

**The Saltire Society Literary Awards, 1936-2015: A  
Cultural History**

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**A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Publishing Studies**

**University of Stirling  
2016**



## **Abstract**

This thesis presents a history of the Saltire Society Literary Awards and examines their status and role within Scotland's literary and publishing culture. The Society was founded at a critical inter-war period during which Scottish writers, artists and cultural commentators were re-imagining Scotland's political and cultural identity. The Society, therefore, was a product of this reformatory era in Scotland's modern history. The Society's identity and position within this inter- and post-war reformation is reflected in the Literary Awards, which are a means by which the Society attempts to accomplish some of its constitutional aims.

The purpose of this thesis is three-fold. Firstly, it has filled a conspicuous gap in modern Scottish cultural history by offering a historically accurate description of the founding of the Saltire Society in 1936 and the development of the Society's Literary Awards up until 2015. Secondly, this thesis demonstrates how the Society's Literary Awards function in relation to key critical discourses pertinent to contemporary book award culture, such as forms of capital, national identity and gender. Finally, this thesis proffers an in-depth analysis of book award judgment culture. Through an analysis of the linguistic and social interactions between Saltire Society Literary Award judges, this thesis is the first study of its kind which considers exactly how literary award judging panels facilitate the judgement process.

What this thesis reveals is how, despite often being plagued by problems regarding finances and personnel, the Society's Literary Awards have endured as a key feature of Scottish literary and publishing culture, so much so that they are now the only series of awards dedicated to awarding Scottish fiction, non-fiction, poetry and first books, as well as academic history and research books. Due to the persistence and enthusiasm of the Society's administrators and literary award judges the awards have

continued to thrive and evolve to accommodate developments and demands within Scottish literary culture.

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## Acknowledgements

This research was made possible through an Arts and Humanities Research Council Collaborative Doctoral Award (AHRC CDA) and I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to the AHRC for allowing me this opportunity to complete my research. I would also like to thank the British Federation of Women Graduates and the University of Stirling's Division of Literature and Languages who have also awarded me financial aid which has enabled me to attend conferences overseas.

I would also like to thank my supervisor Professor Claire Squires for her support, encouragement and supervision throughout my research and writing of this thesis. Her expertise, advice and patience have been invaluable over the past four years. I have also received significant guidance from Dr. Bethan Benwell and Dr. Suzanne Gilbert, whose advice and expertise helped me shape key critical analyses within this thesis. Further, this thesis would never have come to be if it was not for the cooperation and support of the Saltire Society. In particular I would like to thank Jim Tough, Sarah Mason, Ian Campbell and Ian Brown for their unwavering encouragement and confidence in my work.

I am hugely indebted to my family, particularly my parents, Debbie and Derek, who have been incredibly supportive throughout my life. They instilled in me a love of literature and reading which has put me where I am today. I would also like to thank my brothers, Michael and Jason, whose senses of humour and honesty keep me grounded.

I have exceptional friends who have continually helped me see the light at the end of the tunnel during the most stressful periods of creating this thesis. In particular, Ashleigh Watson has always been there to listen to me when things seemed insurmountable, Maxine and David Branagh-Miscampbell have been incredible in their

patience and reassurance in times of need and Laura Jones has been both a dear friend and excellent proof reader. I cannot thank you all enough. Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Zach, who reminds me every day that hard work and tenacity always pays off. Thank you for your support and encouragement.



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## 1 Introduction

The Saltire Society was founded in 1936 in Edinburgh, Scotland, as an independent advocate and supporter of Scottish culture. To this day, the Society aims to celebrate the full breadth of Scotland's cultural landscape, holding events and presenting awards for architecture, literature, civil engineering, and arts and crafts in Scotland, as well as conferring awards to individuals who are believed to have made a meaningful contribution to Scottish culture.<sup>1</sup> Despite this long history, little is written about the founding years of the Society and its progression into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. George Bruce's 83-page pamphlet *'To Foster and Enrich': The First Fifty Years of the Saltire Society*, published by the Society in 1986 as part of its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, is the most notable attempt to summarise the history of the Society and its activities.<sup>2</sup> Even less is available about the Society's various awards, and there is nothing at all specifically about the Society's Literary Awards, which have been conferred to some of Scotland's best known authors, including Alasdair Gray, James Kelman, A. L. Kennedy and Ali Smith.

This absence of scholarship regarding the Society and its influence and impact upon Scotland's culture, particularly in terms of literary award culture, is problematic. Acquiring a sense of how cultural phenomena surrounding cultures of the book, such as awards, affect Scottish literature is imperative to the construction of a comprehensive history of Scotland's publishing and book history. Although there have been a number of histories of the book and publishing in Scotland, most notably, the four volume *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland* (2007-2017), edited by Bill Bell et al, and

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<sup>1</sup> The Saltire Society's full range of cultural awards includes annual awards for Civil Engineering and Housing Design, as well as International Travel Bursaries for Visual Art, Housing and Architecture, Creative Writing and Music. The Society also awards a prize for Arts and Crafts in Architecture biannually. The annual Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun Award is presented to individuals who are deemed to have made 'a significant contribution to Scottish culture'.

<sup>2</sup> George Bruce, *'To Foster and Enrich': The First Fifty Years of the Saltire Society* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1986).

Richard B. Sher's *The Enlightenment and the Book* (2006), none of these discuss Scotland's literary award culture in any detail.<sup>3</sup> While Volume 4 of *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland: Professionalism and Diversity 1880-2000* (2007) includes a brief section about literary awards which details some awards which exist, or have existed, in Scotland, few of these histories consider the impact and influence literary awards have had upon the canonisation, promotion and reception of books in Scotland.<sup>4</sup> This seems to be a particularly unusual omission given that Britain's oldest literary award – and the second oldest in the world – the James Tait Black Prize, was established in Edinburgh in 1919 and remains administered by the University of Edinburgh to this day.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, through a descriptive history of the Society's Literary Awards, and a critical analysis of their position and influence within Scotland's wider literary and publishing culture, this thesis remedies this absence in scholarship concerning how literary awards function within Scottish culture in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the Society's Literary Awards have so rarely been considered within comprehensive histories of the book in Scotland is because the awards have had an inconsistent history. The first literary award conferred by the Society was in 1937, for Robert Gore-Browne's biography *Lord Bothwell* (1937).

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<sup>3</sup>A. Mann & S. Mapstone, *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Volume 1: Medieval to 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017)

S. Brown. & W. McDougall, *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Volume 2: Enlightenment and Expansion 1707-1800* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011)

Bill Bell, *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Volume 3: Ambition and Industry 1800-1880* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007)

D. Finkelstein & A. McCleery, *The Edinburgh History of the Book, Volume 4: Professionalism and Diversity, 1880-2000* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007)

Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland and America* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006)

<sup>4</sup> Claire Squires, 'Literary prizes' in *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Volume 4: Professionalism and Diversity, 1880-2000*, ed. by D. Finkelstein and A. McCleery (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 264-273.

<sup>5</sup> 'About the Awards', The James Tait Black Prizes, 12 April 2016 < <http://www.ed.ac.uk/events/james-tait-black/about> > [accessed 3 May 2016]

Subsequent awards were granted in 1938, 1939 and 1940.<sup>6</sup> After a sixteen year hiatus, the commendations resumed for a brief period in the mid-1950s with Edwin Muir's poetry collection *One Foot in Eden* (1956) receiving the title of 'Scottish Book of the Year' in 1956, followed by Stuart Piggott's *Scotland Before History* (1958) in 1958. The Scottish Book of the Year awards then stopped for a further twenty-four years until their formal re-establishment in 1982.<sup>7</sup> As of 2015 there were six literary awards conferred annually by the Society: Fiction Book of the Year and Non-Fiction Book of the Year (formerly considered collectively as the 'Book of the Year Award' established in 1982), First Book of the Year Award (established in 1988), History Book of the Year Award (so-called since 1997, although this award has existed in some form since 1965), Research Book of the Year (established in 1998) and a Poetry Book of the Year Award (established in 2014).<sup>8</sup>

The absence of a full history of the Society's Literary Awards is emblematic of the lack of a detailed history of the Society itself. In *To Foster and Enrich* Bruce offers an interesting insight into the foundational years of the Society, presenting information concerning some significant early members – and future award winners – of the Society, including Hugh MacDiarmid, John Grierson and Edwin and Willa Muir (Bruce, 18-19). Further, Bruce succinctly contextualises some of the important

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<sup>6</sup> 'The Saltire Society Annual Report, 1940-41', p. 7: Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Parts 3.1 and 3.2 of this thesis offer a detailed analysis of these early awards.

<sup>8</sup> There have also been additional awards such as 'The Times Educational Supplement Scotland (TESS) and the Saltire Society Prize for Educational Publications'. The TESS and Saltire Society Prize for Educational Publications was an annual award founded in 1991 and first conferred in early 1993. To be eligible for the award, books or resources had to be 'relevant to Scottish school children aged from 5-18' and include content which 'related directly to the curriculum in Scottish schools'. Applicable materials published by non-Scottish authors or publishers were also eligible. The intention of the award, according to early reports, was to 'encourage publication of and excellence in books for Scottish schools'. This award, which was co-sponsored by the Society and TESS, ceased in 2006. This award is not dealt with in great detail in this study because this thesis remains focused on the Society's current Literary Awards. 'TESS and the Saltire Society Prize for Educational Publications', Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 28.

'Best Book Forward', *The Times Educational Supplement*, Friday 29 May 1992, Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 28.

contemporaneous cultural history and events which, in his opinion, created a particular environment for the birth of the Society as an agent for the promotion of Scottish literature and the arts:

[T]he Saltire Society arrived on the Scottish scene at a peculiarly apt moment. On the one hand [...] the machinery for the promotion of Scottish interests was in being, and on the other hand the confidence in new developments in Scottish literature [...] had dwindled [...] Apparently the continuity of a Scottish literary tradition was in doubt, yet a small but increasing number of Scots believed there was evidence of new, distinctive Scottish achievement in litera[tur]e] (Bruce, 11-12)

Even though Bruce's work was published by the Society, and is just as much promotional material for the Society as it is a descriptive history of the Society's formative years, there is certainly truth to his claim that post and inter-war concerns about the longevity of Scotland's cultural identity and 'literary tradition' stimulated a boom in the development of cultural and political bodies dedicated to the encouragement and preservation of Scottish heritage and tradition. As Parts 2.1 and 2.2 of this thesis illustrate, the founding of the Society reflected such concerns and, from its inception, the Society has been inherently engaged with the formation of Scotland's contemporary cultural landscape.

In fact, the Society preceded the formation of several other well-known organisations dedicated to the promotion and preservation of the arts in Scotland that have since become central to Scotland's cultural landscape. The Scottish Arts Council, for example, which was formed in 1967, and restructured and renamed as Creative Scotland in 2010, became 'the government's main agency for the distribution of public funds in support of the arts in Scotland'.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, The Gaelic Books Council is a charitable organisation founded in 1968 dedicated to helping 'publishers produce a wide range of books' in both Gaelic and English, which remains pertinent to the

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<sup>9</sup> Norman Wilson, ed., *Scottish Writing and Writers* (Edinburgh: The Ramsay Head Press, 1977), pp. 59, 62-63.

funding and promotion of Gaelic literature (Wilson, 63). Further organisations established during the 20<sup>th</sup> century include the Scottish Association of Writers, which was established in 1969 with the commitment to ‘promot[ing] the interchange of ideas and experiences of the members of Writers’ Clubs in Scotland’ (Wilson, 62) and the Association for Scottish Literary Studies (ASLS), an educational charity founded in 1970 which ‘aims to promote the study, teaching and writing of Scottish literature, and to further the study of the languages of Scotland.’<sup>10</sup> Despite being the predecessor of such institutions by three decades, the Society’s role as an arbiter of Scottish culture and art has gone largely ignored by scholars and cultural commentators alike. While the objectives of a number of the organisations noted were similar to those of the Society, principally the promotion and support of the production and dissemination of Scottish literature and culture, the Society is one of the few Scottish cultural institutions to formalise its support of Scottish literature through awards. Furthermore, as this thesis illustrates, while other Scottish literary awards have, at times, competed with the Society’s awards for coverage and prestige, as of 2015, the Society’s awards remain the only series of literary awards in Scotland exclusively rewarding Scottish literature.<sup>11</sup>

As well as positioning the Society and its literary awards within Scotland’s broader socio-historical and cultural context, this thesis also brings the analysis of the awards into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Such analyses require situating the Society’s Literary Awards in relation to award culture both within the UK and internationally. Furthermore, the means by which this study has been conducted, through an Arts and

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<sup>10</sup> ‘About Us’, *The Association of Scottish Literary Studies* (30 September 2015) <<http://asls.arts.gla.ac.uk/About.html>> [accessed 23 October 2015]

<sup>11</sup> It is worth noting that while the Saltire Society Literary Awards remain the only awards dedicated to fiction and non-fiction for adult readers, there are awards for Scottish literature written for young adults and children, such as the Scottish Children’s Book Awards administered by the Scottish Book Trust. ‘Scottish Children’s Book Awards’, *The Scottish Book Trust* <<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/learning/teachers/scottish-childrens-book-awards>> [accessed 23 October 2015]



Humanities Research Council Collaborative Doctoral Award, has enabled first-hand observation and engagement with the organisation of the awards, permitting hitherto unavailable access to the Society's Literary Award administration and judgment processes. Such experience has directly informed much of the study included herein.

Before moving onto this examination of the Society's Literary Awards, this thesis first illustrates the broader areas of critical discourse relating to literary award culture within which this study positions itself.

## 1.2 Literary Award Culture: Existing Criticism

Despite the fact that literary awards have been part of British literary culture for the best part of a century, significant critical discourse considering their influence and effect upon literary canons and the contemporary publishing industry has only emerged within the last twenty years. Richard Todd's *Consuming Fictions: The Booker Prize and Fiction in Britain Today* (1996) was one of the first texts to consider the wider impact of the Booker Prize for Fiction (now known as the Man Booker Prize following a change in sponsorship in 2002), in terms of book sales, author status and 'literary enrichment'.<sup>12</sup> As James F. English notes, Todd's text is one of the first 'that sets out to understand the powerful and complex role such prizes have come to play in our culture'.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, Todd seems to have instigated the shift from what English called anecdotal retellings of 'scandalous moments in a prize's history' (English, 'Consuming Fictions', 530), to a more serious and scholarly assessment of the role of literary awards within the contemporary literary and publishing industry.

English continued this critical assessment of the significance of cultural awards in *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (2005). In this English develops many of the topics Todd dealt with nine years earlier and, using Pierre Bourdieu's theories concerning cultural capital, offers a more definitive theoretical framework for the series of cultural and economic value exchanges related to cultural prize phenomena.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, English illustrates how the exchange of cultural capital that happens when an award is bestowed or accepted is often tangible, both economically (in terms of prize funds, for example) and in terms of prestige (an author or publisher's

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Todd, *Consuming Fictions: The Booker Prize and Fiction in Britain Today* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996), p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> James F English, 'Consuming Fictions: The Booker Prize and Fiction in Britain Today', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 45.2 (1999), 529-533 (p. 530)

<sup>14</sup> James F English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (London: Harvard University Press, 2005)

reputation can be improved by winning a literary award). As a result, there is a quantifiable exchange that happens between the institution bestowing an award and the individual or institution receiving it:

The prize *is* cultural practice in its quintessential contemporary form. The primary function it can be seen to serve – that of facilitating cultural “market transactions,” enabling the various individual and institutional agents of culture, with their different assets and interests and dispositions, to engage one another in a collective project of value production – is the project of cultural practice as such. (English, *Economy of Prestige*, 26)

English suggests, therefore, that in order to critically engage with cultural awards and effectively assess their impact, analyses of awards and prizes must consider this ‘symbolic give and take’ (English, *Economy of Prestige*, 26). For English, awards demand scholarly consideration because of their omnipresence within contemporary culture:

There is no form of cultural capital so ubiquitous, so powerful, so widely talked about, and yet so little explored by scholars as the cultural prize. Prizes and awards fairly dominate the cultural landscape these days [...] [T]he sense that the cultural universe has become super-saturated with prizes, that there are more prizes than our collective cultural achievements can possibly justify, is the great and recurring theme of prize punditry.<sup>15</sup>

It is just such ideas of the world’s cultural sphere becoming saturated by laudatory awards that are the focus of Joel Best’s critique of ‘congratulatory culture’ *Everyone’s A Winner* (2011). Best takes a sociological approach in his analysis of ‘the trend toward awarding ever more prizes’, considering whether an abundance of awards starts to diminish their impact and effect.<sup>16</sup> Using the example of the upsurge in awards for mystery novels in the United States and United Kingdom that occurred between 1946 and 2008, Best argues that ‘prize proliferation’ is now a common cultural phenomenon: ‘There is, in short, a widespread trend: awards, prizes, and other honors are becoming more common [...] This is the process of *prize proliferation*, whereby the number of public

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<sup>15</sup> James F English, ‘Winning the Culture Game: Prizes, Awards and the Rules of Art’, *New Literary History* 33:1 (2002), 109-135 (p. 109)

<sup>16</sup> Joel Best, *Everyone’s a Winner: Life in Our Congratulatory Culture* (California: University of California Press, 2011), p. 4.

awards grows.’ (Best, 33) Best’s analysis broadens the scope of the impact of this prize proliferation, suggesting that this proliferation of awards occurs ‘throughout our society: government agencies, private businesses, schools, and other organizations all seem to be presenting growing numbers of awards’ (Best, 33). While Best’s study may focus on American prize culture, and takes a wider, sociological approach to the nature of awards and prize-giving, many of his arguments discussing the general social impact of award culture are constructive when considering literary award culture as a cultural phenomenon.

Similarly to Todd, English and Best, Claire Squires discusses the impact and influence of contemporary literary award culture in terms of the effect such awards have on an author’s or book’s economic, as well as cultural, value. In *Marketing Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain* (2009), Squires notes how ‘[l]iterary prizes [...] have promoted writing and also contributed to mid-term canon formation.’<sup>17</sup> For Squires, literary awards are one part of the wider marketing campaigns and activity that are an integral element of book publishing which, Squires argues, has intensified the ‘commodification of the literary marketplace’ in recent years (Squires, *Marketing Literature*, 2). According to Squires, one of the key ways in which such ‘commodification of the literary marketplace’ manifests is within an award-winning book’s paratextual features. Writing in *Judging a Book by its Cover* (2007) and using the example of the Booker Prize for Fiction, Squires explains how the cultural kudos that comes with winning the Booker Prize can translate into economic capital through increased promotion:

The strapline ‘Booker Prize Winner’ [...] becomes part of a wider marketing mix set to build on the book’s achievements [...] Hence, particularly with the bigger literary awards and certainly with the Booker, floor and window space is given over to displays of the shortlist and the eventual winner.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Claire Squires, *Marketing Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Claire Squires, ‘Book Marketing and the Book Prize’, in *Judging a Book by its Cover* ed. by N. Matthews and N. Moody (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 71-83 (p. 73).

The level of successful impact a literary award can have within this ‘marketing mix’ depends, Squires argues, on the promotional activity of the award’s organisers and the winning or shortlisted book’s publisher (Squires, 2007, 76).

Like English, as well as presenting an analysis, Squires has also articulated why such studies into award culture are imperative to comprehensive understandings of both book and cultural histories:

The analysis of literary prizes, as one specific example of the “phenomena” of “recent cultural history,” provides concrete examples of institutions and the rules by which they function (the sponsors, the prize-giving bodies, the eligibility criteria etc.), as well as the ideological contexts both in which they operate and which they also construct.<sup>19</sup>

Continuing, Squires suggests that ‘[a]s an aspect of the discipline of book history [...] literary prizes can afford the researcher a pertinent view of the material and ideological conditions of the production and reception of literature and literary value’ (Squires, ‘A Common Ground?’, 39-40). Similarly to Squires’ approach, therefore, it is necessary for the purpose of this analysis of the Society’s Literary Awards to consider such awards as just one part of a larger cultural value exchange relating specifically, in this instance, to the reception of books and literature in Scotland.

One of the key themes repeated throughout critical discourse about literary awards is the idea of such commendations being an integral part of a book’s reception and ‘lifecycle’. Such notions of the life of a book, from publication and manufacture, to distribution and reception were developed by Nicholas Barker in *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society* (1993). According to Barker, there are ‘five events in the life of a book – publishing, manufacturing, distribution, reception and survival’, the sequence of such events, Barker continues, ‘constitutes a system of communication’.<sup>20</sup> For Barker there are

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<sup>19</sup> Claire Squires, ‘A Common Ground? Book Prize Culture in Europe’, *The Public* 11: 4 (2004), 37-48 (p. 39).

<sup>20</sup> Thomas R. Adams and Nicholas Barker, ‘A New Model for the Study of the Book’ in Nicholas Barker (ed.) *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society* (London: British Library, 1993), p. 15.

‘three stages in the life of books’ that have survived these five events. These stages are particularly significant to this analysis of the Saltire Society’s Literary Awards and their impact upon contemporary Scottish literature. As Barker argues:

There are three stages in the life of books that have survived. The first includes its creation and initial reception: this is the period during which it is used to perform the function for which it was brought into existence. The second is the period during which it comes to rest without any use or at least intensive use. It is during this period that it is in the most danger of disappearing. If circumstances are right then it will survive until the third period. This is when it is discovered that it is a book desirable as an object, either in its own right or because of the texts it contains. It documents the age that brought it into existence and thus enters the world of collecting and scholarly research. (Barker, 32)

This is a significant framework to consider in relation to literary award culture since, as Squires has argued, awards have the potential to play a part in each part of Barker’s cycle (Squires, ‘A Common Ground?’, 43). For example, a literary award is most commonly awarded within a year of a book’s publication date, therefore if the book is shortlisted for, or wins, an award, the event of winning the award is part of the book’s ‘initial reception’. This inevitably blends into the second stage of the lifecycle of a book, because the publicity and interest generated by the book’s award win – particularly if the book wins a number of awards – will likely sustain the ‘rest’ period of a book. The final stage, in which the book is discovered as a ‘desirable object’ relates to the process of canonisation that award-winning books are often drawn into. These stages can be defined as ‘paratextual’ features of a book’s reception. As Gérard Genette and Marie Maclean illustrate, the paratexts of a book are ‘the means by which a text makes a book of itself and proposes itself as such to its readers, and more generally to the public’.<sup>21</sup> While there is no guarantee that an award-winning book will become a best-selling canonical text, awards can help to cement a book’s status within the contemporary literary marketplace. Literary awards, therefore, have the potential to be a paratextual influence upon the life cycle of a

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<sup>21</sup> Gérard Genette and Marie Maclean, ‘Introduction to the Paratext’, *New Literary History*, 22:2 (1991), 261-272 (p. 261)

book. With Barker's framework, and those suggested by Todd, English and Squires, in mind, the purpose of this thesis is to situate the Society's Literary Awards within this cycle of reception, and illustrate how the Society acts as what English calls an 'institutional agent of culture' (English, *Economy of Prestige*, 8).

In addition to the texts mentioned above, other notable contributions to the wider discourse concerning literary award culture have often focused their attention on some of the 'larger' (both in terms of prize funds and the media coverage the award receives) and more controversial awards in the UK, particularly the Man Booker Prize for Fiction (henceforth referred to as the Man Booker). As noted, Richard Todd considered the Man Booker in relation to the 'production and consumption of fiction' and how the Prize is involved in the publishing and marketing cycle (Todd, 2). Todd offered a brief update to his work on the Man Booker in 2006 in an edition of the *Salzburger Beiträge zur Sprach und Kulturwissenschaft* journal dedicated to literary awards in Great Britain.<sup>22</sup>

This is not to say that such academic appraisal of literary award culture has remained focused solely upon the influence of literary awards within the UK. In a development that demonstrates expansion of such analyses, much of the more recent work considering literary award culture has engaged with wider issues, such as gender, nationality and post-colonialism. Graham Huggan and Luke Strongman have both written about authors and texts that have been shortlisted or won the Man Booker in relation to post-colonial discourse.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, there has been extensive research completed about literary awards and cultural prizes around the world, most recently in Gillian Roberts' *Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture* (2011), which

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<sup>22</sup> Richard Todd, 'How Has the Booker Prize Changed Since 1996?', in *Salzburger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft* ed. by Wolfgang Görtzschacher, Holger Klein in association with Claire Squires (2005), 8-20.

<sup>23</sup> Graham Huggan, 'Prizing Otherness: a short history of the Booker' in *The Postcolonial Exotic* (Oxon: Routledge, 2001), 105-124.  
Luke Strongman, *The Booker Prize and the Legacy of Empires*, (New York: Rodopi, 2002).

considers Canada's literary awards, particularly in relation to national identity.<sup>24</sup> Danielle Fuller, DeNel Rehberg Sedo and Anouk Lang have also considered the socio-cultural phenomena of literary awards in relation to Canadian literary and reading cultures.<sup>25</sup> Beth Driscoll has written numerous articles about literary awards in Australia, with particular reference to awards functioning as social media events and their influence upon educational book lists and syllabi.<sup>26</sup> Driscoll considers the Man Booker in terms of the literary middlebrow and popular culture in her 2014 book *The New Literary Middlebrow: Tastemakers and Reading in the Twenty-First Century*.<sup>27</sup> There are also significant contributions to the field regarding non-English language awards, including Britta Scheideler's overview of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade that is awarded annually to writers at the Frankfurt Book Fair.<sup>28</sup> Marie-Françoise Cachin and Sylvie Ducas' article 'The Goncourt and the Book: A tale of two prizes' compares the French Prix Goncourt to the Man Booker and Ducas' *La littérature, à quell(s) prix?* (2013) considers the proliferation of literary awards in France and their impact upon the status of

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<sup>24</sup> Gillian Roberts, *Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).

<sup>25</sup> Danielle Fuller, 'Listening to the Readers of "Canada Reads"', *Canadian Literature*. 193 (Summer 2007), 11-34; Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo, 'A Reading Spectacle for the Nation: The CBC and 'Canada Reads.' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 40:1 (Winter 2006), 5-36; Anouk Lang, "'A book that all Canadians should be proud to read': Canada Reads and Joseph Boyden's Three Day Road.", *Canadian Literature*, 215 (Winter 2012), 120-136; DeNel Rehberg Sedo, "'Richard & Judy's Book Club' and 'Canada Reads': Readers, Books and Cultural Programming in a Digital Era.", *Information, Communication and Society*. 11. 2 (2012), 188-206.

<sup>26</sup> Beth Driscoll, 'Twitter, literary prizes and the circulation of capital', in *By the book? Contemporary Publishing in Australia*, ed. Emmett Stinson (Melbourne: Monash University Press, 2013), pp. 103-119. Beth Driscoll, 'Making the List: The Value of Prizes for Women Writers in the Construction of Educational Reading Lists', in *By the book? Contemporary publishing in Australia* (Melbourne: Monash University Press, 2013), 127-140.

<sup>27</sup> Beth Driscoll, *The New Literary Middlebrow: Tastemakers and Reading in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

<sup>28</sup> This award, which is funded by donations from publishers and booksellers, comes with a €25,000 cash prize and, according to the Peace Prize Foundation, acts 'as a symbol of an entire industry's unique dedication to peace'.

'The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade', <http://www.friedenspreis-des-deutschen-buchhandels.de/445943/> [accessed 29 January 2015]

Britta Scheideler, 'Von Konsens zu Kritik: Der Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels', *50 Jahre Frankfurter Buchmesse: 1949-1999* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1999), 46-88.



the author.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Edward Mack discusses literary award culture in relation to the Japanese literary canon and cultural capital in *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature* (2010).<sup>30</sup>

While significant in their contribution to discourses relating to literary awards, very few of these analyses consider, or even mention, Scottish literary awards. Any critical assessment of Scotland in relation to literary award culture is usually a discussion of whether Scottish authors are marginalised by awards like the Man Booker which appears to show a bias against Scottish authors. The Man Booker's statistical imbalances have not gone unnoticed by Scottish authors such as Alan Bissett and Irvine Welsh, who have both articulated concerns with this so-called 'Man Booker Bias'. Bissett argued that the prize's failure to shortlist more Scottish authors indicated an 'institutional bias'.<sup>31</sup> Such 'bias', he argues, may be informed by divides in social class and language, as well as nationality (Bissett, 2012). In a similar vein, when discussing nationality and literature, Irvine Welsh suggested that the Man Booker was 'based on the conceit that upper-class Englishness is the cultural yardstick against which all literature must be measured'.<sup>32</sup>

While Scottish awards are rarely discussed, Scottish authors are not always entirely neglected in critical discussions of contemporary literary award culture. Todd dedicates a chapter to 'New Fiction in Scotland' in *Consuming Fictions* (1996) and notes that it was surprising that Alasdair Gray's debut novel *Lanark* (1982) was not shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 1981. Despite this exclamation of apparent shock, Todd failed to acknowledge the fact that Gray had won the Saltire Society's inaugural Book of the Year

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<sup>29</sup> Marie-Françoise Cachin and Sylvie Ducas-Spaes, 'The Goncourt and the Booker: A tale of two prizes', *Logos* 14:2 (2003), 85-94.

Sylvie Ducas, *La littérature, à quel(s) prix?* (Paris: La Découverte, 2013)

<sup>30</sup> Edward Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature* (London: Duke University Press, 2010)

<sup>31</sup> Alan Bissett, 'The Unnoticed Bias of the Booker Prize', *The Guardian*, 27 July 2012, <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2012/jul/27/booker-prize-bias-english>> [accessed 5 June 2014]

<sup>32</sup> Irvine Welsh, 'A National Literature?', *Edinburgh World Writers Conference*, 19 August 2012, <<http://www.edinburghworldwritersconference.org/national-literature/irvine-welsh/>> [accessed 5 June 2014]

award in 1982 for *Lanark* (Todd, 134). Sharon Norris also overlooks the Society's Literary Awards when offering an in depth analysis of Scottish authors and the Man Booker. As Norris illustrates, a statistical analysis of the nationality of Man Booker winners and judges in relation to national population suggests that Scottish books are in fact 'marginally over-represented' in comparison to their Welsh and Irish counterparts.<sup>33</sup> Yet, while the focus of her article is the apparent disproportion of English Man Booker winners in comparison to their Scottish counterparts, Norris also discusses the 'Scottish connection' between the Man Booker and Scottish literary awards:

A sizeable percentage of winners, shortlisted authors, and, perhaps predictably, even some of the judges, have 'cut their teeth' on two older awards, the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and the Hawthornden Prize. Both of these are Scottish [...] Although relative to the Booker neither of these prizes offers a heavy financial remuneration [...] what they do both afford is a certain prestige. (Norris, 44)

While Norris' omission the Saltire Society Literary Awards in this discussion is unsurprising given the lack of accurate information about the Society's awards, it is problematic nonetheless that when discussing Scottish authors who have been shortlisted for the Man Booker who have also won other prizes based in Scotland, Norris fails to mention the Society's Literary Awards. This is made more frustrating considering the fact that Norris claims the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Hawthornden Prize are 'Scottish' awards because they were established – and in the case of the James Tate Memorial Prize remain administered – in Scotland. Yet, bar this 'Scottish connection', neither of these awards is particularly 'Scottish'. The Hawthornden Prize accepts entries from all British authors under the age of 41, with its recipients including Siegfried Sassoon, Ted Hughes, and Hilary Mantel. Likewise, the James Tait Black Memorial Prize accepts submissions from any work of fiction written in English. Its winner's roll call

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<sup>33</sup> Sharon Norris, 'Recontextualising the Booker' and 'Scots and the Booker' in *Salzburger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft* ed. by Wolfgang Görtschacher, Holger Klein in association with Claire Squires (2005), 20-53.

exemplifies just how diverse a range of winners it has awarded, including the American Cormac McCarthy, British-Indian Salman Rushdie, and South African J. M. Coetzee.<sup>34</sup> What such oversights reveal is how the current absence of any formal history of the Society's Literary Awards is leading to perceptible gaps in understandings of the history of literary awards in the UK and particularly in Scotland. As a result, this absence is preventing the development of an inclusive critical discourse on the subject of literary award culture.

Building upon ideas established in the literature discussed above and using theoretical frameworks utilised in such literature, this thesis analyses the Society's Literary Awards and illustrates their cultural impact in relation to Scottish literature and publishing. Central to many of the critical analyses noted herein is the work of Pierre Bourdieu, whose writings about the production and distribution of cultural value have become central to understanding the cultural impact of literary awards (see Driscoll, *New Literary Middlebrow*, 5; English, *Economy of Prestige*, 5; Squires, *Marketing Literature* 54-58). Bourdieu's writings on the connections between cultural, symbolic, and social value, which, he considered to be as significant as, and innately linked to, economic value, have influenced much of the critical discourse that is focused on literary award and arts prize culture.<sup>35</sup>

A critical study of the effects and implications of a manifestation of literary award culture can be positioned using Bourdieu's work as a theoretical framework. Indeed, the three forms of capital identified by Bourdieu – cultural, social and economic – are constantly in play during the process of administering, judging and bestowing a literary award. For Bourdieu:

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<sup>34</sup> 'The James Tait Black Prize: Fiction Winners', (April 2016) <<http://www.ed.ac.uk/events/james-tait-black/winners/fiction>> [accessed 12 May 2016]

<sup>35</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital', in *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. by J E Richardson, trans. by Richard Nice (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 46-58 (p.47).

[C]apital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money [...] as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital [...] and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 47)

In the case of the Saltire Society, for example, cultural and social capital comes in the form of the Society itself which has, over the years, developed status as a consecrator of cultural value through its series of awards. Although, as is evidenced in Part 4.1 of this thesis, the legitimacy of the Society's status as an arbiter of cultural value has, at times, been questioned and does demand further scrutiny. As an institution dedicated to the preservation of 'all that is best in the Scottish tradition', the Society exemplifies how Bourdieu's different forms of cultural value are not only intrinsically connected, but work as a circuit of cultural value exchanges. This circuit is illustrated and explained further in Part 4.1 of this thesis.

Using Bourdieu's concepts to illustrate the wider impact of the Society's Literary Awards will also support an assertion that this thesis makes; namely, that literary awards are part of the broader sociology of the book. Squires hints towards this dynamic when she notes that literary awards exist within 'ideological contexts both in which they operate and which they also construct' (Squires, 2004, 39). This suggestion, that literary awards are simultaneously engaging with *and* creating a particular context, ideological or otherwise, is imperative to a full understanding of the true nature and impact of literary awards. In considering the Society's Literary Awards as one part of Scotland's wider cultural and socio-political environment, this thesis situates the awards as an integral element of what Donald F. McKenzie calls the 'sociology of texts'.<sup>36</sup> For McKenzie:

[A]ny history of the book which excluded study of the social, economic and political motivations of publishing, the reasons why texts were written and read as they were, why they were rewritten and redesigned, or allowed to die, would

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<sup>36</sup> Donald F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts: The Panizzi Lectures, 1985* (London: The British Library, 1986). Page reference?

degenerate into a feebly degressive book list and never rise to a readable history  
(McKenzie, 1985, 5)

The key point for this analysis is this notion of *why* texts are ‘read as they [are]’ or ‘allowed to die’ since, as noted, literary awards can directly influence the way in which books are read and affect a book’s longevity and impact.<sup>37</sup> McKenzie continues, suggesting that using the word sociology ‘directs us to consider the human motives and interactions which texts involve at every stage of their production, transmission and consumption’ (McKenzie, 6-7).

Since, as English argues, literary award administrators are assuming ‘an even larger and more powerful role in our contemporary processes of canon formation’ (English, *Economy of Prestige*, 154), a consideration of the way in which such canons are being formed is imperative to a full understanding of contemporary literary award culture. Such awards are a unique example of how contemporary canonicity takes shape. Books that win awards not only have the potential to be accepted within larger institutional or long-established canons, such as educational syllabi or as part of a publisher’s series of ‘modern classics’, but an award-winning book is then also part of the awards’ own canon of award winners (a canon which is often exploited in the promotion of such awards).<sup>38</sup> As Wendell V. Harris notes, literary canons are an illustration of the numerous processes of selection that books can go through.<sup>39</sup> Harris states that: ‘evaluations of literary texts are actually judgments of how well the texts [...] fulfil particular functions’ (Harris, 115). As people who are tasked with the ‘evaluation’ of a text in relation to a series of eligibility rules,

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<sup>37</sup> This said, English argues that a ‘big payout in itself cannot guarantee a prize’s success, though it can attract some immediate attention’. In other words, winning a major literary award will not always proffer instant success for a book, author or publisher (English, *Economy of Prestige*, 124).

<sup>38</sup> Sophie Allan and Beth Driscoll have discussed the potential impact winning an award can have on a book’s chances of being included within educational syllabi in Australia, noting that ‘a prize is something like a ‘golden ticket’ in gaining recognition by the education system. Either that, or it is a hurdle requirement’. Sophie Allan and Beth Driscoll, ‘Making the List: The Value of Prizes for Women Writers in the Construction of Educational Reading Lists’, in *By the Book? Contemporary Publishing in Australia* ed. by Emmett Stinson (Victoria: Monash University, 2013), pp. 127-141 (p. 139).

<sup>39</sup> Wendell V Harris, ‘Canonicity’, *PMLA*, 106:1 (1991), 101-121.

literary award judges are integral to this assessment of literature. Before a book reaches a judging panel it has already gone through a series of selections; from an agent's decision to try and sell the book to a publisher, to the publisher's decision to publish the book and their decision to nominate the book for an award. In addition to this, an award's rules of eligibility are also a form of selection. The conditions stated within an award's set of rules can, therefore, also affect the 'canon of literature' the judges are evaluating. Given that only writers who are living in, descend from or are writing about Scotland are eligible for the Society's Literary Awards, the judges are not only engaging with the creation of a contemporary literary canon, but they are also facilitating the construction of a *Scottish* literary canon.

Such debates regarding the Scottish literary canon inevitably lead to questions concerning exactly how books and their authors are identified and categorised. To be exact, if there is a discernible Scottish literary canon, how is 'Scottishness' defined? Much has been written about Scottish literature and national identity, with significant contributions to the field made by Alan Riach, David Daiches and Douglas Gifford.<sup>40</sup> Cairns Craig also offers an interesting assessment of the influence of literature upon national identity and vice versa in *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (1999). According to Craig, since novelists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were creating a 'national imagination' and presenting the nation 'as both the fundamental context of individual life and as the real subject of history', the literary novel form is inextricably connected to 'the development of the modern nation'.<sup>41</sup> Such issues regarding national identity and literature are particularly relevant with regards to literary award culture more

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<sup>40</sup> Alan Riach, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography: the Masks of the Modern Nation* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

Douglas Gifford, 'At last - the Real Scottish Literary Renaissance?' *Books in Scotland*, 34 (1990), 1-4.  
David Daiches, ed., *A Companion to Scottish Culture* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981).

<sup>41</sup> Cairns Craig, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), p.9.

generally since, as with the Society's awards, many literary awards' criteria of eligibility take into account the nationality or geographical location of the author. Nationality and nationhood therefore become influential features in examinations of literary awards which determine whether an author or text qualifies for particular awards or prizes. Furthermore, since, as Robert Crawford suggests, 'Scottishness' is not a fixed entity, but is in fact in 'constant evolution, continually re-manufacturing itself', literary awards that reward authors depending on their Scottish status are actively involved in this 're-manufacturing' of Scottishness.<sup>42</sup>

Considering nationhood and Scottish literary identity specifically in relation to literary award culture, Part 4.2 of this thesis illustrates some of the complexities of 'national' literary awards that use national identity as a criterion of eligibility *and* purport to be supporting, or representative of, that particular national identity. Gillian Roberts' work relating to Canadian national identity in terms of both Canadian and international awards, offers a useful framework for considering awards in relation to national cultural values. Roberts notes that:

[N]ational literary prizes, by virtue of the fact that they celebrate literature included on the basis of its nationality, *are* partly responsible for constructing a national literature, and, by implication, the boundaries of the nation itself. (Roberts, 24)

Roberts' assertion, that national literary awards are, in part, immersed in the construction, as well as the promotion, of national literary identity, is deliberated in conjunction with Crawford's assertion that all national identities are organic and constantly evolving entities (Crawford, 14-15) in Part 4.2. The Society's unique position as both a creator and promoter of Scottish culture raises questions as to the 'type' of Scottish culture the Society fosters and promotes.

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<sup>42</sup> Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), pp. 14-15.

While such analyses of Scottish literature and nationhood are useful in positioning Scottish literature within wider discourse relating to national culture and identity, the discourses focus upon the textuality of Scottish literature, rather than the cultural value exchanges that such texts are immersed in. This means that relying on such criticism alone does not advance this analysis of how Scottish literature operates within Scotland. As a result, in a development of these categorisations of national identity, this study brings into question Neil Davidson's assertion that 'national consciousness [is] a more or less passive expression of collective identification among a social group' and considers the way in which national identity informs, and is informed by, its *cultural* identity.<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, this thesis positions the Society as a cultural nationalist organisation using John Hutchison's definition of cultural nationalism as 'a movement of moral regeneration, which seeks to re-unite the different aspects of the nation', to consider the Society's status as both a creator and promoter of Scotland's national culture.<sup>44</sup> Hutchison contends that:

The aim of cultural nationalism is rather the moral regeneration of the historic community, or, in other words, the re-creation of their distinctive national civilization [...] Typically cultural nationalists establish informal and decentralized clusters of cultural societies [...] designed to inspire a spontaneous love of community in its different members by educating them to their common heritage. [They] celebrate national cultural uniqueness [...] in order to identify the community to itself [...] and differentiate it against other communities. (Hutchison, 124)

This description is a fitting one for the Saltire Society whose motivations lie in the promotion and preservation of Scottish national identity and culture. It is with Hutchison's description in mind that the history of the Society in Parts 2.1 and 2.2 and, later, the discussion of the Literary Awards' relationship with the Society's notions of Scottish national identity in Part 4.2, are considered.

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<sup>43</sup> Neil Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p.14.

<sup>44</sup> John Hutchison and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 123.



As this overview of the critical discourse related to literary award culture demonstrates, this thesis is positioned within a well-established and growing area of academic study. It is important that such areas of criticism are not only continually developed, but that they consider themselves as interdisciplinary, considering all elements of publishing, book history and literary studies. This study is therefore at the intersection at which such disciplines meet and demonstrates how such studies of the book can be enhanced further by the inclusion of socio-cultural histories of specific institutions which contextualise developments in literary culture.

Before moving onto such analysis, the following section, Part 1.3, explicates the methodologies used in this analysis of the Society's Literary Awards.

### 1.3 Methodology

The research for this study of the Saltire Society Literary Awards was funded by an AHRC CDA in collaboration with the Saltire Society. The collaborative nature of this Award enabled me to conduct research into the history of the Society's Literary Awards whilst also working with the Society in the administration and organisation of its series of awards between 2012 and 2015. This role, which included corresponding with judges, publishers and authors, and consulting with the Society in the development of the awards allowed me first-hand experience managing the Literary Awards and observing meetings held by the respective judging panels. Such insight into the composition, management, adjudication and conferral of the awards ensures that this research remains distinct in its depth and access.

One of the key problems encountered when examining this particular area of Scotland's literary and cultural history was the lack of reliable information related to the history of the Society and its awards. Although there are a number of brief histories of the Society included within various general studies of post-war culture and society in Scotland, the only document that offers an insight into the founding of the Society is, as previously noted, George Bruce's pamphlet *'To Foster and Enrich'* (1986). The usefulness of this document, however, is limited. The pamphlet is not only thirty years out of date, but it was also commissioned by the Society and is therefore likely predisposed to consider the Society in a purely positive way. *'To Foster and Enrich'* is also lacking in any referencing or footnoting, making any kind of retracing of Bruce's steps and sources impossible.<sup>45</sup> Finally, Bruce's work is, at times, factually inaccurate, indicating that his sources were anecdotal or second-hand and therefore extremely difficult to triangulate and

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<sup>45</sup> This was most notably a problem when Bruce refers to and quotes from an autobiographical document by one of the founding members of the Society, the origins of which have been impossible to locate.

substantiate. Accordingly, although Bruce's work is referenced in this thesis, as it remains one of the few pieces of long-form work dedicated to the history of the Society, for the purposes of this examination a 'start from scratch' approach to assembling a history of the formation of the Society and its Literary Awards has been favoured.

To facilitate this accurate retelling of the Society's history and the history of its Literary Awards, one of the key research methods used throughout the composition of this thesis was the use of the Society's archives which are held at the National Library of Scotland (NLS). The Society also has a series of private, largely digital, archives (including email correspondence and databases) that have not yet been accessioned to the NLS and access to these private archives was a further advantage of my privileged position as a researcher working directly with the Society. The archives held at the NLS are substantial and well organised and the detailed cataloguing of the Society's papers and correspondence since 1936 to the present day enabled swift collection of the relevant information for this study. The Society's NLS archives hold several different kinds of documentation, such as hand-written letters, press releases, newspaper articles and faxed documents. Accordingly, an element of my work with the archives was understanding how such documents can be used together and how to substantiate the historical information I was using.

There were, however, some limitations to the archives. There were instances when documents or communications appeared to be incomplete or missing corresponding materials. In these instances, I would try to source other materials that may substantiate accounts, such as newspaper reports or meeting minutes. Nonetheless, there were times when certain accounts could not be verified and were therefore not documented in this thesis. A further issue with the archives is that they are at times inconsistent. The amount of archived materials related to the Society's Literary Awards can vary from year to year,

meaning that some years are better documented than others. This, as well as the limited space permitted by this thesis, explains why certain occurrences are explained in more detail than others in the descriptive histories of the awards. This said, the Society's archives have proved invaluable in piecing together the history of the Society's founding, as well as the founding of each of the awards discussed in detail within this study.

A further methodology used for this thesis were interviews conducted with past and current judges, publishers, authors and cultural commentators who have been involved in some capacity with the Society's Literary Awards over the past eighty years. I recorded and transcribed a total of twenty-three audio interviews. When it was not possible to conduct face-to-face interviews with participants, interviews were conducted over the telephone. The face-to-face interviews were conducted in a semi-structured way: participants were asked opening questions about their involvement or knowledge of the Society and its awards and, largely organic, conversation developed from this. The purpose of such an approach was to both inform this study and create an oral history of the Society's Literary Awards from people who have witnessed or played a key role in the development of the awards over the past thirty years. These recordings will also be deposited with an embargo date in the Society's archives in the NLS.

However, this research method came with its own set of challenges, the most notable being the unreliability of personal memory. On a number of occasions, the information I was told during an interview did not correspond to contemporaneous information documented in archives. For example, a number of long-standing judges indicated in interview that they were present for the adjudication of particular books, despite the fact that archived Press Releases, meeting minutes and letter correspondence between judges from the period indicated otherwise. Such triangulation of methods and resources, while not failsafe, is the most reliable way by which a history of the Society and

its awards can be created. As in any study that is concerned with constructing and interpreting past events, there remains the possibility that certain claims or accounts, both from archive documents or personal testimony, will remain uncorroborated, which is one of the problematic elements of such historic research.

In addition to the unreliability of personal memory, interviews are also a potentially problematic method because people can remain guarded when they are being recorded. While the open and conversational approach to the interviews intended to combat this, some interviewees seemed tentative in their discussion of the Society's Literary Awards or their involvement in them, making some contributions ineffective. This said, there were also some instances when I felt that my role as an assistant within the organisation of the Society's Literary Awards enabled me to develop a good, professional rapport with interviewees which undoubtedly allowed for a more informal approach to the discussions.

A further key methodology used in the completion of this thesis was participatory observation facilitated by my work with the Society. Using first-hand observations as part of my research is defined in terms of what Alan Bryman describes as the 'prolonged immersion of the observer in a social setting in which he or she seeks to observe the behaviour of members of that setting'.<sup>46</sup> In terms of this study, I was observing the 'behaviours' of the Society's Literary Award judges and the overall management of the Literary Awards. The observations I was able to carry out add a unique level of knowledge to this research and such experience has given me unparalleled access to the judging process and administration of the Society's Literary Awards. The combination of these three research methods – archival research, oral history and participant observation – has enabled me to complete this study into the history of the Saltire Society Literary Awards.

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<sup>46</sup> Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 270.

## 1.4 Thesis Structure

To effectively present this examination, this thesis is divided into five parts, with each part dealing with issues and themes relating to the development and administration of the Society's Literary Awards and their role within Scotland's wider literary and cultural landscape.

Part 1: 'Introduction', summarises the purposes and aims of this thesis and offers an overview of the existing criticism related to literary award culture. Part 2: 'The History of the Saltire Society', illustrates the circumstances in which the Society was founded in the 1930s, creating a chronology of key moments in both the Society's and Scotland's history. This section considers the socio-political and cultural developments of Scotland in the 1930s and illustrates how such circumstances influenced the establishment of the Society in 1936.

Taking a similarly historiographic view, Part 3: 'The Saltire Society Literary Awards', presents a chronological history of the Society's early book awards and commendations (Part 3.1) as well as the four major Literary Awards: Book of the Year (Part 3.2), History Book of the Year (Part 3.3), First Book of the Year (Part 3.4) and Research Book of the Year (Part 3.5). These descriptive histories recount how these awards were established and how they have evolved in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Building upon this historical account of the Society's Literary Awards, Part 4: 'The Saltire Society Literary Awards and Critical Discourse', considers the awards in relation to key critical frameworks commonly associated with literary award culture more generally. Part 4.1 illustrates how the Society's Literary Awards function in terms of the forms of cultural capital identified by Pierre Bourdieu. This section considers the exchanges of power and cultural influence that exist between the different elements of the Society's awards, including the judges, authors, publishers, and the Society itself, proposing that the

cultural exchanges that occur within contemporary literary award culture are part of a Circuit of Capital Exchange. Part 4.1 also takes a quantitative approach to assessing the cultural and economic impact of the Society's Literary Awards through an analysis of book sales obtained from Nielsen BookScan. Part 4.2 considers the Society's position as a 'Scottish' literary award in relation to critical frameworks pertaining to national identity and cultural nationalism. In this section it is argued that in requiring authors to either be Scottish by birth, or to have resided in Scotland for a long period of time, the Society's awards are engaging with wider socio-political and cultural debates surrounding the definitions of Scottish national identity and culture. Finally, Part 4.3 considers the role of gender in relation to the Society's Literary Awards, both in terms of the gender balance of judges and shortlisted or winning authors. Using contemporaneous writing about the representation of women in the Scottish publishing industry to contextualise a quantitative data analysis of the Society's Literary Awards, this section evaluates the gender imbalances evidenced by the Society's awards.

As the final critical analysis of this thesis, Part 5: 'Judging the Saltire Society Literary Awards: A Discursive Analysis', presents a discursive analysis of the judging process practiced by the Society's Literary Awards judging panels. Part 5 positions the Society's Literary Award judging panels as distinct communities of practice whose social interactions are unique to the context of the Society's judging process. Using discursive psychology as a critical framework to analyse transcriptions from two judging panel meetings held in 2014, this section examines the ways in which the Society's Literary Award judging panels discuss books they are considering for an award and negotiate their roles within the group. Being the first study of its kind to consider a literary award judging panel as a community of practice, the work in Part 5 demonstrates ways in which further research into the discourse of literary award judgement culture can be approached.

With a foundation of the purposes and significance of this study placed, the subsequent parts of this thesis demonstrate a comprehensive history and analysis of the Saltire Society's Literary Awards between 1936 and 2015.



## 2 The History of the Saltire Society

### 2.1 Origins of the Saltire Society

The Saltire Society's Annual Report from 1939 noted that 'The Saltire Society was formed in 1936 by a group of people who wished to see Scotland take its proper place as a cultural unit', and illustrated the aims and purpose of the Society thus:

The [Society] looks back to the past only to move forward. Its main concern is with the future [it] envisages a new Scotland with a vigorous intellectual life, drawing on the past for inspiration to new advances in art, learning, and the graces of life.<sup>47</sup>

According to George Bruce, the origins of the Society arose from a conversation between the journalist George Malcolm Thomson, and politician and academic Andrew Dewar Gibb.<sup>48</sup> Quoting Alison Sheppard's *Memories of the Saltire Society* (a seemingly lost autobiographical account by Sheppard), Bruce suggests that Thomson 'found himself shocked by the Scots' and their lack of interest in their own history and culture, and 'communicated his feeling to Dewar Gibb'<sup>49</sup>:

[Thomson] was amazed to find how the English knew about and appreciated in their heritage and how ignorant the Scots were about theirs and how indifferent they were about preserving it. He prodded Dewar Gibb into doing something about it. He also mooted the idea of calling it the Saltoun Society. (Bruce, 12-13)<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1939-1940* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1940), p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> McCulloch illustrates how many of the writers who were involved in the founding years of the Society, namely George Malcolm Thomson, Andrew Dewar Gibb, Hugh MacDiarmid, Edwin Muir and Neil Gunn had been writing about the socio-political problems Scotland faced during the 1920s and 30s.

Margery Palmer McCulloch, 'Politics and Society between the Wars', *Scottish Modernism and its Contexts 1918-1959* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp. 100-103.

<sup>49</sup> George Bruce, *'To Foster and Enrich': The First Fifty Years of the Saltire Society* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1986), pp. 12-13.

<sup>50</sup> The name originally proposed for the Society – the 'Saltoun Society' – is likely a reference to the Scottish writer and patriot Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun. Given Fletcher's political activity and anti-union position, it is interesting that his name would be suggested as the title for the Society, which would eventually pride itself on being apolitical and independent. However, in 1988 the Society established the 'Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun Award', an annual award which recognises 'outstanding achievements in the fields of science, arts and public life.' The Society claims this award 'celebrates the legacy of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, a seventeenth century Scottish writer and politician and a keen patron of the arts during his lifetime.'

John Robertson, 'Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun (1653?–1716)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), January 2008

<<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/view/article/9720>> [accessed 11 May 2015]

Bruce suggests that Andrew Dewar Gibb's wife repeated 'the gist' of this conversation to Alison Sheppard, who was secretary of Glasgow University's Women's Student Union in 1936. A report from a conference organised by the Perth branch of the Society in 1947, at which Sheppard spoke during a session called 'The Saltire Society: Retrospect and Intentions', appears to substantiate Bruce's case regarding the founding of the Society.<sup>51</sup> The published report of the conference states that Sheppard<sup>52</sup>, who was the Society's Honorary Secretary at the time, said:

The Saltire Society came to birth in Glasgow [...] There were present as midwives, three Professors, an author, and an historian. [...] the Saltire Society owed its being to professors. From the first, certain fixed principles, by common consent, were taken for granted: -

1. It was to be a National Society.
2. There was to be no feeling of inferiority. Comparisons with Scotland's southern neighbour were abandoned. International contacts were to be made direct with other countries, and members of the Society were to behave as representatives of a small, but important European country.
3. The primary interest of the Society was in the *future* of Scotland; hence its energy was to be directed to the contemporary scene, to encouraging *living* authors and artists.
4. The aim of the Society was to be inclusive, not exclusive; to unite, not divide. Political, religious, or any other divisions were to be ignored. [...]
5. Rejection of the second-rate was a cardinal feature. It was felt that far too much inferior work was acclaimed, simply because it was Scottish. [...]
6. The grand objective was a richer, fuller life, for all inhabitants of Scotland. (9393/342)

Accordingly, the Society was organised as a members' organisation governed by a group of volunteers who managed the Society's activities and decided upon constitutional policies. The organisation's structure was intricate. It included a number of Honorary

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'Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun Awards: Four Scots honoured for their 'unique' contributions to Scottish society', The Saltire Society (2014) <<http://www.saltiresociety.org.uk/awards/history-and-heritage/andrew-fletcher-of-saltoun/andrew-fletcher-of-saltoun-award/>> [accessed 11 May 2015]

<sup>51</sup>'The Saltire Society, Perth Conference, 1947', p. 3-4. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 9393, File No. 342.

<sup>52</sup>In addition to this, an essay entitled 'The Saltire Society: A short account of the first ten years', which was published in *Scotland's Magazine* in May 1947, states that the Society 'is not by any means faultless but it has accomplished such effective work [...] largely due to the restless initiative of Alison Sheppard in the earlier years'.

Iain Paul, 'The Saltire Society: A Short Account of the First Ten Years', *Scotland's Magazine*, 1947, p. 6.

Presidents, of which there were six by 1939<sup>53</sup>; a President, who, when present, would act as Chair at all meetings and have ‘a deliberate and a casting vote’; a Secretary; a Treasurer; and an Executive Committee (*Saltire Society Annual Report 1939-40*, 8). The Executive Committee included the President, Secretary and Treasurer and ten other members of the Society, four of which formed ‘a quorum of the Committee’, with Office Bearers and Committee members being elected each year at the Society’s General Meeting (*Saltire Society Annual Report 1939-40*, 8). Alison Sheppard was elected as Honorary Secretary in 1937 and, despite being a driving force in the establishment of the Society, would only become an Honorary President in 1945.<sup>54</sup>

The Society’s membership rose steadily in its initial years. By 1939 the Society had 371 members, which rose to 420 by early 1942 and increased to 541 a year later. Such increases in membership, which was purchasable for an annual fee of 5 shillings, is quite remarkable given that Scotland had not only been at war since 1939, but had also been suffering from the economic depression that followed the First World War and ran into the Second during the 1930s and 40s.<sup>55</sup> A year after the end of the Second World War in 1946, membership had increased to 1,725. Unfortunately, such figures did not necessarily equate to income for the Society. A note in the Annual Report for 1941-1942 reveals that ‘The number of old members who have failed to pay their subscriptions is rather more than before.’<sup>56</sup> Presuming that this is ‘no doubt due to the War’, the Society remained optimistic, feeling safe in the prediction that ‘peace would bring an immediate and spectacular rise in membership’ (*Saltire Society Annual Report 1941-42*, 3).

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<sup>53</sup> The Society’s 1939 Annual Report lists Sir Iain Colquhoun, Bart., of Luss., Eric Linklater, William Power, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Frederic Lamond, and George Pratt Insh as Honorary Presidents. Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1939*. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 9393, File No. 16.

<sup>54</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1945-46* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1946), 1.

<sup>55</sup> Scotland’s socio-political and economic status during this period is discussed in relation to the Society in more detail in Part 2.2 of this thesis.

<sup>56</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report 1941-42* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1942), p. 3.

Such upsurges in membership indicate that the Society was fairly successful in its ambition to ‘stir the mind of the Scottish people<sup>57</sup>, but not everyone was convinced of the Society’s impact and contribution. An anonymous contributor writing in *Scottish Journal*<sup>58</sup> about the Society’s conference held in St Andrews in 1953 suggested that, far from making a significant impact, the Society was not only failing to engage with key figures in Scottish culture (although the author of the article fails to say who these key figures may be), but was also comprised of ‘middle-class [but] well-intentioned nonentities’.<sup>59</sup> The author continues, suggesting that:

In a small country like Scotland it is ridiculous that such a Society cannot muster and give due place in its deliberations to all the really significant authors [...] and other creative people in our midst. Until it does it can have no real authority. Its deliberations on cultural matters must remain deliberations *in vacuo* unless they are effectively united to the real trends manifesting themselves in our literature, arts, and cultural affairs. (*Scottish Journal*, 4)

This anonymous reproach did not go unnoticed by the Society. Robert Hurd, the Society’s Honorary Secretary, wrote to William MacLellan, editor of *Scottish Journal* and a member of the Society suggesting that, ‘For a member of your standing to have allowed a statement of this kind to appear in a Journal directly under your control seems to me quite extraordinary.’<sup>60</sup> Additionally, Dr. Oliver Boyd wrote a direct rebuke to the article in a later issue of *Scottish Journal*, in which he defends the Society’s activities and maintains that the Society cannot make significant changes to Scottish cultural policy without the assistance of other groups:

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<sup>57</sup> Agnes Mure Mackenzie, ‘The Saltire Society: Its Background and Purpose’, *Aberdeen University Review*, 30:90 (1944), p.240.

<sup>58</sup> *Scottish Journal* (1952-54) was one of several post-war magazines published by Glasgow-based publisher William MacLellan. Like the magazines and journals that had existed in the 1920s, such as *The Chapbook*, *The Scottish Nation* and *The Scots Magazine* (all edited and contributed to by Hugh MacDiarmid), *Scottish Journal* ‘confirmed [...] how a Scottish-based magazine and publisher with a declared Scottish agenda was a necessary part of the cause of national cultural independence.’

Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker, ‘Introduction’, *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines: Volume 1: Britain and Ireland 1880-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 709.

<sup>59</sup> ‘The Saltire Society Conference’, *Scottish Journal*, No. 7 May-June 1953, p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from Robert Hurd to William McLellan, 11 June 1953. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 347.

Even though it may not always have spoken as loudly and clearly as it ought to have done, it *has* spoken – and acted [...] If it has not done more, the fault is not all the Society's. It can act only by getting other bodies to act; it is not a Scottish Ministry of Fine Arts – fortunately perhaps; and though it may publish books, it cannot compel people to buy them.<sup>61</sup>

Such correspondence illustrates how this view of the Society as a peripheral organisation; always present, but not necessarily effective or engaged in contemporary debates, has consistently overshadowed the Society. It was for such reasons that the Society commissioned a report in 2011 to assess the influence and opinion of the Society. According to the report, despite there being an 'important and distinctive role for the Society' in Scotland, the Society had 'a lower public profile than was the case for much of its earlier existence'<sup>62</sup> and there was 'a general lack of recognition on the part of the public of what the Society is' (*Saltire Commission*, 9). The report continues to note that if the Society is known, it is regarded as having a benevolent influence (*Saltire Commission*, 10). However, while the Society's impact may not have always been evident, from its earliest days it has attempted to engage with significant cultural issues within Scotland. As Part 2.2 illustrates, far from existing '*in vacuo*', the Society's history has paralleled key developments in Scotland's wider cultural and socio-political growth, effectively demonstrating interrelationships that exists to this day.

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<sup>61</sup> 'The Saltire Society', *Scottish Journal*, No. 11 November-December 1953, 5-6 (p. 6).

<sup>62</sup> Cullen of Whitekirk, 'Report of the Saltire Commission' (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 2011), p. 3.

## 2.2 The Saltire Society and Scotland's Cultural Renaissance

The end of the First World War in 1918 brought with it worldwide economic instability that hit Britain hard, with Scotland feeling the full effects of the post-war crisis. Catriona M. MacDonald argues that a 'southward drift of industry' in post-war Britain led to noticeable differences between Scotland and England at this time:

Over-crowding in Scotland was six times greater than England [...] unemployment remained persistently higher than the British average and social performance indicators, [...] showed that the average Scot was in much poorer physical shape than his southern counterpart.<sup>63</sup>

And while T. M. Devine has since argued that 'the inter-war period was not all doom and gloom'<sup>64</sup> for Scots, there is no doubt that the First World War was, as Michael Lynch argues, a 'watershed in the development of Scottish society and its economy'.<sup>65</sup> Such economic issues, coupled with seemingly half-hearted attempts from Westminster to offer concessions to Scotland in the 1920s and 1930s (Lynch, 435), led to a noticeable rise in nationalist ideologies in Scotland's political landscape. The significance of such events cannot be underestimated when constructing a history of Scotland's cultural evolution during this time. As MacDonald and others argue, this sense of dissatisfaction towards the political status quo of the union not only led to an intensification in Scotland's attitude towards political governance and autonomy, but it also influenced writers and artists who became vocal proponents of political causes.

George Malcolm Thomson was one such writer, becoming infamous for his so-called 'lurid' 1927 book, *Caledonia, Or the Future of the Scots*, a text known for its censorious evaluation of Scotland's social and cultural identity.<sup>66</sup> Thomson's acerbic commentary criticises Scotland's failure to celebrate its art, music, and literature and

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<sup>63</sup> Catriona M. MacDonald, *Unionist Scotland 1800-1997* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1998), p. 103.

<sup>64</sup> T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation: 1700-2007* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 267.

<sup>65</sup> Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico, 1992), p. 424.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Rait and George S. Pryde, *Scotland* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1934), p. 141.

preserve a position as a significant cultural voice in Europe. The influence of Thomson's opinions was apparently far-reaching. George Bruce argues that it was the expression of such feelings in the conversation between Thomson and Andrew Dewar Gibb that led to the founding of the Society (Bruce, 12-13). According to Bruce, this conversation was the 'chance factor' that acted as the 'stimulus' for the founding of the Society (Bruce, 12). Although this story is repeated by George McKechnie in his critical biography of Thomson, *The Best Hated Man* (2013), there is no mention of Thomson in any of the Society's own documents. Following Bruce's lead, McKechnie committed fully to the notion that '[t]he Saltire Society was a body conceived following an original idea from George Malcolm Thomson,' repeating Bruce's story of the exchange between Thomson and Dewar Gibb.<sup>67</sup>

To some extent, the lack of evidence of such events is immaterial. Thomson's published works, particularly *Caledonia*, illustrate that there are certainly elements to his writing which directly relate to the founding principles of the Society. Most notable of such is his argument that Scottish people are ignorant of their own culture: '[t]here is not a nation in Europe which knows as little and cares as little about its past as the Scots.'<sup>68</sup> Thomson continues, suggesting that what little Scottish people do know about Scotland is based upon a 'whole mythology' founded on a 'vague complex of generalisations' (Thomson, 7-9). The Society's Annual Report from 1939 reveals that, ten years after the publication of *Caledonia*, such sentiments resonated with the Society, with the report declaring that, '[t]he nation that forgets its past is dead', an assertion which leads the

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<sup>67</sup> George McKechnie, *The Best Hated Man: Intellectuals and the Conditions of Scotland Between the Wars* (Argyll: Argyll Publishing, 2013), p. 213.

<sup>68</sup> George Malcolm Thomson, *Caledonia or the Future of the Scots* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1927), p.66.

Society to aspire to ‘revive the memory of famous men and to make Scots conscious of their heritage’.<sup>69</sup>

A further significant point Thomson makes in his polemic, which was pertinent both to the Society and Scottish culture more widely in the 1920s and 30s, is that Scotland had no ‘national literature’, so much so that even the production of literature in Scotland stalled:

There is no literature in Scotland. The country has produced none in the twentieth century, or to be exact, since the year 1901 [...] The publishing of books has been dead in the country for a very much longer period [...] There has been, since the war, one modest and shortlived attempt to create a national publishing house in Edinburgh but this is the only ripple in the stagnant pool [...] The book-buying public [in Scotland] is, as a matter of fact, extraordinarily small. (Thomson, 60-61)

Thomson’s suggestion that the book-buying public was at this time ‘extraordinarily small’, is likely an exaggeration, based on conjectural opinion rather than any evidence. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century was in fact, as David Finkelstein argues, a turning point for readers and book-buyers in Scotland as the ‘move of book retention from public to private spaces’, as well as the production of ‘[l]ess expensive one-volume works, and the rise of paperback publishing’ allowed more readers than ever before access to literature.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, reading *Caledonia* ninety years on, it reads as a tongue-in-cheek piece, with a deliberately confrontational tone aimed at rattling the Scottish arts community into action.

However, Thomson was not alone in his strong opinions regarding Scotland’s apparent lack of knowledge or pride in its cultural heritage. A rebuke to Thomson’s opinions came from C. M. Grieve, better known by his penname Hugh MacDiarmid, that took the form of the ‘hastily written’ 95 page *Albyn, or Scotland and the Future* which was

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<sup>69</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report 1938-39* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1939), p. 2.

<sup>70</sup> D. Finkelstein & A. McCleery, *The Edinburgh History of the Book, Volume 4: Professionalism and Diversity, 1880-2000* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 441.



also published in 1927.<sup>71</sup> Believing Thomson's arguments to be 'coherent, but far too pessimistic'<sup>72</sup>, in *Albyn* Grieve states that:

The forces that are moving towards a Scottish Renaissance are complex and at first sight incompatible. The movement began as a purely literary movement some seven or eight years ago, but out of necessity speedily acquired political and then religious bearings. It is now manifesting itself in every sphere of national arts and affairs (Grieve, 5)

Such sentiments regarding the broadening of this 'movement' were reiterated four years later when the Scottish author George Blake stated that '[o]ne does not need to be a politician to appreciate the importance of this slow restoration of our self-respect.'<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, early Society advocate and member Edwin Muir made similar assertions eight years later in the equally controversial *Scottish Journey* (1935), a book Muir wrote after travelling around Scotland in 1935. For Muir, Scotland was 'gradually being emptied of its population, its spirit, its wealth, industry, art, intellect, and innate character'.<sup>74</sup>

Such opinions did not go without challenge. In their history of Scotland published in 1934, Robert Rait and George S. Pryde call Grieve's work 'vitriolic' and its 'companion volume' *Caledonia*, 'discordant' (Rait and Pryde, 141). What these texts reveal is that the Society's appearance in 1936 was not merely a fortuitous occurrence based upon the opinions of an isolated group of people, but in fact reflected a wider discord in Scottish culture which was being openly discussed by Scottish writers. Suggesting that the context for such 'overt ideological creative writing' developed because of 'concern[s] over the increasingly depressed economic and social condition of Scotland', Margaret Palmer McCulloch notes how 'for the major part of the 1920s [...] the dominant manifestation of the revolutionary objectives of what Denis Saurat had called *le groupe de la Renaissance*

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<sup>71</sup> Margery Palmer McCulloch, *Scottish Modernism and its Contexts, 1918-1959: Literature, National Identity and Cultural Exchange* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 200p), p. 95.

<sup>72</sup> C. M. Grieve, *Albyn or Scotland and the Future* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1927), p. 43.

<sup>73</sup> George Blake, 'Literary Tendencies in Modern Scotland', *Library Review* 3:2 (1931), 63 – 66 (p.64).

<sup>74</sup> Edwin Muir, *Scottish Journey* (London: William Heinemann, 1935). p. 3.

*Écossaise* was a literary one' (McCulloch, 94). Implying that Scotland's socio-political circumstances at the time were influencing Scotland's literary output, McCulloch continues, proposing that the work of Thomson and MacDiarmid:

[S]ought to remind readers of the history and considerable achievements of the fledgling Scottish Renaissance movement, while emphasising how much still had to be done artistically and politically before achievement of its aims could be within sight. (McCulloch, 95)

Accordingly, assertions that the founding of the Society 'was the culmination of a growth of civic and cultural organisations which focused on Scotland's problem' appear well-founded, given the debates that had been circulated by Scottish writers in the 1920s and 30s.<sup>75</sup> Far from being a series of separate and isolated events, the emergence of a cultural organisation like the Society during this period was as much a part of this literary and cultural reawakening as the publication of such instigative texts.

This so-called 'Scottish Renaissance' saw, John Foster argues, an intensification in Scottish authors actively participating in the party-political debates regarding nationalism that were taking place during the 1920s and 30s. According to Foster, this was a new phenomenon, much different to that of past Scottish writers and artists:

The Scottish Renaissance was [...] something quite different from the Scottish tradition of Stevenson, Barrie or Buchan. Neil Gunn, Edwin Muir, Eric Linklater, Grassie Gibbon, Naomi Mitchison – all identified themselves in some form or other with movements seeking to change the political relationship which defined that tradition: the union between Scotland and England. [...] Some sought formal links with working-class politics – like MacDiarmid [...] Others saw their role more in literary terms [...] All, however, wished to break with a past in which Scottish literature existed as a sub-species of English.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Writing in *The Bulletin of Scottish Politics* in 1981, Christopher Harvie also notes that other organisations committed to the preservation and development of Scottish culture, such as the 'Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland [...] the Scottish Travel Association [...] the SNDC [Scottish National Development Council], the National Trust for Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Hostels Association' were also founded throughout the 1930s.

Christopher Harvie, 'Labour and Scottish Government: The Age of Tom Johnstone', *The Bulletin of Scottish Politics*, 2 (Spring 1981), 1-21 (p. 6).

<sup>76</sup> John Foster, 'The Twentieth Century, 1914-1979', in *The New Penguin History of Scotland*, ed. by Robert Allen Houston and William Knox (London: Penguin Books, 2002), pp. 417-494 (p. 443).

Others have been more tentative in their assessment of the political influence upon the writers and artists commonly included under the ‘amorphous’ Scottish Renaissance title, with Richard Finlay arguing that:

[A] sense of crisis permeated the renaissance in that all knew that something was wrong and that the artistic status quo had to be overturned, yet there was no agreement as to what should replace it. For some it was anarchy, for others a new order, and, probably for most, it signified uncertainty.<sup>77</sup>

Finlay continues to suggest that the ‘main achievement of the renaissance was to leave a cultural legacy which has become more appreciated after its demise’ (Finlay, 151). However, Finlay sells short the timeliness of Scotland’s literary renaissance. Far from being more significant after the fact, in the 1930s the Society was responding directly to the sense of crisis that Finlay suggests permeated the Scottish Renaissance at that time.

Scotland’s interwar period also saw cultural deliberations and celebrations happening on a much larger scale. In 1938, Scotland’s cultural persona was put on public display during the Glasgow Empire Exhibition. The exhibition, which saw 12 million people descend upon Glasgow’s Bellahouston Park between May and December in 1938, had an international as well as domestic audience, with the objective of the event being to boost Scotland’s weak post-war economy and inform a global audience of Scotland’s cultural affluence and impact. In the official guide for the event *Scotland’s Welcome, 1938*, the Lord Provost of Glasgow wrote:

For the whole of the summer of 1938, Scotland in general, and Glasgow in particular, will be en fête, and we are confident that we shall attract to our beautiful and historic Country visitors from every part of the world.<sup>78</sup>

Retrospectively, commentators have suggested that the administration of the event only acted to reiterate the political discord towards ‘the old Scotland’, with ceremonial processions seemingly celebrating individuals with imperial titles rather than politicians

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<sup>77</sup> Richard Finlay, ‘Modern Times (1914 - ) general’, in *Oxford Companion to Scottish History* ed. by Michael Lynch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 150-153 (p. 151).

<sup>78</sup> G. F. Maine, ed., *Scotland’s Welcome 1938* (Glasgow: WM. Collins and Sons and Co. Ltd., 1938), p. 21.

from Scotland's popular political parties (Foster, 450). This aside, what remains significant about the 1938 Empire Exhibition in Glasgow is its timing. It happened at a time in which the promotion and preservation of Scottish culture was at the forefront of Scotland's political, social and economic milieu.

Likewise, the aims and focus of long-standing organisations that were established in this interwar period also reflect how the long-term longevity of Scottish cultural promotion was a key component to organisations dedicated to advocating Scottish arts. As well as the Society, a number of major cultural bodies, who remain active today, were established during this crucial inter-war period in Scotland's cultural history. These organisations ranged from those dedicated to the preservation of Scottish culture, with the intention of making it available to a wide audience, like the National Library of Scotland and Scottish National Dictionary, founded in 1925 and 1931 respectively, to institutions dedicated to the wider dissemination and support for the arts more generally, such as the Scottish Society of Women Artists (1924) and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (1930). Furthermore, organisations dedicated specifically to literary culture, such as Scottish PEN – a Scottish centre for the international PEN association which is dedicated to creating a community of support for writers worldwide – was established in 1926. Much like the establishment of the Society itself, the founding of such organisations arose at a critical time at which Scotland was reconsidering its socio-cultural identity.

With the outbreak of war in 1939, the momentum of Scotland's cultural reimagining slowed. The national priorities, and those of the Society, were diverted. Michael Gardiner notes that, politically and socially, '[t]he Scots were drawn back into Britain by a sense of togetherness'.<sup>79</sup> For the Society, the war brought economic difficulties. By 1944 the Society was warned by its Treasurer that it would need to raise

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<sup>79</sup> Michael Gardiner, *Modern Scottish Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), p. 56.

the cost of membership or ‘eat into its [financial] reserves’.<sup>80</sup> One of the ways the Society attempted to raise funds during the 1930s and 1940s was through the publication of pamphlets and books. Between 1939 and 1965, the Society produced twenty-five publications, including books, pamphlets, chapbooks and an exhibition catalogue.<sup>81</sup> The Society also produced the literary magazine, *Saltire Review*, between 1954 and 1961.<sup>82</sup> Half of these publications were published and printed in collaboration with existing publishers and printers such as Oliver & Boyd, C. J. Cousland and Sons and Thomas Nelson and Sons. Such partnerships appear to have been a means by which the Society was able to limit the risk and expense of publishing books alone.

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<sup>80</sup> The Saltire Society, AGM, 28 June, 1944. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 9393, File No. 16.

<sup>81</sup> Allan Ramsay, *Poems epistles, fables, satires, elegies & lyrics* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for Saltire Society, 1940); James Hogg, *Selected poems of James Hogg* ed. by J. W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for Saltire Society, 1940); James A. Bowie, *The Basis of Reconstruction* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for Saltire Society, 1941); Alan Riach, *Building Scotland: A Cautionary Guide* (Edinburgh: C. J. Cousland and Sons for Saltire Society, 1941); Thomas Urquhart, *Selections from Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty* ed. by John Purves (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for Saltire Society, 1942); *Four Scottish Poems of the 16th Century*, ed. by John W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1943); *Mally Le.: to which is added three folk songs*, ed. by John W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1944); William Dunbar, *Seasonal Poems* ed. by John W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1944); John Lorne Campbell, *Gaelic in Scottish Education and Life: Past, Present and Future* (Edinburgh: W. & A.K. Johnston for Saltire Society, 1945); Isabella Burns, *The Marriage of Robin Redbreast and the Wren* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1945); Robert Hurd & Andrew Philip, *Planning and Building Post-war Scotland* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1945); *Songs of the '45*, ed. by John W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1945); *Six Scottish Poems of the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by John W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1946); *Whuppity stoorie*, ed. by John W. Oliver (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1946); *Scottish Children's Rhymes and Lullabies* ed. by Joan Hassall (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1948); Robert O. Dougan, *The Scottish Tradition in Photography* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons for Saltire Society, 1949); William Beattie, *The Scottish Tradition in Printed Books* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons for Saltire Society, 1949); John Lorne Campbell, *Gaelic in Scottish Education and Life: Past, Present and Future* (Edinburgh: W. & A. K. Johnston for Saltire Society, 1950); *Scotland on Freedom: from an Anonymous Chronicle of About 1460*, ed. by Ages Mure Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1950); Peter Frederick Anson, *Scots Fisherfolk* (Banff: Banffshire Journal for Saltire Society, 1950); Rashie Coat, ed. by Joan Hassall (Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark for Saltire Society, 1951); Robert Hurd & Andrew Philip, *Gladstone's Land: the Story of an Old Edinburgh House* (Edinburgh: National Trust for Saltire Society, 1952); *Scottish Pageant*, ed. by Agnes Mure Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for Saltire Society, 1952); *The Bruce: A Selection*, ed. by Alexander Kinghorn (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd for Saltire Society, 1960); *Old Highland Tartans: early tartans, spinning implements, dye samples, illustrations of Highland dress, manuscripts, etc.* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1965)

<sup>82</sup> The *Saltire Review* was a triannual journal founded by the Society. According to the first issue, the purpose of the journal was to ‘fill the gap in the cultural life of the country left by the unhappy demise of such monthlies as *The Scots Review* [...] like its predecessors it [sought] to be Scottish in orientation while avoiding parochialism’. The first edition of *Saltire Review* was edited by Alexander Scott, and its Advisory Board included Neil M. Gunn, Eric Linklater, Compton MacKenzie, Agnes Mure Mackenzie and Naomi Mitchison. The *Saltire Review* was published until 1961, at which point the Society decided to re-brand the journal, calling it the *New Saltire*. The *New Saltire* was edited by the literary agent, Giles Gordon (who would later criticise the Society’s Book of the Year Award, as discussed in Part 4.2 of this thesis), and Michael Scott-Moncrieff. Alexander Scott, ‘Editorial’, *Saltire Review*, 1:1 (1954), p.6.

The collaboration between the Society and Oliver & Boyd seems particularly fitting given that both parties were interested in disseminating informative documents and texts about Scotland to Scottish readers. Writing about the history of Oliver & Boyd, Alistair McCleery notes how the publisher maintained its position as a key proponent in Scottish educational publishing until the sale of the company to the *Financial Times* in 1962:

From the middle of the nineteenth century, Oliver & Boyd's educational and medical lists dominated and provided the basis for strong export revenues. This position persisted until the second half of the twentieth century when the company retrenched to serve the distinctive Scottish educational market.<sup>83</sup>

The fact that Oliver & Boyd's publishing catalogue at this time was focused upon instructional materials with export value makes their collaboration with the Society, who were determined to promote Scottish culture both domestically and internationally, particularly timely and an astute move in which both parties could benefit from each other's cultural and economic capital. Records from the 1930s and 40s reveal that Oliver & Boyd took much of the financial burden from the Society in their early publications, promising to sustain the production and promotion of the publications whilst maintaining an equal partnership with the Society and the authors. A 'Memorandum of Agreement between Oliver & Boyd Ltd. and The Saltire Society' from 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1939 relating to the Society's series of 'Scottish Classics' pamphlets states that, as publishers, Oliver & Boyd 'shall publish at their own risk four volumes of SCOTTISH CLASSICS' and, after deducting 15% for publishing commission, the profits (what was left after the cost of production was subtracted from sales income) would be divided equally between the publisher, the Society and the author.<sup>84</sup> In a similar contract from 1947 for the Society's

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<sup>83</sup> Alistair McCleery, 'Conglomerates', in *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland: Volume 4, Professionalism and Diversity 1880-2000*, ed. by, David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 348-352, (p. 348).

<sup>84</sup> Oliver and Boyd Ltd. Agreements and Agencies. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 5000, File No. 92.

‘Scottish Poets’ series of pamphlets, the publisher not only agreed to fund the production and split the profit equally, but also committed to having ‘sole control’ of ‘advertisement (including the number and destination of free copies), price and marketing of the works’ (5000/92).

Such publishing output is impressive given that the war halted much of the book production in Scotland during this time. McCleery notes how the impact of the war was not only felt between 1939 and 1945, but lingered long after and caused ‘long-term and structural decline’ within Scotland’s papermaking and publishing industry.<sup>85</sup> Restrictions on raw materials and paper lasted until 1956, which may offer an explanation as to why almost all of the Society’s publications between 1939 and 1960 were chapbooks or pamphlets that were no more than 70 pages long. Despite such restrictions on resources and finances, the Society remained determined to produce and publish content which reflected their aims. Although reeling from the loss of personnel ‘with time to devote for furthering its aims’, the Society believed that the war brought with it a time ‘propitious for awakening interest in the objects of the Society’.<sup>86</sup> Suggesting that the war had ignited patriotism amongst Scots, the Annual Report for 1941-42 argued that:

[N]ever was there a greater and more growing sentiment in Scotland in favour of things Scottish, whether cultural or material; never were people’s minds more susceptible to new ideas and unconventional action such as the Society has stood for during the past six years. If the Society can be kept alive during these difficult times, the small flame we are helping to kindle can be fanned in times of peace, until a light will shine out in Scotland at least as bright as that to which we pay homage in Poland, in Czecho-Slovakia, in Norway or in Greece, whose culture and patriotism are the admiration of us all. (*Saltire Society Annual Report 1941-42*, 5)

The Society’s self-proclaimed status as a cultural conservationist with a passion-over-profit publishing model illustrates the Society’s principled attitude towards the democratic

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<sup>85</sup> Alistair McCleery, ‘Scottish Papermills’, in *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland: Volume 4, Professionalism and Diversity 1880-2000*, ed. by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 97-107 (pp. 97-99).

<sup>86</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1941-42* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1942), p. 5.

purpose of the Society's publications during this time. However, despite such optimistic attitudes, reports from the Society's Publication Secretary in 1949 reveal that the national 'recession in the book trade' began to affect the Society's publications (9393/6). While the Society continued to engage with Scotland's literary culture in some capacity through the 1950s, bestowing a number of Scottish Book Of the Year Awards (which are discussed in detail in Part 3.1 of this thesis), by the mid-1960s, the Society's Publications Committee was becoming increasingly aware of the Society's failure to sustain its publishing projects.<sup>87</sup>

Just as the Society had been born in the midst of a so-called Scottish literary renaissance, so too was its work in the 1960s and 1970s influenced by Scotland's wider socio-political and cultural factors. Many have suggested that contemporary Scottish literature and arts have emerged from a second renaissance in Scotland's post-war cultural identity. Exactly when such a second renaissance occurred is still in contention. In 2002, Michael Gardiner defined the 'First Scottish Renaissance' as being a 'pre-World War Two' phenomenon, with the 'Second Scottish Renaissance' following 'post-World War Two'.<sup>88</sup> Similarly and more specifically, other discourse examining Scotland's second cultural renaissance has suggested that its origins can be traced back to cultural production from the 1960s.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, Gerrard Carruthers has argued that the emergence of key Scottish writers in the 1970s and 80s, such as Tom Leonard, James Kelman and

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<sup>87</sup> Minutes from Publications Committee meetings during this period reveal that the committee frequently turned down or postponed projects because they could not afford to sustain them. In February 1966 it was stated that the committee had agreed that 'unless a commercial publisher was prepared to finance the holding of stocks, the Publications Committee would rarely be able to contemplate anything larger than a small paper-backed pamphlet'.

Minutes of Meeting of the Saltire Society Publications Committee, 22 February 1966. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 938.

<sup>88</sup> Michael Gardiner, 'Towards a Post-British Theory of Modernism: Speech and Vision in Edwin Morgan', *Pretexts: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 11:2 (2002), 133-146 (p. 135).

<sup>89</sup> Eleanor Bell and Linda Gunn, *The Scottish Sixties: Reading, Rebellion, Revolution?*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013).



Alasdair Gray, delineated the second renaissance.<sup>90</sup> Douglas Gifford, on the other hand, suggests that post-war Scottish fiction can be roughly divided into two groups:

In the immediately post-war period before 1980, writers tend overall to be deeply pessimistic and ironic regarding earlier romanticism and distortion of Scotland's culture and history. After 1980 [...] the fiction attempts a more positive vision of Scotland, increasingly working in new genres, mingling these in a determined contemporary eclecticism which simultaneously exploits older Scottish cultural and fictional traditions and breaks with them.<sup>91</sup>

Gifford effectively summarises the pre-1980s pessimism that has already been discussed in detail in this section. However, just as the 'First Scottish Renaissance' influenced the shaping of the Society in its formative years, so too did the 'Second Scottish Renaissance' influence, and become influenced by, the work of the Society in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Far from being exclusive to Scottish literature and fiction, Scotland's Second Renaissance had a much wider effect upon the arts in Scotland.

As a means of justifying the time frame by which he is separating modern Scottish literature, Gifford tentatively suggests the 'change in confidence' in Scotland's post-1980s literature may 'somehow be related to the 1979 Devolution referendum' (Gifford, 237). Neil Davidson has expanded upon this, suggesting that the post-1980 developments in debates surrounding Scottish culture and national identity correspond to specific political developments in Scotland:

If it were possible to draw a graph showing the strengthening of Scottish national consciousness over the last 20 years, it could be charted in relation to the Conservative party general election victories of 1979, 1983, 1987 and 1992, and would show the curve ascending more steeply with the announcement of each result. [...] In other words, this heightened sense of Scottishness was not an assertion of primordial being but a response to a particular political conjuncture.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Gerard Carruthers, 'Scottish Literature: Second Renaissance', *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature*, ed. by Laura Marcus and Peter Nicholls, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.668-685.

<sup>91</sup> Douglas Gifford, 'Breaking Boundaries: From Modern to Contemporary in Scottish Fiction', *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume 3*, ed. by Ian Brown, Thomas Owen Clancy, Susan Manning and Murray Pittock, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 237-253 (p. 237).

<sup>92</sup> Neil Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood*, (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p.1.

Davidson continues, noting how such correlations between political change and a heightened interest in national identity are interrelated, since ‘nationhood is never asserted for its own sake, but always in order to achieve some economic, social or political goal’ (Davidson, 1). Accordingly, just as political happenings had affected the way by which writers had expressed their opinions earlier in the century, political discord and the ‘quasi-democratic debacle’ of 1979 (Gifford, 237) appears to have instigated a change more generally within Scotland’s cultural milieu.

The interrelation between Scotland’s culture and politics is most aptly evidenced by T. M. Devine’s description of the rise of the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the 1970s. Discussing the complexities of the SNP’s success in UK general election in 1974, Devine suggests that:

Few Scots, even at the height of the [SNP’s] electoral popularity in 1974, wished to break the Union; the aim was rather to improve it to Scottish advantage [...] The SNP’s success [...] was seen as an effective way of drawing attention to Scotland’s problems.<sup>93</sup>

Despite the fact that the Society has always maintained that it is apolitical – or ‘suprapolitical’ as described in a Society document from 1975 – its interests and actions have frequently mirrored those of the SNP.<sup>94</sup> Not only were both organisations established in the mid-1930s, inspired by the post-First World War revival in concern for the preservation of Scottish national identities and culture, but as Devine’s statement illustrates, the two bodies’ ideologies complemented each other. Considering Devine’s statement – which could easily be mistaken as a description of the Society – within the context of the Society and Scotland’s wider cultural environment at the time, accentuates the extent to which Scottish political thought reflected, and no doubt influenced, cultural developments.

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<sup>93</sup> T. M. Devine, *Scotland and the Union, 1707-2007* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), p. 146-147.

<sup>94</sup> ‘A New Voice in Scotland: Political Parties? Trade Unions?’ Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 115.

Following Scotland's failed devolution referendum in 1979, the UK's general elections in 1983, 1987 and 1992, in which the Conservative Party ruled despite Scotland's preference for more liberal parties at the polls (most notably Labour and the SNP), seemed to accentuate Scotland's apparent lack of power in the UK's democratic procedures and therefore highlighted the suppression of Scottish culture more widely.<sup>95</sup> The after-effects of such political tensions have continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s and directly contributed, according to Ian Macwhirter, to the rise of Scottish Nationalism in the past two decades:

Scots have voted SNP in recent years, not to celebrate their race or ethnicity or even to define themselves culturally against another nation, but to express their repugnance at another political creed: Conservatism. [...] If the rise of Scottish Nationalism can be credited to any one person, it is the former Conservative Prime Minister [Margaret Thatcher].<sup>96</sup>

As Davidson and Macwhirter have both suggested, the political disorder present in Scotland during the past 40 years has influenced debates surrounding nationhood and national identity (both of which are discussed in more detail in Part 4.2 of this thesis). According to Gerard Carruthers, from the 1970s to the turn of the century, Scottish writers and artists were no longer concerned with the notion of 'an organic national identity' an identity which, Carruthers argues, 'rested on an over-wrought perception of the country's ever fragmented history' (Carruthers, 668). Rather, Carruthers claims, 'Scotland during the last three decades of the twentieth century has increasingly found a series of 'usable' pasts and presents' (Carruthers, 668). In other words, rather than concentrate on identifying an essential or 'correct' Scottish cultural identity, from the 1980s, Scottish

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<sup>95</sup> *General Election Results, 9 June 1983*, House of Commons Public Information Office Factsheet, 22, June 1984.

*General Election Results, 11 June 1987*, House of Commons Public Information Office Factsheet, 47, June 1987.

*General Election Results, 9 April 1992*, House of Commons, 61, 1993.

<sup>96</sup> Ian Macwhirter, *Road to Referendum*, (Glasgow: Cargo Publishing, 2014), p. 42.

writers and organisations have sought to assimilate the different aspects of Scotland's cultural landscape.

Considering this, it is no coincidence that much of the Society's work has reflected concurrent political developments. In 1977, for example, the Society proposed establishing a working group with other arts organisations to establish a 'Policy for the Arts' in Scotland.<sup>97</sup> This idea, which led to the development of a so-called 'Manifesto for the Arts in Scotland', was directly influenced by the possibility of Scotland's devolution in 1979.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, the Society's Book of the Year Award was founded in between major UK elections – three years after this Referendum and one year before a UK general election. Therefore it could be argued that the establishment of the first award in 1982 was not only a means by which the Society could continue its endeavour to promote Scottish culture, but was also an engagement with the contemporaneous debates surrounding national and cultural identity. Consequently, just as the formation of the Society was a consequence of the socio-political conditions of the time, the formal founding of the Society's first Scottish literary award in 1982, while not necessarily a deliberately political act, certainly reflected Scotland's wider political environment.

The founder of the Book of the Year Award, Paul Henderson Scott, was clear to reiterate exactly what was meant by the term 'Scottish Book' in a letter to his prospective judging panel in September 1981:

The term, "Scottish Book", would include any book by an author of Scottish descent or living in Scotland, or a book by anyone which deals with the work or life of a Scot or with a Scottish problem, event or situation. The book might therefore be poetry, a novel, play or other work of imaginative literature, or biography, literary criticism or a study of any Scottish issue.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Paul Henderson Scott, 'A New Sang: Devolution and Development', 1977. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 115.

<sup>98</sup> A. C. Davis, 'A Manifesto for the Arts in Scotland: Conference', 21 March 1979. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 115.

<sup>99</sup> Letter from Paul Scott to: Thomas Crawford; J. A. Ford; Edwin Morgan; Dr. Anne Smith, 29 September 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

The significance of such criteria of eligibility, which presumes that there is a wider knowledge or accepted understanding of what a ‘Scottish issue’ might be, cannot be understated. In presenting the award as a means by which the ‘Scottishness’ of a book or author can be defined, the Society are once again engaging with, and most importantly *influencing*, the way in which Scottish literature is viewed by authors, readers and publishers.

In offering insight into the historical contexts of the founding and evolution of the Society, this overview of Scottish socio-political history and culture since the 1930s has illustrated that, since its founding in 1936, the Society has been both a product and stimulus of Scotland’s cultural landscape. The value of establishing this chronology of events is both practical, in terms of establishing the Society’s timeline and considering it alongside significant developments in Scotland’s recent history, and important in offering an illustration of how a nation’s socio-political changes are reflected in its cultural institutions. From the beginning, the Society has consistently been affected, both positively and negatively, by events in Scotland more widely. The result has been for the Society to continually evolve in order to engage with new policies, initiatives and events, making it an incredibly valuable resource both in terms of the materials it has produced, which are now artefacts demonstrative of Scotland’s cultural history, and as a body whose initiatives have reflected and helped create Scotland’s cultural landscape.

### 3 The Saltire Society Literary Awards

#### 3.1 Early Book Commendations and Awards

The Saltire Society's Book of the Year Award was one of the first awards the Society bestowed in its founding year. Along with the Housing Award, which was also first conferred in 1936, the inaugural 'Book of the Year Award' commendation was granted for the year 1936-37 to Robert Gore-Brown's biography of the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Boswell James Hepburn, *Lord Bothwell* (1937), and Neil Gunn's novel *Highland River* (1937).<sup>100</sup> The judging panel for this award were the writers, and early advocates and members of the Society, Eric Linklater, Compton Mackenzie and Edwin Muir.<sup>101</sup> In 1937 two further commendations were made to Agnes Mure Mackenzie's *The Passing of the Stewarts* (1937) and Robert McLellan's *Three Plays in Scots* (1937). Although there is no archival record of whether Linklater, Mackenzie and Muir continued to act as judges after 1937, George Bruce indicates that the judges remained the same until the Second World War interrupted the commendations: 'The discriminating assessments of the adjudicators was brought to an end by the outbreak of war in 1939.' (Bruce, 26). Bruce would also later reiterate that Linklater, Mackenzie and Muir were members of the Society's first Book Commendation selection panel in a letter to the Society's Administrator, Kathleen Munro, in 1999.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> The Saltire Society's first 'Housing Commendation' was given to 'Houses at Milton, Bowling, Dunbartonshire' in 1937, with subsequent awards being made in 1938 ('Westquarter, Stirlingshire') and 1939 ('Houses at Alyth, Perthshire'). The Society's housing awards developed from an 'area of interest of the earliest meetings in connection with architecture' and were to focus on 'housing the people' (Bruce, 56). Similarly to the Book Commendations the 'Housing Design Award', as it came to be known during this period, it 'lapsed for the period of the 1939-1945 war'. (Bruce, 59)  
George Bruce, *'To Foster and Enrich': The First Fifty Years of the Saltire Society* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1986).

<sup>101</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report 1937* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1937), p. 5.

<sup>102</sup> Letter from George Bruce to Kathleen Munro, Thursday 9 December 1999, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 9.

The Society's 1937 Annual Report stated that it 'was resolved to institute a prize for Poetry, to be awarded annually for the more meritorious first work published by a Scot living in Scotland' and that a 'proposal to reward first novels in a similar manner had been opposed by Mr. Power, who remarked that what was wanted for novels was Birth Control.' (*Saltire Society Annual Report 1937*, 7). There is no further mention of a Poetry prize in the Society's annual reports or meeting minutes in the immediate years following this, suggesting that this award was never pursued.<sup>103</sup> It is significant, however, that an award for 'first novels' was turned down by the Society at this point. The comment about 'Birth Control' for novels from the Scottish politician, journalist and writer William Power, suggests that Power, who was an Honorary President of the Society, believed there was a proliferation of novels and the Society should not endorse this. It would take another forty-nine years before the Society's First Book of the Year Award would be founded in 1986.<sup>104</sup>

The Society's Book Commendations continued until 1940, with Fred Urquhart's *Time Will Knit* (1938) receiving the accolade in 1939, and Edwin Muir's autobiography *The Story and the Fable* (1940) and J. A. Bowie's *The Future of Scotland* (1939) receiving commendations in 1940.<sup>105</sup> Following this flurry of activity and commendations in the late-1930s, the commendations ceased in 1940 and it would take a further sixteen years before the Society began rewarding literature again. Bruce notes that, in 1956, the Society's commendation for literature 'became an award' (Bruce, 26). Exactly why this change in terminology from 'commendation' to 'award' happened is unclear. Annual Reports from 1955 onwards refer to the Society's conferral of honours to books as 'awards' and it was at this point that the plans for the 'Scottish Book of the Year Award'

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<sup>103</sup> A separate award for poetry would not be established by the Society until 2014, the founding of which is discussed in Part 3.2.

<sup>104</sup> A full history of the Society's First Book of the Year Award is detailed in Part 3.3 of this thesis.

<sup>105</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1937-1938* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1938), p. 17.

were formalised and the institution of an ‘*ad hoc* sub-committee’ to manage the award was requested.<sup>106</sup>

The types of book that were commended in the earliest years of the Society’s Book of the Year Award reflect the Society’s constitutional commitment of ‘restoring Scotland to its proper position as a cultural unit’ and to ‘make Scots conscious of their heritage’.<sup>107</sup> Three of the seven books that received commendations from the Society were fiction books set in Scotland. Neil M. Gunn’s *Highland River* – which also received the James Tait Black Memorial Book Prize in 1937<sup>108</sup> – is set on Scotland’s highland coast and follows the protagonist’s ‘course from boy to adulthood’.<sup>109</sup> Robert McLellan’s collection of three Scots language plays set in various stages of Scotland’s monarchical and political history, ‘Toom Byres’, ‘Jamie the Saxt’, and ‘The Changeling’, became ‘immediately successful and in demand with Scottish audiences’.<sup>110</sup> According to Alastair Cording, the popularity of McLellan’s plays ensured the overnight establishment of the ‘validity of Scots language as a theatrical medium’ (Cording, 431). Likewise, Fred Urquhart’s novel *Time Will Knit* (1938), a drama about the eviction of a working-class family from their Edinburgh home, was also a popular text, so much so that Penguin Books reissued the novel in 1944 under their ‘The New Penguin Writing’ series.<sup>111</sup>

Similarly, the non-fiction titles that received commendations from the Society in 1937, 1938 and 1940 all focused on specifically Scottish themes and issues. Robert Gore-Browne’s *Lord Bothwell: A Study of the Life, Character and Times of James Hepburn, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Bothwell* (1937) explores the life of James Hepburn, the third husband of Mary Queen of Scots and Agnes Mure Mackenzie’s *The Passing of the Stewarts* (1937)

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<sup>106</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1955-1956*, (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1956), p. 6.

<sup>107</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1936 – 1937*, (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1937), p. 2.

<sup>108</sup> ‘Prize Novel Award to Neil Gunn’, *The Evening Telegraph*, 3 May 1938, p. 9.

<sup>109</sup> Gerard Carruthers, *Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 124.

<sup>110</sup> Alastair Cording, ‘The Plays of Robert McLellan’, *Robert McLellan: Playing Scotland’s Story*, ed., by Colin Donati (Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2013), p. 431.

<sup>111</sup> ‘Books of Today’, *The Western Morning News*, 6 June 1944, p. 2.



describes the history of the Stewart dynasty in Scotland. This apparent focus on celebrating books concerned with Scotland's past changed with the commendation of James A. Bowie's *The Future of Scotland* (1939) in 1940. Rather than focus on historic accounts of Scotland's socio-political status, Bowie's book presented Scotland's current political, economic and social position with the view of advocating 'a policy of progressive planning' in Scotland.<sup>112</sup> This shift in priorities from heritage to future developments in Scotland reflected the Society's general outlook on its work during this period. In the *Annual Report* for 1939-40, one of the 'Aims of the Society' stated that the Society's 'main concern is with the future' and that it 'envisages a new Scotland with a vigorous intellectual life, drawing on the past for inspiration to new advances in art' (*Saltire Society Annual Report 1939-40*, 2).

Despite there being little information available about exactly how the earliest book commendations were selected by Linklater, Mackenzie and Muir, the choices themselves are telling, particularly in relation to the Society's constitution. As mentioned earlier, the Society's book commendations exemplify the overall constitutional objective of the 'encouragement of [...] Scottish culture', as well as the particular aims of 'perpetuat[ing] the memory of great and undeservedly neglected Scotsmen', and the 'promot[ion] [of] the study and teaching of Scottish history'.<sup>113</sup> Consequently, the book commendations were not just a way of 'encouraging' Scottish culture, but they were also a means by which the Society could publicly illustrate its aims and attitudes. In showing its support for these particular texts and authors, the Society was, to some degree, using the books' status as recognisably Scottish texts to propagate its own agenda and aims, indicating that the Society was aware of the potential publicity the earliest book commendations might accrue. While there is no evidence of the Society producing official press releases

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<sup>112</sup> James A Bowie, *The Future of Scotland: A Survey of the Present Position with Some Proposals for Future Policy* (London: W. & R. Chambers, Ltd., 1939), p. 6.

<sup>113</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1940*, (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1940), p. 6.

announcing the recipients of the book commendations, the Society did include the awards in its Annual Reports to members which would often be summarised in regional newspapers. An example of this is a notice in the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* newspaper on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 1937, which lists Gord-Browne and Gunn's commendations from the Society.<sup>114</sup>

The subsequent parts of this section illustrate, in detail, the historic developments of the four longest standing literary awards presented by the Society and the awards are dealt with in chronological order of their founding.

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<sup>114</sup> 'No Title', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, Wednesday 25th August 1937, p. 13.

### 3.2 The Saltire Society's 'Scottish Book of the Year'

The book commendations described in the previous section came to an end in 1940, an unsurprising fact given that the Society was dealing with personnel and membership issues caused by the war. The next documented reference to the Society's Literary Awards came thirteen years after the last commendation was made. During a meeting of the Society's Publications Committee in Edinburgh on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 1953, it was noted that a 'Book of the Year Award' was proposed during one of the Society's conferences held in St. Andrews earlier in the year.<sup>115</sup> The Publications Committee agreed 'that this matter should be held over for discussion at the next meeting' when it was 'hoped that there might be a larger attendance' (9393/937). The meeting that followed, held in February 1954, did indeed prove more productive. Those who attended the meeting, including the Society's President J. W. Oliver, the Publications Committee's Honorary Secretary Alison Cairns, and Rector of the University of Glasgow and Saltire Society Committee member Tom Honeyman, devised an outline for a 'Book of the Year' award which would be taken to the Society's Council:

After discussion it was agreed to recommend to the Council (One) that an award might be made to the "person", publishers, author, editor or journalist, who contributed most to Scottish Literature during the year; (Two) that the award, which should take the form of a money prize, should be made within one year of the first announcement of the scheme but not necessarily from year to year thereafter – possibly every second year, and (Three) that it should be made by an ad hoc Committee appointed to the purpose.<sup>116</sup>

A later meeting, which was held to discuss these proposals further, included more members of the Publications Committee, such as the historian and author Agnes Mure Mackenzie, who had been made an Honorary President of the Society in 1942, and the

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<sup>115</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh on 7 October 1953, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>116</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Glasgow on 8 February 1954, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

author George Scott-Moncrieff.<sup>117</sup> It was reported at this meeting that the Society's Council had suggested that the prize should 'take the form of a shield or plaque', be made 'annually as a commendation rather than a prize' and that the 'panel of judges be selected by the Publications Committee' (9393/937).

As with the first book commendations in the late 1930s, it seems the Society's Council preferred to refer to the award as a 'commendation' as opposed to a 'prize'. The Council also intimated that the award should take the physical form of a 'shield or plaque' rather than as a cash prize. Further, as well as offering a 'shield or plaque' to the winning author, it was also suggested that 'an offer of publication would be [...] the most helpful form of prize or award' (9393/937). However, despite the agreement that these points relating to the prizing of the award 'merited fuller discussion at a later meeting', there is no further reference to these suggestions in subsequent meeting minutes.

The Publications Committee proposed that five 'subjects' should be eligible for the prize, 'namely History and Biography, Drama, Fiction, Poetry and Belles Lettres' and that 'the judge should be an expert in the particular field in which the award happened to be made in any one year' (9393/937). The committee also suggested the quite unconventional idea that the award, while bestowed annually, should 'cover a period of five years', presumably in order to guarantee that an extensive range of titles would be eligible for the award. Nonetheless, in a meeting in December 1954, the author J. M. Reid 'advised against spreading the award over a period of five years' because, he argued, the award would then 'resemble the P.E.N. "Niven" Award.'<sup>118</sup> Instead, Reid 'recommended

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<sup>117</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh on 22 June 1954, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>118</sup> It is likely the 'P.E.N. "Niven Award"' noted here is the Frederick Niven Award which was founded in 1949-50 by Pauline Niven, the widow of the Canadian author Frederick Niven, who was educated in Scotland. The Frederick Niven Award, which was awarded triennially and funded by donations made by Pauline Niven, was administered by the Scottish Centre of International PEN. The final award was made in 1984 (for the years 1980-83) and given to Alasdair Gray for his debut novel *Lanark*. The £500 award was 'made possible by the munificence of the Scottish Arts Council' after the funding from Pauline Niven came to an end.

that the award should be an annual one for the 'Scottish Book of the Year'.<sup>119</sup> Such detailed discussions of the logistical administration of the awards, and their potential impact upon authors and the Society, reveal how seriously the Society's Publications Committee took the founding of this new award for literature. The meeting minutes indicate that the Publications Committee and the Society's Council were keen to establish a literary award that effectively supported and celebrated the winning author and books, whilst also upholding distinct literary merit and critical acclaim, hence the preference for experts in the respective fields to judge the books each year. Notwithstanding these in-depth discussions about the establishment of this 'Book of the Year' award, there appears to have been no reference made to the similar awards made by the Society in the 1930s, suggesting that this new award was not considered a continuation of the literary awards the Society had made twenty years earlier.

Suggestions for the 'ad hoc committee' of judges who would select a winner for the award were made at a meeting on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1955.<sup>120</sup> Suggestions included: lecturer of English at Aberdeen University, Walter Keir; Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Edinburgh University, William L. Renwick; Mr. Hogben; and the historical novelist Dr. Janet M. Smith. Keir, Renwick and Hogben accepted the offer to form a sub-committee to 'deal with matters pertaining to the award'; Dr. Janet M. Smith, however, declined to join the panel and the writer and historian J. M. Reid accepted a position on the sub-committee in her place.

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For more on this see 'Frederick Niven Award', *Books in Scotland*, 15 (1984), p. 2; 'Frederick Niven', *Encyclopaedia Britannica* <<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Frederick-John-Niven>> [accessed 7 January 2015]

<sup>119</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh, 16 December 1954. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>120</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Glasgow, 22 March, 1955. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

Following the establishment of the judging panel, details of the Society's Scottish Book of the Year Award were publicly announced in the Society's Annual Report for 1954-55. The report states that:

The Council have approved the Committee's scheme for an annual Award for the best piece of work in any one of the following five categories:- History and Biography, Drama, Fiction, Poetry and Belles Lettres. It has been suggested that the work selected for the award should be designated "The Scottish Book of The Year." The Committee are proceeding with the appointment of an *ad hoc* sub-committee to be responsible for the necessary arrangements.<sup>121</sup>

This news received some publicity, with *The Scotsman* running a small item on the award on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1955. The one line piece simply stated that: 'The Saltire Society have approved a scheme for an annual award for the best piece of work in any of the following categories: History and biography, drama, fiction, poetry, and belles lettres.'<sup>122</sup>

However, this initial momentum that was building around the Society's Scottish Book of the Year Award was stalled by a series of unfortunate events. The death of Agnes Mure Mackenzie in February 1955 appears to have momentarily impeded the progression of the Scottish Book of the Year Award during this period. As a key member of the Society's Publications Committee, and having attended committee meetings only eight months before her death, the loss of Mackenzie no doubt altered the dynamics and priorities of the Committee. Further, with the Society's Executive Board suggestion that another literary award for 'a published work of Scottish historical research' should be established in tribute to Mackenzie (which is discussed in more detail in Part 3.3 of this thesis), the Publications Committee were distracted by the organisation of this new award.<sup>123</sup> In addition to this, the Society's Book of the Year Awards' sub-committee convenor, Hogben, had been ill throughout 1956, meaning that by January 1957 the committee had not yet met to discuss the award. By such time it had been well over a year

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<sup>121</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1954-1955* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1955), p. 14.

<sup>122</sup> 'Saltire Scheme', *The Scotsman*, 19 October 1955.

<sup>123</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report, 1955 – 1956* (Edinburgh: The Saltire Society, 1956), p. 6.

since the Society had publicly announced the award in *The Scotsman* and their Annual Report in 1955.

Publications Committee meeting minutes from this period suggest that the patience for such delays was wearing thin and at a meeting on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 1957 it was decided that ‘the other three judges – Professor Renwick, Dr. Keir and [Mr. Reid] – might make up and compare their respective selections for the Award in the meantime.’<sup>124</sup> By March 1957 the Publications Committee were no longer referring to the Society’s literary award as the ‘Book of the Year Award’, but as the ‘Saltire Literary Award’, possibly to avoid confusion as a result of the introduction of the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award for Scottish Historical Research to the Society’s repertoire.

By the end of 1957, the first Saltire Literary Award sub-committee had chosen Edwin Muir’s *One Foot in Eden* (1956) as the inaugural recipient of the award. As meeting minutes from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 1957 note: ‘It was reported that the Judges had given the Saltire Literary Award for 1956 (the first to be made) to Dr. Edwin Muir’s book of poems “One Foot in Eden”.’ It was decided that the prize that would be conferred to Muir would be ‘a specially bound copy of the winning book.’<sup>125</sup> A design for the binding was submitted from a binding artist recommended to the Society by the Scottish Craft Centre, however, the Publications Committee declined this initial design, stating that it ‘lacked originality and technical distinction’ (9393/937). Renwick made the suggestion of approaching the Edinburgh bookbinders Hunter & Foulis Ltd. or Henderson & Bissett to see if they would accept the commission.<sup>126</sup> The motivation for taking the

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<sup>124</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh, 29 January 1957. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>125</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Glasgow, 6 November 1957. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393 No. 937.

<sup>126</sup> Originally established in 1857, Hunter & Foulis Ltd. were one of the largest bookbinders in the UK, and were known for maintaining high production standards throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Henderson & Bissett were equally known and respected for their technical skill. In 1968 Hunter & Foulis absorbed Henderson & Bissett.

Helen Williams, ‘Changing Technology’, in *The Edinburgh history of the book in Scotland: Volume*

production to a company, as opposed to an individual designer, lay in the possibility of maintaining ‘continuity of design’ in the bindings, suggesting that the Society’s Literary Award sub-committee intended to establish the tradition of gifting a specially bound copy to award winners (9393/937).

The 1957 award, given to George Hay’s *The Architecture of Scottish Post-Reformation Churches* (1957), was, according to Publications Committee meeting minutes, decided upon in late 1958, at which point the committee were also in discussions with Henderson & Bissett about designs for bindings for winning books.<sup>127</sup> Confusingly, the Society’s Annual Report for 1957-1958 did not mention George Hay’s award win, but instead reiterated Edwin Muir’s 1956 win, reporting that: ‘The award itself is to take the form of a specially bound copy of the book, after some difficulty the Committee hope that they have found a design which can be repeated each year.’<sup>128</sup> The Annual Report for 1958-1959 also fails to note George Hay’s 1957 award, but does report that the 1958 award was given to Stuart Piggott’s *Scotland Before History* (1958) and that ‘Professor Renwick and Messrs Henderson and Bissett have worked out a simple and attractive design for the binding of the prize volumes’.<sup>129</sup> The Report also stated that a ‘bound copy of *One Foot in Eden*, which won the first Award, has been presented to Mrs Edwin Muir’, following Edwin Muir’s death in January 1959. This meant that Muir received the ‘prize’ for his award nearly two years after it had been conferred to him. Following the 1958 award, there were no other Saltire Society Literary Awards conferred until the Book of the Year Award was re-established in 1982 (the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award did, however, continue to be awarded throughout the 1960s and 1970s).

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4, *Professionalism and diversity 1880-2000*, ed. by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 136-141 (p. 139).

<sup>127</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh, 2 October 1958. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>128</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report 1957 – 1958* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1958), p. 10.

<sup>129</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report 1958 – 1959* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1959), p. 11.



As Part 2.2 of this thesis illustrates, the late 1970s and early 1980s saw a surge in activity in the Society and particular attention was paid to cultural policy reform and the promotion of the arts in Scotland. Paul Henderson Scott is one of the key figures in the Society's activities between 1977 and 1994. Scott, who was Convenor of the Society's Publications Committee and Secretary of the 'Manifesto of the Arts in Scotland' committee, recalled that the re-establishment of the Society's Book of the Year Award was a relatively simple process:

[At] the very first meeting I attended [as a member of the Saltire Society Council] they said [...] 'Is there anything you think the Saltire Society ought to start doing that we haven't been doing?' I said yes, certainly, you ought to start an award, a book award, and the reason for that was that Scotland was producing very many excellent books, you know, very good poets and very good novelists, and so on [...] But the odd thing is that there's no body that actually recognised them [...] with nothing to recognise their productions and to celebrate them so [...] the committee agreed with this and said 'As long as you can raise the money, let's go ahead and do it.'<sup>130</sup>

Scott gave a similar account of the return of the Society's Scottish Book of the Year Award in 1982 in an article entitled 'Behind the Awards' in the Spring 1991 issue of *Books in Scotland*. In the article, Scott reiterated the Society's longstanding connection with Scottish literature, suggesting that a literary award seemed like an obvious means by which the Society could continue its support for Scottish literature:

Literature has always been important to the Society [...] So why was there no book award, especially at a time when Scottish writing was in a very flourishing state? The Council of the Society readily approved proposals which I put to them in 1981 and almost at once we found a very generous and helpful sponsor in the Royal Bank of Scotland.<sup>131</sup>

In an interview in 2013 Scott reiterated the ease by which he raised the financial support for the award stating that he approached the Bank of Scotland, who, despite liking the idea, were seemingly unable to commit to financial sponsorship. He then discussed the idea with Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), who 'agreed immediately to do it' (Scott, 2014). In

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<sup>130</sup> Paul Henderson Scott, in interview with Stevie Marsden, 6 March 2013.

<sup>131</sup> Paul Henderson Scott, 'Behind the Awards', *Books in Scotland*, 37 (1991), 1-3 (p.1).

fact, Scott claims that during RBS's period of sponsorship, *The Scotsman* newspaper approached him to ask if they could continue the sponsorship of the prize at the end of RBS's support, suggesting that the Society's Book of the Year Award was considered a ripe sponsorship opportunity.

While in previous years the administration of the Society's earliest literary awards was a lengthy and somewhat convoluted process, frequently hindered by staffing and financial issues, Scott proved a force to be reckoned with and secured sponsorship for the Book of the Year Award from RBS by August 1981. Correspondence between Scott and RBS's assistant public relations officer, Gordon P. Fenton, from 18<sup>th</sup> August 1981, illustrate the terms by which such sponsorship was secured. Writing to Scott, Fenton notes:

I have obtained agreement for the Bank to become involved with the Society in the proposed Literary Award Scheme. The conditions would be as follows:-

1. Agreement on a title for the Scheme. I suggest 'The Royal Bank – Saltire Society Scottish Literary Award Scheme.'
2. Agreed title to be placed on all Press Releases and other related communications, as well as the band to be placed round the winning book.
3. We agree to sponsor the Scheme to the extent of £1,000 in each of the next three years, i.e. a total of £3,000, with the option to review at the end of that time.<sup>132</sup>

Scott seemingly accepted this proposal with immediate effect, despite the fact that a press release announcing the 'scheme' released on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1981, notes that the award was referred to as 'The Saltire Society and Royal Bank Scottish Literary Award' as opposed to Fenton's suggestion of 'The Royal Bank – Saltire Society Scottish Literary Award Scheme'.<sup>133</sup>

Within a month of receiving Fenton's confirmation of support from RBS, Scott began approaching people to be judges and nominators for the award. In September 1981,

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<sup>132</sup> Letter from Gordon P Fenton (Assistant Public Relation Office, Royal Bank of Scotland) to Paul Henderon Scott, 18 August 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>133</sup> Press Release announcing the 'Saltire Society and Royal Bank Scottish Literary Award', 3 November 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

Scott wrote to the critic and editor of the *Scottish Literary Journal*, Thomas Crawford, the Scottish writer and civil servant James Allan Ford, the poet Edwin Morgan, and the founder of *The Literary Review*, Dr. Anne Smith, to invite them to become judges for the Society's Book of the Year Award. Detailing the terms and conditions of the award, Scott asked Crawford, Ford, Morgan and Smith if they would consider being members of the first 'Saltire Society and Royal Bank Scottish Literary Award' judging panel.<sup>134</sup> In the letter, Scott notes that RBS had agreed to sponsor the award for £1,000 per year for three years and that it was his intention to announce the scheme in mid-November 1981, with the first prize presented in October 1982 (9393/153). Scott also set out the criteria for the award, formally identifying for the first time in the history of the Society's literary awards, exactly what was meant by the term 'Scottish Book of the Year':

The term, "Scottish Book", would include any book by an author of Scottish descent or living in Scotland, or a book by anyone which deals with the work or life of a Scot or with a Scottish problem, event or situation. The book might therefore be poetry, a novel, play or other work of imaginative literature, or biography, literary criticism or a study of any Scottish issue. Book on history would not be excluded, although works in which the main emphasis is on original historical research will continue to be the special province of the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award. (9393/153)

Scott continues, explaining how books fitting the criteria of eligibility noted above would be nominated and judged:

- (a) The literary editors of leading Scottish newspapers and the editors of magazines and reviews in Scotland, which are concerned with literature, will be invited to act as the nominating body for the reward. They would be asked by the end of October each year to nominate a book which in their view merits consideration for the award from among the books reviewed in their pages during the preceding twelve months.
- (b) A panel of three or four members (who would be distinguished writers, critics or academics) will be appointed [...] to consider these nominations and make the final decision. In addition to the Book of the Year, they might award smaller prizes to one or two additional books which they considered deserved commendation. They would have the right to withhold the awards in any year they considered that no book reached the required standard. (9393/153)

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<sup>134</sup> Letter from Paul Scott to Thomas Crawford; J. A. Ford; Edwin Morgan; Dr. Anne Smith, 29 September 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

Scott also wrote to literary editors and reviewers of Scottish journals and newspapers, including *Chapman*, *Cencrastus*, *The Glasgow Herald* and *The Scottish Review* explaining the new award scheme and asking if, in principle, they would be willing to provide nominations.<sup>135</sup> The terms and conditions put forward by Scott for the administration for the award, including requesting nominations from editors and reviewers of literary journals, not only illustrates how thoroughly considered and well-planned the Society's new award was, but they reveal that Scott was clearly trying to establish the Book of the Year Award as a 'quality' award from the beginning. In prohibiting open submissions and restricting nominations to recommendations from literary editors and reviewers, Scott was effectively producing an extra layer of selection for the awards and assuming that literary reviewers and editors would only submit 'the best' books of the year. Likewise, in declaring that the judging panel would consist of 'distinguished writers, critics and academics', Scott is asserting that the individuals chosen to judge the award would be highly qualified and skilled, thus implying that the decisions they make will be nonpareil because they are experts in their respective fields.

However, not everyone was convinced that such a method of nomination and adjudication was the best way in which to survey Scotland's yearly literary output. John Arnott, Senior Producer at BBC Radio, wrote to Scott on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 1981, questioning the nomination method:

[A]re you convinced that this is the best method of nomination? I can understand that you do not wish to be deluged with titles as you might be if, [...] nominations were open to all. [...] At present it is basically an editor's choice. Would it not be more attractive, and comprehensive, if it were

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<sup>135</sup> Letter enclosing description of 'new Scottish Book Award' and request for nominations (commencing October 1982) from Paul Scott to R. Knox, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*; Duncan Glen, *Akros*; Joy Hendry, *Chapman*; Glen Murray, *Cencrastus*; John Fowler, *The Glasgow Herald*; J K Annand, *Lallans*; Mr. McDonald, *Lines Review*; Dr. Anne Smith, *The Literary Review*; James Campbell, *New Edinburgh Review*; Tom Crawford, *Scottish Literary Journal*; M. Lindsay, *The Scottish Review*; J Seaton, *The Scotsman*; Clive Sandground, *Sunday Standard*, 23 September 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

initially a critics' choice, open for nomination by anyone who had published literary criticism or review in that year?<sup>136</sup>

Arnott also indicates that he felt individual producers of the BBC's book programmes could not nominate books, since such nominations would inevitably be seen as 'the BBC nomination', going against the BBC's constitutional requirement to remain 'ever-impartial' (9393/153). Arnott's concerns were well-founded, particularly given that two of the judges Scott had invited to join the first judging panel were also editors of literary journals: Tom Crawford, was the literary editor for the *Scottish Literary Journal* and Anne Smith was the founder and editor of *The Literary Review*. Such circumstances increased the risk of nominations coming from a relatively small pool of individuals.

While there is no record of the reply, if any, Arnott received in response to his concerns, it seems Scott would still be explaining and defending the Book of the Year nomination process ten years later. Writing in *Books in Scotland* in 1991, Scott openly defends the nomination procedure favoured by the Society, illustrating the pragmatic benefits of the process:

Nomination by literary editors has two purposes. First of all it throws the net wide by including in the selection process most of the people involved in the reviewing of books in Scotland. On the other hand, it is a safety valve to exclude the scores of books which are not seriously in the running. We want to protect our judges from the superhuman task of reading, or pretending to read, every new book that appears. At the same time we do not want to miss any book which deserves consideration. (Scott, 1991, 2)

Scott's argument, that asking literary editors to provide nominations 'throws the net wide' and includes 'most of the people involved in the reviewing of books in Scotland' in the nomination process for the Society's award, is actually rather disingenuous. This is not only indicated by the fact that Scott's fellow judge, Douglas Gifford, would write that he wished the panel received '*more* nominations' for the awards, mere months after the publication of Scott's article; but also by the fact that the majority of nominations received

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<sup>136</sup> Letter from John Arnott, Senior Producer Talks and Features (BBC Radio) to Paul Henderson Scott, 19 October 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

for the Book of the Year Award at this time came not from external parties, but from the panel itself.<sup>137</sup> For example, in 1987, twenty-five books were nominated for the Book of the Year Award, but only five of these nominations came from outside the panel: the literary journals *Leopard*, *Chapman*, *Lines Review* and the *Edinburgh Review* all nominated one book each, as did the Glasgow *Herald* newspaper.<sup>138</sup> Likewise, in 1990 and 1991, thirty-two and thirty-five nominations for the Book of the Year Award were received respectively, but around 70% of the nominations for these years came from the panel. In addition, a number of nominations in 1990 and 1991 came from Scottish Television (STV) and *The Scotsman* who were co-sponsors of the Book of the Year Award during these years.<sup>139</sup>

This trend would continue into the mid-to-late 1990s, at which point nominations from publishers began to appear, although there is no recorded explanation as to why nominations from publishers were accepted from this time onwards. In 1996, of the fifty-five books nominated for the Book of the Year Award, 15% came from the literary editors of newspapers or editors of literary journals, 18% came from publishers and 67% came from the panel, which, at that point included, Angus Calder, Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford, Joyce McMillan, Isobel Murray and Derick Thomson.<sup>140</sup> A similar pattern emerges in 1998, with 22% of nominations coming from publishers (although this was thirteen nominations from only four publishers), 73% of nominations from the panel and only 5% of nominations from the editors of literary journals.<sup>141</sup> The incremental increase of nominations from publishers and the decrease of nominations from editors of literary

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<sup>137</sup> Douglas Gifford, 'The Saltire Shortlists', *Books in Scotland*, 40 (Winter 1991), 1-4 (p. 3).

<sup>138</sup> 'The Saltire Society/Royal Bank of Scotland Literary Award – Nominations for 1987', Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15a.

<sup>139</sup> Nominations for the Book of the Year Award, 1990 and Nominations for the Book of the Year Award 1991. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 23.

<sup>140</sup> Nominations for the Book of the Year Award 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

<sup>141</sup> Nominations for the Book of the Year Award 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

journals between 1996 and 1998 continued and, while the Society stopped recording who made nominations after 1999 in their databases of entries, it would be fair to surmise that this trend continued into the 2000s.<sup>142</sup> By 2010, although the Society continued to request nominations from ‘literary editors, publishers and producers of book programmes in radio and television’, the majority of the entries came from publishers.<sup>143</sup> In 2015, the Society changed the wording of the Book of the Year Award entry form (which was also separated into Fiction and Non-Fiction Book of the Year Awards from 2015 onwards) to state that nominations were *only* accepted from publishers.<sup>144</sup>

Returning to the origination of the Book of the Year Award, however, Scott appears to have been clearly attuned to the importance of media coverage of the award, organising a midday press conference for the launch of the award at the Society’s offices in Edinburgh on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 1981.<sup>145</sup> Ninety guests were invited to the event, with invitees including the poet Norman MacCaig, Assistant Producer of the BBC’s ‘Books Now’ programme Elinor Aitken, Walter Cairns of the Scottish Arts Council, Publisher’s consultant David Fletcher, and literary editor of *The Scotsman*, James Seaton (9393/153). The official press release that accompanied the launch of the award confirmed the judging panel for the first Saltire Society and RBS Literary Award to be Thomas Crawford, David Daiches (who was asked to join the panel in October 1981), James Allan Ford, Edwin Morgan, Paul Henderson Scott and Anne Smith.<sup>146</sup> It also noted that the

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<sup>142</sup> Due to inconsistent archival records, there is no year on year data available for full lists of Book of the Year Award nominations which also includes verification of exactly who nominated each book.

<sup>143</sup> Saltire Society Scottish Book of the Year Award 2010: Call for Nominations. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

<sup>144</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards 2015: Entry Form. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

<sup>145</sup> The Saltire Society and the Royal Bank of Scotland: Launch of Literary Award, 17 November 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>146</sup> Although the Society’s official Press Release for the first award notes that Crawford, Daiches, Ford, Morgan, Scott and Smith were the members of the first judging panel, both Ian Campbell and Douglas Gifford have indicated in interview and public speeches that they were members of the first Book of the Year Award panel. However, a letter from Scott addressed to Campbell and Gifford and sent in January 1983 indicates that this was in fact the time at which Campbell and Gifford were invited to join the panel. Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Angus Calder, Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford, Alan Massie, Isobel Murray, 14 January 1983. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 154

judging panel ‘might award smaller prizes to one or two additional books which they considered deserved commendation’ and that the panel ‘would have the right to withhold the awards in any year when they considered that no book reached the required standard’ (9393/153), although this has never happened in the history of the Society’s Literary Awards. News of the launch of the award was announced in *The Scotsman* and the Northern edition of the *Daily Telegraph* on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 1981, as well as in *Books in Scotland*, *Business and Finance in Scotland* and the *Glasgow Evening Times*.<sup>147</sup> Correspondence from writers and publishers enquiring about the award indicates that the launch of the award was successful in generating interest. Many of the letters the Society received (some of which were forwarded from RBS who also received correspondence relating to the award) enquired as to the ‘ground rules [and] conditions’<sup>148</sup> of the award and asked for an ‘entry form’<sup>149</sup>. Such enquiries demonstrate how, initially, there was some expectation that the nomination process for the award would be an entirely open one.

Despite this concerted and public announcement of the Book of the Year Award in late 1981, Scott would not formally request nominations for the award until eight months later. On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August 1982 Scott wrote to the members of the Book of the Year Award judging panel and a number of literary reviewers and editors, including the editors of *Akros*, *Books in Scotland* and *Cencrastus*, and the president of the Scottish Publisher’s Association<sup>150</sup>, calling for their nominations for that year’s Scottish Book of the Year.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> ‘New Scottish Book Award’, *The Daily Telegraph (Northern Edition)*, 18 November 1981, p. 14.

‘Scottish Book of the Year’, *Books in Scotland*, 9 (1981-1982), p. 3.

‘The Saltire Society and The Royal Bank of Scotland are launching an annual award for the Scottish Book of the Year’, *Business and Finance in Scotland*, 8:6 (December 1981), p. 8.

<sup>148</sup> Letter from A. Fairly to Saltire Society, 20 November 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>149</sup> Letter from Marion Muir to Saltire Society, 26 November 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>150</sup> The full list of recipients of this letter from Scott, 10 August 1982: J. K. Annand; Thomas Crawford; David Daiches; Callum McDonald, editor *Lines Review*; James Allan Ford; John Fowler, literary editor *The Glasgow Herald*; Duncan Glen, editor *Akros*; Cuthbert Graham, contributor *Aberdeen Press and Journal*; Joy Hendry, editor *Chapman*; R. B. Jeffrey, literary editor, *Sunday Standard*; Maurice Lindsay, editor *The Scottish Review*; Allan Massie, literary critic *The Scotsman*; Edwin Morgan; Glen Murray, editor *Cencrastus*; James Seaton, literary editor, *The Scotsman*; Ann Smith; Norman Wilson, editor *Books in Scotland*.



Scott ended the note thanking the nominators for their help, and reiterating that it was hoped that the award would ‘encourage Scottish writers and draw attention to their work.’ (9393/153). As Table 1 illustrates, Scott received eleven nominations in August and September 1982, with Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* (1981) receiving two nominations from Norman Wilson, the editor of *Books in Scotland*<sup>152</sup>, and the editorial committee of *Cencrastus*.<sup>153</sup>

**Table 1: List of nominations for Saltire Society Book of the Year Award 1982**

Author	Title	Publisher	Nominator	Publication Date
Buchan, William	<i>John Buchan</i>	Buchan and Enright (London)	Fiona Carlisle, Buchan and Enright	1982
Calder, Angus	<i>Revolutionary Empire: The Rise of the English-Speaking Empires from the 15th Century to the 1780s</i>	Jonathan Cape	Sheila G. Hearn, <i>Cencrastus</i>	1981
Corson, James C.	<i>Notes and Index to Sir Herbert Grierson’s Edition of the Letters of Sir Walter Scott</i>	Oxford University Press	Thomas Crawford, <i>Scottish Literary Journal</i>	1979
Dunnett, Dorothy	<i>King Hereafter</i>	Michael Joseph	Cuthbert, <i>Aberdeen Press and Journal</i>	1982
Gray, Alasdair	<i>Lanark</i>	Canongate	Sheila G. Hearn, <i>Cencrastus</i> and Norman Wilson, <i>Books in Scotland</i>	1982
Hart, F. R. & Pick, J. B.	<i>Neil Gunn - A Highland Life</i>	John Murray	James Seaton, <i>Scotsman</i>	1981
Kinsley, James	<i>The Poems of William Dunbar</i>	Clarendon Press	Thomas Crawford, <i>Scottish Literary Journal</i>	1979
McLellan, Robert	<i>Collected Plays Vol 1</i>	John Calder	J. K. Annand, <i>Lallans</i>	1981
Smith, Iain Crichton	<i>Selected Poems, 1955-1980</i>	MacDonald	Trevor Royle, <i>Lines Review</i>	1982
Toulmin, David	<i>Hard Shining Corn</i>	Paul Harris	Robert Jeffrey, <i>Sunday Standard</i>	1982
Davies, Laurence & Watts, Cedric	<i>Cunninghame Graham: A Critical Biography</i>	Cambridge University Press	Thomas Crawford, <i>Scottish Literary Journal</i>	1979

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Letter requesting nominations for Book of the Year Award. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>151</sup> Scott had also written to the literary editors and critics of many of these publications before the announcement of the award in September 1981 to ask if they would be willing to nominate books for the first award in October 1982. The recipients of this initial letter from Scott included: R. Knox, Features Editor, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*; Duncan Glen, Editor, *Akros*; Joy Hendry, Editor, *Chapman*; Glen Murray, Editor, *Cencrastus*; John Fowler, Literary Editor, *The Glasgow Herald*; J K Annand, Editor, *Lallans*; Mr. McDonald, *Lines Review*; Dr. Anne Smith, Editor, *The Literary Review*; James Campbell, Editor, *New Edinburgh Review*; Tom Crawford, Editor, *Scottish Literary Journal*; M. Lindsay, Editor, *The Scottish Review*; J Seaton, Literary Editor, *The Scotsman*; Clive Sandground, Features Editor, *Sunday Standard*. Letter enclosing description of Book of the Year Award and request for nominations, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, No. 153.

<sup>152</sup> Letter from Norman Wilson to Paul Henderson Scott, 27 September 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>153</sup> Letter from Sheila G. Hearn, executive editor *Cencrastus*, to Paul Henderson Scott, 29 September 1982, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

Of the eleven books nominated for the first Book of the Year Award, five were non-fiction, history or biographies, three were novels, two were collections of poetry and one was a collection of plays.<sup>154</sup> The nomination for William Buchan's memoir, *John Buchan* (1982), was the only nomination to come directly from the book's publisher and arrived two months before Scott requested nominations from his group of literary editors and critics. Unusually, three of the books nominated by Book of the Year Award judge and editor of *Scottish Literary Review*, Thomas Crawford – Corson's *Notes and Index to Sir Herbert Grierson's Edition of the Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, Kinsley's *The Poems of William Dunbar*, and Davies and Watts' *Cunninghame Graham: A Critical Biography* – were all published in 1979. While these books appear anomalous in comparison to the other books nominated and published between 1981 and 1982 – and, as is discussed shortly, the eligibility of 'older' publications was questioned by a member of the judging panel – Scott's original criteria of eligibility for the awards did not actually specify that the books should be published in the preceding twelve months. The 'procedure of selection' decided upon by Scott and Fenton, stated that 'by the end of October each year [literary editors are] to nominate a book [...] from among the books reviewed in their pages during the preceding twelve months.'<sup>155</sup> This criterion indicates that the key date to be taken into consideration when deciding upon a book's eligibility for the award is the date at which it was *reviewed*, not the date on which it was published. Furthermore, since, as Crawford explains in his nomination letter to Scott, the 'review supplements' for *Scottish Literary Journal* were 'years behind with their reviewing', it seems inevitable that the nominations

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<sup>154</sup> While they missed out on winning, or being shortlisted for, the Society's inaugural Book of the Year Award, Angus Calder, F. R. Hart and J. B. Pick did receive Scottish Arts Council Book Awards which came with a £600 prize.

'Scottish Book Awards', *Books in Scotland*, 10 (Spring, 1982), p. 3.

<sup>155</sup> Draft Press Release and Letter from Gordon Fenton to Paul Henderson Scott, 3 November 1981, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

made by the editors of the *Scottish Literary Journal* would be for books published in the years preceding 1981.<sup>156</sup>

The shortlist for the inaugural Book of the Year Award (as shown in Table 2) selected from the nominations illustrated in Table 1 was announced in a Press Release from RBS on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 1982.<sup>157</sup>

**Table 2: Shortlist for the Saltire Society Book of the Year Award 1982**

Author	Title	Publisher & Publication Date
Dunnett, Dorothy	<i>King Hereafter</i>	Michael Joseph, 1982
Gray, Alasdair	<i>Lanark</i>	Canongate, 1982
Hart, F. R. & Pick, J. B	<i>Neil Gunn: A Highland Life</i>	John Murray, 1981
McLellan, Robert	<i>Collected Plays Volume I</i>	John Calder, 1981
Smith, Iain Crichton	<i>Selected Poems 1955-80</i>	MacDonald, 1982
Toulmin, David	<i>Hard Shining Corn</i>	Paul Harris, 1982
Davies, Laurence & Watts, Cedric	<i>Cunninghame Graham: A Critical Biography</i>	Cambridge University Press, 1979

Not only do the Society's records indicate that these seven books were the only books of the eleven nominated which Scott requested from publishers for the panel to read, but they were requested just two weeks before the public announcement of the shortlist was made. Writing to the publishers of the shortlisted books on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 1982, Scott requested six copies of books that had 'been nominated for consideration as the first Scottish Book of the Year'.<sup>158</sup> This short, two-week time frame between Scott's request for books from publishers and the public announcement of the shortlist implies that Scott knew the books that were selected for the shortlist before requesting them and that the judges only read the books they went on to shortlist for the award. While this system

<sup>156</sup> Letter from Thomas Crawford to Paul Henderson Scott, 11 August 1982, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>157</sup> Press Release, The Saltire Society and Royal Bank Scottish Literary Award, 13 October 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>158</sup> Letter from Paul Scott sent to the publishers John Calder, Michael Joseph, Cambridge University Press, John Murray, Canongate and Paul Harris Publishing, 1 October 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

seems unorthodox in comparison to the current literary awards nominations procedure followed by the Society – by which publishers are asked to send copies of nominated books two to three months before a shortlist announcement in order to enable plenty of reading time for the judges – it is possible that Scott and the judges relied heavily upon the nominating body to *only* recommend award-worthy books. When prompting literary editors and reviewers for nominations in August 1982, Scott requested that nominators also send a ‘photocopy of the review’ of the books they were nominating.<sup>159</sup> A number of these reviews were written by the nominator themselves with one review submitted alongside a nomination of Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark* written by future Saltire Society Literary Award judge Douglas Gifford.<sup>160</sup> As a result, it is possible that Scott requested these reviews to be sent with nominations to add an extra layer of adjudication and reduce the work of the judging panel.

The nominations of books published in 1979 made by Crawford were not, as may be expected, requested by Scott for reading by the judging panel. This may have been due to the fact that the books were deemed ineligible because of their three-year-old publication dates. Indeed, Crawford’s, seemingly ineligible, nominations were commented on by other members of the Literary Panel. In a handwritten note responding to news of the nominations, Edwin Morgan wrote: ‘As regards the list, by the way, I have some doubts about HARD SHINING CORN (1972) and CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (1979) being called ‘Book of the Year’! What year?’<sup>161</sup> However, despite Morgan’s observation that David Toulmin’s collection of short stories, *Hard Shining Corn*, was originally published in 1972 and was in fact re-released in 1982, the book *was* shortlisted for the

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<sup>159</sup> Letter from Paul Scott sent to J K Annand, Tom Crawford, David Daiches, McDonald, James Ford, John Fowler, Duncan Glen, Cuthbert Graham, Joy Hendry, Robert Jeffrey, Maurice Lindsay, Allan Massie, Edwin Morgan, Glen Murray, James Seaton, Ann Smith, Norman Wilson, 10 August 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>160</sup> Letter from Norman Wilson to Paul Scott, 27 September 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>161</sup> Letter from Edwin Morgan to Paul Henderson Scott, 13 October 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

inaugural award, adding further confusion as to how the judges accounted for the eligibility of books nominated and shortlisted for the award.

Further correspondence between Scott and the nominators during this period is revealing. While seven nominators wrote a letter, which detailed their nomination with an accompanying review of the selected book, Crawford and Cuthbert Graham went into great detail to explain and justify their selections. After ‘careful consideration’ Graham, a journalist and reviewer for the *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, nominated Dorothy Dunnett’s *King Hereafter*<sup>162</sup> and enclosed a copy of his own review in which he described Dunnett’s novel as being ‘profoundly moving’.<sup>163</sup> Acknowledging that ‘[i]t may seem unusual to recommend a book which is a historical romance or fantasy’, Graham defends his nomination noting that ‘after all it was the historical fiction of Sir Walter Scott which introduced the entire genre to European literature’ (9393/153). Graham continues this defence, stating:

[I]t seems natural that we should give credit to a revival of this esteemed tradition. In making such an award to Mrs. Dunnett incidental acknowledgement would also be made of her five “Lymond” novels [...] [Dunnett’s] book as a whole gives abundant evidence of very deep and wide research and it conveys to the reader a very vivid feeling for the whole period and way of life in the Scotland and the Europe of the eleventh century. (9393/153)

Graham’s comments are interesting. In defending the novel’s genre, Graham reveals that he believed particular genres of fiction would not be taken seriously for the award or might even be ruled out because of their form or style.

The presentation of the 1982 Book of the Year Award was made just six weeks after Scott requested copies of nominated books for the judging panel. RBS issued a Press Release on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November announcing that Alasdair Gray’s debut novel *Lanark*

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<sup>162</sup> Letter from Cuthbert Graham to Paul Henderson Scott, 13 September 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>163</sup> Cuthbert Graham, ‘Macbeth – as Thorfinn the Mighty’, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 8 May 1982, p. 8.

(1982) had won the inaugural ‘Saltire Society and Royal Bank Scottish Literary Award’.<sup>164</sup> The announcement of the winner was made at a ceremony held in the boardroom of the RBS offices in Edinburgh on the morning of Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November. The Press Release for the event states that one of the judges, Professor David Daiches, announced the winner of the award:

The panel of judges was impressed by the high standard of entries and was also conscious of the difficulty of judging between works of fiction, drama, poetry and biography”. [Daiches] said that “LANARK was unanimously considered by the judges to show a remarkable imaginative power which gave a new dimension to the modern Scottish novel. (9393/153)

The Press Release also reports that the judges ‘commended Dorothy Dunnett’s novel KING HEREAFTER (Michael Joseph) as a powerful and persuasive historical novel based on deep research’ and Robert McLellan’s *Collected Plays* which they believed ‘should receive a special mention in overdue recognition of McLellan’s great contribution to modern drama in Scots’ (9393/153). Jack Kirkland, the Executive Director of RBS, was reported to have said ‘I have been aware that The Saltire Society have for some time been anxious to introduce such a Literary Award and we at The Royal Bank are happy to join them in fulfilling this desire.’ Kirkland continued, noting that RBS was ‘attracted to the aims of the Award insofar as it provides recognition for a Scottish author or a book with a Scottish theme. We are particularly pleased that this Award acknowledges the work of writers, [whose] contribution to the Arts is so often forgotten.’ (9393/153).

This Press Release reveals what the Society wanted their Literary Award to represent. In selecting *Lanark*, which was described as ‘unconventional’,<sup>165</sup> and was compared to James Joyce’s *Ulysses* on release<sup>166</sup>, the judges appeared to be celebrating and awarding innovation and experimentation. However, the commendation for Dunnett’s

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<sup>164</sup> Press Release ‘The Saltire Society and Royal Bank Scottish Literary Award’, 16 November 1982. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>165</sup> ‘‘Lanark’ author wins new award’, *Glasgow Herald*, 17 November 1982.

<sup>166</sup> ‘Scottish Book Award’, *Retail Newsagent London*, 1 January 1983.

historical novel reiterates the Society's appreciation of texts demonstrative of traditional Scottish history and research, echoing the kinds of texts the Society had rewarded in the past. Furthermore, the commendation for Robert McLellan's *Collected Plays* is stated to have been grounded upon 'overdue recognition' for McLellan's overall 'contribution' to Scottish literature, as opposed to the specific texts nominated for the award (9393/153). The singling out of these three texts and the explanatory cases made for their selection actually mirrors the Society's own constitutional aims of 'look[ing] to the past only to move forward' and 'seek[ing] to revive the memory of famous men and to make Scots conscious of their heritage'.<sup>167</sup> In endorsing both *Lanark*, an experimental and thoroughly modern novel, and *King Hereafter*, a historical novel based upon Scotland's monarchical history, the Society's Literary Award judges encapsulated the duality of the Society's self-proclaimed role of being both conscious of Scottish tradition *and* modern developments. Likewise, in commending McLellan's work, the judges explicitly stated that they did indeed seek to 'revive the memory' of his work.

Newspaper reports of the 1982 Awards Ceremony described Gray, who was present to accept his award, as 'a man of few words'.<sup>168</sup> According to the report:

Alasdair rose from his seat, said: "Thank you," and sat back down again! His brevity was commended by the society's chairman, Paul Scott, but at a reception afterwards [Gray] confided in me that he had, in fact, had a longer speech in mind. He had written two sentences but, at the last moment, decided to cut down even that. "Really, just a waste of words. A heartfelt 'thank you' says it all." (*Edinburgh Evening News*, 1982)

This particular report of the inaugural award's ceremony continues, making a particularly interesting, yet erroneous, critique of the Society:

In announcing the award Professor David Daiches [...] commented that the panel of judges had been impressed by the high standard of entries, but that "Lanark" had been a unanimous choice. [...] Strange as it may seem it has taken nearly half a century to award that first literary prize. When the [...]

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<sup>167</sup> George Bruce, 'To Foster and Enrich' *The First Fifty Years of the Saltire Society*, (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1986), p. 16.

<sup>168</sup> 'The Waverley Column', *Edinburgh Evening News*, 17 November 1982.

Society was founded some 50 years ago one of their aims was to establish a “Scottish Book of the Year” award, but they never got round to it until the Royal Bank stepped in to offer £1000 for each of the next three years. (*Edinburgh Evening News*, 1982)

This inaccurate assertion not only illustrates the extent to which the history of the Society’s previous Literary Awards was unknown to most people, but that some believed the award was the invention of RBS.

Following the presentation of the 1982 award, there was little respite for Scott and the Book of the Year Award. In January 1983, Scott set to inviting a new group of people to become the judging panel for the award. Writing to Angus Calder (who was longlisted for the 1982 award), Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford, Allan Massie and Isobel Murray on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January, Scott suggests that ‘The nomination system limits the number of books which the Panel has to consider and the task is not therefore too onerous’ (9393/154). All but Massie agreed to join the panel, with the writer and civil servant James Allan Ford taking Massie’s place.

It is unclear exactly why Scott decided to change the panel following the 1982 Award. While this indicates that Scott was attempting to instil the establishment of a fresh judging panel annually, the fact that several of the people who became judges in 1983 went on to serve as judges for many years undermines this. For example, after joining the panel in 1983 Calder was on the panel for sixteen years until 1998; Murray was a panel member until 2005; Gifford served on the panel until 2010; and as of 2015 Campbell remains a member of the judging panel adjudicating the Fiction, Non Fiction and First Book of the Year Awards. The only member of the 1983 panel who did not continue as a judge was James Allan Ford. Further cementing this established status quo, once Scott stood down from his position as convenor of the Society’s Literary Award judging panel in 1994, Gifford and Campbell took up the position of convenor, alternating the role year on year. On Gifford’s departure, Campbell took up the post exclusively until he stepped



down from the role and was replaced by the former literary editor of *The Scotsman*, David Robinson, in 2016.<sup>169</sup> The positive and negative aspects of having such longstanding judges are discussed in more detail in Part 4.1 of this thesis.

Another significant feature of the judging panel established in 1983 is that it was a predominantly academic group. Campbell, Gifford, Murray and Calder are all academics who specialise in Scottish Literature. Campbell has written extensively on Victorian and modern Scottish literature, Gifford has published works assessing 21<sup>st</sup> century Scottish literature and Murray has edited a number of editions of Oscar Wilde's poetry and short fiction, as well as editing the work of Naomi Mitchison and writing a biography about the Scottish author Jessie Kesson.<sup>170</sup> Similarly, Calder was a historian, who published works discussing Britain's political history as well as editing work by Hugh MacDiarmid.<sup>171</sup> While not an academic, James Allan Ford still had substantial literary credentials in Scotland. He was the author of five novels<sup>172</sup>, President of Scottish PEN from 1980 to 1986 and a trustee of the National Library of Scotland<sup>173</sup>.

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<sup>169</sup> Although Campbell stepped down as the Convenor of the Society's Literary Awards Panel in 2015, he remained an active member of the panel as a judge.

<sup>170</sup> Selected works by Campbell, Gifford and Murray include: Ian Campbell, et al., *Collected letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle, Vol. 1-42* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1973 to present); Ian Campbell, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiction Critical Essays* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1979); Ian Campbell, *Kailyard* (Edinburgh: Ramsay Head Press, 1981); Douglas Gifford, *Dear Green Place?: The Novel in the West of Scotland*, (Glasgow: Third Eye Centre, 1985); Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan, *History of Scottish Women's Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997); Douglas Gifford, et al., *Scottish Literature in English and Scots* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002); Isobel Murray, ed., *Complete Shorter Fiction Oscar Wilde* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); Isobel Murray, *Jessie Kesson: Writing Her Life: A Biography* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2000); Isobel Murray, ed., *Beyond this Limit: Selected Shorter Fiction of Naomi Mitchison* (Glasgow: Kennedy and Boyd, 2008); Isobel Murray, *Scottish Novels of the Second World War* (Edinburgh: Word Power Books, 2011).

<sup>171</sup> Angus Calder, *People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London: Cape, 1969); Angus Calder, *Revolving Culture: Notes from the Scottish Republic* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994). Calder was also nominated for the 1982 Scottish Book of the Year Award for his book *Revolutionary Empire: The Rise of the English-Speaking Empires from the Fifteenth Century to the 1780s* (London: Cape, 1981).

<sup>172</sup> James Allan Ford's novels include: *Brave White Flag* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1961); *Judge of Men* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1968); *Mouth of Truth* (London: Gollancz, 1972); *Season of Escape* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1963); *A Statue for a Public Place* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1965).

<sup>173</sup> 'Obituary: Capital Novelist James Allan Ford was a Man of Many Talents', *The Scotsman* 30 April 2009 <<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/capital-novelist-james-allan-ford-was-a-man-of-many-talents-1-1205011>>[accessed 21 February 2016]

In selecting this group of people with numerous scholarly credentials and publications relating to Scottish literature, Scott was instilling a reputation for the award as an authoritative indicator of quality Scottish literature. Scott, therefore, was drawing from the panel's academic, cultural and social capital in order to do so and Part 4.1 of this thesis considers these exchanges of cultural and social capitals in more detail. When discussing the purpose of founding a Scottish Book of the Year Award in 2013, Scott noted that the award's 'initial purpose was not just to encourage the writers and pat them on the back, but it was to draw attention to the fact that Scottish literature was serious and important'.<sup>174</sup> For Scott, Scottish literature during this period was not being taken as seriously as he believed it should be, and the establishment of the Society's Book of the Year Award and its judging panel, dominated by experts in the field of Scottish literature, was a reaction to this perceived lack of interest in Scottish literature.

The Scottish Book of the Year continued as an annual award, awarding authors such as Edwin Morgan, Tom Leonard, Norman MacCaig and Muriel Spark, until RBS withdrew their sponsorship in 1987. In a letter sent to the Society on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 1987, M. G. Keohane, the Head of Group Public Relations at RBS, stated that '6 years support of the [Book of the Year] award could be viewed as reasonable' and indicated RBS's intention of ending their sponsorship of the award.<sup>175</sup> The Society's President, and former literary award judge and Book of the Year Award winner in 1984, David Daiches was disappointed with this news. Writing to RBS's Chairman, Sir Michael Herries, on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 1987, Daiches asked whether it would be possible for RBS to reconsider its decision, noting that the Society would be 'deeply sorry' to lose 'this unique and

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<sup>174</sup> Paul Henderson Scott, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 6 March 2013.

<sup>175</sup> Letter from M. G. Keohane, Head of Group Public Relations to Paul Henderson Scott, 11 May 1987. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 156.

important award'.<sup>176</sup> In his response, Herries reiterated that the decision to withdraw sponsorship was 'only taken after considerable discussions and deliberation by the Executive of the Bank'.<sup>177</sup> Herries stated, however, that there 'may be other ways in which [RBS] may be able to help you' and requested a member of the Society's offices staff to contact him for more information (9393/156).

Scott soon began pursuing other avenues of sponsorships and by December 1987, he was already in discussions with *The Scotsman* regarding a potential sponsorship deal. In a letter to Randal Allan, a representative from *The Scotsman* sent on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, Scott stated that he was 'naturally very pleased that there is a possibility that The Scotsman might take on the sponsorship of the Saltire book award'.<sup>178</sup> Scott continued, stating that he felt the Society could 'ask for [a] no more suitable sponsor' and that the two organisations could 'work together very effectively to develop the award as an important part of the Scottish literary scene' (9393/156). With this letter Scott enclosed a selection of Press Releases from past years and information about the financial cost of sponsorship of the award:

Initially the award was for £1,000, but the Royal Bank increased this to £1,500 three years ago. The only other costs have been £200 annually [...] towards the expenses of administration [of] the award ceremony. The members of the Awards Panel have given their services free [...] we have kept administrative costs to the bare minimum. (9393/156)

In reminding this potential sponsor that the administration costs of the award had been kept to a 'bare minimum', it seems Scott is trying to make the award seem like a valuable financial investment. Scott further exemplifies this by comparing the Society's Award to the 'MacVittie [sic] award' which, Scott claimed, 'is a good deal more lavish than this'

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<sup>176</sup> Letter from David Daiches to Michael Herries, Chairman at RBS, 7 July 1987. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Acc. 9393, File No. 156.

<sup>177</sup> Letter from Sir Michael Herries to David Daiches, 16 July 1987. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 156.

<sup>178</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Randal Allan, *The Scotsman*, 2 December 1987. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, (NLS) Acc. 9393, File No. 156.

(9393/156). The award Scott was referring to was the McVitie's Prize for Scottish Writer of the Year, which was established in 1986 and was administered by the Scottish Book Trust. When Scott wrote this letter in 1987, the prize fund for the McVitie's prize was £5,000, which was doubled to £10,000 in 1992.<sup>179</sup> Scott also wrote that a 'P.R. firm has been paid [by McVitie] to handle the publicity and they have been entertaining on some scale' and that he believed the McVitie's Panel members 'have been paid a fee' (9393/156). However, Scott assured Allan that he did not believe it was necessary for the Society's award to 'emulate any of this'. Instead, Scott suggested that,

After fifty years of award schemes in various fields, a certain prestige attaches to the Saltire name which more than compensates for a lot of P.R. razamataz [sic]. The award might be increased in value to keep up with the Joneses, but I do not think that this is essential. (9393/156)

This correspondence illustrates how Scott considered the cultural and economic value of the Society's award – at least when discussing the award with a potential sponsor – by comparing it to a similar award for Scottish literature. The McVitie's Prize for Scottish Writer of the Year was remarkably similar to the Society's Book of the Year Award. Like the Society's award, the McVitie's Prize was awarded to 'a novel, collection of short stories, poetry, autobiography, theatre, cinema, radio and television scripts etc.' by 'writers born in Scotland, or who are or have been resident in Scotland or who take Scotland as their inspiration'.<sup>180</sup> Moreover, like the Book of the Year Award, the announcement of the McVitie's Prize was made in November, with articles announcing the winners of one of

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<sup>179</sup> The McVitie's 'Scottish Writer of the Year' Prize was by founded by the Book Trust in 1987 and ran until 1996 when the sponsorship was overtaken by Stakis Hotels. McVitie's are reported to have withdrawn their sponsorship of the prize two months prior to the launch of the 1998 'because McVitie's felt its investment was seen as wasted and the company's involvement was increasingly becoming seen as embarrassing rather than prestigious'.<sup>†</sup> Stakis sponsored the award for a further two years, but the award came to an end in 1998 because, as a 2001 article states, 'journalists described their event as "tragically naff"'.  
<sup>†</sup>'Book prize's happy ending', *The Herald*, 19 July 1997, p. 3.

<sup>\*\*</sup>'The List', *The Herald*, 15 December 2001, p. 6.

<sup>180</sup> The Book Trust, *The Book Trust Guide to Literary Prizes, Grants and Awards in Britain and Ireland* (London: Book Trust in Association with the Society of Authors, 1988), p. 27.

the awards often making reference to the other.<sup>181</sup> However, Scott argues that the key difference between the Society's award and the McVitie's Prize is the fact that the Society has the experience of 'fifty years of awards schemes' (9393/156), experience which, in Scott's opinion, carries with it a cultural kudos and prestige especially afforded to the Society.<sup>182</sup> The fact that Scott articulates his opinion of the Society's award to a potential sponsor in this way was likely a deliberate accentuation of the Book of the Year Award's already, according to Scott, established cultural value, as a means of eschewing concerns regarding the financial commitment anticipated from the sponsor.<sup>183</sup>

Following this correspondence, Scott wrote to the Book of the Year judging panel – which still included Calder, Campbell, Gifford and Murray, with the addition of Derick Thomson who joined the panel in 1984 and Alan Taylor who joined in 1987 – on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 1988 to tell them that *The Scotsman* had 'offered to sponsor the Book of the Year Award from the current year onwards.'<sup>184</sup> The terms of the sponsorship, Scott continued, would 'remain as last year with an award of £1,500', and an additional £1,000 for a 'Scottish New Writer of the Year' award for 'the author of the best first published

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<sup>181</sup> Rob McKenna, 'Murder Choice for McVitie's Prize', *The Herald*, 1 December 1995, p. 5; Lynne Robertson, 'McIlvanney Wins Award', *The Herald*, 28 November 1996, p. 9; 'Literary Prizes', *New Straits Times*, 3 May 1993, p. 35.

<sup>182</sup> The reputation and public profile of the Saltire Society was a particularly hot topic amongst the Society's Council and 'Public Relations and Publicity Committee' more generally during this period. Minutes from a meeting of the Public Relations and Publicity Committee held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 1987 show that the Society was keen to 'examine the public image of the Saltire Society fifty years after its inception' and 'Improve contacts between the Society and Press/Media'. Although Scott was not present for this meeting, the minutes of the meeting were circulated amongst all other committees, including the Book of the Year Award panel. Further, Scott did attend a later meeting of the Public Relations and Publicity Committee, 1 February, 1988, indicating that he was conscious of the determined efforts being made by the Society to assure its public profile.

'Minutes of Public Relations and Publicity Committee Meeting, 8 April 1987', Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 116.

'Minutes of Public Relations and Publicity Committee, 1 February 1988', Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 116.

<sup>183</sup> The way in which the cultural capital of the Society's Literary Awards has been perceived and demonstrated throughout the history of the Society's literary awards and commendations is discussed in more detail in Part 4.1 of this thesis.

<sup>184</sup> Letter from Paul Scott to Angus Calder, Ian C, Douglas Gifford, Isobel Murray, Derick Thomson and Alan Taylor. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

book' (10347/21).<sup>185</sup> Furthermore, in a letter from Scott to the Publicity Manager at *The Scotsman*, Ian Thomson, four months later, Scott noted that he was 'delighted to hear' that *The Scotsman's* Editor, Magnus Linklater (who became the President of the Society in 2011), was also 'prepared to act as one of the judges'.<sup>186</sup> Despite this suggestion, there is little evidence to suggest that Linklater did in fact serve as a member of the judging panel between 1988 and 1989.

Some members of the panel were pleased with the conception of a new award category for emerging writers, with Isobel Murray writing to Scott the next day to say it was a 'splendid development'.<sup>187</sup> However, such new awards aside, by 1988 the scheduling of the Society's Literary Awards would be called into question. On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 1988, Simon Berry, the features editor for *The Scotsman*, wrote to Scott to make a number of suggestions regarding the Book of the Year Awards' schedule, stating that he hoped Scott would 'be able to persuade the Panel of the wisdom of the changes we discussed'.<sup>188</sup> Berry noted the following key points:

A change in the timing, so that winners are announced in early January and the shortleets in mid-November (n. b. the Whitbread shortlist this year was Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>) [sic]. This will allow your panel a little more time to select the winners, and we can promote the shortleets more effectively to the book trade over Xmas. [...] The shortleets will be nominated by literary editors (a maximum of 2 in each category) and the Panel from all titles received for review by Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> 1989; the Panel might be extended net year by an extra member who is an imaginative writer, also one member might become due for retirement each year (with the possibility of being invited back in future years). (10347/21)

Here, the organisation and administration of the Book of the Year Award has once again been compared to another, well-known literary award. The Whitbread Literary Awards (known as the Costa Book Awards since 2006 following a change in sponsorship), were

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<sup>185</sup> This award for 'the best first published book' evolved into the Society's First Book of the Year Award, which is discussed in more detail in Part 3.4 of this thesis.

<sup>186</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Ian Thomson, *The Scotsman*, 30 May 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>187</sup> Letter from Isobel Murray to Paul Scott, 16 February 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, No. 21.

<sup>188</sup> Letter from Simon Berry, *The Scotsman*, to Paul Henderson Scott, 9 December 1988. Edinburgh, National library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

founded in 1971 and are a group of awards for multiple categories including First novel, Novel, Biography, Poetry and Children's Book.<sup>189</sup>

Writing to the judging panel on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 1988 to discuss Berry's suggestions, Scott noted the proposed change in schedule dates.<sup>190</sup> While he acknowledged that the movement of the announcement of the winner from November to January would 'give us more time [and] enable the Award to make the maximum impact during the main book buying season', Scott expressed apprehension with the proposal to change the closing date for nominations to 31<sup>st</sup> October, stating that it would 'run the risk of making us work in too much of a rush' (10347/21). He also noted that *The Scotsman* were 'considering the introduction of a new category for books on poetry' (10347/21). Such suggestions received mixed reviews from the panel. Derick Thomson<sup>191</sup> and Isobel Murray<sup>192</sup> both wrote to Scott and indicated their concern with arranging a panel meeting to select a winner in January. Angus Calder, on the other hand, was concerned with *The Scotsman's* suggestion of creating a new award for poetry:

I'm a bit worried about the idea of a special award for poetry criticism, if that is what 'books on poetry' means. I'd be against a special award for books of poetry, since it would presumably ensure that the main prize always went to a work of prose. I'm glad that the award has been given in the past so as to acknowledge the excellence of much recent Scottish verse, and wouldn't want to see poetry 'ghettoised'. The Whitbread doesn't do that, nor does the W H Smith.<sup>193</sup>

Calder's belief that the Whitbread Award does not award books from multiple categories is actually incorrect. Since the founding of the Whitbread Awards in 1971, it has included

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<sup>189</sup> 'Frequently Asked Questions', Costa Book Awards, <<http://www.costa.co.uk/costa-book-awards/faqs/>> [accessed 21 January 2015]

<sup>190</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Literary Award Panel Members, 21 December 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>191</sup> Letter from Derick Thomson to Paul Henderson Scott, 31 December 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>192</sup> Letter from Isobel Murray to Paul Henderson Scott, 9 January 1989. Edinburgh, National library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>193</sup> Letter from Angus Calder to Paul Henderson Scott, 12 January 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

three awards, for poetry, biography and novels, introducing a children's book and first book category 1972 and 1975 respectively.

Although there was a miscommunication between Scott and Calder as to exactly what kind of poetry book would be celebrated by this hypothetical award, with Scott verifying in a later letter that *The Scotsman* was referring to a 'book of (not on) poetry', Calder's concern regarding the segregation of books is an issue which has remained pertinent to the long-term administration of the Society's literary awards.<sup>194</sup> Indeed, it was not until 2014 that a separate award for poetry was introduced by the Society and the Scottish Poetry Library.<sup>195</sup>

As a result of the replies he received from the judging panel members in response to *The Scotsman*'s suggestions, Scott wrote to the panel a few months later on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 1988 stating that '[t]he proposals in my letter of 21<sup>st</sup> December 1988 have not been generally welcomed'.<sup>196</sup> Despite this, Scott continued to state that *The Scotsman* wanted to 'announce the new arrangements fairly soon' and had made 'two additional suggestions [...] that John Prebble should be invited to join the Panel after the short leet stage [and] that there should be some rotation in the membership of the panel.' (10347/21). According to Calder, the introduction of Prebble, a journalist and novelist well known for his research in Scottish history, was an 'excellent idea – raising [the awards'] profile, and also bringing

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<sup>194</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to the Literary Awards judging panel, 1 March 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>195</sup> In 2014 the Saltire Society, in partnership with the Scottish Poetry Library, founded the Poetry Book of the Year Award. In its first year the award, which is awarded to new collections of poetry by Scottish born authors, authors of Scottish descent or authors living in Scotland, was adjudicated by Dr. Robyn Marsack, the former director of the Scottish Poetry Library (2000-2015) and poet, writer and Professor Emeritus at the University of Stirling, Rory Watson. In 2015, Dorothy McMillan, Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Glasgow, joined Marsack and Watson as the third member of the panel. Prior to 2014, poetry books nominated for the Society's Book of the Year or First Book of the Year Awards were judged alongside all other entries for these awards. In 2013 the Society also founded a Publisher of the Year Award for publishers whose headquarters are based in Scotland. Between 2013 and 2015 the award was judged by CEO of Publishing Scotland Marion Sinclair; Acting Head of Literature, Languages and Publishing at Creative Scotland, Aly Barr; literary agent Jenny Brown, Jenny Brown Associates; Professor Claire Squires, Director of the Stirling Centre for International Publishing and Communication at University of Stirling; the award-winning independent bookseller Roz de la Hay; and the CEO of New Writing North, Claire Malcolm.

<sup>196</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to members of the Saltire Society Book of the Year judging panel, 1 March 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.



in someone who is not involved in Scottish literary politics like the rest of us!’<sup>197</sup> About rotation of the panel, however, Calder said he was ‘agnostic’, arguing that ‘continuity of the panel membership indicate[d] the commitment of all involved’ (10347/ 21). Murray also felt that adding Prebble to the panel after the short leet stage sounded ‘fine’ and also felt that rotation of the panel seemed ‘very reasonable’, despite the fact that she ‘enjoy[ed] and valu[ed] the yearly experience’ of reading for the award.<sup>198</sup> Campbell, on the other hand, was against both the inclusion of Prebble and introducing regular rotation of judging panel members:

I see no real advantage in a new member joining us at the leet stage – quite the reverse – but if the Scotsman put it forward strongly it seems unnecessarily obstructive not to accept gracefully. [...] Some rotation is no bad thing; though I think [...] that it has worked well with the stability of membership building up some expertise and some experience of the ground rules, the actual experience of running a competition like this, among people who have come to know one another. [...] There would be a case for keeping the same group a year or two longer, I think. Our range is such that an impartiality is not so difficult to achieve.<sup>199</sup>

Although Campbell suggests that some rotation ‘is no bad thing’, he in fact goes on to explain why he feels the ‘stability’ of the panel over the years has been beneficial to the award. This, along with Campbell’s inclination to avoid inviting Prebble to join the panel once they have selected a shortlist – although, this was a preference Campbell was willing to surrender for the sake of a good relationship with *The Scotsman* – indicates that Campbell had a somewhat insular view of how the judging of the Society’s Book of the Year Award should continue.

Despite the three month debate about the inclusion of John Prebble and the rotation (or lack thereof) of the judging panel in early 1989, little changed in the organisation and

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<sup>197</sup> Letter from Angus Calder to Paul Henderson Scott, 7 March 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>198</sup> Letter from Isobel Murray to Paul Henderson Scott, 10 March 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>199</sup> Letter from Ian Campbell to Paul Henderson Scott, 8 March 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

adjudication process of the Society's Book of the Year Award between 1989 and 1994. Following the addition of Scottish Television as an extra sponsor of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards in 1990, the prize funds for each were increased to £5,000 (from £1,500) and £1,500 (from £1,000) respectively.<sup>200</sup> STV and *The Scotsman* became co-sponsors of the two literary awards between 1990 and 1994. Writing to congratulate Sorley McLean, the winner of the 1990 Book of the Year Award, in January 1991, Scott stated that the award was 'sponsored by The Scotsman and Scottish Television.'<sup>201</sup> Scott also informs McLean that the Awards Ceremony, which was held on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January 1991, would be 'covered by radio and television' (10504/15).<sup>202</sup> Two years later, STV and *The Scotsman* were still sharing the sponsorship of the awards and were seemingly alternating the public presentation of the Book of the Year Award, or the so-called 'main' award. In a letter to Kathleen Munro, the Society's Administrator, written in January 1993, Campbell noted that 'STV are anxious that it's "their turn" to present the main award'.<sup>203</sup> While both STV and *The Scotsman* were co-sponsoring the awards in the early 1990s, there is little to suggest that there was any interaction between the two organisations regarding this relationship. It seems all organisation of the sponsorship criteria, including the negotiation of the alternating presentation of the Book of the Year Award, was facilitated through the Society itself.

However, in February 1994 the Managing Director of STV, Gus MacDonald wrote to the editor of *The Scotsman* Magnus Linklater and the editor of *The Herald*, Arnold Kemp, proposing that, as sponsors and promoters of Scotland's various literary awards,

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<sup>200</sup> The Society's First Book of the Year Award was launched in 1988. It is discussed in more detail in Part 3.4 of this thesis.

<sup>201</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Sorley McLean, 11 January 1991. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

<sup>202</sup> Although there is evidence that a number of the Society's Literary Award Ceremonies were recorded and broadcast by STV, only one archived recording, of the 1995 ceremony, has been traced within the STV footage archives.

<sup>203</sup> Letter from Ian Campbell to Kathleen Munro, 14 January 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 24.

could they not ‘perhaps co-operate to pull them together into an event which becomes the Booker of the north of the Border?’.<sup>204</sup> Two weeks later, Linklater forwarded this proposition to Paul Henderson Scott stating: ‘I don’t know what your reaction would be to this but we could not possibly take it any further if the Saltire Society was unenthusiastic.’<sup>205</sup> Linklater continued, suggesting that:

The advantages would be a higher profile, more money etc. The disadvantages might be a diluting of the Saltire involvement. It might be better not to rule it out altogether at this stage but to make a few more enquiries to see what might be involved. (11374/12)

In response to this proposal Scott wrote to Linklater and the Head of Public Affairs at STV, David Whitton, who had also contacted Scott stating that STV were ‘quite keen to explore’ this idea, noting that he had ‘long thought that there would be advantages in one combined award which might attract more attention than the present diversity’.<sup>206</sup> Scott continued, hypothesising as to how such collaboration might work:

[The award] could perhaps have a number of categories (say fiction, non-fiction, poetry and first book) to reduce the difficulty of making rational choice between books of very different kinds. In fact, when [United Biscuits (UB)] launched the McVittie [sic] Award in close imitation of the Saltire Award, I suggested [...] that we should combine forces. For their own commercial reasons, they preferred to go it alone. They argued (and it is a fair point) that a diversity of awards was good for Scottish writing because it meant that more writers had a chance of recognition. Possibly UB might not be more interested in co-operation because they have lost the support of the BBC and their recent awards have not been well received. (11374/12)

Such comments from Scott are revealing, as they indicate that the McVitie’s Scottish Writer of the Year Award may have used the Society’s Literary Awards as an exemplar when establishing their own award. As Part 4.2 of this thesis illustrates, the similar terms

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<sup>204</sup> Letter from Gus MacDonald, Managing Director, STV, to Magnus Linklater, *The Scotsman*, and Arnold Kemp, *The Herald*, 3 February 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11374, File No. 12.

<sup>205</sup> Letter from Magnus Linklater to Paul Henderson Scott, 15 February 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11374, File No. 12.

<sup>206</sup> Letter from Paul Scott to Magnus Linklater, *The Scotsman* and David Whitton, STV, 9 March 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11374, File No. 12.

of eligibility of the two awards meant there was often cross-over of shortlisted and winning authors. While open to the suggestion of merging the Society's Literary Awards with the McVitie's Prize and the Scottish Arts Council's literary awards, Henderson Scott made clear that the Society was unwilling to compromise its own methods of adjudication: '[t]he Saltire method of judging has produced results which have met with general approval and I suggest that this tried and proved format should be maintained' (11374/12).

Members of the Society's Literary Awards judging panel were, however, more sceptical of this proposal. Writing to Kathleen Munro on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March, Derick Thomson, who had been a member of the panel on and off since 1985, questioned the motives of STV's proposal:

I have little doubt that STV are looking for a high-profile, down-market situation, with a smaller financial input from their company, and small regard for the ultimate literary consequences. [...] What STV proposes, it seems to me, might make better TV but do nothing to enhance the real value and purpose of the Saltire awards. Might it not be better to look for a new sponsor, especially since the Scotsman seems supportive of the Saltire's individual position?<sup>207</sup>

Echoing Scott's prioritisation of the Society's administration and adjudication, Thomson also stated that he 'hope[d] the Saltire Society [would] not easily surrender its prestigious prize, and well-considered methodology.' (11374/12) Despite such concerns by July 1994 Whitton was writing to Scott to confirm STV's co-sponsorship of the Society's Literary awards for that year.<sup>208</sup> The plan, as described by Whitton, was for a pre-recorded 'Book Award programme' to be broadcast on STV on St Andrew's night in November 1994 (11374/12). An invitation to this so-called 'Evening of Book Awards' confirms that the combined ceremony, which included the announcement of the winner of the 1994 McVitie's Scottish Writer of the Year Prize (Janice Galloway's *Foreign Parts* (1994), and

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<sup>207</sup> Letter from Derick Thomson to Kathleen Munro, 14 March 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11374, File No. 12.

<sup>208</sup> Letter from David Whitton, Head of Public Affairs Scottish Television to Paul Henderson Scott, 29 July 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11374, File No. 12.

the Society's Book of the Year (George MacKay Brown's *Beside the Ocean of Time* (1994) and First Book of the Year Award (Andrew Crumey's *Music in a Foreign Language* (1994), took place on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November in Edinburgh and was broadcast on STV on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 1994.

However, 1994 would be the last year that Scott would act as convenor of the Society's Literary Awards panels. In June 1995, Scott wrote to his fellow judge, Douglas Gifford, to thank him for taking over the convenorship of the panel.<sup>209</sup> This letter also reveals that STV had withdrawn their sponsorship for the Society's Literary Awards and that Derick Thomson had secured funding of £1,500 for the First Book of the Year Award through *Gairm*, the literary magazine he co-founded and edited (11714/24). Despite their withdrawal of sponsorship, Scott confirmed that STV intended to include the announcement of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards at another televised award ceremony in November. The 1995 Book of the Year Award was awarded to two authors: Neal Ascherson for his non-fiction history and travel book *Black Seas* (1995) and A. L. Kennedy's first full length novel, *So I Am Glad* (1995).

It was during this period that Gifford and Ian Campbell established their system of alternating convenorship of the Society's Literary Awards panel. Accordingly, Campbell became convenor of the panel to the 1996 awards. As part of the handover to Campbell, in January 1996 Kathleen Munro wrote to Gifford and Campbell to highlight some of the areas of the Society's Literary Awards that required attention. As well as confirming sponsorship for the awards, Munro also noted that '[t]he procedure for selection is a farce: we need to work on this' and suggested that the convenor should 'find out names of Literary Editors or equivalent' and 'send information to them'.<sup>210</sup> Munro's apparent

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<sup>209</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Douglas Gifford, 12 June 1995. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No, 24.

<sup>210</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Douglas Gifford, 5 January 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

frustration stemmed from the fact that the nomination and selection process had become bloated and confused. The introduction of nominations from publishers in the early 1990s only added to the confusion. In 1995, for example, all but one of the thirty-five nominations made for the Book of the Year Award had come from members of the panel or sponsors.<sup>211</sup> The Society partially rectified this imbalance for the 1996 Book of the Year Award: of the fifty-five books nominated for the awards, thirty-seven came from panel members, ten came from publishers and eight came from the editors of literary magazines or the literary section of newspapers.<sup>212</sup>

As well as making some progress in the expansion of the narrow field of nominators for the Book of the Year Award, during 1996 Ian Campbell was keen to improve the marketing of the awards. In a letter to Munro, Campbell notes a series of issues that were raised at a meeting of the Literary Awards panel held that morning. Campbell notes that the panel felt:

The publicity for the short list, its announcement and its general visibility round the bookshops is disappointing compared to the McVitie prize. We should investigate ways of raising money to try to do more to draw the Saltire award to public attention, in bookshops and in newspapers, radio and TV.<sup>213</sup>

A method of mitigating this, which Campbell admitted was inspired by the McVitie's marketing campaign, was through the production of posters and stickers 'bearing the Saltire award shortlist message' (11714/25). There is, however, no evidence that such suggestions led to a concerted marketing campaign from the Society for the Literary Awards in 1996.

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<sup>211</sup> Nominations for the 1995 Saltire Society Book of the Year Award. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 24.

<sup>212</sup> Nominations for the 1996 Saltire Society Book of the Year Award. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

<sup>213</sup> Letter from Ian Campbell to Kathleen Munro, 4 November 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

The mid-1990s boost to the profile for the Society's Literary Awards via the televised broadcast of the awards began to peter out by 1997. In a letter to Douglas Gifford (who was once again convenor following Campbell's turn the previous year), Kathleen Munro noted that since the Society was 'going it alone' in 1997 because STV were no longer going to broadcast the awards ceremony, they needed to begin making arrangements for that year's ceremony.<sup>214</sup> Soon after this letter prompting decisions from Gifford regarding dates for the ceremony, a press release announcing the shortlist for the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award confirmed that the winners would be announced during a lunchtime ceremony held at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 1997.<sup>215</sup> The next few years of the Society's Literary Awards would remain stable, with *The Scotsman* continuing to support the Book of the Year Award and the Post Office supporting the First Book of the Year Award from 1996 onwards, the withdrawal of the *The Scotsman* as a key sponsor in 2000 signified the beginning of a sustained period of uncertainty and financial difficulties for the Society's Book of the Year Award.<sup>216</sup>

Between 2000 and 2004 the Society failed to secure sponsorship for the £5,000 Scottish Book of the Year Award and used their own reserves to absorb the cost. In 2004, the Faculty of Advocates, an independent body for the country's legal advocates and QCs based in Edinburgh, took over the sponsorship of the Book of the Year Award<sup>217</sup>, giving the Society £8,000 for the administration of the prize (£5,000 for the award prize, £2,000 towards the cost of the award ceremony and £1,000 towards the administration of the

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<sup>214</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Douglas Gifford, 20 October 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11991, File No 16.

<sup>215</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards Press Release, 29 October 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11991, File No 16.

<sup>216</sup> Letter from Steven Malcolm, Deputy Promotions Manager, *Scotsman* to Kathleen Munro, 3 March 2000. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12393, File No 84.

<sup>217</sup> Press release: 'Advocates Open New Chapter with Saltire Book of the Year Sponsorship', 14 October 2004. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13219, File No 23.

award).<sup>218</sup> This partnership came to an end in February 2007. In a way which seemed to echo the earliest Book of the Year Awards presented by the Society in the 1930s and 1950s, this period of sporadic sponsorship and financial instability continued through the late 2000s and into the early 2010s, with the Society covering the costs of the Book of the Year Award in the years it could not secure sponsorship.

The lack of financial support for the award was such that in 2009 the Society sent a statement, under the title ‘The Scottish Book of the Year Axed’, to all ‘interested parties’ (such as Society members, publishers, journalists and writers) asserting that without financial backing the Society’s Book of the Year Award would not be able to continue:

Unless the Saltire Society finds financial support for its Scottish Book of the Year Award before March 2009, there will be no award presentation in 2009. We are desperately looking for a company, organisation or individual who would be willing to support this prestigious award for the next three years. We are open to suggestions and would greatly appreciate constructive help.<sup>219</sup>

This call to action worked, with the Scottish Government stepping in to offer financial support to the Book of the Year Award as part of Homecoming Scotland 2009, a programme of events held throughout Scotland in 2009 to encourage individuals with Scottish ancestry to visit Scotland.<sup>220</sup> A Scottish Government News Release from November 2008 reveals that the Culture Minister, Linda Fabiani, announced that the Society was to be given £25,000 of ‘Homecoming Year sponsorship’ for the following years’ awards, increasing the prize fund for the Book of the Year Award to £10,000.<sup>221</sup> As part of this partnership, the Society created a subcategory of the Literary Awards titled the ‘Homecoming Award’. Table 3 details the shortlist for this award.

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<sup>218</sup> Letter from Bruce McKain, Director of Public Affairs at Faculty of Advocates, to Michael Hance, Director of Saltire Society, 16 April 2004. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13219, File No 23.

<sup>219</sup> ‘The Scottish Book of the Year Axed’ (2008). Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No 31.

<sup>220</sup> ‘Homecoming Scotland 2009: The Story’, 3 September 2011  
<[http://www.visitscotland.org/what\\_we\\_do/marketing/the\\_homecoming\\_story.aspx](http://www.visitscotland.org/what_we_do/marketing/the_homecoming_story.aspx)> [accessed 5 June 2014]

<sup>221</sup> Press Release: Saltire Society Literary Awards 2009, 30 November. Saltire Society, Private Archives.



**Table 3: Saltire Society 2009 Homecoming Award Shortlist**

Author	Title	Publisher
Robert Crawford	<i>The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography</i>	Jonathan Cape
Seamus Heaney	<i>The Testament of Cresseid and Seven Fables</i>	Faber and Faber
Jackie Kay	<i>The Lamplighter</i>	Bloodaxe Books
Esther Woolfson	<i>Piano Angel</i>	Two Ravens Press
Donald Worster	<i>A Passion for Nature</i>	Oxford University Press

The exact purpose and terms of this award were not very clear. In a press release distributed by the government about the Homecoming Year campaign from late 2008, when discussing the Society ‘Homecoming Award’, Fabiani is quoted as stating that:

Scotland’s rich heritage of literature and language is enjoyed by people all over the world, many of whom have developed their love and appreciation of this country from books about Scotland or written by Scottish authors. This reflects one of the main themes of next year’s Homecoming [...] The year of Homecoming will provide a unique opportunity for visitors to join in the celebration of all the great things Scotland has given to the world. So it's appropriate that for 2009 a special Homecoming award is being created that will enhance the profile of Scottish literature around the world.<sup>222</sup>

This goes some way to explaining how the financial supporters viewed the award, but far from being representative of the Scottish diaspora, the shortlist contains a number of authors who were already eligible for – and had even won – the Society’s other Literary Awards. Robert Crawford won the Research Book of the Year Award in 2007, and his biography of Robert Burns (which was also shortlisted for the ‘Homecoming Award’) went on to win the Book of the Year Award in 2009. Jackie Kay had also previously won the First Book of the Year Award in 1992 for her poetry collection *Adoption Papers* (1991).

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<sup>222</sup> ‘All Write for Year of Homecoming’, 28 November 2008. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

The Scottish Government's support for the Society's Literary Awards only lasted for one year, and in 2010 the Society was once again left without the financial aid to sustain the Book of the Year Award. In the autumn of 2010 the Society launched an appeal to its members requesting donations towards the Book of the Year Award. The donation request form sent to Society members described the history of the award to date, testifying that '28 years on, the Saltire Society's Book of the Year Award is regarded as among the leading awards of its kind in Scotland.' and asked members if they would 'help the Society sustain this vital award in 2010 and beyond?'<sup>223</sup> The campaign only raised £2,870 towards the £10,000 required by the Society to run the Book of the Year Award<sup>224</sup>, with donations ranging from £10 to £100.<sup>225</sup> The largest donation came from an anonymous supporter who provided £1,000. Despite failing to raise the £10,000 wanted for the award, the winning author James Robertson, received the full £5,000 for his novel *And the Land Lay Still* (2010) in 2010. This fraught method of subsidising the award could only sustain part of the award in 2010 and the next year the Society was once again seeking new sponsorship, raising the amount sought from £10,000 to £12,250.<sup>226</sup>

As previously noted, the Book of the Year Award's struggles in the 21<sup>st</sup> century reflect those the Society dealt with in previous years when the award was irregularly administered because of funding issues. Such issues came to a head in 2011 when the Society published a strategic review commissioned and undertaken by the Society's then Chairman, Rt Hon Lord Cullen of Whitekirk in March 2010. The purpose of this review was to assess the status of the Society, particularly in terms of its impact and public profile, and it seems fitting that this report, which argued that all of the Society's awards

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<sup>223</sup> Autumn Appeal, 2010. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

<sup>224</sup> This £10,000 budget for the award was illustrated in information materials provided to potential sponsors for the 2010 Book of the Year Award. The breakdown of this sum was detailed as follows: Preparation in the run up to the award ceremony, £1,500; A proportion of the cost of the award ceremony, £1,500; Production of publicity material for the shortlisted books and winning book, £2,000; Prize to winning author, £5,000.

<sup>225</sup> Figures provided by the Saltire Society. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

<sup>226</sup> 'Saltire Society Literature Brief 2011'. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

failed to consistently attract media coverage and ‘face[d] increasing competition from other newer awards which offer larger monetary prizes’, was completed at what could be perceived as a critical point in the history of the Book of the Year Award.<sup>227</sup> The report was not only a major influence upon the developments of the Society and its body of awards, but the inclusion of a Book of the Year Award judge and winner on the Commission meant it was intimately connected to the Society’s Literary Awards. Dr Ann Matheson, who has been a Literary Award judge since 2007, was a member of the Commission, as was the author James Robertson who was the recipient of the Book of the Year Award in 2010. Although the fact that Robertson’s win corresponded with his taking part in the Commission was coincidental. On hearing that he had been shortlisted for the award, Robertson wrote to the convenor of the panel, Ian Campbell, to clarify that he understood that the judges may wish to ‘take appropriate action’ if they felt the conflict of interest to be too great.<sup>228</sup> Robertson’s concerns were not unfounded. The Society’s Council had explicitly stated that ‘the objective of a strategic review would be best achieved by establishing a commission of experts from outside the Society’ and both Matheson and Robertson, while not employed by the Society, were Society members, and either completed work on behalf of the Society or were recipients of their awards. Despite this, it was decided that Robertson and Matheson’s involvement with the Society would not constitute a conflict of interest in their assessment of the Society’s overall work.

The Saltire Society Commission Report made a series of recommendations for the Society, with Cullen noting that ‘We would not have made the recommendations [...] if we had not been convinced that there is an important and distinctive role for the Society’ (Cullen, 3). One such recommendation was that the Society should employ a ‘full-time Executive Director to give strategic direction; develop and sustain an active programme;

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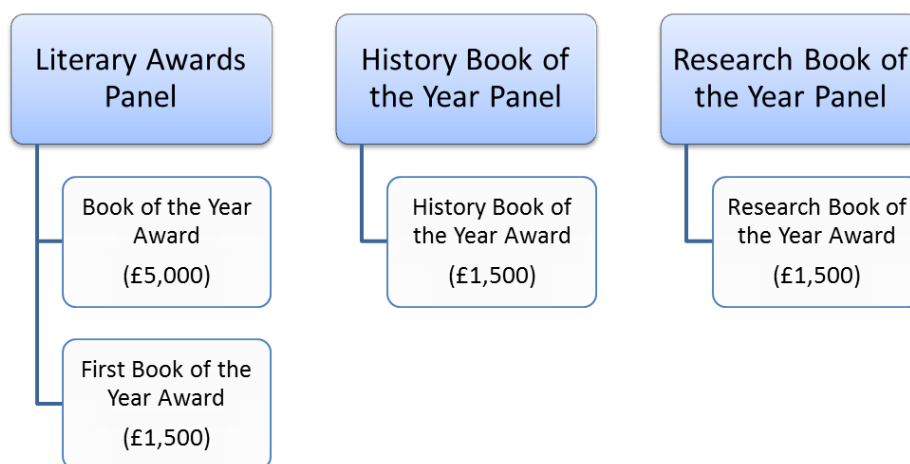
<sup>227</sup> Cullen of Whitekirk, ‘Saltire Society Report of the Saltire Commission’, January 2011, p. 10  
<[www.saltiresociety.org.uk/Downloads/Saltire-CommIssion-Report.pdf](http://www.saltiresociety.org.uk/Downloads/Saltire-CommIssion-Report.pdf)> [accessed 20 May 2013]

<sup>228</sup> Letter from James Robertson to Ian Campbell, 8 November 2010. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

and make recommendations as to activities and priorities’ (Cullen, 5). Jim Tough, former CEO of the Scottish Arts Council and Executive Director at Arts Council England, became the Society’s first Executive Director in February 2012.

A further recommendation was that the Society ‘should regularly review its awards, and consider whether there should be awards in additional areas’ (Cullen, 4), and this suggestion has been particularly relevant to the Society’s series of Literary Awards. For example, 2014 saw a change in the administration and sponsorship of the Society’s Book of the Year Award. Financial support came from Creative Scotland, whose own series of awards, the Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust Book Awards (SMITs), formerly known as the Scottish Arts Council Book Awards, which were discontinued in 2014, enabled the Society to change the way in which their literary awards were administered. Figure 1 illustrates the Society’s Literary Awards schema until changes were introduced in 2014.

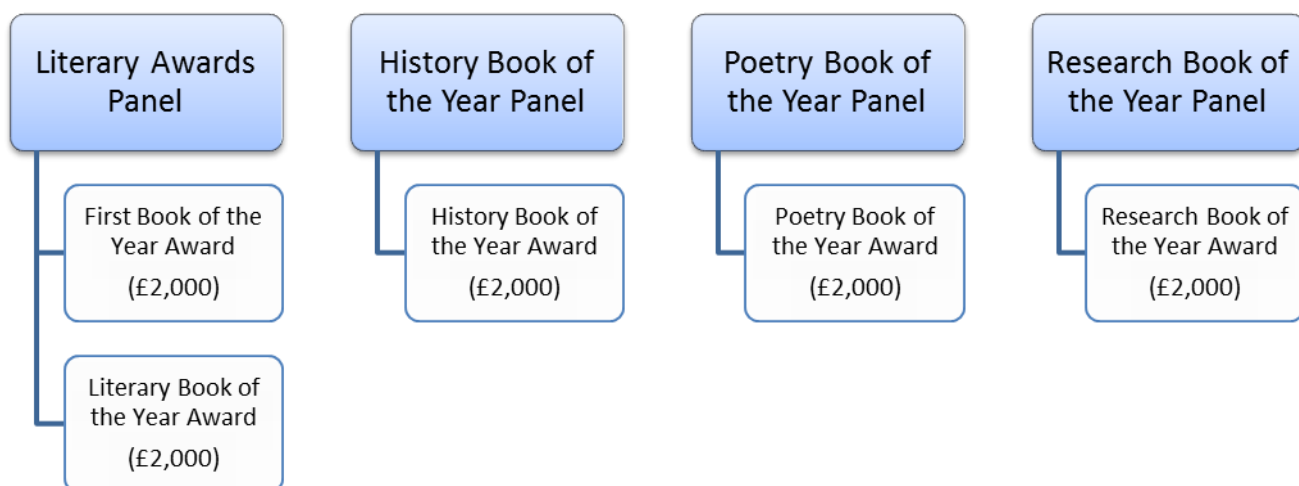
**Figure 1: The Saltire Society Literary Awards Schema c. 2013**



With the addition of a Poetry Book of the Year Award in 2014, and the expansion of the Book of the Year Award into Fiction and Non-Fiction categories in 2015, the Society decided to restructure the organisation of the awards in order to effectively promote the

awards as a defined ‘family’ of prizes. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate how the Society’s Literary Awards schema worked after the changes made in 2014 and 2015.

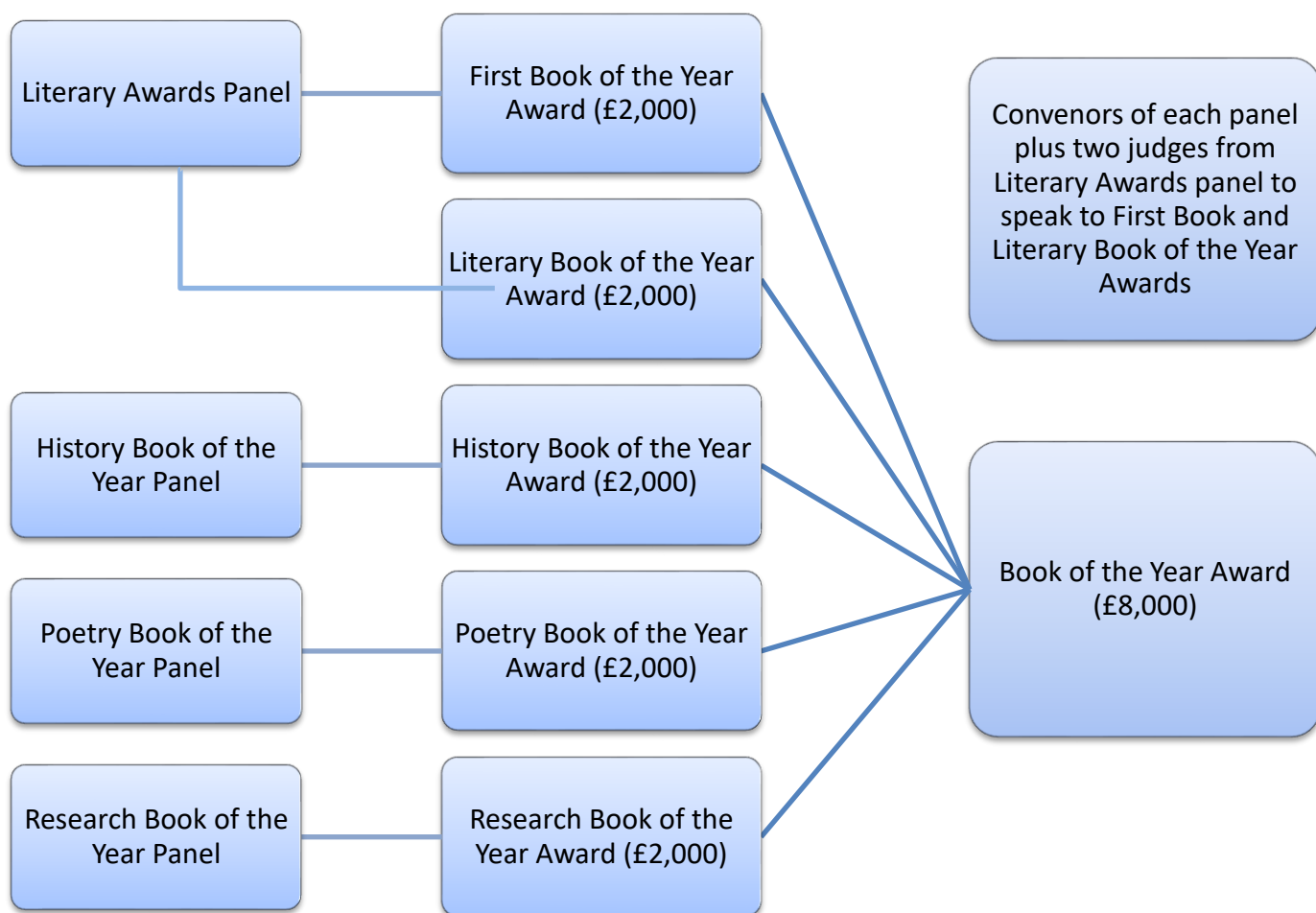
**Figure 2: The Saltire Society Literary Awards Schema 2014**



The reasoning for these changes was twofold. Firstly, the new financial sponsorship from Creative Scotland gave the Society the opportunity to offer a larger cash prize which could either be divided between all the category winners or could be given to an ‘overall’ Book of the Year Award winner who was chosen from the five category winners. The Society opted for the latter option, choosing to award each category winner £2,000 and making them a shortlistee for the ‘overall’ Book of the Year award with an additional prize of £8,000 (this was reduced to £6,000 from 2015 onwards).<sup>229</sup>

<sup>229</sup> The ‘Literary Book of the Year Award’ category was divided into two separate Fiction and Non-Fiction Book of the Year Award categories in 2015 (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3: The Saltire Society Literary Awards Schema 2015**



The second, and arguably more important, reason for the restructuring of the Society’s Literary Awards was its newfound status as the only remaining series of awards dedicated to celebrating Scottish literature. As a result, restructuring the awards aided the Society’s aim of successfully promoting the Society’s Literary Awards as a group of related awards celebrating the breadth of Scottish literature.

What this comprehensive history of the Society’s Book of the Year Award has illustrated is how this award for Scottish literature has had to adapt over the years in order to remain a relevant element of Scottish literary culture. Coming from confused and, at times, disorganised beginnings, the Society’s Book of the Year Award (now Fiction and

Non-Fiction Book of the Year Awards) has evolved into a ‘major cultural milestone in Scotland’s year’, as one publisher put it.<sup>230</sup> Despite this, the Society’s Book of the Year Award has, until recent years, been plagued by financial uncertainties and while it has usually managed to keep the precarious status of the Book of the Year Award from public view, the awards’ insecure position has often influenced decisions made regarding the promotion and presentation of the award which led to the diminishment of the awards’ status in the mid-late 2000s. This did begin to change with the engagement of the Society’s Executive Director in 2012 which, in turn, led to the reconfiguration of the Literary Awards schema and the introduction of Creative Scotland as a leading financial sponsor. However, as the following histories of the Society’s Agnes Mure Mackenzie/History Book of the Year Award, First Book of the Year Award and Research Book of the Year Award illustrate, the administrative and financial issues that plagued the Book of the Year Award have affected all of the Society’s Literary Awards over the years.

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<sup>230</sup> Robert Davidson, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 6 February 2015.

### 3.3 The Agnes Mure Mackenzie Memorial Award for Scottish Historic Research/the Scottish History Book of the Year

The following section details the origins and development of the Society's History Book of the Award. As noted in Part 3.1 of this thesis, the momentum that surrounded the founding of the Society's 'Scottish Book of the Year Award' in the early to mid-1950s was disrupted by the passing of the historian and Society advocate Agnes Mure Mackenzie in February 1955. Following her death, the Society's Executive Committee proposed that the Publications Committee should consider honouring Mackenzie with a literary award in her name: 'At the request of the Executive, the Committee considered the proposed Award to be given in the name of the late Dr. A. M. Mackenzie for a published work of Scottish historical research.'<sup>231</sup>

It seems fitting that the Society chose to pay tribute to Mackenzie in this way: Mackenzie had been a loyal supporter and member of the Society for many years. She edited and wrote a number of books and pamphlets which were published by the Society (or on their behalf by the publisher Oliver & Boyd) and regularly took part in annual conferences held by the Society.<sup>232</sup> In 1941 Mackenzie was made the first female Honorary President of the Society and dedicated her book *Scottish Pageant* (1946) to her 'Companions at the Saltire Society/Who desire that those things which were cast down shall be raised up/And those things which have grown old shall be made new' (Mackenzie, 1946, v). Mackenzie's passionate advocacy of the Society and its work was most clearly

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<sup>231</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1955. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393 No. 937.

<sup>232</sup> See: A. M. Mackenzie, *The Arts and the Future of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1942); *Scottish Pageant: 55 BC.-AD. 1513*, ed. by A. M. Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd. for Saltire Society, 1946); *Old Scottish Christmas Hymns*, ed. by A. M. Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1947); *Scottish Pageant, 1513-1625*, ed. by A. M. Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd. for Saltire Society, 1948); *Scottish Pageant, 1625-1707*, ed. by A. M. Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd. for Saltire Society, 1949); *Scottish Pageant, 1707-1802*, ed. by A. M. Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd. for Saltire Society, 1950); *Scotland on Freedom*, ed. by A. M. Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1950); A. M. Mackenzie, *On the Declaration of Arbroath* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1951); A. M. Mackenzie, *The Edinburgh of Queen Mary: A Festival Lecture* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1958).



illustrated in a piece she wrote for the University of Aberdeen's journal in 1944. In an article entitled 'The Saltire Society: Its Background and Purpose', Mackenzie commends the Society's dedication to supporting Scottish writers like her:

When I publish a novel, I have to do it in London, and so have my betters. As a Scots-woman, I am ashamed of the fact: it was not so a hundred years ago. [...] The founders of the Saltire knew these things, and instead of folding their hands and lamenting about them, they got to work. Like most Scots they had little money [...] They set to and did what they could with what they had, which was rather less than five loaves and two fishes—much more like half a kipper and a bap: but the essential of miracles is faith, and faith and brains were the two things they had rowth of. (Mackenzie, *The Saltire Society*, 239)

In addition to this, as a member of the Society's Publications Committee in the 1950s, Mackenzie was present during some of the earliest meetings at which plans for the Book of the Year Award were discussed.<sup>233</sup> It is therefore likely that Mackenzie was directly engaged in the conversations concerning the founding of the Society's first literary award and was sympathetic to this particular form of literary patronage.

As illustrated in Part 3.2, one of the biggest problems the Society came across when trying to establish literary awards was acquiring sufficient financial investment or sponsorship, and the 'Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award for a book of Scottish historical research', was no different. According to minutes from a Publications Committee meeting that took place on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 1955, the Society's Executive recommended that:

the Award should be given wholly or in part in the form of books to be chosen by the winner and that an Appeal for the necessary funds should be made about the middle of November through letters to the Press and circulars to members and other interested persons and bodies.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Mackenzie was invited to join the Saltire Society's Publications Committee in May 1952 and was recorded as attending Publications Meetings in June 1954, seven months before her death in February 1955. Minutes of meeting of Publications Committee held in Edinburgh on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1952. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh, 22 June, 1954. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>234</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh, 29 September 1955. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

This suggestion was accepted by the Publications Committee, who ‘endorsed the proposals put forward by the Executive’ and founded the following three criteria for the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award (AMM Award):

- 1) that it be given for a published work of Scottish historical research:
- 2) that the Award be given wholly or in part in the form of books to be chosen by the winner:
- 3) that an Appeal for Funds be made about the middle of November through letters to the Press and circulars to members<sup>235</sup>

The Committee also suggested that the Award should ‘be made not more than once in every three years by a single judge – such as the Professors of Scottish History at Glasgow or Edinburgh’ who would be appointed ‘on the occasion of each award (9393/937)’.<sup>236</sup>

The idea of making books part of the prize for the AMM Award winner, and allowing the winner to select the books, was a novel one. The reasoning for this approach was likely two-fold. Firstly, given that the Society did not have the funds to supply a cash award for the winner of the AMM Award, offering the winner a selection of books was likely a more cost-effective means of rewarding the winner. Secondly, given that the purpose of the award was to reward books of historical research, it was perhaps believed that a gift of books was a form of direct and practical encouragement to the winning author. In allowing the winning author to select part of their prize, the Society was arguably making the ‘prizing’ element of the award more personal, tailoring it to the needs of the recipient. However, by 1965 when the first AMM Award was actually conferred,

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<sup>235</sup> Letter from Jean Clark to Miss Cairns, 6 October 1955. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>236</sup> In this way, the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award was similar to the James Tait Black Memorial Award which was established in 1919 by Janet Coats in honour of her late husband, the publisher James Tait Black. A stipulation of the two category James Tait Black Memorial Award (for English language Fiction and Non-Fiction/Biography), was that the award was to be adjudicated by a Professor of Literature of Edinburgh University which is where the award is administered to this day.<sup>236</sup> As the James Tait Black Prizes have evolved over the years, this process of adjudication has been formalised, with entries being read by postgraduate students at the University of Edinburgh, as well as the judging panel, which in 2015 consisted of Professor Randall Stevenson, Dr Alex Lawrie, Dr Jonathan Wild and Dr Simon Cooke who are all based within the University of Edinburgh’s School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures. ‘About the Awards: Judges and Panels’, *James Tait Black Memorial Award*, 21 January 2015 <<http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/events/tait-black/about/judges>> [accessed 13 February 2015]

the prize was changed to a 'suitably bound volume of the [winning] book [...] and the balance out of £50' after the special binding had been paid for.<sup>237</sup>

While keen to commemorate one of its most prolific supporters, the Society could not offer the financial support for such a venture, making it necessary for the Society to raise funds through an appeal for contributions from 'interested persons and bodies'.<sup>238</sup> The Society's 'Appeal for Funds for the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award', which invited 'all those who admired Dr. Mackenzie's work and appreciated her untiring efforts in research and her integrity as an historian to contribute' (9393/24) was launched in March 1956, and by January 1957 the scheme had raised £290:13:3, with a promise made by an unnamed donor to make this up to £300.<sup>239</sup> In the Society's Annual Report for 1955-1956, the Society notes how the response to the appeal had been 'satisfactory', recording a 'particularly generous donation from the Town Council of Stornoway in recognition of the work of a distinguished townswoman'.<sup>240</sup>

For reasons that remain unclear, the first AMM Award for Scottish Historical Research was not made until ten years after the initial funding appeal in 1956.<sup>241</sup> According to a memo from the late 1960s, the donations made towards the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Memorial Fund (AMM Memorial Fund), which, by the end of the 1950s totalled £321, were considered 'insufficient to provide a worthwhile prize' and left to accumulate interest, because the income was considered too low to constitute a prize.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Letter from R. M. Gorrie Hon Secretary to Professor G.W.S. Barrow 23 February, 1965. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>238</sup> The Saltire Society: The late AGNES MURE MACKENZIE, C.B.E, M.A., D.Litt., LL.D. Memorial Award. No Date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>239</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Edinburgh, 29 January 1957. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

<sup>240</sup> Saltire Society, *Saltire Society Annual Report 1955-1956* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1956), p. 6.

<sup>241</sup> The lack of definition concerning what happened between the establishment of the AMM Award and Memorial Fund and the conferral of the award is largely due to incomplete archives.

<sup>242</sup> Memo: AGNES MURE MACKENZIE MEMORIAL FUND. No Date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

Perhaps this lack of funds was the reason why the first AMM Award was not conferred until 1965.

G. W. S Barrow was awarded the inaugural AMM Award for his book *Robert Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland* (1965). A letter from the Society's Honorary Secretary, R. M. Gorrie, to Barrow from 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1965 reveals that Barrow's prize was a 'suitably bound volume of the book to be prepared by the Scottish Craft Centre's bookbinder and the balance out of £50 after this has been paid for'.<sup>243</sup> Barrow was also invited to the Society's Annual General Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1965 to receive the award. In response, Barrow wrote to Gorrie stating that the award was 'a notable honour' which he 'appreciat[ed] deeply and [was] more than happy to accept'.<sup>244</sup>

Despite the fact that the original outline of the AMM Award from 1955 suggested that the award should only be awarded every three to four years, the next award was not conferred until 1974, almost a decade after the first award was given to G. W. S. Barrow and nearly twenty years after the Award was established. Letters and memos relating to the award from the late 1960s and early 1970s reveal that this delay was most likely caused by financial issues and misunderstandings of the true value of the interest and revenue generated from the AMM Memorial Fund. An unsigned memo from Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 1969 corrects an error in the Minutes of the Society's Executive Meeting held in October 1969 which stated that 'the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Memorial Fund at present stands at about £600'.<sup>245</sup> The author of this memo says that they 'wish that were so', going on to explain that at the current Stock Exchange prices, the market value of the fund was only £360 (9393/24). The author continues, explaining that:

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<sup>243</sup> Letter from R. M. Gorrie Hon Secretary to Professor G.W.S. Barrow 23 February, 1965. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>244</sup> Letter from G W S Barrow to R M Gorrie, 25 February 1965. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>245</sup> Letter to Peter Allam from unknown author, 7 November, 1969. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

This, of course, is the main reason why the Fund has been allowed to become somewhat dormant. Annual income is approximately £23 and if the individual awards are to be worth while it is not practicable to make an award more than once in every three or four years. (9393/24)

Such details go some way to explain why there were such lengthy gaps between AMM Awards. It also suggests that the Society's view of what constitutes a 'worthwhile' award had changed since presenting its first literary awards in the 1930s and 1950s. The earliest awards were conferred as commendations, with no tangible prize – monetary or otherwise – offered to the winning author. It is therefore interesting that the author of this memo suggests that it is better to postpone conferring an award, rather than confer one which offers a small prize, indicating that the Society's personnel associated the value of the award with economic value.<sup>246</sup> However, the Society's determination to make the prize for the AMM Award distinctive or worthwhile, even if this was just in terms of presenting a specially bound copy of the book, was such that, somewhat counterproductively, the focus upon the financial security of the AMM Memorial Fund hindered the administration and conferral for nearly twenty years of the award.

Discussions about the value of the AMM Fund instigated further debate in the early 1970s. A letter from John B. Rankin, the Society's Honorary Secretary, to the Scottish historian and co-editor of *The Scottish Historical Review*, Gordon Donaldson, written in August 1972, reveals that the Society's Publications Committee, who maintained the administration of the AMM Memorial Fund, had decided the 'Award should be reinstated [with] an annual prize of £30'.<sup>247</sup> Noting how the Society needed an 'assessor' to help in the adjudication of such an award, Rankin asked Donaldson if he 'would be prepared to act as the assessor on the first occasion' (9393/24). Donaldson expressed an interest in the role, but noted that he would like to meet with Rankin and George Bruce, the Publications

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<sup>246</sup> The issues surrounding how the Society has historically quantified value in relation to the Literary Awards is discussed in more detail in Part 3.1 of this chapter.

<sup>247</sup> Letter from John B. Rankin to Gordon Donaldson, 11 August 1972. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

Committee Chairman, to discuss the idea further.<sup>248</sup> Writing to Bruce to discuss the possibility of a meeting, Rankin revealed that Donaldson had noted that there was ‘a similar prize, namely the Hume Brown Prize and suggested that our rules be distinctly different from theirs’.<sup>249</sup>

This resurgence of productivity in the administration of the AMM Award was short lived. Although Rankin, Donaldson, and Bruce met to discuss the scheme in the autumn of 1972, Rankin would not write to Donaldson about the AMM Award again until Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June 1973. Rankin apologised for the delay, explaining that ‘[o]nly now have the funds accumulated to such an extent that a prize of £60 is available’.<sup>250</sup> Indicating that during the meeting held in the autumn of 1972 it was decided that the prize fund for the AMM Award should be doubled from £30 to £60. Continuing, Rankin noted that as the editors of *The Scottish Historical Review*, Donaldson and Donald J. Withrington ‘were to be invited to act as the assessors for the best “published work of Scottish Historical Research”’ (9393/24). Unlike the Book of the Year Award, which requested nominations for the award from literary reviewers and editors, the ‘assessors’ of the AMM Award were responsible for selecting, as well as adjudicating, books eligible for the award. Due to the delays in the organisation of the award, Rankin also asked Donaldson if he believed that they should amend the original dates for the publication of qualifying books from 1971-1972, to 1972-1973. However this short burst of productivity was hindered by Rankin

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<sup>248</sup> Letter from Gordon Donaldson to John B. Rankin, 16 August 1972. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>249</sup> The prize Donaldson was referring to was the ‘Hume Brown Senior Prize’ which is still administered by the University of Edinburgh and awarded ‘biennially to a graduate of a Scottish University for an original contribution to Scottish History, unpublished or published, not more than two years before the award’ (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/current-students/university-prizes-awards/humanities/scottish-history>) The judges of the award ‘are the holders of the established chairs in Scottish History’. Quote taken from email correspondence with Professor Ewen Cameron from University of Edinburgh.

Ewen Cameron, email correspondence with Stevie Marsden, 2 March 2015.

Letter from John B. Rankin to George Bruce, 18 August 1972. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, No. 24.

<sup>250</sup> Letter from John Rankin to Gordon Donaldson, 29 June 1973. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

stepping down from his unpaid post as the Society's Honorary Secretary in the months following this correspondence, as well as Donaldson's failure to decide upon a winner of the award before the end of 1973, through fear of missing 'another book worth considering [that] might appear'.<sup>251</sup> As a result, the second AMM Award was not awarded until 1974, two years after Rankin had asked Donaldson if he wanted to be an assessor for the award.

This second AMM Award for a publication on Scottish history was given to Majorie O. Anderson for *Kings and Kingship in Early Scotland*, published in 1973. A press release announcing Anderson's win invited addressees to a presentation ceremony to be held at 3 p.m. on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1974, and offered a history of the AMM Award as well as a lengthy quote from the 'assessors of the award', Donaldson and Withrington.<sup>252</sup> In describing why they chose Anderson's book, Donaldson and Withrington illustrate exactly what criteria they did consider when adjudicating for the award:

While the volume is not likely to make much appeal to the general reader, it is, nevertheless, indispensable to anyone seriously interested in the history of Scotland in early centuries. [...] It seems unlikely that the ground will be covered again on this scale within the foreseeable future. (9393/24)

Such reasoning not only explains the motivations of the judges, who appeared to favour the significance and longevity of the research of the winning book over its accessibility, and therefore commercial impact, but also goes some way to distinguish the Award from the Society's Book of the Year Award. By making this statement when presenting the second AMM Award, Donaldson and Withrington were attempting to establish the award as one which celebrates achievements, and potential long-term impact and influence, of Scottish historical research over the prospective commercial impact of the winning book.

Donaldson and Withrington continued to judge for the AMM Award well into the 1970s, with S. G. Checkland receiving the award in 1976 for *Scottish Banking: A History*

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<sup>251</sup> Letter from Gordon Donaldson, *The Scottish Historical Review*, to Sylvia Fennell, 11 December 1973. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>252</sup> Notification of Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award 1974. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

1695-1973 (1975) and Michael Flinn, Thomas Smout and Rosalind Mitchison collecting the award in 1981 for their historic study of the population of Scotland, *Scottish Population History* (1977). Both of these awards received some coverage in local and national press. News of Checkland's award was printed in the *Aberdeen Evening Express* on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 1977 and the *Times Educational Supplement for Scotland*.<sup>253</sup> News of the 1981 award appeared in both the *Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman* newspapers on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 1981, and was also reported in the summer edition of the *British Book News* journal in June 1981.<sup>254</sup> The *Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman* illustrated the short articles about the award with photographs of the authors taken on location at the University of Stirling, where the presentation was made by the Society's President, Sir Kenneth Alexander, who was also principal and vice-chancellor of the university during this time.<sup>255</sup>

The explanatory text in all three news articles was similar, suggesting that the information came from a press release from the Society. However, while *The Herald* and *British Book News* refer to the award specifically as the 'Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award', the *Glasgow Herald* notes that the award was 'initiated by the society in 1956 in memory of the Scottish historian, Dr Agnes Muir [sic] Mackenzie'. Furthermore, both *The Herald* and the *Glasgow Herald* explain that the award is not made annually but only 'on occasions when the adjudicating panel consider a published work has made a significant contribution, at a particularly high standard, to the advancement of an aspect of Scottish history'. Such public statements acknowledging the irregularity of the AMM Award are significant since they indicate that the Society was conscious of presenting the intermittent

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<sup>253</sup> *Aberdeen Evening Express*, Friday 18 February 1977.

*Times Educational Supplement for Scotland*, 25 February 1977.

<sup>254</sup> *The Scotsman*, 5 March 1981.

Colm Brogan, 'Saltire Award for Group of Historians', *Glasgow Herald*, 5 March 1981, p. 2.  
*British Book News*, June 1981, p. 324.

<sup>255</sup> Charlie Allan, 'Sir Kenneth Alexander: Obituary', *The Guardian*, 30 March 2001

<<http://www.theguardian.com/news/2001/mar/30/guardianobituarie2>> [accessed 21 March 2015]



nature of the award as deliberate, as opposed to being caused by financial or administrative issues.

The *Glasgow Herald* article is a particularly interesting piece of early publicity for the AMM Award, because Brogan contextualises the significance of the award going to *Scottish Population History*, noting that: ‘Appropriately enough in this, the year of the Census, the latest Saltire Society award for a publication on Scottish history has gone to a study of the population of Scotland over the past centuries’ (Brogan, 2). Brogan also lists the previous winners of the award, with the final line of the article stating that ‘[t]he award is not financial – it takes the form of a scroll – and is regarded as something of an accolade by Scottish historians.’ (Brogan, 2) This comment from Brogan unwittingly foreshadows the friction between cultural and economic capital that will arise on numerous occasions in the future of the AMM Award. In asserting that the AMM Award is ‘regarded as something of an accolade by Scottish historians’, Brogan is attempting to justify the lack of financial reward by suggesting the award is valuable, and valued, in other ways.

Although Brogan’s assertion regarding the absence of a financial reward for the winners of the AMM Award in 1981 is accurate, some previous winners of the award did receive small cash prizes. As already noted, G. W. S. Barrow received the remaining balance from £50 after the cost for a leather bound copy of his book had been paid for. And while not a cash prize, in 1974 the winner of the award, Marjorie O. Anderson, was presented with ‘a nice piece of glass’ on receiving the award.<sup>256</sup> However, when the next award was conferred in 1977, it seems there was little in the way of financial reserves to present the winner, S. G. Checkland, with a trophy or substantial cash prize. Writing to the Society’s President, Sir Kenneth Alexander, the Society’s Treasurer A. C. Davis suggested that the Society should present Checkland’s wife with a bouquet of flowers as she was

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<sup>256</sup> Letter from A. C. Davis to Kenneth Alexander, 11 February 1977. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

going to be present at the ceremony (9393/24). Despite the fact that in this correspondence Davis acknowledged that ‘our funds at present really cannot allow us to be very generous’ (9393/24), Checkland was in fact presented with a £60 cheque.<sup>257</sup> On receipt of the award, Checkland wrote to Davis to express his gratitude at winning the award in terms of the cultural value and kudos he felt it signified:

May I say how much I appreciate the honour done by the Saltire Society in awarding me the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award [...] As you will be aware it gives particular satisfaction to an author to have his work recognised by his peers in a particular discipline, as in the present case. Even more so perhaps, in my own case as an incomer, is the recognition that a study in the Scottish context is acceptable by the Saltire Society.<sup>258</sup>

Checkland’s reference to his position as an ‘incomer’ is an allusion to his status as a Canadian working and researching in Scotland. His comment also implies that he believed the Society was a credible authority in the valuation of Scottish research.

Returning to the financial solvency of the AMM Award, in order to offer cash rewards or trophies the Society relied upon the AMM Memorial Fund accruing enough interest in the years between awards. This reliance was such that it impacted the regularity of the conferral of the award. Following a conversation with Gordon Donaldson, who remained as an AMM Award adjudicator, the Society’s Honorary Secretary, John B. Rankin, wrote to the Society’s President, Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Publications Committee in July 1973 to inform them that, since the Memorial Fund was due to receive interest in December 1973, an award could be presented in early 1974: ‘The Prize (of £60) will next be presented in early 1974 for a “published work of Scottish historical research”, completed during the calendar years 1972 and 1973’.<sup>259</sup> Rankin continued to say that the

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<sup>257</sup> Letter from A. C. Davis to S. G. Checkland, 25 November 1976. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>258</sup> Letter from S. G. Checkland to A. C. Davis, 6 December 1976. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

<sup>259</sup> Letter from John B Rankin to Saltire Society President, Chairman, Hon. Treasurer, Publications Committee, and Professor Gordon Donaldson and Mr. Donald J Withrington, 9 July 1973. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 24.

‘next succeeding Award will fall [in] early 1976 for a work completed in 1974 and 1975. Interest on War Stock (or equivalent) and Bank Account should by that time have produced a further £60’ (9393/24). However, between 1981 and 1991 no monetary prizes were conferred to the winners of the AMM Awards. As already noted, the six authors of *Scottish Population History* received ‘scrolls’ in 1981; and the subsequent winners of the AMM Award, Stewart J. Brown, who won the award in 1984 for his book *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth* (1982), and T. C. Smout for *Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (1986) in 1988, received leather bound copies of their award-winning books. By the time T. M. Devine would receive the award in 1991 for his book *The Great Highland Famine: Hunger, Emigration and the Scottish Highlands in the Nineteenth Century* (1988), the prize was raised to £200<sup>260</sup> which Devine received at an AMM Award ceremony held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1991.<sup>261</sup>

While Brown and Smout missed out on a cash prize, their awards were presented to them by the first recipient of the AMM Award, G. W. S. Barrow. As the editor of the *Scottish Historical Review* in the 1980s, Barrow was the adjudicator of the AMM Award, alongside his co-editor, Withrington. Barrow – who was also President of the Society between 1986 and 1990 – was not the only former winner of the AMM Award to become a judge for the award. T. C. Smout, who won the award twice (in 1981 and 1988), and T. M. Devine (who won the award in 1991) were also judges for the award after receiving it. Smout judged for the AMM Award in 1991, but resigned from the panel in 1993, noting in June of that year that he thought he should be replaced by the 1991 AMM Award winner, T. M. Devine.<sup>262</sup> Devine must have accepted an invitation to join the AMM Award

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<sup>260</sup> Letter from Kathleen Austin to Marjorie (no title/surname), 27 March 1991. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 4.

<sup>261</sup> Ceremony invitation for 1991 award to T. M. Devine, event, 23 April 1991. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 24.

<sup>262</sup> Handwritten letter from Christopher Smout to Kathleen Munro, 7 June 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 4.

judging panel, as by September 1993 the Society's Administrator, Kathleen Munro, wrote to Withrington to ask him to forward the books which were seemingly in contention for the award at that time to Devine.<sup>263</sup> However, it seems there was some confusion as to the state of the AMM Award judging panel at this time. In December 1993, Barrow wrote to Munro apologising for neglecting the award whilst also stating that he was not sure as to who was currently a member of the panel:

Agnes Mure Mackenzie I've shamefully neglected [...] partly because so many panellists have given up. I am happy to preside over one more competition but I'd like an up-date on the membership of the panel please, as apart from Tom Devine I'm not sure who is on!<sup>264</sup>

Munro responded to Barrow a week later, informing him that the panel currently consisted of himself, Devine and Withrington.<sup>265</sup> Munro also made a number of suggestions as to who the Society might wish to invite to join the panel following the retirement of Professor of history at University of Glasgow, A. A. M. Duncan, and the resignation of Smout (11259/4).<sup>266</sup>

Before leaving the panel, Duncan recommended other historians who could possibly be called upon by the Society to become judges for the award including Professors of history, David Stevenson and Edward Cowan. What such recommendations reiterate is that judges of the AMM Award were required to have achieved a certain level of scholarly qualification in order to be nominated as a judge for the award. Given that one of the key criteria of the AMM Award was that the winning book would be a 'published work of distinguished Scottish Historical Research of scholarly importance', it

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<sup>263</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to D J Withrington, 27 September 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 4.

<sup>264</sup> Handwritten letter from G W S Barrow to Kathleen Munro, 1 December 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 4.

<sup>265</sup> Letter from K Munro to Geoffrey W. S. Barrow, 8 December 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 4.

<sup>266</sup> While there is record of Professor Duncan's resignation, there is little documentation of his membership of the AMM Award judging panel, therefore it is difficult to ascertain exactly when he became a member of the panel.

is understandable that the adjudicators of such an award would be influential scholars of Scottish research in their own right.<sup>267</sup> Nonetheless, as has already been illustrated in the case of Barrow, Smout and Devine, the Society appears to have favoured inviting former winners of the AMM Award to be members of its adjudicating panel. This suggests that either there were a limited number of Scottish history scholars eligible for, or available to adjudicate for, the award, or the Society wanted to control and limit the reach of the award. Such limited collaborations and allegiances between Scotland's historians and the AMM Award, which have continued to the present day, contributed to creating a kind of microcosm of Scottish historical research within Scottish literary and publishing culture.

By the mid-1990s, however, there was a change in momentum of the AMM Award. It is during this period that the award began to develop. It formalised its judging and nominations processes and introduced more substantial monetary prizes for the award winners. As a result of such developments in the administration of the award, between 1991 and 2000 the number of AMM Award winners had doubled.<sup>268</sup> However, confusion surrounding the membership of the AMM Award judging panel would inadvertently affect the nomination and judging process once again between 1993 and 1994. In a letter sent from Munro to Withrington in September 1993, Munro indicated how she and the panel members had 'lost track of the books being circulated' for the award; proceeding to list the nominated books and ask Withrington to forward them to Devine if he had them in his possession (11259/4). Table 4 illustrates the books included in Munro's list of 1993 nominations for the AMM Award.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> This description of the expectation of the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award winner was taken from a 1998 Press Release for the Award.

Press Release: Scottish Book of the Year. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 83.

<sup>268</sup> In the twenty-six years between the award first being conferred in 1965 and the beginning of the 1990s, there were six winners of the AMM Award; but, within the next ten years (1991-2001) the same number of authors would receive the award.

<sup>269</sup> While these are the texts listed in this correspondence, it is possible that more titles were nominated for the 1993 AMM Award.

**Table 4: Nominations for 1993 Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award**

Author	Title	Year of Publication	Publisher
Robin Bell (ed.)	<i>Bittersweet within My Heart: Collected Poems of Mary, Queen of Scots</i>	1992	Pavilion Books
Robert S. Halliday	<i>The Disappearing Scottish Colliery</i>	1989	Scottish Academic Press
William Mackie	<i>The Diary of a Canny Man</i>	1991	Aberdeen University Press
Bashir Mann	<i>The New Scots: The Story of Asians in Scotland</i>	1992	John Donald
Paul H. Scott	<i>Andrew Fletcher and the Treaty of Union</i>	1994	The Saltire Society
John S. Smith	<i>Old Aberdeen: Bishops, Burghers and Buildings</i>	1991	Aberdeen University Press

Due to the misunderstanding regarding the status of the adjudicating panel, and Barrow's failure to maintain the administration for the AMM Award, Munro was obliged to write to Barrow in March 1994 to forthrightly ask: 'Who is to be awarded the [1993] prize?' and 'When is it to be presented?'<sup>270</sup> Barrow responded to this letter over a month later on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 1994, explaining that,

[I]t was not possible to recommend a book this year for the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award. I regret this outcome, but I feel that it was the only one possible. With the panel reduced to three, and with Tom Devine taking a completely opposite view from that of Don Withrington, I judged that it would not have been right for me to give a casting vote [...] and come down on the side of any one particular entry. It was perhaps unfortunate this year that with a number of members of the panel pulling out we did not have any submissions from among ourselves – but it may simply be the case that the past 2 or 3 years have been rather barren in the field of Scottish historiography. I hope that the next round will prove more fruitful.<sup>271</sup>

Barrow's admission not only exposes that two of the three judges adjudicating for the 1993 AMM Award had opposing views as to which book deserved to win the prize and that Barrow, despite being Convenor of the panel, was unwilling to cast a deciding vote; but, it

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<sup>270</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to G. W. S. Barrow, 25 March 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, No. 4.

<sup>271</sup> Letter from G. W. S. Barrow to Kathleen Munro, Thursday 5 May 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 4.

also illustrates that Barrow believed there was a lack of high-quality, and therefore award-worthy, eligible books. Concluding this letter to Munro, Barrow submits his resignation from his role as Convenor of the panel (11259/4). Following this, in December 1994, Munro wrote to the publishers who had submitted books for the 1993 AMM Award, stating that ‘the Adjudicators did not see fit to confer the Award upon any of the entries submitted on this occasion.’<sup>272</sup>

By September 1994, Devine had taken over the role of Convenor of the AMM Award panel and judged the 1994 award along with Cowan, Withrington and Norman MacDougall, a lecturer in Scottish History at the University of St. Andrews.<sup>273</sup> Minutes from a meeting held by this panel indicate a new focus and formal structure for the award. At the meeting the following description, which confirmed the history and basic rules of the Award, was agreed upon:

Established [in] 1965, the Award – a bound and inscribed copy of the winning publication – was instituted in memory of the late Dr. Agnes Mure Mackenzie and is made triennially for a published work of Scottish Historical Research (including intellectual history and the history of science). Editions of texts are not eligible. [...] Nominations are invited and should be sent to the Administrator.<sup>274</sup>

Furthermore, it was agreed that the members of the judging panel were entitled to submit ‘up to six titles for consideration’ for the AMM Award, although, subsequent notes from the meeting indicate that the panel were able to submit more titles if they wished to (11714/3). Such recommendations were to be listed in order of preference, and sent to Devine by the end of February 1995. In addition, ‘publishers would be asked to submit books of scholarly importan[ce] relating to Scotland, either published or about to be published’ and the announcement of successful nominees was scheduled for March, 1995

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<sup>272</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Pavilion Books, Edinburgh University Press, Scottish Academic Press, Aberdeen University Press, John Donald, Aberdeen University Press, 19 December 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 3.

<sup>273</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to T. M. Devine, 4 August 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 3.

<sup>274</sup> Meeting Minutes, The Saltire Society, Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award Panel, 22 September, 1994. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 3.

(11714/3). Since the Award was being conferred every three years, the ‘period of adjudication to be considered [...] would be the calendar years 1992-4 and then 1995-7’, but it was up to the adjudicators to ‘use their discretion’ when considering the official publication dates of nominated books (11714/3).

With regards to the sponsorship of the prize, the meeting minutes reveal that the interest amassed on the AMM Memorial Fund account totalled £2673, which was considered ‘sufficient to pay for the prizes [and related costs] for a few years’ and it was agreed that approximately £550 ‘could be used for the forthcoming award’ (11714/3). Despite this commitment of funds for the AMM Award, the final note under a section dedicated to ‘Finances and Sponsorship’ included within these meeting minutes, asserts that ‘the kudos of receiving the prize was far greater than any monetary award’ (11714/3).

There are a further two points raised and discussed during this important meeting of the AMM Award panel in September 1994. Firstly, Cowan, Devine and Withrington were aware of the need to generate publicity for the award, agreeing to produce a leaflet insert for the *Scottish Historical Review* in order to ‘alert the community of this major Historical prize’; once again reiterating not only the prize’s status as a significant or ‘major’ award, but also identifying the group, or ‘community’ of scholars the award was aimed at (11714/3). The panel also committed to circulating information about the award to ‘History Departments and Editors of historical periodicals’, as well as agreeing to meet in early 1995 ‘to discuss ways of encouraging the Press to take an interest in the Award’ and it was also agreed that ‘the award presentation ceremony would be used as a publicity vehicle’ (11714/3). What such procedures and ideas reveal is how the panel were not only aware of the need to connect more directly with Scotland’s ‘community’ of History scholars, but that the AMM Award should be widely promoted, in order to engage with a wider audience. It is particularly interesting that the judging panel for the AMM Award



felt this way, because in all other aspects the award was managed and administered for – and by – scholars of Scottish history. As previously noted, on the conferral of the second AMM Award in 1974, the judges actually acknowledged that the book they had selected was unlikely to ‘appeal to the general reader’ (9393/24). Therefore, up until this point there had been little indication that the adjudicators of the AMM Award were interested in appealing to those outside of the Scottish History research community.

The second point raised during this 1994 meeting of the AMM Award panel, relates to the terms of eligibility for the submission of books for the award. The meeting minutes stated that ‘if a book was nominated to the Convenor which has been written by a member of the Panel, that member would declare an interest and withdraw from discussion.’ (11714/3). It is significant that the judging panel for the AMM Award felt it was necessary to explicitly state this condition when establishing rules and terms of eligibility for the award since it again reflects the interrelationships between the AMM Award winners and judging panel members. This formal recognition of the possibility of potential crossovers between the AMM Award judges and nominated authors was arguably a tacit acknowledgement of the small pool of Scottish history scholars the panel anticipated book nominations from.

The impact of this meeting of the AMM Award panel in September 1994 was demonstrated in the months that followed. There were over twenty books nominated for the 1995 award, by far the highest number of nominations received for the AMM Award since its inception in 1965.<sup>275</sup> Further, the fact that many of the nominations came from

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<sup>275</sup> The books nominated for the 1995 AMM Award (for calendar years 1992 – 1994) included: David Allan *Virtue, Learning and the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993); Gavin Bell, *In Search of Tusitala: Travels in the Pacific after Robert Louis Stevenson* (London: Picador, 1994); Michael Brown, *James I* (Edinburgh: Canongate Academic, 1994); Keith M. Brown, *Kingdom or Province? Scotland and the Regal Union, 1603-1715* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1992); T. M. Devine, *Transformation of Rural Scotland: Social Change and the Agrarian Economy, 1660-1815* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994); T. M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War: The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994); T. M. Devine & G. Jackson, *Glasgow, Vol 1: Beginnings to 1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); I. Donnachie & G. Hewitt, *Historic New Lanark*

the publishers themselves indicates that the focused promotion of the award discussed in the meeting in September 1994 had been successful. However, many of the books came from the same publisher, suggesting that the AMM Award panel targeted certain publishers who they knew to be, or believed were, producing books that were eligible for the award. Edinburgh University Press (EUP), for example, makes up nearly half of the total nominations for the 1995 AMM Award.

By the end of February 1995, members of the judging panel for the AMM Award were beginning to discuss and put forward their preferences from the nominations they had received. The members of the panel: Cowan, Withrington and MacDougall, wrote to the Convenor, Devine, indicating the six books they considered to be the best, placing them in order of preference. Problems arose, however, when two of the panel members 'voted' for three of the nominated books written by the Convenor of the panel, T. M. Devine. The two members of the AMM Award panel who voted for books by Devine not only chose different books, but they also ranked them entirely differently; one judge felt that Devine's *Clanship to Crofters' War: The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (1994) was the best book out of the entire selection, whereas the other judge placed Devine's *Transformation of Rural Scotland: Social Change and the Agrarian Economy, 1660-1815* (1994) fourth in their list of six.

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(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993); I. Donnachie & C. Whatley, *The Manufacture of Scottish History* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1992); Elizabeth Ewan, *Town Life in Fourteenth Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); Michael Fry, *The Dundas Despotism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992); Christopher Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics, 1707-1994* (London: Routledge, 1994); R. A. Houston, *Social Change in the Age of Enlightenment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Ian Hustwick, *Moray Firth Ships and Trade: During the Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Scottish Cultural Press, 1994); E. W. MacFarland, *Protestants First: Orangeism in Nineteenth Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); E. W. MacFarland, *Ireland and Scotland in the Age of Revolution: Planting the Green Bough* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994); Hector L. MacQueen, *Common Law and Feudal Society in Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993); Allan Massie, *Edinburgh* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994); Paul H. Scott, *Scotland A Concise Cultural History* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1993); Paul H. Scott, *Andrew Fletcher and the Treaty of Union* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 1994); Elizabeth Sutherland, *Columba: Apostle to the Picts* (Inverness: Constable Publishers, 1997); William Zachs, *Without Regard to Good Manners: A Biography of Gilbert Stuart, 1743-86* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992). Of these 21 nominations, 9 came from EUP.

As a consequence of such results, Devine wrote to the members of the panel and the Society's Administrator, Kathleen Munro, to withdraw from his role as Convenor for the Award:

[...] a rather embarrassing situation has arisen. Two of my books appear on one list and one on another. It is therefore obvious that I must now withdraw from the decision-making process for this year and I have informed the Saltire Society accordingly. [...] The most experienced of us in this area is Don Withrington who served in the previous committee under the convenorship of Geoffrey Brown. I have asked Don to take my place as acting convenor for this year's award and he has readily agreed.<sup>276</sup>

Despite such complications to the adjudication of the AMM Award, the 1995 Award went to Michael Brown's *James I* (1994). Writing to Munro in May 1995, Withrington notes that 'the adjudicators were in some difficulty in coming to a decision about the Award' especially, he continues, considering 'the number and quality and variety of publications we were reviewing'.<sup>277</sup> Withrington also reports that he intends to write to Devine to inform him of the winner and note a number of issues which arose during that years adjudication process, namely, whether the panel should 'ask the [Society's] Council if the award might be made every two years rather than every three' because of the 'increase in works in Scottish history which are being published' (11714/3). However, Withrington acknowledged that such changes to the frequency of the presentation of the award would only be possible 'if the income for it will stretch that far' (11714/3). The Press Release announcing Brown's win indicates that the presentation of his award and the prize – a leather bound copy of *James I* and £300 – took place at the Society's Headquarters in Edinburgh on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July, 1995. This Press Release states that Devine was the

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<sup>276</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine to N. MacDougall, T. Cowan, D. Withrington, K. Munro, 3 March 1995. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 3.

<sup>277</sup> Handwritten Letter from Don Withrington to K Munro, 17 May 1995. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, No. 3.

‘Chairman of the Adjudicators’ for the 1995 award, suggesting that his withdrawal from the panel was not publicly known.<sup>278</sup>

The next AMM Award was awarded to Stephen Boardman in 1997 for *The Early Stewart Kings: Robert II & Robert III, 1371-1406* published by Tuckwell Press in 1996. Devine was once again required to step down as Convenor of the AMM Award panel in 1997 since his own books - *Scotland in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1996) and *Glasgow Volumes 1 & 2* (1995 – 1996) – were being considered for the award (and the latter of these two titles was also submitted for the 1995 AMM Award). Withrington once again took Devine’s place and acted as the Convenor of the panel for 1997. Minutes from a meeting held by the panel on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1997 confirm that Devine was not present during the adjudication of the 1997 award, which considered nominations for books published in 1995 and 1996.<sup>279</sup> Cowan and MacDougall returned as judges in 1997 and were also joined by Rosalind Mitchison, a retired Professor of Social History at the University of Edinburgh. Mitchison was the first female judge for the AMM Award in the award’s thirty-two year history, a startling fact given that the award was established to commemorate an influential female historian and scholar.

The minutes from the meeting in November 1997 also reveal that the panel had received ‘23 publications, nominated by the publishers and/or by the members of the Committee’ and that of these, nine had ‘survived to an initial short list’ (11828/29). During this meeting Boardman’s book was selected as the winner of the 1997 AMM Award from a final list of three from which the judges’ choice was ‘narrowly, if decisively, made’ (11828/29). The other books in contention for the award being R. D.

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<sup>278</sup> Press Release for 1996 Agnes Mure Mackenzie. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 29.

<sup>279</sup> Meeting minutes [written by D. J. Withrington] Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award in Scottish History, 15 November 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 29.

Anderson's *Education and the Scottish People 1750-1918* (1995) and Allan I. Macinnes' *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (1996).

It was also at this meeting that it was proposed that the AMM Award should be made annually. An 'Additional Note' that concluded the meeting minutes noted that:

Such have been the number and the scholarly quality of the publications under review in 1995-96, an emphatic signal of the thriving condition of Scottish historical studies and also of the greater opportunities recently in publishing books on Scottish historical subjects, that the members of the Committee discussed whether it should propose to the Council that the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award be made annually rather than biennially. (11828/29)

Following on from the point raised by Withrington in his correspondence with the Society's Administrator two years previously, this 'Additional Note' is a more formal proposal of an adjustment to the terms of the AMM Award in order to confer the Award once a year. Soon after this meeting, Devine wrote to Withrington offering his opinion on the positive and negative elements of such adjustments to the regularity of the AMM Awards:

The suggestion of the panel that we should go towards a one-year [cycle] is interesting and certainly merits serious consideration. [...] at this stage, I am not terribly attracted to the idea, partly because we have only just introduced a two-year cycle. [...] my own sense is that there has not been a particularly rich crop of quality publications in the field in 1997 and if this is the case an annual award might cause difficulties [...] in maintaining standards. My suggestion [...] is that we continue the two-year cycle for one further round and then make a decision on what to do thereafter. If this is acceptable it would mean we would make the award on the basis of books published in 1997 and 1998.<sup>280</sup>

As well as expressing his misgivings about an annual award, Devine also suggested inviting another person onto the AMM Award panel 'so as to avoid the danger of a split vote (i.e. 2 versus 2) in future', since the addition of Dr. Iain Hutchison, a Senior Lecturer

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<sup>280</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine to D. J. Withrington, 28 November 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 29.

in History at the University of Stirling in April 1998 had increased the total number of panel members to four.<sup>281</sup>

Such comments regarding the alteration of the occurrence of the AMM Award reveal that Devine's main concern with the introduction of a yearly award was the risk of there being too few books to consider for an annual award, which, in Devine's opinion, could lead to books of lesser quality winning. Despite expressing such concerns about the possible drawbacks of an annual award in November 1997, following consultation with the other members of the panel in early 1998, Devine wrote to Kathleen Munro on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1998 indicating that the AMM Award panel *would* like the Society's Council to not only consider making the award an annual one, but to also consider renaming the award the 'Scottish History Book of the Year'; a name that the panel felt 'would have more impact' and 'be useful for PR purposes'.<sup>282</sup> Following this request, Munro wrote to Devine saying that '[w]hen Council met on 18th April, members agreed with the desire to run the award annually and also with the new name.'<sup>283</sup> Nonetheless, Munro noted that the Society's Council 'did desire however that the award should be 'in memory' of Agnes Mure Mackenzie' (11828/29).<sup>284</sup>

As previously stated, 1998 also saw the addition of Iain Hutchison to the judging panel for the History Book of the Year award, a development which seems to have been instigated by Withrington's retirement from the University of Aberdeen, and Devine's desire for members of the panel to 'be in [an academic] post' and for a 'regular turnover in

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<sup>281</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Devine, 27 April 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 29.

<sup>282</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine to Kathleen Munro, 3 April 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, No. 29.

<sup>283</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to T. M. Devine, 27 April 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 118282, No. 29.

<sup>284</sup> To reflect this change in the title of the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award to the Scottish History Book of the Year Award, all subsequent post-1998 references to the Award in this thesis will refer to the award as the History Book of the Year Award.

membership'.<sup>285</sup> Accordingly, after serving on the panel for nearly 15 years, Withrington retired from his position as a 'full-time' member of the panel but was asked to remain as a 'lay member' in July 1998. This meant he agreed to be called upon to act as a judge for the award if there was a split vote or if a panel member had to withdraw because their own work was nominated.<sup>286</sup> Withrington was called upon immediately and was one of the adjudicators for the 1998 History Book of the Year Award.

Despite the agreement to award the History Book of the Year Award annually, due to the previous award covering two years' worth of publications, the 1998 award was open to books published during both 1997 and 1998. The award itself – which still came with a leather bound copy of the winning book and an increased cash prize of £500 – was not presented to the winner, William Fergusson for *The Identity of the Scottish Nation: An Historic Quest* (1998), until May 1999.<sup>287</sup> Similar to the number of nominations received for the 1995 award, the Society received twenty nominations for the 1998 History Book of the Year Award.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine, to Kathleen Munro, 3 April 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, No. 83.

<sup>286</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to D. J. Withrington, 16 July 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 83.

<sup>287</sup> History Book of the Year Ceremony Invitation. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 83.

<sup>288</sup> Lynn Abrams, *The Orphan Country: Children of Scotland's Broken Homes from 1845 to the Present Day* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998); Douglas Ansdell, *The People of the Great Faith: the Highland Church, 1690 – 1900* (Stornoway: Acair, 1998); Walter Bower, *A History Book for Scots: Selections from Scotichronicon*, ed. by D E R Watt (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1998); Michael Brown, *The Black Douglasses: War and Lordship in late Medieval Scotland, 1300-1455* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998); Jamie Cameron, *James V: The Personal Rule, 1528-1542*, ed. by N. MacDougall (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998); Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords: Social and Economic Change in the Western Highlands and Islands, 1493 – 1820* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998); John Dwyer, *A The Age of Passions: an Interpretation of Adam Smith and Scottish Enlightenment Culture* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998); William Ferguson, *The Identity of the Scottish Nation: an Historic Quest* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998); John J. Graham, "A Vehement Thirst After Knowledge": *Four Centuries of Education in Shetland* (Lerwick: Shetland Times, 1998); R. Gurriero Wilson, *Disillusionment or new opportunities?: the Changing Nature of Work in Offices, Glasgow, 1880-1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998); Majorie Harper, *Emigration from Scotland, 1918-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); John F. McCaffrey, *Scotland in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1998); John Rattray McIntosh, *Church and Theology in Enlightenment Scotland: The Popular Party, 1740 – 1800* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1998); Roger A. Mason, *A Kingship and Commonweal: Political Thought in Renaissance and Reformation Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998); Martin J. Mitchell, *Irish Immigrants and Scottish Society in the First Half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998); Cynthia J. Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law: the Anglo-*

Following the presentation of the 1998 award on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May 1999 at the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, Devine wrote to Munro indicating that it was his intention to resign from the position of Convenor of the panel. Writing on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May, Devine stated:

I firmly believe that there should be a regular turnover of membership, including the Convenorship, in order to avoid any accusation that we are a closed oligarchy. [...] I have probably now contributed as much as I usefully can and feel the time is ripe for some new ideas and fresh leadership. [...] I therefore wish to tender my resignation as Convenor at this time in order to give the [...] Society sufficient time to appoint a successor before the next round.<sup>289</sup>

After consultation with Devine and the rest of the panel, former Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award winner T. C. Smout and Scottish historian, Edward J. Cowan, were both nominated to take Devine's place as Convenor of the award. On hearing this, Smout stood down from this nomination, agreeing that Cowan should be the next Convenor of the Society's History Book of the Year Award.<sup>290</sup>

During the adjudication of the 1999 award, which was awarded to Eric Richards for *Patrick Sellar and the Highland Clearances* (1999) on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2000, the judging panel - Withrington, Hutchison, MacDougall and Cowan – raised the issue of the gender balance of the panel.<sup>291</sup> Writing to Munro in February 2000, Hutchison stated that he agreed 'wholeheartedly with Ted [Cowan] [that] we must have a woman' on

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*Scottish Border in the later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998); Edna Robertson, *Glasgow's Doctor: James Burn Russell, 1983-1904* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998); James I. Robertson, *The First Highlander: Major-General David Stewart of Garth, 1768 – 1829* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998); Fiona J. Watson, *Under the Hammer: Edward I and Scotland, 1286 – 1306* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998); Charles W. J. Withers, *Urban Highlanders: Highland-Lowland Migration and Urban Gaelic Culture, 1700-1900* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998).

<sup>289</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine to Kathleen Munro, 12 May 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 10.

<sup>290</sup> Correspondence between Kathleen Munro and T. C. Smout. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 10.

<sup>291</sup> Moreover, in a further example of how the tension between the cultural and economic value of the AMM Award played out throughout the award's history, in a fax to Eric Richards following his accepting of the award in 1999, Withrington wrote: 'Before you give up your day job, however, I should add quickly that, like many serious honours, this brings no fortune in prize-money. There's none – what you get is a specially hard-bound copy of your book [...] and the warm plaudits of your fellow historians in Scotland.' Handwritten note (faxed) from Don Withrington to Eric Richards. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 10.



the panel.<sup>292</sup> According to Hutchison's letter, the two key candidates for this were Senior Lecturer in Scottish History at the University of Stirling, Dr. Fiona Watson (who was shortlisted for, and very nearly won, the 1998 award) and Dr. Catriona MacDonald, from the Glasgow Caledonian University. Hutchison indicated a preference for MacDonald since there was 'already one Stirling person on the committee' and he felt that the judges 'should be spread across as many universities as possible' (12057/10). As a result of these discussions, Munro wrote to MacDonald on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2000, inviting her to join the Society's History Book of the Year Award judging panel. Munro noted that 'members of the panel normally serve for six years', adding that 'after three [years] you might wish to have a break'.<sup>293</sup> MacDonald accepted the offer on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, making her the first permanent female member in the history of the award.

Between 2000 and 2001 a number of issues relating to the administration and terms and conditions of the award were discussed in correspondence between the judges and Kathleen Munro. Writing to the panel in February 2001, Munro notes how the organisation of the award for 2000 is 'a little out of kilter', proposing to the panel that if they wish to hold the award's ceremony in April, they 'either have to press on or change the month of the ceremony'.<sup>294</sup> In 2000, the terms of the History Book of the Year Award stated that only books published between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2000 were eligible for nomination (12256/48), but such books were not requested by Munro until March 2001 and, as a result of this delay, confusion regarding the publication date and eligibility of some books arose.<sup>295</sup> Writing to the panel's Convenor, Cowan, in May 2001, fellow judge

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<sup>292</sup> Letter from Iain Hutchison to Kathleen Munro, 15 February 2000. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 10.

<sup>293</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Catriona MacDonald, 29 September 2000. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 48.

<sup>294</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Catriona Macdonald, Edward Cowan, D. J. Withrington, Iain Hutchison, Norman MacDougall, 27 February 2001. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 48.

<sup>295</sup> Letter from K Munro to John Tuckwell, Tuckwell Press, 28 March 2001. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 48.

Withrington states that he does not know how the panel ‘can cope with books dated 2000 still creeping in to the market in March or April 2001’.<sup>296</sup> What Withrington’s comment indicates is that the delay between a book’s official publication date and its availability to the general market led to the panel receiving books that, though eligible, were arriving late within the judging process. This problem also reflects a second point made by Withrington, namely, that he was finding it difficult to source copies of the books to read. Revealing his frustration at the situation, Withrington writes: ‘I am really irritated (even with a good library to hand here) at not being able to get my hands on the nominations’ (12256/48). This issue indicates that publishers failed to supply books that had been nominated for the award since records show that Munro had already written to publishers and requested copies of nominated books (12256/48). Ultimately, Withrington’s complaint was superfluous, since he admitted that of the nineteen titles nominated for the 2000 award, no entry ‘really stood out’ or represented the elements of ‘quality and scholarship and innovation’ that the award intended to reward (12256/48).<sup>297</sup> Consequently, Withrington offered only three recommendations for the short list which did not include the eventual winner (12256/48).

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<sup>296</sup> Handwritten letter from Don Withrington to Ted Cowan, 30 May 2001. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 48.

<sup>297</sup> The nineteen nominations for the 2000 History Book of the Year Award included: David Allan, *Philosophy and Politics in Later Stuart Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); Keith M. Brown, *Noble Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); Ian Donnachie, *Robert Owen: Owen of New Lanark and New Harmony* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); Krisztina Fenyô, *Contempt, Sympathy and Romance* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); John Finlay, *Men of Law in Reformation Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); W. H. Fraser, *Scottish Popular Politics* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2000); R. A. Houston, *Madness and Society in Eighteenth Century Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); John Marsden, *Somerled and the Emergence of Gaelic in Scotland* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); Irene Maver, *Glasgow* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); Alastair J. Macdonald, *Border Bloodshed: Scotland, England and France at War, 1369-1403* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); J. Derrick McClure, *Language, Poetry and Nationhood* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); Andrew McKillop, *More Fruitful than the Soil* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); Catriona M. Macdonald, *The Radical Thread: Political Change in Scotland: Paisley Politics, 1885-1924* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); Marcus Merriman, *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots, 1542-1551* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); William Scott, *Bannockburn Revealed* (Rothesay: Elenkus, 2000); J. J. Smyth, *Labour in Glasgow, 1896-1936: Socialism, Suffrage, Sectarianism* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000); T. C. Smout, *Nature Contested, Environmental History in Scotland and Northern England since 1600* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); D. E. R. Watt, *Medieval Church Councils in Scotland* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000); Christopher A. Whatley, *Scottish Society 1707-1830: Beyond Jacobitism, Towards Industrialisation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

The winner of the 2000 History Book of the Year Award was Marcus Merriman for his book *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots, 1542 – 1551* (2000). Merriman was chosen from a shortlist of three of the nominated books, which included *Border Bloodshed: Scotland, England and France at War, 1369-1403* (2000) by Alastair J. Macdonald and *The Radical Thread: Political Change in Scotland, Paisley politics, 1885-1924* (2000) by Catriona MacDonald, the most recent addition to the award's judging panel. Besides the 2000 award nominations exemplifying the status of Tuckwell Press during this time as a leading and prolific publisher of Scottish historical research (eleven of the nineteen books nominated for the award were published by Tuckwell Press), this shortlist once again highlighted the issue of panel members being nominated for the award. As had happened in 1995 and 1997 when Devine was nominated for the award while acting as a member of the panel, it seems MacDonald did not take part in the adjudication of the 2000 award. The running order for the 2000 History Book of the Year Award ceremony, held on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2001, lists MacDougall, Hutchison, Withrington and Cowan as the judging panel, thus suggesting that MacDonald did not partake in the judging or presentation of the award.<sup>298</sup> This running order also reveals that the winner of the award, Marcus Merriman, received a bound copy of his award-winning book, and a cheque for £2,000, a substantial £1,500 increase to the cash prize awarded to the previous years' award winner.

Following the Society's decision to make the History Book of the Year Award an annual award in 1998, the award was conferred annually, but the chronology of the presentation of the award in the mid-2000s was confused. Roland Tanner received the 2001 History Book of the Year Award for *The Late Medieval Scottish Parliament, Politics and the Three Estates, 1424 – 1488* (2001), but Tanner was not informed of this until

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<sup>298</sup> Saltire Society History Book of the Year in Memory of Dr. Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award Ceremony Running Order. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 48.

January 2003, and the formal presentation of the award did not occur until 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2003.<sup>299</sup> The Society's own archives indicate that the 2002 award went to Margo Todd for *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (2002)<sup>300</sup>; despite the fact that Yale University Press' website claims Todd won the Award in 2004.<sup>301</sup> The 2003 award was given to Marjory Harper for *Adventurers and Exiles: the Great Scottish Exodus* (2003) but was not presented to Harper until near the end of 2004 on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November.<sup>302</sup> By this point the History Book of the Year Award presentation had been incorporated into the Society's Literary Awards ceremony, which included the presentation of the Book of the Year, First Book of the Year, History Book of the Year and Research Book of the Year Awards. However, despite this change in the administration and presentation of the History Book of the Year, the award was still open to books published between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> December of the previous year, meaning that the winning books were frequently being rewarded well over a year since their initial publication.

During the adjudication of the 2004 award, which was awarded to Michael Penman for *David II, 1329 – 1371* (2004) in May 2005, Munro wrote to Cowan to ask if he had 'any strong objection' to 'assessing the History Research Book Award on a biennial basis once again'.<sup>303</sup> The Society's Council, Munro explained, had 'been looking at its finances – rather the lack of them – and is thinking of ways to reduce cost' (12907/61). Up until this point, the History Book of the Year Award prize – which now comprised of a cheque for £2,000 and, until 2005, a leather bound copy of the winner's book – had been funded by the AMM Memorial Trust fund established in 1955 and subsidised by the Society's

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<sup>299</sup> Saltire Society History Book of the Year Award Presentation Ceremony Invitation. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12393, File No. 33.

<sup>300</sup> Winners of the Saltire Society History Book of the Year Award. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12907, File No. 61.

<sup>301</sup> 'The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland', *Yale Books* <<http://yalebooks.co.uk/display.asp?k=9780300198119>> [accessed 21 March 2015]

<sup>302</sup> Phil Miller, 'Author "chuffed to bits" as tale of father and son reconciled wins Saltire award', *The Herald*, 1 December 2004, p. 8.

<sup>303</sup> Email from Kathleen Munro to Edward Cowan, 26 May 2005. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12907, File No. 61.

financial reserves. Acknowledging that Cowan and the panel may not wish to revert back to a biennial award, Munro noted that the award needed to acquire a sponsor and asked Cowan if he had suggestions of ‘any trusts dedicated to historical matters’ she could approach (12907/61). Following this, in 2006 the Society secured sponsorship for the History Book of the Year Award from the Edinburgh legal firm, Gillespie Macandrew WS (hereafter referred to as Gillespie), who became the first private sponsor of the award in its fifty-one year history, committing a ‘four-figure sum in prize money’.<sup>304</sup> The first recipient of the newly sponsored History Book of the Year Award was Cynthia Neville, who won the 2005 Award for her book *Native Lordship in Medieval Scotland: The Earldoms of Strathearn and Lennox, c.1140-1365* (2005).

As hitherto noted, it was during this period that the gifting of a leather bound copy of the award-winning book came to an end. Writing to Michael Penman, who became the final recipient of a leather bound copy of his award-winning book, Munro apologised for the delay in delivering the book to him – he did not receive it until early 2006, almost two years after the publication of his winning book – and asked his opinion on this form of gift, noting how:

There has been a suggestion put forward that we might abandon this part of the award. As a recipient, would you be willing to give me your opinion on this. It is considered by some to be a rather ‘quaint’ gesture and by others to be most acceptable. If you have the time, perhaps you could let me know which you would support.<sup>305</sup>

There is no record of Penman’s reply, but email correspondence between Munro and the Chairman of the Society, Cunison Rankin, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007, indicates that a bound book would no longer be offered as part of the History Book of the Year Award

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<sup>304</sup> Press release: Gillespie MacAndrew in the Scottish History Books: Law firm sponsors Saltire Scottish History Book of the Year, 22 November 2006. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13161, File No. 59.

<sup>305</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Michael Penman, 31 January 2006. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12907, File No. 61.

prize.<sup>306</sup> Writing to Rankin, Munro states that the reason for abandoning this form of reward is due to the fact that the binder employed by the Society had moved away, and the person Munro approached as a replacement ‘laughed’ at the payment the Society offered (13161/59). The discontinuation of the prize of a bound book was, therefore, caused by financial constraints, not the ‘quaintness’ of the gesture, as suggested in Munro’s letter to Penman.

This particular email correspondence between Munro and Rankin not only brought the Society’s financial issues into relief at the time, but also highlighted the Society’s unstable relationship with the award’s sponsor, Gillespie. In order to align the award’s timeframe of nomination and adjudication with that of the Society’s other awards, the History Book of the Year Award panel decided to present two awards in 2007 to cover the 2006 and 2007 award. Seeking funding for this double award, Munro wrote to Gillespie in early 2007, stating that ‘for this year only the Assessors will be choosing two books to be awarded, one for work published in 2006 and the other for 2007’ and enquiring as to whether Gillespie would be willing to contribute to this additional prize.<sup>307</sup> However, Gillespie were unwilling to support two awards. Munro’s email correspondence with Rankin on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007 reveals that, while Gillespie were happy to financially support the 2007 History Book of the Year Award, they were unwilling to offer any financial backing for the 2006 award. Munro explains that Gillespie believed ‘they would not get any more branding/publicity’ if they were to support a second History Book of the Year Award (13161/59). Rankin responds by asking if Gillespie would be ‘prepared to increase their sponsorship to £2000 for this one year and give two £1000 prizes for the two years’, but Munro reports that Gillespie have stated that their sponsorship budget is

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<sup>306</sup> Email from Cunison Rankin to Kathleen Munro, 14 November 2007. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13161, File No. 59.

<sup>307</sup> Letter from K Munro to Emma L. McGowan, PA/Marketing Assistant Gillespie Macandrew WS. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13161, File No. 59.

‘used up’ (13161/59). Antagonistically, Rankin reiterates that the Society does not ‘have the resources to pay for our own awards’ and asserts that if there is no money, there can be no award (13161/59). He even goes as far to suggest that the panel should be held responsible for financing the award if they wish to make the announcement: ‘If Ted Cowan has already announced the 2006 winner then perhaps he or Glasgow university could bring £1500 to the table’, to which Munro argues that financing the award is ‘the Society’s responsibility – not Ted’s and nothing to do with Glasgow University’ (13161/59). This exchange ends with Munro noting that she has ‘someone in the wings willing to put £1,000 and [...] someone else willing to give the balance’ for the 2006 History of the Book Award prize fund (13161/59).

Despite there being two separate shortlists and winners for the 2006 and 2007 History Book of the Year Awards – with Bruce A. McAndrew winning the 2006 award for *Scotland's Historic Heraldry* (2006) and Christopher A. Whatley winning the 2007 award for *The Scots and the Union* (2007) – the complications regarding the sponsorship of the awards led to confusion in the reporting of the award following the announcement of the winners in November 2007. In the Society’s own documents, the 2007 History Book of the Year Award was noted as being supported by Gillespie, but the 2006 Award was not.<sup>308</sup> However, *The Herald* newspaper incorrectly asserts that the two winners of the different History Book of the Year Awards were in fact *joint* winners of one award.<sup>309</sup> Similarly the website ‘The Book Standard’ stated that there were ‘two awards for the Saltire Society/Gillespie Macandrew Scottish History Book of the Year’, which also inaccurately suggests that both Awards were supported by Gillespie.<sup>310</sup> On the surface,

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<sup>308</sup> The Saltire Society, Book Award Shortlists 2007. No date. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13161, File No. 58.

<sup>309</sup> Phil Miller, ‘A L Kennedy wins Saltire Award’, *The Herald*, 1 December 2007, p. 5.

<sup>310</sup> Alison Flood, ‘Kennedy Wins Saltire.’, *The Book Standard*, 4 December 2007  
<<https://www-nexis-com.ezproxy.stir.ac.uk/docview/getDocForCuiReq?lni=4R8R-3PP0-TX7D-POCH&csi=280434&oc=00240&perma=true>> [accessed 25 March 2015]

such misquotes concerning the sponsorship of the award may appear inconsequential; however, taking into consideration the disagreements that were happening between the Society's staff regarding Gillespie's refusal to support both awards, such misinformation only intensifies the sense of confusion that surrounded the 2007 History Book of the Year Awards.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the problems in the previous year, in March 2008, Derek McCulloch, Marketing and Development Partner at Gillespie, wrote to Munro to withdraw the company's sponsorship of the History Book of the Year Award. McCulloch noted that Gillespie believed that 'continuing with sponsorship of the award would not fit with our new strategic focus and targets for 2008'.<sup>311</sup> In addition, McCulloch states that '[h]aving reflected on the previous two years we have been associated with the award, we also feel we have been unable to maximise the opportunities of this collaboration', suggesting that Gillespie felt their sponsorship of the History Book of the Year Award was ineffective in raising the company's own profile (13161/59). As a result, in 2008 the Society's History Book of the Year Award lost its first and only sponsor in its fifty-two year history.

Despite losing a financial sponsor and Rankin's ominous assertion that 'No money [equals] no award', the Society's History Book of the Year Award continued (13161/59). In 2008 Cowan and MacDonald remained as members of the adjudicating panel (with Cowan maintaining his role as Convenor), but they were joined by Richard Oram, Professor of history at the University of Stirling.<sup>312</sup> Between 2008 and 2012, this judging panel remained the same, only changing in 2010 when Catriona MacDonald won the History Book of the Year Award for her book *Whaur Extremes Meet: Scotland's Twentieth Century* (2009), and the Society's Chairman, Lorimer Mackenzie, judged for the award in

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<sup>311</sup> Letter from Derek McCulloch, Partner Gillespie Macandrew to Kathleen Munro, 13 March 2008. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13161, File No. 59.

<sup>312</sup> Scottish History Book of the Year Request for Nominations 2009. Saltire Society's private archive.



her place. The prize fund also remained at a constant £1,500 during this period, with the Society using its own financial reserves to cover the expense.

2013, however, saw a change to the award's judging panel, with Professor of Scottish History, Christopher Whatley, taking over the Convenorship of the panel. Historians David Caldwell and Fiona Watson also joined MacDonald and Oram as members of the panel from 2013 onwards. Continuing a tradition of the award's judging panels, two of the five judges, Whatley and MacDonald, are former winners of the award. In an example of how the introduction of an Executive Director for the Society in 2012 influenced the progression of the awards in the 2010s, in September 2013 Jim Tough wrote to the newly formed panel to remind them of the award's terms of eligibility and 'previous custom and practice', noting that:

It seems under Ted Cowan's chairmanship the following basic criteria applied;

1. Monograph is the assumed output; edited collections only exceptionally considered and collections of historical extracts/documents, never.
2. Research underpinning
3. Readability
4. Scottish focus<sup>313</sup>

Tough continued, stating that 'there was informal discussion earlier in the year about 'relaxing' the criteria to allow consideration of works that seem less academic, but have at least a research underpinning [...] [T]he original qualification was a book which 'recognises excellent [sic] in Scottish historical research'. It also said 'either on a Scottish subject or by a Scottish author' (Tough, 2013). While there have been a number of books shortlisted for the award since 2013 that have come from non-academic or specialist publishers, it is difficult to say after such a short period of time whether the Society's History Book of the Year Award panel have in fact taken a more 'relaxed' view to the criteria of eligibility since 2013.

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<sup>313</sup> Letter from Jim Tough to Chris Whatley, David Caldwell, Catriona Macdonald, Richard Oram, Fiona Watson, September 2013. Saltire Society's private archive.

With the wider changes to the Society's Literary Award schema in 2014 (see Figure 2) the History Book of the Year Award prize fund was raised from £1,500 to £2,000, with the winner of the award, Steve Bruce for *Scottish Gods: Religion in Modern Scotland, 1900-2012* (2014), also being shortlisted for the Society's Scottish Book of the Year Award. It seems the 'readability' of Bruce's book was at the fore for the History Book of the Year panel's decision, who 'commended [Bruce] for the clarity of his jargon free writing, which makes this profoundly important book accessible to a wider readership'.<sup>314</sup> 2014 also saw the introduction of a new sponsor of the History Book of the Year Award. In yet another example of the microcosmic nature of the award, the Scottish Historical Review Trust sponsored the Society £2,000 to cover the cost of the award's prize fund. In 2015, the History Book of the Year Award was awarded to Patricia R. Andrew's *A Chasm in Time: Scottish War Art and Artists in the Twentieth Century* (2014).

Much like the Book of the Year Award, the Society's History Book of the Year has had a long and, at times, confused history which was beleaguered by ineffective organisation. What this history of the award has shown is that there are a number of factors that have influenced the evolution of the award since it was founded in 1955. More specifically, as illustrated in this account, there are two key issues that have persisted throughout its history. Firstly, until recent years there has been a near constant struggle to finance and sustain the award (an issue with which all of the Society's Literary Awards have struggled). This inconsistent economic support for the award has, at times, had a direct impact on how and when the award was conferred, leading to lengthy periods between awards and the celebration of winners. Such economic struggles led to the award's judging panel regularly articulating the award's value in terms of the cultural capital and the prestige of winning the award as a means of justifying the lack of financial

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<sup>314</sup> History Book of the Year Award Panel Shortlist Comments, 2014. Saltire Society's private archive.

reward. This is a significant point since it demonstrates exactly how the Society, and judging panel members, would rationalise and articulate the value of the awards they were conferring.

The second issue highlighted by this account, namely the interrelation between award winners, sponsors and judging panel members, is also one which has affected all of the Society's Literary Awards in some capacity. Yet, over the years, the administration of the History Book of the Year Award has been particularly affected by the seemingly microcosmic nature of the community of Scottish historical research in Scotland. While it is difficult to quantify whether this is a microcosm generated by the Society's narrow reach in the selection of judges, or is reflective of a wider issue pertaining to the coterie of a certain element of historical research in Scotland, there is no doubt that the limited consortium of History Book of the Year Award winners and judges has, rightly or wrongly, affected the way in which the award has developed over the years, illustrating how such external influences can have an impact upon the administration of the Society's Literary Awards.

### 3.4 The Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award

On Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 1988, Paul Henderson Scott informed the judging panel for the Saltire Society's Book of the Year that *The Scotsman* newspaper had 'offered to sponsor the Saltire Award for the Scottish Book of the Year from the current year onwards', following the withdrawal of sponsorship from the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1987.<sup>315</sup> The 'terms and conditions' of the Book of the Year Award, would remain the same, but, as of 1988 there would be an additional award of £1,000 for 'the Scottish New Writer of the Year for the author of the best first published book' (10347/21). Literary Award judge Isobel Murray replied to Scott's letter the following day to say that 'a separate award for the Scottish New Writer is a splendid development' and assured Scott she would keep this news confidential until its public announcement.<sup>316</sup> The nomination and judging process for the new award would be similar to that of the Book of the Year Award: nominations would be invited from the literary editors of newspapers, literary magazines and journals, and would be judged by the Literary Award panel which included Angus Calder, Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford, Isobel Murray, Alan Taylor and Derick Thomson. Scott remained as the chair of the panel. What is unclear from such correspondence is exactly where the idea for an award for 'the best first published book' originated. Although there was mention of the founding of a book for 'first novels' noted in the Society's 1937 Annual Report, this suggestion was swiftly negated and seemingly forgotten by the Society. Credit for the founding of the First Book of the Year Award was subsequently

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<sup>315</sup> Letter from PHS to Angus Calder, Ian C, Douglas Gifford, Isobel Murray, Derick Thomson, Alan Taylor Monday 15 Feb 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>316</sup> Letter Isobel to Paul Henderson Scott, Tuesday 16 February 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

claimed by the Literary Editor Catherine Lockerbie who wrote that the award was ‘inaugurated by *The Scotsman*’.<sup>317</sup>

By April 1988 information about this new award was being widely circulated, with a press release announcing the ‘Scottish First Book by a New Author Award’ being sent to the editor of the weekly Edinburgh newspaper *The Citizen*<sup>318</sup> and the newly appointed Information Officer of the Scottish Arts Council, Barbara Thomson, on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 1988.<sup>319</sup> In May 1988 Lorraine Fannin, the Director of the Scottish Book Marketing Group<sup>320</sup> confirmed that the Society was welcome to announce the winners of its ‘New Author and Scottish Book of the Year awards’ during ‘Scottish Book Fortnight’ which was to take place between Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 1988.<sup>321</sup> The announcement of the winner of the inaugural ‘Best First Book of the Year’ was made alongside the announcement of the winner of the 1988 Book of the Year Award on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November and the winner, Raymond Vettese, received £1,000 for his book *The Richt Noise and Ither Poems* (1988).<sup>322</sup>

Vettese’s win had the potential to be controversial. According to a brief biography about Vettese written in 1995, he won the award ‘despite having failed to appear on the official shortlist’ for the award.<sup>323</sup> The Society’s records suggest that Vettese was not included in the initial list of nominations for the inaugural First Book of the Year Award as shown in Table 5.

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<sup>317</sup> Catherine Lockerbie, ‘Nonplussed Bruce wins Saltire Book Prize’, *The Scotsman*, Wednesday 1 December 1999, p. 4.

<sup>318</sup> Letter from Kathleen Austin to The Editor of *The Citizen*, 19 April 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

<sup>319</sup> Letter from Kathleen Austin to Barbara Thomson, Information Officer at SAC, 19 April 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

<sup>320</sup> The Scottish Book Marketing Group originated from the Scottish Publishers Association which was founded in 1973 and evolved into the Scottish Publishers Association in 1986. Since 2007 the organisation has been known as Publishing Scotland.

‘Our History’, *Publishing Scotland*, 26 May 2014, <<http://www.publishingscotland.org/about-us/our-history/>> [accessed 16 June 2015]

<sup>321</sup> Letter from Lorraine Fannin to Paul Henderson Scott, 19 May 1988. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>322</sup> *The Scotsman*, 2 November 1988, p. 7.

<sup>323</sup> ‘An A-Z of Scottish writers’, *The Scotsman*, 30 December 30 1995, p. 15.

**Table 5: Nominations for inaugural First Book of the Year Award, 1988<sup>324</sup>**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publisher/Year</b>	<b>Nominator</b>
Candia McWilliam	<i>A Case of Knives</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 1988	Unknown
Robbie Kydd	<i>Auld Zimmery</i>	Glasgow: Mariscat Press, 1987	<i>The Scotsman</i>
Matthew Yorke	<i>The March Fence</i>	London: Viking, 1988	Unknown
John Burns	<i>A Celebration of the Light</i>	Edinburgh: Canongate, 1988	Unknown
Peter Whitebrook	<i>Staging Steinbeck</i>	London: Cassell, 1988	<i>Scotland on Sunday</i>
George Marshall	<i>In a Distant Isle</i>	Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1987	Unknown
Ian Abbot	<i>Avoiding the Gods</i>	Blackford: Chapman, 1988	<i>Inter-Arts</i> (Angus Calder)
Jim C. Wilson	<i>The Loutra Hotel</i>	Puttenham: Making Waves, 1988	<i>Chapman</i>

While Vettese was not included in this list of nominations, he was included in the official announcement of the shortlist in *The Scotsman* on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 1988. Vettese was one of six authors shortlisted for the inaugural First Book of the Year Award, alongside Ian Abbot, Robbie Kydd and Candia McWilliam, as well as two other authors who were not included on the original list of nominations - John J. Graham, and John Burnside.<sup>325</sup> Burnside's book, *The Hoop* (1988), was also listed as an 'additional nomination' in the Society's records. This half page article, which, it should be remembered, was published by the sponsor and apparent originator of the award, offered short biographical descriptions of the authors shortlisted for the award who were said to represent 'a very wide range of backgrounds, age groups and literary concerns' (Berry, 1988).

However, while this particular article detailing the 1988 shortlists focused on the First Book of the Year Award shortlistees, the award generally came to be considered, or represented as, a minor award in comparison to the Book of the Year Award in future

<sup>324</sup> The Saltire Society Best First Book Nominations 1988, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10347, File No. 21.

<sup>325</sup> Simon Berry, 'Title fight for Scottish talent', *The Scotsman*, 17 October 1988, p. 15.

articles. In an article published a day after the announcement of the winners of the Society's 1988 Literary Awards – and a few weeks after the announcement of the shortlist – on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1988, Literary Award judge Angus Calder briefly discussed the First Book of the Year Award, writing:

This year we knew that our task might be more difficult than usual because a new award was to go to the best first book. But in practice our decision was almost instantaneous, despite several strong challengers. Raymond Vettese's book of poems, *The Richt Noise*, uses Scots with extraordinary power throughout, for polemical, lyrical and descriptive purposes.<sup>326</sup>

What is most surprising about Calder's, seemingly candid, account of how the Society's Literary Award judges approached judging books shortlisted for the 1988 awards, is the fact that Calder dedicates just two short paragraphs to the 'best first book', despite the fact that this was the first time the award had ever been presented. Far from being celebrated as a significant addition to the Society's series of literary awards, in Calder's article the award for 'best first book' is overshadowed by a lengthier discussion of the two books that shared the 1988 Book of the Year Award. As this chapter illustrates, this impression of the First Book of the Year Award being a less important or significant award in comparison with the Book of the Year Award is one which has plagued the First Book of the Year Award since it was founded.

This optimistic start to the First Book of the Year Award did not last for long. Correspondence between the Literary Awards judges during the months of adjudication for the 1989 Literary Awards indicates that there were some misgivings about the number, and quality, of books eligible for the First Book of the Year Award. In a letter to Paul Henderson Scott written on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October 1989, Literary Award judge Alan Taylor

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<sup>326</sup> Angus Calder, 'The dream ticket that shows where Scots should be going', *The Scotsman*, Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> 1988, p. 11.

suggested there was an ‘embarrassing lack of choice as regards to first books’.<sup>327</sup> Taylor continued, stating:

As far as I’m aware we have only two books that can legitimately be considered: James Meek’s *MacFarlane* [sic] *Boils the Sea* and *The Quincunx* by Charles Palliser. Meek’s is palpably a ‘first’ book [...] To award it a prize would be daft [...] *The Quincunx* is of a different order and if it’s eligible then I would be of a mind to give Charles Palliser the booty straight away. (10504/15)

Taylor also acknowledged the fact that Scott had ‘reservations’ about the eligibility of *The Quincunx* (1989) since the novel’s author, Charles Palliser, was American-born but working as a lecturer in literature at Strathclyde University in Glasgow.<sup>328</sup> With regards to the final decision about Palliser’s eligibility, Taylor conceded that he would be ‘guided’ by Scott’s decision (10504/15). Continuing, Taylor noted that if *The Quincunx* was deemed eligible it should ‘take the ‘First Book’ categorie [sic] and also be *considered* for the ‘Book of the Year’ (emphasis in original)’ (10504/15). This latter suggestion from Taylor infers that the Society’s Literary Award judges were open to the possibility of a ‘first’ book being shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award if it was deemed ‘good enough’.<sup>329</sup>

The way in which Taylor discusses James Meek’s *MacFarlane Boils the Sea* (1989) and Charles Palliser’s *The Quincunx* (1989) sets the two novels in opposition to each other in terms of their literary quality. In stating that Meek’s debut novel is ‘palpably a ‘first’ book’, while simultaneously suggesting that Palliser’s novel could not only win the First Book of the Year Award, but should also be considered for the Book of the Year Award, Taylor implies that Meek’s book is outranked by Palliser because it is too *obviously* a first book. Such comments insinuate that *MacFarlane Boils the Sea* is of

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<sup>327</sup> Letter from Alan Taylor to Paul Henderson Scott, 20 October 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

<sup>328</sup> Deirdre Donahue, ‘Charles Palliser: Literature’s new mystery man’, *USA Today*, 28 December 1989, p. 2.

<sup>329</sup> Indeed, such movement of books between categories has always been an option for the Society’s Literary Award judges, with the judges reserving the right to recommend a book to another panel or category if they felt it was necessary, and while this has been happened with books being recommended by the judges of the Book of the Year category to the History of Research Book of the Year Award panels, the Literary Award judging panel has never ‘upgraded’ a first book from the First Book of the Year Award category to the Book of the Year Award category.



poorer quality than other contenders because the author's inexperience is demonstrated in the text itself. It is significant that Taylor discusses the books nominated for the 1989 First Book of the Year Award in such terms since, as is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, the Society's Literary Award judges have been discussing debut authors and their books in such terms ever since. For example, Ann Matheson, who has been a Saltire Society Literary Award judge since 2006, acknowledged that she remains 'conscious' that a book nominated for the First Book of the Year Award is the 'first published book by a new writer' and if the book has many 'excellent qualities' but falters in certain areas, she will 'overlook that if the sum of the parts is sufficiently good, in a way that you wouldn't for a well-established writer.'<sup>330</sup>

To return to the judging of the 1989 First Book of the Year Award, alike to Taylor, Isobel Murray also wrote to Scott to state some 'preliminary opinions' about the books they had been reading for the 1989 awards.<sup>331</sup> Like Taylor, Murray commented on the lack of books nominated for the award stating: 'As far as I can see, we have few nominations for the first book [prize] – five, indeed' (10504/15). Murray continued, questioning whether since there were only five books apparently in contention for the award, would it not be possible to have a shortlist of five, which would give the panel 'more time for the much harder task of starting to trim the main entries' (10504/15). In the remainder of her page-long letter to Scott, Murray discusses the books and authors nominated for the Book of the Year Award, returning to the First Book of the Year Award in the final paragraph of her letter to maintain that she views *The Quincunx* as 'a likely contender for the first book prize' and that she would 'rather see it considered for that prize than the big one' (10504/15). Murray's letter reiterates the comparison the judges made between the First Book of the Year Award and the Book of the Year Award,

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<sup>330</sup> Ann Matheson, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 6 February 2014.

<sup>331</sup> Letter from Isobel Murray to Paul Henderson Scott, 22 October 1989. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

insinuating that the former was inferior to its longstanding counterpart. Murray does this twice in her letter to Scott: at the beginning she refers to the Book of the Year Award as the ‘main one’ and, before signing off, she refers to it as ‘the big one’ (10504/15).

Despite such favourable discussions about Palliser’s *The Quincunx*, the second First Book of the Year Award, was in fact awarded to Sian Hayton for her novel *Cells of Knowledge* (1989). Informing Hayton of her award in a letter written on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 1990, Paul Henderson Scott noted that the award would be announced during a lunchtime ceremony at the University of Edinburgh on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 1990.<sup>332</sup> Scott continued, explaining that the Editor of *The Scotsman*, Magnus Linklater, would be presenting Hayton with a cheque for £1,000 at the ceremony (10504/15). Responding to Scott’s invitation, Hayton wrote to the Society’s Administrator Kathleen Munro in order to accept the invitation and ask if her editor and friend, Dr. Robyn Marsack, could also attend the ceremony as Hayton’s guest.<sup>333</sup> This correspondence illustrates the extent to which many people who have been involved with, or attended ceremonies for, the Society’s Literary Awards in the past have remained engaged in the Society and its literary awards for many years: Magnus Linklater became President of the Society in 2011 and Robyn Marsack, who became Director of the Scottish Poetry Library in 2000, is one of the judges of the Society’s Poetry Book of the Year Award which was founded in 2014.

Following the conferral of the second First Book of the Year Award in early 1990, the award benefitted from the introduction of STV as a sponsor of the Society’s Literary Awards. The introduction of this new sponsor, who would share sponsorship of the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards with *The Scotsman*, led to an increase in prize money for the awards, with the First Book of the Year Award prize fund increasing

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<sup>332</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Sian Hayton, 4 January 1990. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

<sup>333</sup> Letter from Sian Hayton to Kathleen Austin, 12 January 1990. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

to £1,500. The announcement of this joint sponsorship deal was made on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September 1990, just three months before the announcement of the 1990 Literary Award shortlists. Similarly to the 1989 First Book of the Year Award shortlist, only three books were shortlisted for the award in 1990: Janice Galloway's *The Trick is to Keep Breathing* (1989), Gordon Legge's *The Shoe* (1989) and Harry Tait's *The Ballad of Sawney Bain* (1989). However, what was different about the 1990 shortlist was the fact that every book shortlisted was published by the independent Edinburgh-based publisher, Polygon. This domination of the Society's First Book of the Year Award shortlist by Polygon coincides with the company's exponential growth within, and therefore impact on, Scottish literature, particularly in terms of its support of new Scottish literature in the late 1980s and early 1990s:

Polygon Press, initially begun as a student-run organisation affiliated to Edinburgh University in the 1970s, then managed between 1988 and 1990 by Peter Kravitz, played an important role in nurturing new Scottish talent. Under the editorial direction of Marion Sinclair between 1990 and 1997, it proved particularly fleet-footed in spotting and publishing significant works by James Kelman, Janice Galloway, Liz Lochhead, Louise Walsh and Alexander McCall Smith, among others.<sup>334</sup>

Polygon's success in 'nurturing new Scottish talent' between 1990 and 1997 is exemplified by the fact that during this seven years, eight first time authors published by Polygon were shortlisted for the Society's First Book of the Year Award.

Of the three Polygon books shortlisted for the award in 1990, it was Harry Tait's novel *The Ballad of Sawney Bain* which was awarded the third First Book of the Year Award. The press release announcing Tait's win circulated on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January 1991 describes the decision to award him the £1,500 prize as a 'unanimous' one.<sup>335</sup> The reason *The Ballad of Sawney Bain* was chosen, the press release states, was 'in recognition of its

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<sup>334</sup> B. Bell, S. W. Brown, W. McDougall, eds., 'Publishing policies: the literary culture', in *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Volume 4: Professionalism and Diversity 1880-2000* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 184

<sup>335</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards Press Release, 31 January 1991. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10504, File No. 15.

bold treatment of an original and frequently horrifying historical subject on a large and vigorous scale' (10504/15). This acclaim did not, it would seem, translate into financial success for Tait. A short news item published in *The Times* on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 1992, just over a year after Tait's win, claimed that:

Harry Tait, the Glaswegian writer who won the Saltire Society's first book award last year, has been forced to take out a classified advertisement in *The Scotsman* newspaper so that he continues to write. Tait, who wrote *The Ballad of Sawney Bain*, says he will have to move to Spain, Czechoslovakia or Canada to teach if he cannot find a way to live in Britain.<sup>336</sup>

By this time, however, another author had been awarded the Society's First Book of the Year Award. Similarly to the previous year's shortlist, Polygon were prominent on the 1991 shortlist, with two of the four shortlisted books coming from the Scottish publisher and for the second year in a row, a Polygon author won the award. A. L. Kennedy received the award on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 1992 for her debut collection of short stories *Night Geometry and the Garscadden Trains* (1990). Correspondence between the judges regarding the 1991 award reveals that, although Kennedy's book was selected as the winner of the First Book of the Year Award, David S. Mackenzie's *The Truth of Stone* (1991) was the judge's second choice.<sup>337</sup> Mackenzie's position as 'runner up' was also stated in the press release announcing the winners of the 1991 award, alongside the 'runner up' of the Book of the Year Award, Robin Jenkins' *Poverty Castle* (1991) (10504/15).

The ceremony for the 1991 award also revealed tensions between the sponsors of the Society's Literary Awards. As noted earlier in this chapter, the First Book of the Year Award was often referred to as the 'minor' award in comparison with the Book of the Year which was seen as the 'main prize'. Following the 1991 awards, Simon Forrest, the Controller of Corporate Affairs for STV, wrote to Paul Henderson Scott to complain about

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<sup>336</sup> 'Kaunda lives on family support', *The Times*, 8 February 1992, p. 20.

<sup>337</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Isobel Murray, 9 January 1992. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10890, File No. 28.

a number of issues relating to the awards ceremony held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 1992. Forrest notes how he was particularly unhappy ‘to learn that instead of [STV newsreader] Viv Lumsden presenting the major prize [it was] decided that she would give the second prize’.<sup>338</sup> Forrest continued to suggest that he ‘should have been consulted about this since it undermines [STV’s] involvement for every year to be seen to be playing the junior role’ (10890/28). For a sponsor to have such a vehement reaction to an association with the First Book of the Year Award, and misguidedly refer to it as a ‘second prize’, illustrates the extent to which the identity of the First Book of the Year Award was unclear in its early years.

A year later, the 1992 First Book of the Year Award was awarded to two collections of poetry: Jackie Kay’s *Adoption Papers* (1991) and Christopher Whyte’s *Uirsgeul/Myth* (1991). This was the first year in which the award was split between two shortlistees, with each author receiving £750. Following the ceremony, held on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1993, Ian Campbell wrote to the Society’s administrator, Kathleen Munro, to inform her of how the ceremony unfolded. Campbell noted how he had spoken to *The Scotsman*’s editor, Magnus Linklater, and the Managing Director of STV, Gus MacDonald, about how the awards and the ceremony may be developed in the future. One suggestion being, Campbell states, that ‘there might be a place for a practising critic of the younger generation [...] to join the panel at some point’, with former First Book of the Year Award winner, A. L. Kennedy, named as a potential candidate.<sup>339</sup> This issue was raised again, this time by Magnus Linklater, who wrote to Paul Henderson Scott later in the year stating that he had ‘no quarrel with the format’ of the awards, but that perhaps the ‘composition’ of the judging panels should be reconsidered: ‘I wondered whether we

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<sup>338</sup> Letter from Simon Forrest (STV) to Paul Henderson Scott, 2 January 1992. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 10890, File No. 28.

<sup>339</sup> Letter from Ian Campbell to Kathleen Munro, 26 January 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 24.

shouldn't be considering incorporating one or two of the younger Scottish writers, but perhaps that can be a matter for discussion next year.'<sup>340</sup>

Such comments allude to concerns relating to the static nature of the Society's Literary Award judging panel which, in 1993, remained more or less unchanged since the founding of the First Book of the Year Award in 1988. The panel, which also judged for the Book of the Year Award, had consisted of Angus Calder, Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford, Isobel Murray, Paul Henderson Scott, Alan Taylor and Derick Thomson since 1984 (except in 1989 and 1990, when Thomson was not a member of the panel).<sup>341</sup> What is significant about Campbell's specific reference to A. L. Kennedy, and Linklater's emphasis on the inclusion of *younger* Scottish writers, is the fact that both suggestions seem focused on the Society's Literary Awards engaging with new and upcoming writers. Such issues are inherently interconnected with the Society's First Book of the Year Award which was established for the very purpose of supporting emerging Scottish writers. Campbell and Linklater's comments suggest that the sponsors of the Society's Literary Awards were not convinced that the panel of judges was truly representative of the kind of books and authors they were judging for the Society's Literary Awards, particularly with regards to the First Book of the Year Award.

It seems that such calls for the introduction of a new panel member were heeded because in 1994 the journalist and theatre critic, Joyce McMillan, joined the panel in place of the journalist and writer Alan Taylor. Such changes coincided with STV ending their joint financial sponsorship of the Society's Literary Awards (although they would continue to broadcast the Awards Ceremony until 1997). While *The Scotsman* remained as sponsor of the Book of the Year Award (and would continue to do so until 1999), the First Book of

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<sup>340</sup> Letter from Magnus Linklater to Paul Henderson Scott, 23 June 1993. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11259, File No. 25.

<sup>341</sup> Concerns regarding the long-standing status of the Society's Literary Award judging panel members have been raised throughout the history of the Society's Literary Awards and are discussed in more detail in part 4.1 of this thesis.

the Year, as previously noted, received one year of sponsorship in 1995 from the Gaelic literary journal *Gairm*. When this one year sponsorship deal came to an end, the Society's Director, Ian Scott, wrote to a multitude of companies in April and May 1996, including Waterstone's, HarperCollins and Johnston Press, in targeted attempts to secure financial support for the First Book of the Year Award. For example, in his letter to Eddie Bell, the Chief Executive of HarperCollins, Scott noted how:

These Saltire Awards are widely acknowledged across the literary spectrum in Scotland and attract a good deal of media attention. Scottish fiction [...] is currently enjoying a period of special popularity and last year's winner of the first book, Ali Smith's "Free Love", was acclaimed as the start of a potentially brilliant writing career.<sup>342</sup>

Writing in response to Scott on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 1996, Bell declined to sponsor the First Book of the Year Award suggesting that 'a book award sponsored by an individual publisher usually has little or no credibility'.<sup>343</sup> Bell continued, stating that sponsoring the award would 'preclude us from ever submitting any HarperCollins books, as it would be seen as a conflict of interest' (11828/51).

Equally negative responses were received from Waterstone's and James Thin. Writing on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1996, Honor Wilson-Fletcher, the PR and Publicity Manager of Waterstones's noted that, despite 'sympathis[ing] with the issues which concern [the Society]', the 'lion's share' of Waterstone's budget was 'fully spent'.<sup>344</sup> Similarly, the owner of the Edinburgh bookshop James Thin Books, D. Ainslie Thin, wrote a revealing letter explaining the negative impact the termination of the Net Book Agreement<sup>345</sup> had on the company's finances making any sponsorship impossible:

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<sup>342</sup> Letter from Ian Scott to Eddie Bell, Chief Executive HarperCollins, 17 May 1996, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>343</sup> Letter from Eddie Bell, Exec Chairman Harper Collins to Ian Scott, 19 June 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>344</sup> Letter from Honor Wilson-Fletcher, PR and Publicity Manager Waterstones to Ian Scott, 23 April 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>345</sup> It just so happened that Scott's search for sponsorship corresponded with a brief recession in the UK book trade following the breakdown of the Net Book Agreement (NBA) in 1995. The NBA had allowed publishers to set minimum prices for books but when this option was removed 'consumer spending on books

I am sorry we cannot help you. As you know the Net Book Agreement disappeared on us on 1st October 1995 and since then our margin has been very severely dented. In the period between 1st October and end December, we lost margin which went straight through to a reduction in our profit to the amount of £253,000. So we are busy trying to mend our fences by making new arrangements with publishers, but meanwhile our profitability has been severely affected and we have been cutting back on every possible expense in order to ensure our future. We will have things in place in the course of the next year or so, I am sure, but meanwhile I am afraid we cannot possibl[y] provide the support you require for your prize<sup>346</sup>

However, in the midst of this series of rebuffs, a letter from Kathleen Munro which was sent to the secretary of the Scottish Post Office Board, Martin Cummins, on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 1996 reveals that Cummins had approached the Society enquiring about the possibility of the Post Office (a subsidiary of the Royal Mail) becoming a financial sponsor. Munro took the opportunity to explain that the Society would ‘take on board [...] suggestions and requests’ from sponsors, ‘within reason’.<sup>347</sup> Munro also noted that Jenny Brown, who was the Head of Literature at the Scottish Arts Council at the time, had been in touch to suggest an award for ‘literature for children’ and that the Society was thinking about this and perhaps Cummins would like to consider it too (11828/51).<sup>348</sup> Munro signed off by thanking Cummins for ‘showing such an interest’ in the awards and assuring him that she would be ‘in touch very soon with some figures’ which would indicate the potential expenditures that the sponsorship of the First Book of the Year Award would entail (11828/51).

Writing to Cummins a month later on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August, Munro informed him that *The Scotsman* had confirmed that ‘their budget will not allow them to sponsor the

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bottomed out in the spring of 1996’.

Giles Clark and Angus Phillips, ‘The reshaping of retail’ in *Inside Book Publishing* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 35.

<sup>346</sup> Letter from D. Ainslie Thin, James Thin Books to Ian Scott, 17 April 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>347</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Martin Cummins, Scottish Post Office Board, 1 July 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>348</sup> Brown has commented on the need for a children’s literary award on further occasions, most recently in interview, but the Society has not pursued awarding this particular area of literature any further. Jenny Brown, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 26 February 2015.



Scottish First Book of the Year: £1500 (a published work by a new author)’ and that the Society’s ‘search [for a sponsor] starts again’.<sup>349</sup> Munro asked Cummins if ‘the Scottish Postal Board might be interested and allow its name to be associated with this award?’, stating that ‘Although the publicity material for our award has been issued, the ceremony provides an opportunity to announce the sponsors and to display P.R. material’ (11828/51).

On Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1996 Cummins responded to Munro confirming that the Post Office would ‘support (rather than sponsor) the Saltire First Literary Award at this year’s ceremony on 27 November for the **inclusive** sum of £1,500’ (emphasis in original).<sup>350</sup> Following this statement of support, Cummins listed a substantial series of conditions the Post Office wished for in return for their support. These included:

- The Post Office’s support will be fully acknowledged in [the] televised introduction of the Award;
  - Kenneth Graham, or other nominated Post Office representative, will be able to present the Award and speak (your good offices to be used to secure as much air time as possible) to camera for subsequent television broadcast;
  - The Post Office will be able to display its logo (and associated slogan if possible) in any televised backdrop agreed with STV;
  - After consultation about suitable wording, The Post Office will be mentioned in all media and promotional material issued by the Saltire Society in connection with the aforementioned Awards; [...]
  - A set of books for consideration by the judges for the Saltire First Award will be made available to The Post Office at no extra cost.
  - The Post Office will be offered first option to support the Saltire First Award for the next two years.
- (11828/51).

Following consultation with Ian Campbell, who was Convening the Society’s Literary Award judging panel in 1996, Munro confirmed that the panel were happy to accept these conditions and wrote to Cummins to confirm that the Society were ‘delighted that The Post

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<sup>349</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Martin Cummins, 5 August 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>350</sup> Letter from Martin Cummins to Kathleen Munro, 22 October 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

Office has agreed to support new writers this year' and that she could not 'at the moment, see any reason why we could not comply with [the conditions]'.<sup>351</sup>

Although this formal confirmation of support arrived on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, a press release dated Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October announcing the Post Office's involvement in the Society's Literary Awards indicates that the deal had actually been finalised in the preceding weeks. This press release celebrated the new support, claiming the Post Office's backing had 'saved the Saltire Society's new writer's award for 1996'.<sup>352</sup> The press release, portions of which were published in an article announcing the 1996 shortlists in *The Scotsman* newspaper on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October 1996<sup>353</sup>, also reported that the Society had 'almost given up hope of finding a supporter for this year's Saltire award for the best Scottish First Book' which was 'designed to recognise and encourage new writing talent'.<sup>354</sup> Keen to reiterate the Post Office's 'literary endeavours', Kenneth Graham, the Chairman of the Scottish Post Officer Board, was quoted as saying:

Looking, as we do, after some 10 million letters every working day in Scotland, we felt it very reasonable to extend our own literary endeavours and help the Saltire Society's excellent award for Scottish 'letters' to continue. I'm sure the great novelist Anthony Trollope who worked for The Post Office for many years would approve. (11714/25)<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Martin Cummins, 23 October 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>352</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards Press Release, 21 October 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 51.

<sup>353</sup> Nick Thorpe, 'Every story in the book makes a wide-ranging Saltire list complete', *The Scotsman*, 26 October, pg. 3.

<sup>354</sup> Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award Press Release, (no date). Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

<sup>355</sup> Sponsorship of the Society's First Book of the Year Award was just one of a number of investments in the arts in Scotland made by the Post Office in the late 1980s and early 1990s. An article in the *Glasgow Herald* from Monday 16th March 1987 details the kind of philanthropic investment the Post Office would be making in that year alone: 'This year the Edinburgh Festival will receive £25,000, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra £20,000, the St Magnus Festival in Orkney £15,000, the National Galleries of Scotland £12,500'. The Post Office would also bequeath 'smaller sponsorships such as a £250 annual award for the Royal Scottish Academy and £1600 for the Commonwealth Writers' Conference' (Ritchie, 1987). Such investments were, according to this article, instigated by Ian Barr, the Chairman of the Scottish Post Office (1984-1988) and the 'man who made the Post Office patron of the Arts' (Ritchie, 1987). Accordingly, by the time the Post Office became sponsor of the Society's First Book of the Year Award it had already established itself as a significant supporter and financier of arts and culture in Scotland. Murray Ritchie, 'Man Who Made the Post Office Patron of the Arts' *Glasgow Herald*, 16 March 1987, p. 17.

From the beginning of their sponsorship, the Post Office became actively involved in the marketing and administration of First Book of the Year Award. Cummins was present, for example, at the final judging panel meeting for 1996 held on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 1996.<sup>356</sup> According to the minutes from this meeting, Cummins discussed ‘the pattern of this year’s support and the future [of the award], and the award ceremony’ before leaving so the judges could ‘discuss and vote on the winners’ of the 1996 awards (11714/25). A letter from Ian Campbell to Kathleen Munro sent after this meeting reveals that the Post Office had agreed to ‘help in distributing information about [the] award to weekly newspapers’.<sup>357</sup> Furthermore, Campbell informed Munro that a copy of the 1996 First Book of the Year Award winner, Kate Clanchy’s *Slattern* (1995) was ‘going to [the] Post Office so that Kenneth Graham [the Chairman of the Scottish Post Office] can read before the presentation ceremony’ (11714/25).

Following the withdrawal of STV as a financial sponsor of the Society Literary Awards in 1994, in 1997 STV also decided to end broadcasting the Society’s Literary Awards ceremony. This withdrawal of support in July 1997 triggered a series of changes to the promotion and marketing of the award that would affect them for a number of years to come. In a letter to Douglas Gifford, who was Convenor of the Literary Awards judging panel in 1997, Munro explained that she had ‘spoken to Kathryn Ross of Book Trust Scotland [and] [i]t seems we are all going our own separate ways as Scottish Television has pulled out’.<sup>358</sup> Munro was here making reference to the joint award ceremonies, at which several of Scotland’s major literary awards had been presented, that

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<sup>356</sup> ‘Saltire Society Book Award Final judging meeting’, 4 November 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

<sup>357</sup> Letter from Ian Campbell to Kathleen Munro, 4 November 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 25.

<sup>358</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Douglas Gifford, 2 July 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11991, File No. 16

were broadcast by STV.<sup>359</sup> Munro also informed Gifford that the hotel chain Stakis had replaced McVitie's as the sponsor of the Scottish Book of the Year Award and that Stakis' 'PR people have been speaking to the PR people in the BBC but no-one seems to know what the result is' (11991/16). This news concerning the developments in the McVitie's/Stakis Scottish Writer of the Year Award would eventually have an influential impact upon the Society's own preparations. Writing to Gifford again a month later, Munro commented that '[a]s we are once again 'going it alone', the proposed timing of the ceremony, the availability of accommodation and the announcement of the Stakis Prize shortlist are all affecting our arrangements.'<sup>360</sup> The announcement of the shortlist for the Stakis Prize for the Scottish Writer of the Year 1997 was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October at the Grosvenor Hotel in Edinburgh, the same day the Society's Literary Awards judging panel had arranged to meet to decide the shortlists for the 1997 Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award. It was also on this day that a press release detailing the Society's 1997 Literary Award shortlists and the date for the awards ceremony was distributed. The winner of the Society's 1997 First Book of the Year Award, Robin Robertson's *A Painted Field* (1997) was announced a month later at an awards ceremony held at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 1997.

1998 was the tenth year in which the Society's First Book of the Year Award was awarded. It was also the first year in which the award was jointly split between two books: Dennis O'Donnell's *Two Clocks Ticking* (1997) and Christopher Wallace's *The Pied Piper's Poison* (1998). A year later the Society's First Book of the Year Award was given to Michel Faber's debut collection of short stories *Some Rain Must Fall* (1998) at an awards ceremony held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 1999 at the National Library of

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<sup>359</sup> These joint literary award ceremonies are discussed in more detail in part 3.2 of this thesis.

<sup>360</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Douglas Gifford, 20 October 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11991, File No. 16.

Scotland. With the withdrawal of *The Scotsman*'s financial support of the Book of the Year Award in early 2000, Kathleen Munro wrote to Martin Cummins, on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2000 to offer the Post Office 'first refusal' on extending their sponsorship of the awards to include the Book of the Year Award.<sup>361</sup> Cummins responded three weeks later on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April, stating that the Royal Mail had 'considered this carefully' but were unable to 'extend [...] support beyond the First Book Award'.<sup>362</sup> Still, Cummins did confirm that Royal Mail would be 'delighted to support' the First Book of the Year Award for 2000, and the award was presented to Douglas Galbraith's historical fiction novel *The Rising Sun* (2000) at a ceremony held at the National Library of Scotland on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000. Galbraith's win was described as being particularly significant, since he was reported to have received a £100,000 advance for his debut novel from Picador.<sup>363</sup>

In 2001, Royal Mail attempted a rebranding of their company which included changing the name of the Post Office to Consignia.<sup>364</sup> This in turn led to the First Book of the Year Award being referred to as the 'Consignia/Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award' in 2001, which was awarded to Meaghan Delahunt for her novel *In the Blue House* (2001).<sup>365</sup> Despite the fact that by June 2002 Consignia had reverted back to Post Office, during this period, Consignia was going through financial and logistical problems which appear to have concerned the Society's Administrator Kathleen Munro.<sup>366</sup> Writing to Ian Campbell, the convenor for the 2002 Literary Awards panel, on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2002,

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<sup>361</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Martin Cummins, 21 March 2000. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12393, File No. 84.

<sup>362</sup> Letter from Martin Cummins to Kathleen Munro, 12 April 2000. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12393, File No. 84.

<sup>363</sup> Hugh Macdonald, 'Outsider joins the in-crowd; Hugh MacDonald interviews this year's Saltire winner, Ronald Frame, and profiles the successful debut-novel and non-fiction writers', *The Herald*, 1 December 2000, p. 21.

<sup>364</sup> 'U.K.'s Post Office Will Change Its Name to Consignia in March', *The Wall Street Journal*, 10 January 2001 <<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB979075589579344054>> [accessed 20 April 2015]

<sup>365</sup> 'Billboard', *The Herald*, 7 November 2001, p. 15.

<sup>366</sup> Mary Fagan, 'Consignia name in lost post as Royal Mail returns', *The Telegraph*, 9 June 2002, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/2764832/Consignia-name-lost-in-post-as-Royal-Mail-returns.html>> [accessed 20 April 2015]

Munro stated that she had ‘a feeling Consignia may not wish to commit itself [to further sponsorship] at this stage’.<sup>367</sup> However, email correspondence between Munro and Literary Award judge Isobel Murray from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2002 confirms that Consignia had ‘indicated (verbally) that it will sponsor for a further year.’<sup>368</sup> Consignia/Royal Mail continued to support the Society’s First Book of the Year Award until 2010, with the brand name change reversal being reflected in the Society’s public announcements about the 2002 Award.<sup>369</sup>

Similarly to the 1992 and 1998 awards, the 2002 First Book of the Year Award was shared between two authors: Louise Welsh, for her novel *The Cutting Room* (2002) and Liam McIlvanney for his Robert Burns biography *Burns the Radical* (2002). In 2003 a selection of bi-lingual short stories, Martin McIntyre’s *Ath-Aithne/Re-Acquaintance* (2003), was the first book written predominantly in Gaelic (fourteen of McIntyre’s stories are written in Gaelic, four in English) to be the sole recipient of the First Book of the Year Award. When accepting the award at a ceremony held at the National Library of Scotland on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2003, McIntyre stated that winning the award was a ‘great personal boost’, and that he hoped it would ‘inspire more Gaelic writers to put pen to paper.’<sup>370</sup> However, it is possible that this selection was a controversial one, since in 2003 none of the members of the Society’s Literary Awards judging panel were Gaelic speakers. This fact may have influenced the Society’s decision to invite Ian MacDonald, who was the Director of the Gaelic Books Council at the time, to join the panel as a ‘Gaelic advisor’ in 2004. MacDonald was asked to read and proffer judgment on any Gaelic language texts

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<sup>367</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro to Ian Campbell, 8 January 2002. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 36.

<sup>368</sup> Email correspondence between Isobel Murray and K Munro, 5 February 2002. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 38.

<sup>369</sup> Shortleat for 2002 and results embargoed until 1 p.m., 29 November 2002. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13161, File No. 56.

<sup>370</sup> Raymond Duncan, ‘Titans of writing win Saltire awards; Life achievement honour for Morgan and Jenkins’, *The Herald*, 29 November 2003, p. 7.

nominated for the Society's Literary Awards, becoming a 'full' member of the panel (which entailed reading every book nominated for the Society's Literary Awards) in 2006 until 2014. Further, in 2005 Marion Sinclair, a Gaelic speaker and former Editorial Director at Polygon, and Dr. Ann Matheson, Keeper of Printed Books at the National Library of Scotland and co-author of the *Scottish Gaelic Union Catalogue: A List of Books Printed in Scottish Gaelic from 1567 to 1973* (1984), also became a 'full' member of the Society's Literary Awards panel.

After supporting the First Book of the Year Award for fourteen years, in 2011 the Royal Mail withdrew their financial support – which in 2010 totalled £2,000, with £1,500 for the prize and £500 towards administration expenses and costs relating to the arrangement of the awards ceremony – of the First Book of the Year Award.<sup>371</sup> Following this withdrawal of support, the Society self-funded the award until 2014 when Tamdhu Speyside Single Malt Whisky sponsored the 26<sup>th</sup> First Book of the Year Award, conferred to Niall Campbell's debut poetry collection *Moontide* (2014). Also, in 2014 the prize fund for the First Book of the Year Award was raised for the first time since 1990, from £1,500 to £2,000: this was due to the change in the presentation of all of the Society's Literary Awards as discussed in Part 3.2. With this change, from 2014 the winner of the First Book of the Year Award receives £2,000 and for the first time in the history of the Society's First Book of the Year Award, the winner of the award now receives the same amount of money as the winner of the Book of the Year Award (now the Fiction and Non Fiction Book of the Year Awards).

As this descriptive history of the Society's First Book of the Year Award has shown, the award has often struggled in attaining a strong individual identity away from the Society's Book of the Year Award which has had an almost overbearing presence

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<sup>371</sup> Saltire Society 2010 annual finances. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

within the Society's family of Literary Awards. This history of the Society's First Book of the Year Award also offers a broad, but by no means complete, illustration of how debut authors fared in Scotland more widely. What this history of the Saltire Society's First Book of the Year Award indicates is that a more comprehensive understanding of publishing in Scotland would benefit from this kind of analysis and offers a foundation to acquiring complete knowledge of publishing and literary culture in Scotland and the UK more widely.



### **3.5 The Saltire Society and National Library of Scotland Research Book of the Year Award**

Similarly to the Saltire Society's First Book of the Year Award, the Research Book of the Year Award evolved from a proposition made by a potential sponsor. Writing to Paul Henderson Scott on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 1997, Alan Marchbank, the Director of Public Services at NLS, reminded Scott of a conversation the two shared at the Society's 1997 Literary Awards ceremony regarding the possibility of introducing a new award to 'recognise works of research'.<sup>372</sup> In his letter, Marchbank reported that the NLS was 'in favour of this idea and has asked me to explore further [...] how we could establish this new category for 1998.' (11991/16). Marchbank continues, illustrating some of the ideas he currently held about the administration of the award:

At this stage, I am thinking of a relatively small award in the first year, about £1,500 - £2,000, probably from one of our Trust Funds. Since we are already co-sponsoring the RLS Memorial Award for Young Writers [...] [we] would want the new award to be handled, with the others, by the Saltire Society. We would also want to be involved with the judging of the award, probably by nominating the member of staff best qualified to have a reasonably expert opinion on the material being judged. We would also expect to have sponsorship credit and presence equal to that of the other sponsors. It could also be helpful for us to host the ceremony from time to time. (11991/16)

This correspondence reveals that, as a potential sponsor of a new award, the NLS were clear of their expectations and requirements of the Society from the outset. As well as clarifying that the Society was to take control of the administration of award, Marchbank also suggests that a member of staff from the NLS who is 'best qualified' should be included on the judging panel for the award. Marchbank continued, stating that '[t]he title of the category may need thought' advising that '[t]he Scottish Research Book of the Year is an obvious match for the other [awards]' (11991/16). In conclusion, Marchbank asks

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<sup>372</sup> Letter from Dr Alan Marchbank, Director Public Services National Library of Scotland to Paul Henderson Scott, 17 November 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11991, File No. 16.

Scott to submit this idea to the Society's Council in order to ascertain whether this proposition is something they would be willing to agree to.

Responding to Marchbank's letter on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December 1997, Scott was enthusiastic about the proposal, stating that it was 'an excellent idea' and that he believed there was 'too little recognition of works of research'.<sup>373</sup> However, Scott noted that the Society 'already ha[d] two other Awards which would have to be taken into account: the Science Award and the Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award for works of historical research' (11991/16).<sup>374</sup> Scott also notes how 'The Book of the Year Award has been given once or twice to a book of research such as Duncan MacMillan's *Scottish Art*' but goes on to note that he felt there was an 'awkwardness' to the inclusion of research and non-fiction books in the adjudication of the Book of the Year Award, rhetorically asking: 'how does one judge between such a book and, say, a novel or a collection of poetry?' (11991/16). It is for this reason, Scott suggests, that Marchbank's proposition was 'so welcome' (11991/16). It is significant that Scott, who was an influential figure in the formal establishment of the Book of the Year Award in 1982 and served as a judge for over ten years, highlights this issue of the difficulty the Society's Literary Award judges came up against when judging between different forms and genres of literature since, as part 5 of this thesis details, this problem is a consistent one which pervades the Literary Awards judging process to this day.

Scott also explained that the Society's Agnes Mure Mackenzie Award (henceforth referred to as the History Book of the Year Award as it has been so called since 1998) was

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<sup>373</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Alan Marchbank, 7 December 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11991, File No. 16.

<sup>374</sup> The Science Award Scott is referring to is a science award founded by the Society in 1989 which aimed to 'recognise and honour scientists in mid-career under the age of 50, who either lived in Scotland, had worked in Scotland, or were of Scottish descent'. The award was sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland between 1989 and 1994, and by the brewing company Scottish and Newcastle between 1995 and 2008 when the award was brought to an end. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11714, File No. 46.

already established and rewarded published books of ‘Scottish historical research’.<sup>375</sup> The judges of the History Book of the Year Award, Scott revealed, had already suggested that it should become an annual award due to ‘the large number of good historical books which are being published’ (11991/16). Given the similar nature of the History Book of the Year Award and the award proposed by Marchbank, Scott suggested combining the two:

Perhaps the Agnes Mure MacKenzie Award and your proposal could be combined. We might then have an annual reward for the *Scottish Research Book of the Year* for which works on history of all kinds would be eligible. That would include literature, music, the visual arts, architecture, economics, sociology, politics, biography and so forth and of course intellectual history and the history of science (as distinct from new discovery). Research in all of these fields is in a sense historical so that it becomes a matter of interpreting the term, ‘history’, in a wider sense. (11991/16)

It is likely that, from Scott’s point of view, this suggestion was a pragmatic one. As part 3.2 of this thesis illustrates, the History Book of the Year Award was continually troubled by financial instability which, at times, led to interruptions in the regular conferral of the award. It is therefore possible that Scott saw Marchbank’s proposition as an opportunity to potentially widen the remit of the History Book of the Year Award in order to secure funding from a new sponsor. However, Scott also admitted that it was possible that the History Book of the Year Award panel would feel that this amalgamation of two similar awards would lead to ‘less and not more recognition for the type of book with which they are concerned’ (11991/16). That is to say, Scott anticipated that the History Book of the Year Award panel may be in favour of developing an extra award for books of research, so there was yet further opportunity for the Society to promote this particular area of non-fiction literature.

Scott wrote to a number of the Society’s literary award judges and panel convenors in the months after his correspondence with Marchbank in order to ask their opinion about introducing a Research Book of the Year Award. The reply from T. M. Devine, the

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<sup>375</sup> The origins of the AMM/History Book of the Year Award are described in part 3.2 of this thesis.

Convenor of the History Book of the Year Award, confirmed Scott's supposition that the panel would prove hesitant towards the possible amalgamation of the existing History Book of the Year Award with a new award for research books. Initially, Devine reacted positively to the possibility of another literary award, stating that he felt it was 'always very pleasing to receive the offer of an addition to the Society's list of awards', and acknowledged a 'veritable boom in Scottish historical studies' in recent years, which failed to receive 'the same kind of media recognition for literary works'.<sup>376</sup> He remained unconvinced, however, that the best way to respond to such issues was to amalgamate the History Book of the Year Award with another award for research books:

The proposal that history should be subsumed within a general Scottish Research Book of the Year is not attractive because it might dilute the profile of the subject even further. I agree that the discipline you mention in your letter might have an historical component but that is not the only aspect or even the most important one associated with them. (11828/58)

As well as suggesting that a meeting of the convenors of the Society's Literary Awards judging panels should be arranged to consider this proposal further, Devine also states that he will consult with his fellow judges on the History Book of the Year Award Panel on the matter.

Scott also received a response from Dr. J. Morton Boyd, convenor of the Society's Scottish Science Award. Writing in February 1998, Boyd explained that the Scottish Science Award panel felt that the 'proposed "research book" award should certainly include the sciences' but that the 'likelihood of there being a serious overlap between this proposed award and the existing Saltire Science Award is small' since the 'Science Award focused on areas of research and not on books of research'.<sup>377</sup> Boyd continued, suggesting that it would be a rare occurrence for 'a candidate of the Science Award [to] be the author

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<sup>376</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine to P. H. Scott, 12 December 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

<sup>377</sup> Letter from J. Morton Boyd, CBE to P. H. Scott, 18 February 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

of a book which would meet the literary criteria of the Research Book Award', but if this did happen the candidate would be 'given a choice' as to which award they wished to be nominated for (11828/58). Nonetheless, the Science Award panel did feel that the Research Book of the Year Award should not be a 'general' award, but should have a discernible Scottish 'connection':

We feel that, as with the other Saltire Awards, the "research book" should have a convincing connection with Scotland. This should be satisfied by the candidates having: (1) Scottish birth and/or education and upbringing, (2) carried out the relevant research upon which the book is based in Scotland, (3) having worked firth [sic] of Scotland, the subject of the book deals with indigenous Scottish culture. We would not insist that the book be published in Scotland. (11828/58)

This suggestion was later echoed by Devine following a meeting about the introduction of the proposed Research Book of the Year Award on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 1998. In a letter to the Director of the Society, Ian Scott, Devine noted that 'on reflection my personal view is that it should deal with academic research issues on Scottish themes or a Scottish-related topic'.<sup>378</sup> If the award was broader, Devine wrote, it was possible that the Society's panels would not have the expertise or knowledge to effectively judge the nominations. Using the History Book of the Year Award panel as an example, Devine argued that due to the research interests and expertise of the panel's judges, the 'panel would only be able to comment authoritatively on works of Scottish historical research' which posed a problem, Devine noted, since 'most research books in history emanating from Scottish universities are on other topics or the history of other countries' (11828/58). It is interesting that Devine uses the History Book of the Year Award panel as an example of the breadth of expertise needed for the judging process since, as illustrated in Part 3.2 of this thesis, the History Book of the Year Award judging panel was not always the most wide-ranging of panels since many of the members had either won or been shortlisted for the award. Such

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<sup>378</sup> Letter from T. M. Devine to Ian Scott, Director Saltire Society, 5 March 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

interrelation between the panel members and winners of the award meant that the History Book of the Year Award typified a microcosm of the Scottish historical research community.

Following these discussions, it seems that the Society were happy to formally establish the Research Book of the Year Award with the NLS. Writing to Marchbank on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 1998, Ian Scott explained how the Society intended to manage the award:

After careful consideration we concluded that rather than create a new panel for the award we could use our existing panels. Each would be asked to recommend one work based on research from their own field published during the agreed period and on a Scottish topic. In addition we would approach a recognised authority in any area we thought was not covered by our panels [...] Copies of the books would be circulated to the Convenors, to the special co-opted experts, to yourself and another nominee of the Library and to Paul Scott who would act as Chairman. After a reasonable time this group would be convened and in the civilised debate which followed the winner would emerge. Our thought at the moment is that this process should take place in the Spring and that the Award Ceremony would be free standing and not linked to the existing Book of the Year Ceremony. This is mainly to do with the logistics of harmonising with our existing schedules.<sup>379</sup>

This plan appears to take into consideration the apprehensions raised by Devine and Boyd regarding the selection of a judging panel with relevant expertise. Although the Society did not intend to create a judging panel specifically for the Research Book of the Year Award, they would invite ‘special co-opted experts’ to join current Saltire Society Literary Award judges, and the representative from the NLS, in the judging process for the new award. There is no record of Marchbank’s response to this letter, but a letter from Ian Scott to Marchbank on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> October 1998 reveals that the suggestion to confer the Research Book of the Year Award at a different time to the Society’s other literary awards was rejected by the NLS.<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Letter from Ian Scott to Alan Marchbank, 20 March 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

<sup>380</sup> Letter from Ian Scott to Alan Marchbank, 29 October 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS) Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

While the process proposed in March 1998 was seemingly agreed upon, Ian Scott explained that it would not work for the selection of a 1998 winner which was required in time for the Society's 1998 Literary Award's ceremony in November: 'fitting in with the different time scales of each panel, was a bit of a problem for us this year and we needed to come up with a one-off system for this award if it was to be announced at the same time as the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year' (11828/58). Accordingly, in order to complete the judgement and selection for the inaugural Research Book of the Year Award in time for the Society's Literary Awards ceremony in November 1998, Ian Scott explained that there would be a 'one-off system' judging system (11828/58). Because it was difficult to incorporate the selection of the Research Book of the Year Award 'with the different time scales of each panel' for the 1998 award, Scott explained that the Society had 'decided to ask [the] Literary Panel to suggest two titles from [...] submissions which were research based' (11828/58). These books, along with 'two they selected for special mention last year' would be used to 'form [the] 1998 short list'; this plan, Scott suggested, had 'the merit of simplicity' (11828/58). In order to select a winner in time for the 1998 ceremony that would be taking place in a month's time, Scott noted that the Society proposed that, 'for this year only, [...] a small panel consisting of yourself, Paul Scott and Professor Ian Campbell should meet within the next month to decide on the winner' (11828/58). The nominations Scott suggested for this small, ad-hoc panel, included: *A History of Scottish Architecture* by M. Glendinning et al. (1996); *Carlyle and Scottish Thought* by Ralph Jessop (1997); *Edinburgh History of the Scots Language* edited by Charles Jones (1997); and, *A History of Scottish Women's Writing* edited by Douglas Gifford and Dorothy Macmillan (1998) (11828/58). The panel may have also wanted to add, Scott noted, Stephen Boardman's *The Early Stewart Kings* (1996) which was awarded the History Book of the Year Award in 1997 (11828/58).

A Press Release issued on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> November detailing the 1998 shortlists for the Society's Literary Awards lists four of the five books in Ian Scott's letter to Marchbank. One book, Gifford and MacMillan's *A History of Scottish Women's Writing* was replaced with William Ferguson's *The Identity of the Scottish Nation* (1998) for the final shortlist, although there is no documented explanation as to why this may have been the case.<sup>381</sup> In a meeting of the Society's Literary Award panel attended by Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford, Alison Lumsden, Isobel Murray and Joyce McMillan, and held a few days after this shortlist announcement, Campbell reported that the 'NLS research-based book [...] would be [awarded to] Charles Jones' *History of the Scottish Language*'.<sup>382</sup> Campbell continued, reporting to the panel that the 'arrangements in 1998 had been ad-hoc' and that in future years the judging process for the Research Book of the Year Award would be 'regularised' (11828/58).

However, the most unusual element of Campbell's report about the Research Book of the Year Award is the fact that he takes the opportunity to predict what may happen for the next year's award: '[n]ext year, it was strongly expected that a Scottish history book (and William Fergu[s]on was discussed) would be a powerful contender' (11828/58). This comment is extremely unusual for a number of reasons. Firstly, Campbell appears to be forecasting the next winner of the Research Book of the Year Award based upon the entries that had been discussed for the 1998 awards, seemingly negating books that may be published between November 1998, when this meeting was held, and November 1999, when the succeeding awards would be presented. Secondly, Campbell predicts that a Scottish history book would be a 'powerful contender' for the Research Book of the Year Award, despite the fact that Scottish history books fell under the remit of the Society's

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<sup>381</sup> The Saltire Society Literary Award 1998: Press Release, 7 November 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.

<sup>382</sup> Minutes of Saltire Book Award Panel, 11 November 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 11828, File No. 58.



History Book of the Year Award and the book Campbell suggests, William Ferguson's *The Identity of the Scottish Nation: An Historic Quest* (1998), had already won the 1998 History Book of the Year Award. Finally, Campbell's comment suggested that books nominated for future Research Book of the Year Awards may not be published in the twelve months preceding the award, despite this being the norm for all of the other Literary Awards by this point. While this recording of Campbell's comments may not capture the totality of the point he was making at the time, what this report about the Research Book of the Year Award from Campbell does highlight is the confusion that surrounded the award in its earliest years. Not only was the process of submission and judging for the award confused, but it seems there were also misunderstandings regarding the relationship between the History Book of the Year and the Research Book of the Year caused by the potential intersecting of these similar awards.

To return to the selection and judging process of the Research Book of the Year Award, following the use of an 'ad-hoc' judging panel for the first award in 1998, it was deemed necessary to clarify the terms and conditions for future awards. In a report addressed to Ian Scott in the months following the 1998 awards ceremony, Ian Campbell referred to the inaugural Research Book of the Year Award as an 'interesting but improvised competition'.<sup>383</sup> The haphazard nature of the Society's first Research Book of the Year Award did not, it seems, go unnoticed by the awards' sponsors and co-creators at the NLS. Days after the 1998 awards ceremony, on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 1998, Marchbank wrote an 'Initial Criteria for Selection (1999 onwards)' for 'The National Library of Scotland/Saltire Research Book of the Year Award'.<sup>384</sup> This document is exceptional within the context of the history of the Society's Literary Awards, as it is a very clear

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<sup>383</sup> Letter from Ian Campbell to Ian Scott, 25 January 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 11.

<sup>384</sup> The National Library of Scotland/Saltire Research Book of the Year Award, Initial Criteria for Selection (1999 onwards), Alan Marchbank, 4 December 1998. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12575, File No. 77.

indication of what the sponsor expected the judges to take into consideration when judging books for the award. Not only does Marchbank emphasise the need for a nominated book to ‘add to our knowledge and understanding of Scotland and Scots’ and ‘represent a significant body of research [...] which offers new insights or adds new dimension to its subject’, but he also suggests that the ‘winning book should be a “building block” in its subject area’ and be a ‘necessary purchase for most large libraries’ (12575/77). This latter comment is a particularly significant point as it is clearly influenced by the NLS’s role as Scotland’s legal deposit library. It is clear that, as Director of Public Services at the NLS, Marchbank is using this document to control the fundamental principles of the Research Book of the Year Award, and maintain the award’s alignment with the NLS’s own agenda as a reputable research institution.<sup>385</sup>

Further points Marchbank makes in this ‘Initial Criteria for Selection’ relate to the aesthetic and paratextual elements of the books nominated and selected for the award. He notes, for example, that the ‘physical presentation of the book should involve [...] a physical make-up appropriate to the anticipated level of use’ and maintain a ‘layout and typography that assists use’ (12575/77). Such remarks demonstrate that, while remaining aware that the key purpose of a research book is its influence and permanency within its discipline, Marchbank is also aware of the importance of a book’s functionality and physical form. Further, Marchbank also observes how the paratextual features of a nominated or winning book, such as its index, bibliography and list of sources should be conducive to scholarly research and ‘use an unambiguous style of reference’ (12575/77). The final point Marchbank makes brings the focus of the criteria of selection for the award

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<sup>385</sup> As leading cultural organisations in Scotland, the Saltire Society and NLS have continued to have a mutually supportive relationship. The Saltire Society, for example, part sponsored the NLS’s inaugural Callum Macdonald Memorial Award established in 2001 to ‘encourage the publication of poetry pamphlets’. The Society’s records indicate that they gave the NLS £250 in support of this award. ‘National Library of Scotland Annual Report 2001-2002’, National Library of Scotland (2002), p.28. Email from Alan Marchbank to Kathleen Munro, 20 February 2001. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 36).

back to the impact and longevity of the winning book. In stating that: ‘It is also expected that the winning book will carry with it more subjective judgment elements such as: ‘long-awaited’, ‘fills a gap’, ‘stimulating’, ‘an essential purchase for all specialists’, etc.’, Marchbank is effectively suggesting the kind of terms by which the award’s judge should assess the books they are considering for the award (12575/77). Indeed, the NLS’s clear sense of direction for the award only exemplified the Society’s haphazard administrative style when it came to establishing literary awards.

The letter from Campbell to Ian Scott from January 1999 referred to earlier also offered a number of suggestions as to how the Research Book of the Year Award may be developed in future years. Notably, Campbell reiterated the need for all book award panels to contribute to the nomination of books for the award, stating that ‘only 2 subject areas, and 1 panel’ contributed to the selection of the inaugural winner (12057/11). Furthermore, Campbell noted that there were a number of logistical issues relating to the prize, namely the time period in which eligible books should be published, that needed settling. Due to the ad-hoc nature of the administration of the 1998 award, Campbell stated that ‘*books from more than one year were included in the shortleat* (emphasis in original)’, as a result, it was necessary to decide whether this method would become a regular practice of the award, or whether the terms of eligibility should be ‘restricted to a calendar year or (as in the case of the book panel) a defined year as “published not later than...”’ (12057/11). As by way of an example of how this flexibility of publication dates and terms of eligibility affected the administration of the inaugural award, Campbell reiterated the example of Ferguson’s *The Identity of the Scottish Nation: An Historic Question* (1998), suggesting that ‘there is some expectation’ the book would win the 1999 Research Book of the Year because it ‘missed the prize last year’ (12057/11).

Two days after Campbell sent this letter to Ian Scott, Marchbank attended a meeting of the Society's Literary Award judging panel – which included Alan Boyd, Ian Campbell, Douglas Gifford (who was the Convenor of the panel for that year), Alison Lumsden and Isobel Murray – in order to discuss the Research Book of the Year Award. Minutes from this meeting report that:

The Panel discussed with Alan Marchbank the National Library Research Book of the Year Award. It was agreed that the Convenor should discuss with Ian Scott the best way of bringing together the Convenors of other panels, with sufficient consultation to ensure broad coverage.<sup>386</sup>

This reference to ensuring 'broad coverage' was in respect to urging the Convenors of the Society's other panels to engage with the nomination process for the Research Book of the Year Award. However, this 'consultation' with the Convenors of other panels appears to have been unsuccessful. As Table 6 below shows, half of the nominations for the 1999 Research Book of the Year Award came from members of the Literary Awards panel, with only one Convenor from another panel – Dr. Gerald Mortimer, Convenor of the *Times Educational Supplement Scotland* (TESS) and the Society's Prize for Educational Publications – nominating a book.<sup>387</sup> Two nominations came directly from publishers, and one nomination came from the Convenor of a non-Saltire Society Committee: Professor John E. Dale, Convenor of the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Conservation Strategy Committee.

Four of these eight titles - *The Poems of William Dunbar* (1998), *Scottish Education* (1999), *How Scotland is Owned* (1998), and *The Identity of the Scottish Nation: A Historic Quest* (1998) – were shortlisted for the Research Book of the Year Award in 1999.<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>386</sup> Minutes of meeting for the Saltire Society, The Scotsman/The Post Office Scottish Literary Awards, 27<sup>th</sup> January 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 11.

<sup>387</sup> Research Book of the Year Entries to the 1999 Award as at 15 September 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 11.

<sup>388</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards, Supported by The Scotsman, The Post Office and the National Library of Scotland, Shortlists 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 11.

**Table 6: Nominations for the Research Book of the Year Award 1999**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Year Published</b>	<b>Nominator</b>
<b>Priscilla Bawcutt (ed.)</b>	<i>The Poems of William Dunbar Vol 1 &amp; 2</i>	Association for Scottish Literary Studies	1998	Association for Scottish Literary Studies
<b>T. G. K. Bryce and W. M. Humes (eds.)</b>	<i>Scottish Education</i>	Edinburgh University Press	1999	Gerald Mortimer, Convenor, Saltire Society/TES Education Award
<b>Robin Callander</b>	<i>How Scotland is Owned</i>	Canongate	1998	Prof John E Dale, Convenor SWT Conservation Strategy Committee
<b>Thomas Owen Clancy (ed.)</b>	<i>The Triumph Tree: Scotland's Earliest Poetry AD 550 – 1350</i>	Canongate	1998	Saltire Society Literary Panel
<b>William Fergusson</b>	<i>The Identity of the Scottish Nation: A Historic Quest</i>	Edinburgh University Press	1998	Ian Campbell, Saltire Society Literary Panel
<b>W. S. Hewison</b>	<i>Who Was Who in Orkney</i>	Bellavista Publications	1998	Stewart Davidson, Bellavista Publications
<b>Colin Kidd</b>	<i>British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity &amp; Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800</i>	Cambridge University Press	1999	Alan Boyd, Saltire Society Literary Award Panel
<b>Graeme Morton</b>	<i>Unionist Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland 1830-1860</i>	Tuckwell Press	1999	Alan Boyd, Saltire Society Literary Award Panel

Despite Campbell suggesting that Ferguson's *The Identity of the Scottish Nation* may in fact win the 1999 award earlier in the year, Marchbank presented Priscilla Bawcutt with the second Saltire Society/National Library of Scotland Research Book of the Year Award for *The Poems of William Dunbar* (1998) – which was also shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award – at the Society's Literary Awards ceremony held at the NLS in

Edinburgh on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 1999.<sup>389</sup> Bryce and Humes also received a commendation from the Research Book of the Year Award panel for *Scottish Education* (1999).<sup>390</sup>

Although the administration of the Research Book of the Year Award was beginning to be systematised by 1999, the conferral of the award in 2000 was complicated by the shortlisting of a book by one of the Society's Literary Awards panel members. Isobel Murray's *Jessie Kesson: Writing Her Life* (2000) was, alongside William Donaldson's *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society* (2000), Michael Newton's *Bho Chluaidh gu Calasraid (from the Clyde to Callander)* (1999) and Duncan Petrie's *Screening Scotland* (2000), shortlisted for the award in 2000.<sup>391</sup> Given that the Literary Awards panel were the panel leading the selection of shortlists and winners for the Research Book of the Year Award, Murray, who had been a judge since 1983, withdrew from the voting process for the 2000 Research Book of the Year Award.<sup>392</sup> Murray went on to win the award, which, given Murray's status as a longstanding member of the Society's Literary Awards judging panel, was considered by some to be a controversial choice. Writing to Kathleen Munro on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2001, Ted Cowan, the Convenor of the History Book of the Year Award, expressed concerns about the judging process of the 2000 Research Book of the Year Award.<sup>393</sup> Noting that he felt '[w]e badly crossed our lines over the Research Book of the Year award and we must take care that this does not happen again', Cowan continued to say that he: 'though[t] the winner a poor choice. You need only look at the author's references to see that it is not much of a

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<sup>389</sup> Running order for Saltire Society Awards Ceremony 30 November 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 9.

<sup>390</sup> Confidential Letter from Kathleen Munro to Timothy Wright (Edinburgh University Press), 11 November 1999. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12057, File No. 9.

<sup>391</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards shortlists [no date]. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12907, File No. 59.

<sup>392</sup> Hand written memo from Isobel Murray to Kathleen Munro [no date]. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31.

<sup>393</sup> Letter from Ted Cowan to Kathleen Munro, 18 February 2001. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 48.

”research” book. It is just possible that the literary folk are too powerful on that particular committee’ (12256/48). Despite Cowan’s apparent dislike of the process of selection and judgement for the Research Book of the Year Award, it remained as it was until the reconfiguration of the nomination process in 2007 which is discussed in more detail below.

In addition to Cowan’s misgivings, contemporaneous reports of the 2000 result disagree as to whether Murray was the sole winner of the Research Book of the Year Award in 2000. An article from *The Herald* newspaper published the day after the ceremony, which was held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000, states that ‘[t]he £1500 National Library of Scotland/Saltire research book of the year was won by Isobel Murray, reader in English at Aberdeen University, for *Jessie Kesson: Writing Her Life* (Canongate)’.<sup>394</sup> Similarly, the National Library of Scotland’s 2000-2001 Annual Report also lists Murray as the single winner of the award. Furthermore, in a document titled ‘Minutes of Research’ written on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2000, and presumably sent to the Society’s Administrator Kathleen Munro, Ian Campbell states that he is ‘delighted to report that Isobel Murray’s life of Kesson was voted Research Book of the Year at the convenors’ meeting this afternoon.’<sup>395</sup> However, some of the Society’s other records suggest that the award was conferred jointly to Murray *and* William Donaldson, author of *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society* (2000).<sup>396</sup> A professional biography of Donaldson also notes that his book was in fact voted ‘joint Research Book of the Year by the Saltire Society’.<sup>397</sup> More recently, Donaldson explained the confusion which ensued following the 2000 Research Book of the Year Award:

I was notified by my publisher John Tuckwell that my book *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society* had been declared runner-up for the Saltire Society Research

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<sup>394</sup> Hugh MacDonald, ‘Novel Depicting homosexual awakening scoops Saltire prize’, *The Herald*, 1 December, 2000, p. 3.

<sup>395</sup> Ian Campbell Minutes of Research Book of the Year Award Meeting, 20 November 2000. Saltire Society private archive.

<sup>396</sup> Saltire Society unpublished database, Saltire Society private archive.

<sup>397</sup> ‘William Donaldson’, 23 June 2014 <<http://lit.mit.edu/people/wdonaldson/>> [accessed 12 August 2015]

Book of the Year award back in the Autumn of 2000, and that I was invited to the award ceremony to receive a special commendation certificate. I was unable to attend the meeting in Edinburgh, but I think I did get a certificate of some sort in the post. A couple of years later, while rooting about online looking for something else, I discovered my name in the Society's list of previous winners; and there I was, joint winner of the Saltire Society's Research Book of the Year for 2000. Somewhat startled, I emailed the Society's administrator and asked if this was correct, and she said yes it was.<sup>398</sup>

Donaldson continued, saying that at the time he did not pursue the share of the prize fund that he would have been entitled to as the joint winner of the award in 2000. Such an array of mistakes and misunderstandings once again highlight the confusion that plagued the Research Book of the Year Award in its earliest years.

2001 was the first year in which nominations for the Research Book of the Year Award came from a wider variety of the Society's award panels. A total of four books were nominated for the award, with the Society's Literary Awards panel nominating George Campbell Hay's *Collect Poems and Songs* edited by Michael Byrne (2000), the History Book of the Year Award panel nominating Alasdair J. Mann's *The Scottish Book Trade 1500 – 1720* (2000), the Arts and Crafts in Architecture panel nominating Charles McKean's *The Scottish Chateau* (2001) and, finally, the TESS/Education Book Award panel nominating *Improving School Effectiveness* (2001) by John MacBeath and Peter Mortimore.<sup>399</sup> The Convenors of each of these panels – Douglas Gifford (Literary Awards panel), Edward Cowan (History Book of the Year panel), Ian Arnott (Arts and Crafts panel) and Gerald Mortimer (TESS/Education Book Award panel) met on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November to discuss their nominations. The Convenors were also joined by the Literary Awards panel's Gaelic advisor, Ian MacDonald, the Society's President Paul Henderson Scott, the Director of the Society, Scott Peake, and Alan Marchbank. This panel selected Alistair J. Mann's *The Scottish Book Trade 1500-1720* (2000) as the fourth Research Book

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<sup>398</sup> William Donaldson email correspondence with Stevie Marsden, 22 September 2015.

<sup>399</sup> Research Book of the Year Award for work published 1st September 2000 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2001: Nominations. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12575, File No. 77.



of the Year Award winner. Two days after this meeting Kathleen Munro wrote to John Tuckwell, owner and publisher at Tuckwell Press, to inform him of Mann's success and inviting him to the Literary Awards Ceremony which was to take place on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2001.<sup>400</sup>

Trusting that William Donaldson's *The Highland Pipe and Scottish Society* was commended in 2000, Mann's win in 2001 was the second consecutive win for Tuckwell Press. This trend continued into 2003 when Rebecca Wills' *The Jacobites and Russia, 1715-1750* (2001), also published by Tuckwell Press, was commended by the Research Book of the Year Award panel. As discussed in Part 3.3 of this thesis, this trend of books published by Tuckwell Press winning Saltire Society Literary Awards was also reflected in the History Book of the Year Awards during this period in the early 2000s.

The winner of the 2003 award, however, was *The Greig - Duncan Folk Song Collection* (2002) edited by Patrick Shuldham-Shaw, Emily B Lyle and Katherine Campbell and published by Mercat Press. The selection of this winner appears to have come down to a swing vote from one of the members of the Research Book of the Year Award panel. In a letter from Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2003 addressed to 'all members of the Research Book of the Year Panel', which was sent to Ian Arnott, Edward Cowan, Douglas Gifford, Gilbert MacKay, Gerald Mortimer and Martyn Wade, Kathleen Munro writes that:

[A] meeting of the Research Book Panel might not be necessary. Professor Cowan, Convener of the History Book Panel has stated that - 'Out of the three nominations the Greig-Duncan is the outstanding candidate. I have just been reading the final volume and marvelling at the achievement.' Professor Cowan has therefore switched his allegiance to *The Greig-Duncan folk Song Collections* (eight volumes).<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Confidential Letter from Kathleen Munro to John Tuckwell, Publisher, Tuckwell Press, 16 November 2001. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12256, File No. 36.

<sup>401</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro addressed to Ian Arnott, Edward Cowan, Douglas Gifford, Gilbert MacKay, Gerald Mortimer and Martyn Wade, Thursday 16th October 2003. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

Munro continued to ask the panel if they still wanted to meet to discuss the three nominations that remained in contention for the award and to ask if the panel ‘agree that the three books nominated for the award should [become] the short list?’ (Saltire Society, Private Archives). The reason Munro describes Cowan’s choice as a ‘switch of allegiance’ is that, as convenor of the History Book of the Year Award Panel, in voting for *The Greig-Duncan folk Song Collections* to win the Research Book of the Year Award, Cowan was not supporting the book his own panel nominated, Rebecca Wills’ *The Jacobites and Russia 1715 – 1750*. *The Greig-Duncan folk Song Collections* was in fact nominated by the Saltire Society’s Literary Awards Panel.

Munro’s letter is also significant because it reveals that only three books were nominated for the Research Book of the Year Award in 2003 and all three of these books became the shortlist. This remarkably narrow scope was inevitable given that nominations were only accepted from the Society’s own Literary Award judging panels. As noted earlier, one of the key problems with this nomination and selection process are the disagreements between panel Convenors and members as to what books should be shortlisted for, or win, the Research Book of the Year Award. In an undated letter addressed to Kathleen Munro, Ted Cowan presented his preference from the three books shortlisted for the 2004 Research Book of the Year Award. Cowan was explicit in stating that one of the books shortlisted, T. M. Devine’s *Scotland’s Empire 1600-1815* (2003), did not have the support of the History Book of the Year Award Panel:

The Saltire Society should note that the Devine book was not nominated by the History panel for the Scottish History Book of the Year Award and certainly not for Research Book of the Year. Tom's book is readable but it is a work of synthesis, described by the Scotsman reviewer as basically a text book, and it depends mainly on other people's research. It gives me no pleasure to say so but the Society would look pretty foolish were it to award this prize to Devine and the History panel would be outraged.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> Saltire Society private archives.

Clearly then, the method of nominating and selecting books for the Research Book of the Year Award was not cohesive, with the different Literary Award panels disagreeing with each other's nominations. And while such disagreements are an accepted part of literary award judging processes, the fact that discussions surrounding the selection of the Research Book of the Year Award were conducted through correspondence as opposed to formal meetings and discussions only emphasises the disjuncture in the administration of the Research Book of the Year Award during this time.

This system of nomination continued until early 2007 when a meeting was held to discuss the future of the Research Book of the Year Award. At this meeting, which was held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January and attended by Professor Tom Bryce (the convenor of the 2007 Research Book of the Year Award), Ian Campbell and Douglas Gifford, it was decided that, like the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards, nominations for the Research Book of the Year would be requested from a wider range of groups and institutions.<sup>403</sup> Up until 2007, nominations for the award were only accepted from the Society's other Literary Award's panels and from specialist librarians from the NLS. There is no evidence to suggest that the Society received any nominations from librarians from the National Library of Scotland. However, at this meeting it was proposed that nominations should also be requested from:

- Major Libraries
- Vice Principals of all the Scottish Universities
- University Libraries
- Research Institutions
- Vice Deans of Research from the Faculties of Education: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Stirling and Strathclyde
- Times Educational Supplement Scotland
- Times Higher Education
- The editor of the Scottish Educational Review  
(Saltire Society, Private Archives)

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<sup>403</sup> Research Book of the Year Award Meeting minutes, 10 January 2007. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

It seems that the lack of range of nominations for the Research Book of the Year Award was considered to be such a problem that it was also reported at this meeting that Martyn Wade, National Librarian and Chief Executive of the NLS, had 'indicated' to Kathleen Munro that 'the Library would be happy to discuss with the Society the possibility of funding another award of a literary nature.' While an award for 'Literary Research Books', for research books based in Scottish literary studies, was never developed, the fact that it was proposed as a potential option in 2007 suggests that the concern regarding the scarcity of the *type* of research book that was in contention for the Research Book of the Year Award, which, as noted earlier, was a concern voiced by the convenor of the History Book of the Year Award in 2001, remained problematic.

It is somewhat ironic, then, that the shortlist for the 2007 Research Book of the Year Award included three books about Scottish literary history: Robert Crawford's *Scotland's Books: The Penguin History of Scottish Literature* (2007), which was also shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award in 2007; Gillian Hughes' *James Hogg: A Life* (2007); and *Auld Campaigner: A Life of Alexander Scott* (2007) by David Robb, one of the Literary Award judges. The broadening of the nomination and selection process for entries to the Research Book of the Year Award significantly increased the number of books nominated for the award in 2007: of the nineteen books that were nominated for the award in 2007, seven were shortlisted, a three-fold increase in the number of books being shortlisted for the award in comparison to previous years.

In a development that would do little to discourage Cowan's opinion that the 'literary folk [were] too powerful' on the Research Book of the Year Award Panel, in 2007 the award was shared between Robert Crawford's *Scotland's Books: The Penguin History of Scottish Literature* and David Robb's *Auld Campaigner: A Life of Alexander Scott*, who were presented with their award at a ceremony held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at the

NLS. This partiality towards awarding and shortlisting more ‘literary’ research books for the Research Book of the Year Award corresponded with an incremental decrease in the number of academic books and books from specialist publishers being included on the shortlists for the Research Book of the Year Award. For example, between 1998 and 2009 65% of the forty-three books shortlisted for the Research Book of the Year Award were from publishers, or university presses, who exclusively, or predominantly, produced academic titles; and nearly a quarter of these books (23%) were published by Edinburgh University Press. Additionally, 19% of books shortlisted between 1998 and 2009 were published by subject-specific organisations like the British Film Institute and Scottish Natural Heritage, or publishers who published exclusively in Gaelic. On the other hand, only 16% of books came from trade publishers who are usually recognised for mass-market fiction titles. Conversely, in the five years between 2010 and 2015, of the thirty-four books shortlisted for the Research Book of the Year Award, the percentage of books that came from trade publishers increased to 35% and the number of books from academic publishers dropped to 54%. The most dramatic change came from the fall in books from specialist publishers, with only 11% of the books shortlisted for the award between 2010 and 2015 coming from subject-specific or specialist organisations and publishers. Such changes to the kinds of publishers shortlisted for the Research Book of the Year may be indicative of an expansion in the range of books published by trade publishers who may normally focus on mass-market fiction titles as well as a fall in the number of publishers who focus on niche areas of non-fiction or research.

It is also possible that such figures have been influenced by a shift towards a more formal judging process for the Research Book of the Year Award. As noted earlier, it was usual for the Research Book of the Year Award judging panel to be made up of the convenors and members of other Saltire Society Literary Award judging panels, and these

judges would also usually be tasked with suggesting titles that should be considered for the award. However, since the late 2000s the panel has been more consistent, with at least one member of the panel, Cate Newton, who was Director of Collection Development at the National Library of Scotland from 2000 to 2011, being a judge for the Research Book of the Year Award since 2008.

The inclusion of a member of staff from the NLS on the Research Book of the Year Award panel, a requirement included in the original criteria written at the establishment of the award in 1998, has remained a regular facet of the Research Book of the Year judging panel. In fact, at times, the number of NLS employees, or former employees, who are included on the judging panel for the Research Book of the Year Award has outnumbered judges from other Saltire Society Literary Award Panels. Between 2011 and 2015 there were always at least two representatives who had either retired from, or were still employed by, the NLS. In 2011 and 2012 this was Newton and Darryl Mead, the Deputy National Librarian of the National Library of Scotland between 2011 and 2015. Robin Smith, Head of Collections and Research at the National Library of Scotland replaced Darryl Mead as a panel member in 2013, and Tom Bryce who had acted as convenor of the panel between 2010 and 2013 was replaced by former Literary Award judging panel member, Alison Lumsden. Accordingly, in 2014 the Society's Research Book of the Year Award's judging panel became the Society's first all-female Literary Award panel. Further, as with the Society's other Literary Awards, the Research Book of the Year Award was included in the changes that were made to the Society's Literary Awards schema in 2014. As a result of these changes, in 2014 the Research Book of the Year Award winner, Bob Harris and Charles McKean's *The Scottish Town in the Age of Enlightenment 1740 – 1820* (2014), was also awarded the Book of the Year Award, receiving an additional £8,000 on top of the £2,000 awarded for the category win.

Much like the Society's other Literary Awards, the origins of the Research Book of the Year Award were disorganised; this being despite the fact that the award was clearly pitched to the Society by the NLS who became financial supporters of the award. What this descriptive history of the Research Book of the Year Award proves is how, even though the Society had significant experience in the administration of literary awards by the time this particular award was founded, the Society still had not streamlined the processes involved in establishing a new award. Moreover, the complications faced in the process of nomination and adjudication for this award highlight the sometimes antagonistic differences of opinions held by the Convenors of the Society's various literary award judging panels.

The purpose of Part 3: The Society's Literary Awards was to present a coherent and considered descriptive history of the Society's four longest standing awards. Just as acquiring an understanding of the socio-cultural and historical context within which the Society developed is important to understanding the formative years of the Society and its awards, so too is this descriptive history of the Literary Awards important in aiding further critical analysis. With this history in mind, this thesis moves on to critical analyses of the awards and their administration; firstly, by undertaking an assessment of the awards in relation to Bourdieu's forms of capital, national identity and gender, and finally moving on to an examination of the language and social interactions of the Society's Literary Awards judging panel.

## 4 The Saltire Society Literary Awards and Critical Discourse

### 4.1 The Saltire Society Literary Awards and the Circuit of Capital Exchange

As discussed in Part 1.2 of this thesis, one of the key sociological frameworks by which contemporary literary award culture is considered is Pierre Bourdieu's work focusing on the forms of, and relationships between, capital. In 1986 Pierre Bourdieu proposed that there were three forms of capital: economic, cultural and social.<sup>404</sup> For Bourdieu, cultural capital 'is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital [and] *social capital*, [is] made up of social obligations ('connections')' (Bourdieu, 1986, 47). The interconnectedness of the three forms of capital is, as James F. English illustrates, particularly significant with regards to cultural prizes:

[Prizes] are the single best instrument for negotiating transactions between cultural and economic, cultural and social, or cultural and political capital – which is to say that they are our most effective institutional agents of *capital intraconversion*. [...] The administrators, judges, sponsors [...] and others involved in a prize are thus themselves to be understood as agents of intraconversion; each of them represents not one particular, pure form of capital, but a particular set of quite complex interests regarding the rules and opportunities for capital intraconversion.<sup>405</sup>

English develops Bourdieu's work, in which he arguing that the three key forms of capital identified by Bourdieu are involved in negotiations and exchanges that English defines as 'capital intraconversion' (English, *Economy of Prestige*, 10-11). Such an approach would benefit from acquiring a full understanding of how such forms of capital perform in terms of contemporary literary award culture.

Similarly, as noted previously, Claire Squires argues that literary awards are a facet of book history research that can offer the researcher an understanding 'of the material and

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<sup>404</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital', in *Handbook of Theory of Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. by J E Richardson, trans. by Richard Nice (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 46-58 (p. 47).

<sup>405</sup> James F English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (London: Harvard University Press, 2005), pp. 10-11.



ideological conditions of the production and reception of literature and literary value' (Squires, 'A Common Ground?', 39-40). Until now, however, such theories have been considered as separate hypotheses used alongside each other, as opposed to being amalgamated into a coherent critical framework which is distinctive to critical analyses of literary award culture (and, perhaps, to analyses of cultural awards more generally).

Accordingly, the natural progression for this particular area of literary and book history research, which this thesis articulates using the Saltire Society Literary Awards as a case study, is to demonstrate how the different forms of capital, and the related intraconversions that happen during the process of bestowing a literary award, perform through the lifespan of an award-winning book. More specifically, this thesis argues that there is an ever-present *cycle* of economic, cultural and social capital intraconversions that are unique to literary award culture. Inspired by Robert Darnton's 'Communication Circuit' which demonstrates six stages in the production and reception of the book – and was updated by Claire Squires and Padmini Ray Murray in 2013 to include digital communications<sup>406</sup> – as well as Adams and Barker's lifecycle of the book (Barker, 1993, 14) and Lynette Hunter's 'circle of publishing relations', as well as the theories of Bourdieu, as noted by English and Squires above, this thesis presents the Circuit of Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture illustrated in Figure 4.<sup>407</sup> The circuit presented in this study should be considered a development to the current discourse surrounding literary award culture, refining a particular aspect of this area of literary and publishing culture, and to aid future studies akin to the one presented here.

Accordingly, Figure 4 depicts the way in which Bourdieu's three forms of capital are intraconverted and connected to the production and reception of literary award values

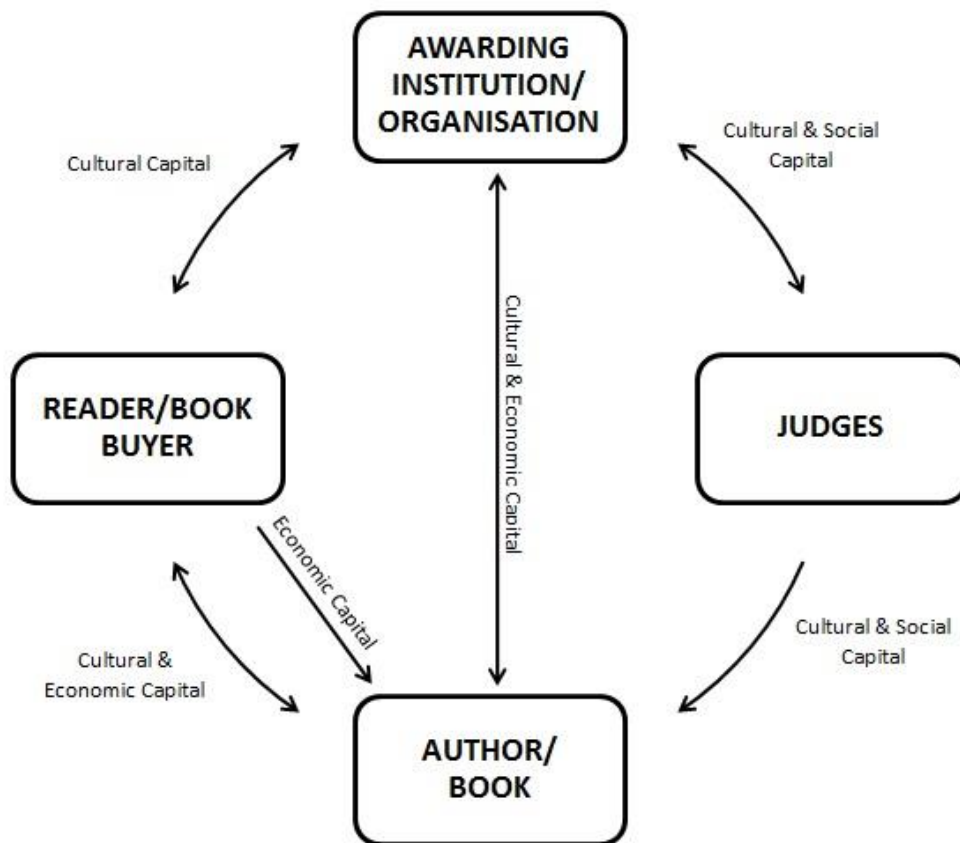
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<sup>406</sup> Claire Squires and Padmini Ray Murray, 'The Digital Publishing Communications Circuit', *Book 2.0* 3:1 (2013), pp. 3-23.

<sup>407</sup> Lynette Hunter, 'What is literary value?' in *Literary Value/Cultural Power: Verbal Arts in the twenty-first century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 11.

and award-winning books. The Circuit of Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture not only illustrates the ways in which cultural, social and economic capital exchanges can occur in the process of a literary award being conferred but also how cultural capital is ‘intraconverted’ as it moves through each agent necessary to the successful conferral of a literary award. This is demonstrated through the following analysis of the Saltire Society’s Literary Awards which makes use of the circuit.

**Figure 4: Circuit of Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture**<sup>408</sup>



The circuit depicts the movement of the three forms of capital identified by Bourdieu and how these are converted depending on the wants, needs or expectations of the agent in question. The following analysis demonstrates how the Society’s Literary Awards

<sup>408</sup> As explained previously, this diagram is developed from an amalgamation of the works of Pierre Bourdieu, James F. English and Claire Squires.

function in relation to the schematic highlighted by the Circuit Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture. Considering each agent of the circuit, Part 4.1 considers the way in which the Society engages with these aspects of literary award culture and whether it is successful in its pursuit of effectively engaging with the forms of cultural, social and economic capital associated with literary award culture.<sup>409</sup>

The Saltire Society has always persevered to present its literary awards as being highly regarded and prestigious within Scottish literary culture. A press release announcing that the 2015 Literary Awards were open for nominations stated that the awards are '[w]idely recognised as Scotland's most prestigious book awards' and that the awards 'represent a long-standing commitment from the Saltire Society to celebrate and support Scottish literary achievement'.<sup>410</sup> It may be expected that this notion of the Society's Literary Awards being 'prestigious' would become part of the narrative the Society presents about the awards, but it is also repeated by the award winners, shortlistees and publishers, and by cultural commentators. Richard Holloway, Book of the Year Award shortlistee and author of *A Plea for a Secular Scotland*, a pamphlet published by the Saltire Society in 2013, described the Society's Literary Awards as 'add[ing] to the richness of Scottish cultural life'<sup>411</sup> and the publisher Sara Hunt, founder of the Glasgow-based publisher Saraband, said the awards were 'quite prestigious awards in Scotland'.<sup>412</sup> In 2006, the literary editor for *The Herald*, Rosemary Goring, stated that '[i]f there was a prize for the best book prize, the Saltire would walk it'.<sup>413</sup> Goring continued, arguing that the Society's Literary Awards have maintained an integrity and altruism that other awards have failed to uphold:

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<sup>409</sup> It is worth noting that, while the Circuit of Cultural Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture presented here positions each agent in a particular order, re-workings of the Circuit are encouraged and will no doubt be necessary when considering the Circuit in terms of other literary and cultural awards.

<sup>410</sup> Press Release: 2015 Saltire Literary Awards open for nominations. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

<sup>411</sup> Richard Holloway, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 13 June 2014.

<sup>412</sup> Sara Hunt, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 25 February 2015.

<sup>413</sup> Rosemary Goring, 'Last Word', *The Herald*, 25 November 2006, p. 12.

[...] the Saltire has proved itself a stalwart of the literary scene, mercifully unswayed by the whims of sponsors and determined to acknowledge the best rather than the most fashionable writers. [...] That decision reveals the Saltire to be an outstanding literary arbiter, willing to rectify what may be seen as wrongs or simply to bestow distinction on those who richly deserve it. (Goring, 2006, 12)

While at times erroneous (the histories of the Society's Literary Awards detailed in Part 3 of this thesis illustrate instances in which the Society *has* been influenced by 'whims of sponsors'), Goring's commendations epitomise the kind of praise the Society's Literary Awards can receive. Although, admittedly, Goring has also been a critic of the choices made by the judges of the Society's Literary Awards, stating that the decision to award Andrew Greig's *In Another Light* the Book of the Year Award in 2004 'dimmed' the 'prize's reputation as a champion of literary excellence'.<sup>414</sup>

Newspaper reports of the awards often lead with the Society's reputation and there are a multitude of examples of when the Society's Literary Awards have been referred to as 'prestigious' or Scotland's 'top' award (albeit often by the same journalists in the same publications).<sup>415</sup> But where does this reputation come from? It is clear that it is one the Society has tried to construct for itself throughout its eighty year history, but in order to be perpetuated and *believed* by those outside of the Society, this reputation needs to be legitimised in some way. The Circuit of Capital Exchange proposes that an institution or organisation awarding a literary award exchanges cultural, economic and social capital via three other agents: the author and/or their work, the reader and book buyer and the judges who work on behalf of the institution to select shortlists and winners. When it comes to the Saltire Society, these exchanges occur in very particular ways.

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<sup>414</sup> Rosemary Goring, 'Prize's reputation is dimmed', *The Herald*, 1 December 2004, p. 8.

<sup>415</sup> See for example: David Robinson, 'Glasgow Writer Wins Prestigious Book Prize', *The Scotsman*, 1 December 2000, p. 1; C. Dennier, 'Glaswegian pater sets tone for visit of top theatre troupe', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 2 May 2002; 'Debut Novel is Cutting Edge for Award-Winning Writer', *Evening News (Edinburgh)*, 13 November 2002, p. 25; Brian Ferguson, 'Gaelic science fiction novel wins literary prize', *The Scotsman*, 15 November 2013; Phil Miller, 'A L Kennedy wins Saltire Award', *The Herald*, 1 December 2007, p. 5; Phil Miller, 'Burnside work names Book of the Year', *The Herald*, 15 November 2013; Nicola Macbeath, 'Aberdeen academic receives Saltire Society book award', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 13 November 2014, p. 8.

The first, and likely the most recognisable, capital exchanges occur between the Society and the award-winning author. In bestowing an award on a particular author or book the Society will not only present the winner with economic capital, in the form of a cash prize, but will also confer cultural capital, or rather kudos, upon the author/book in selecting them as a winner.<sup>416</sup> This cultural capital can also, at times, be intraconverted into economic capital for the winning author/book. Economic capital is the most identifiable, and most talked about, form of capital exchanged in the process of granting awards. Squires highlights how the fiscal value and potential financial reward associated with literary awards has led to competition between awards developing.<sup>417</sup> Squires uses the example of the Orange Prize for Fiction which, when launched in 1996, offered a higher prize purse (£30,000) than the Man Booker Prize (£20,000), thus challenging the Man Booker's status as one of the 'richest' awards in the UK (Squires, 2013, 299). While such competition between awards and their prize purses indicates that an award's economic capital can be viewed as reflecting its cultural capital in the UK, there are awards with nominal cash prizes, such as the French le Prix Goncourt which confers €10 to the winning author.<sup>418</sup> Either way, such sizeable figures cannot be considered merely as financial bonuses for winning authors. As an Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) survey published in 2014 illustrated, professional authors in the UK are finding it

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<sup>416</sup> The reason why, in this instance, the award-winning author and/or book are being considered as one and the same is due to the fact that the promotional emphasis on exactly who, or what, wins a Saltire Society Literary Award can change depending on the award category. For example, for the Literary Award, particularly the Book of the Year Award, emphasis would be placed upon the winning author, often because they were already a well-known author. However, when it comes to the History Book of the Year or Research Book of the Year Awards, emphasis is more likely to be placed on the book itself, particularly the content or themes of the book, because the author is less likely to be well-known and will therefore have less promotional value, or capital.

<sup>417</sup> Claire Squires, 'Literary Prizes and Awards', in G. Harper, eds. *A Companion to Creative Writing* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), pp. 291-304 (p. 299).

<sup>418</sup> The Goncourt's token prize aside, the Académie Goncourt assure that it is the winning of the award that assures an association with the award alone will reap its own financial rewards: 'Mais il est évident qu'il est d'un tout autre rapport financier, un tirage très important étant assuré au livre couronné par le Goncourt.' Académie Goncourt, 'Présentation', 17 April 2016 <<http://academie-goncourt.fr/?article=1229180041>> [accessed 13 July 2016]

increasingly difficult to earn an income exclusively from their writing.<sup>419</sup> According to the ALCS, only 11.5% of professional authors were ‘earning a living solely from writing’ in 2013, a decrease from 40% in 2005 (Johnson et al, 3). This, coupled with falling advances and the year on year fall in book sales in the UK since 2009 – it has been reported that ‘print sales of adult fiction have declined by over £150 million since 2009’<sup>420</sup> – means that authors are finding it more difficult to sustain a full time writing career. The financial remuneration of literary awards is therefore one means by which an author can enhance their income, albeit highly unpredictably and rarely.

This issue was brought to the fore in relation to the Society Literary Awards when James Kelman, who received the Book of the Year Award for his novel *Mo Said She Was Quirky* (2012) in November 2012, noted that the £5,000 prize fund would be ‘really useful’, as he had only made ‘about £15,000’ in the previous year from his writing, despite being an author ‘for about forty years’.<sup>421</sup> Kelman’s fellow Book of the Year Award winner James Robertson reiterated Kelman’s public statements in interview. Robertson confirmed that literary awards were ‘absolutely’ viewed as a form of income for writers, and ‘not just for writers who are starting up’.<sup>422</sup> Robertson noted that:

[...] to be given a cheque for five or ten thousand pounds is a substantial amount of money for many, many authors [...] certainly even when I won [the Society’ Book of the Year Award] for *Joseph Knight*, that was £5,000 [and] that’s like eight months’ worth of living for me. And similarly with *And The Land Lay Still* I [was] in a better position then than I was seven years earlier [...] That’s a serious amount of money for most authors, I would suggest. [...] particularly because I think the awards tend to go to literary writers who don’t necessarily earn huge amounts of money from their books.

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<sup>419</sup> Phillip Johnson et al, *What Are Words Worth Now? A Survey of Author’s Earnings* (London: The Author’s Licensing and Collection Society, 2014) Available online <<http://www.alcs.co.uk/About-us/News/News/What-are-words-worth-now-not-much.aspx>> [accessed 20 August 2015]

<sup>420</sup> Alison Flood, ‘Sales of printed books fall by more than £150m in five years’, *The Guardian*, Tuesday 13 January 2015 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jan/13/sales-printed-books-fell-150m--five-years>> [accessed 20 August 2015]

<sup>421</sup> David Robinson, ‘James Kelman ‘made only £15,000 from writing in 2011’, Saturday 01 December 2012 <<http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/books/james-kelman-made-only-15-000-from-writing-in-2011-1-2670536>> [accessed 4 December 2012]

<sup>422</sup> James Robertson, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 7 March 2014.

They don't necessarily sell in vast quantities, and particularly for poets, for example, that's a serious amount of money. (Robertson, 2014)

Of course a literary award's prize fund is not the only means by which an award offers economic gains for winning authors; Squires notes how 'an intention to increase book sales was central to the [Booker Prize's] mission from its inception' (Squires, 2013, 296). Accordingly, the Booker Prize has grown to become synonymous with 'best-seller' status. The Man Booker website even states that 'to win is to become a best-seller', and refers to this upsurge in a book's sales as the 'Man Booker effect'.<sup>423</sup> As an analysis of Man Booker shortlisted and winning books completed by *The Guardian* newspaper in October 2012 revealed, the impact of an association with the award can have a substantial impact on books sales.<sup>424</sup> Books shortlisted for the 2011 Man Booker, for example, saw an average increase of 51% to the volume sales of books in the week following the shortlist announcement. Between 2001 and 2011, winners of the award saw an average increase in book sales of over 1000% – with some authors' sales increasing by as much as 1918% – in the week following the announcement of the winner (*The Guardian*, 2012). The Man Booker is not unique in its status as an award which stimulates sales for authors and books associated with it. The Scotiabank Giller Prize for Canadian literature, which offers a substantial \$100,000 to its winner and \$10,000 to each shortlistee, has also been credited with increasing the sales of its award winners and shortlistees with books winning the award seeing an average 543% increase in sales.<sup>425</sup> It is therefore not the case then that the only economic capital to be acquired from literary awards is via the awards' prize purse.

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<sup>423</sup> 'The Man Booker effect', *The Man Booker Prize*, 13 November 2012

<<http://themanbookerprize.com/news/2012/11/13/man-booker-effect>> [accessed 6 May 2014]

<sup>424</sup> 'Booker Prize 2012: Sales for all the winners and the 2012 shortlist, including Hilary Mantel', *The Guardian*, 10 October 2012 <<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2012/oct/10/booker-prize-2012-winners-sales-data>> [accessed 5 June 2013]

<sup>425</sup> Vinay Menon, 'The Giller Effect', *Toronto Star*, Tuesday 15 December 2015

<[https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/books/2013/11/01/the\\_giller\\_effect.html](https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/books/2013/11/01/the_giller_effect.html)> [accessed 12 February 2016]

In fact, as the Man Booker data indicates, authors do not even need to *win* awards to reap the economic benefits an association with an award may have.

While a similar analysis of the book sales of Saltire Society Literary Award shortlisted or winning books is discussed in more detail in the latter half of this section, the suggestion that an author's association with an award, through being long- or shortlisted, is the second means by which cultural and economic capital exchanges take place between the awarding institution and the author/book. However, while this exchange may seem one-sided, with the author reaping the benefits of being long- or shortlisted by an award's judging panel and therefore able to make this part of their *curricula vitae* (which is discussed in more detail later in this section), analysis of the Saltire Society's Literary Awards indicate that this exchange is reciprocal, with an awarding institution acquiring cultural kudos from the authors they reward. In press releases and literary award entry forms, the Society consistently refers back to the authors it has already rewarded, making them part of the narrative which the Society presents about the Literary Awards. A specific benefit of this for the Society is the fact that they have awarded many of Scotland's most critically acclaimed and internationally successful authors in the earliest years of the author's career, which enables the Society to claim that they are able to recognise talent at an early stage of an author's career. Such authors, and their stories of having their first book recognised by the Society and their fourth, sixth and tenth book being shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, as is the case for Ali Smith, for example, also becomes part of the Society's narrative of success. Having such critically acclaimed authors on their winner's roll call verifies the Society's standing as an 'arbiter' of literary and cultural value in Scotland, with the choices made by the Society's judges accruing their own cultural capital for the Society.



Such associations through the awards can also be intraconverted into economic capital for both parties. Authors can state their association with the Saltire Society Literary Awards on a book cover, which may well entice a book buyer, new publisher or agent (and the extent to which such associations with the Society's Literary Awards can have an impact upon an author's reputation and book sales is discussed later in this section), and the Society can use its roll call of author's who have gone on to have a successful writing career as evidence of their value when seeking funding or sponsorship. The reciprocity of such exchanges emphasises the fact that the two agents at work depend on the reputational kudos of each other for the cultural capital of the award to have meaning, thus highlighting the fact that such capital exchanges cannot happen *in vacuo*, but are in fact part of the wider Circuit of Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture.

The Saltire Society's Literary Awards also shares this reciprocal relationship with its Literary Award judges. As indicated by the Circuit of Capital Exchange, cultural and social capital is exchanged by the Society and its judges. In the simplest terms, this exchange is similar to that between an award-winning author and the awarding institution: both parties can benefit from an association with the other. As James F. English notes: 'it is the first axiom among prize administrators that the prestige of a prize is reciprocally dependent on the prestige of its judges [...] and part of being culturally well-credentialed is the experience of having sat on the juries of major prizes' (English, 122). In other words, a judge who is well known within their field, whether as a journalist, academic or celebrity will acquire cultural and social capital through their involvement with a literary award since the act of being a judge is held in high-esteem and being selected to judge for such an award implies a certain level of literary wherewithal and intelligence. Likewise, an awarding institution can accrue social status through an association with judges who are well-known or well-respected in their fields.

In terms of the Society's Literary Awards, the reputation of those who have been on judging panels has most commonly come from experience acquired through academic qualifications and careers. Of the twenty-five people who have adjudicated for the Society's Book of the Year, First Book of the Year and Poetry Book of the Year Awards between 1982 and 2015, nearly half have been professional academics, who held, or had retired from, leading positions in universities when they were members of the judging panel. The professions of the judges who were not academics included journalist, civil servant, former publisher, bookseller and author. When it comes to the Society's Research and History Book of the Year Awards, all of the judges who have adjudicated for these awards have exclusively been academics, with expertise in Scottish history and research considered a pre-requisite for membership of these panels.

While the Society believes that having judging panels dominated by Doctors and Professors of Scottish literature or historical research legitimises the awards and that the related social and cultural kudos is tangible – experts in the field of Scottish literature are likely well-equipped to critically assess literature and will have a good understanding of Scottish literary culture in a wide sense – the Society's penchant for having judging panels dominated by academic professionals has been questioned. Writing in 2002 Rosemary Goring, suggested that 'the Saltire's shortlist may be accused of reflecting nothing more than the elitist attitudes of its selectors' because it was judged by 'a panel comprised largely of academics and critics'.<sup>426</sup> Goring continued to say there was 'little in the way of popular fiction' on the 2002 shortlist, but conceded that such 'omissions [...] are a subjective issue' (Goring, 2002, 12). As previously stated, two years later, Goring suggested that in choosing Andrew Greig's novel *In Another Light* (2004) as the 2004 Saltire Society Book of the Year Award winner, the judging panel had 'dimmed' the

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<sup>426</sup> Rosemary Goring, 'Our nation of literary extremes needs to redress the balance', *The Herald*, 23 November 2002, p. 12.

'prize's reputation as a champion of literary excellence'.<sup>427</sup> Again, Goring questioned the validity of the judging panel's decision:

Maybe the Saltire judges decided against the most talented names on its shortlist because each has already won the award in the past. If so, it was a misplaced sentiment. If not, then it might be argued that sentimentality still held sway, seeing a triumph of easy readability and escapism over ambition and nerve. (Goring, 2004, 8)

Although two years later Goring would state that the Society's Literary Awards 'committee' were 'willing to rectify what may be seen as wrongs or simply to bestow distinction on those who richly deserve it' (Goring, 2006, 12), the fact that she commented specifically about the largely academic makeup of the judging panel is telling. Literary award judges are, of course, scrutinised for the decisions they make; being derided or applauded depending on how critics react to shortlisted and winner announcements.<sup>428</sup> What is interesting about Goring's commentary is the fact that she suggests the Society's Literary Award panel's failings are a result of the academic nature of the panel, but Goring is inconsistent with her opinions of the awards which illustrates the unpredictability of attitudes towards the Society's Literary Award judging panels.

Goring's observations also highlight how decisions made by the Society's judges reflect upon the authors and their books. As previously noted, an author or book which is longlisted, shortlisted or selected as a winner for a literary award acquires cultural and economic capital from the awarding body, but since it is typically a judging panel who make the *selections* for a literary award, they too confer a certain amount of cultural and

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<sup>427</sup> Rosemary Goring, 'Prize's reputation is dimmed', *The Herald*, 1 December 2004, p. 8.

<sup>428</sup> See: Claire Lowden, 'Was Richard Flanagan the safe choice for the Man Booker Prize?', *Prospect* 15 October 2014 <<http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/arts-and-books/was-richard-flanagan-the-safe-choice-for-the-man-booker-prize>> [accessed 13 July 2016]; Laura Freeman, 'The best book of the year? No, Man Booker Prize winner 'Seven Killings' is actually the most horrible', *Mail Online* 16 October 2015 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3275127/The-best-book-year-No-Man-Booker-Prize-winner-Seven-Killings-actually-HORRIBLE.html>> [accessed 13 July 2016]; Sarah Gilmartin, 'Literary awards' pros and cons: gold stars and black marks', *The Irish Times*, 9 March 2016 <<http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/literary-awards-pros-and-cons-gold-stars-and-black-marks-1.2566177>> [accessed 13 July 2016]

social capital upon the winning author or book. Although the specifics of the judgment of books for literary awards remains largely hidden from public view (and Part 5 of this thesis goes some way to probing this area of literary award culture in more detail), the public announcements of selections at awards ceremonies and press conferences, often made by the chair of the judging panel, highlights the part played by the judges. In publicly stating their preference for a particular book or author, the judges of the Saltire Society Literary Awards are using their own cultural and social capital – which, as already noted, is viewed as legitimising their status as a judge – to endorse the winning author or book. In other words, the book or author becomes a winner because the judging panel says so and the decision is authenticated by the Saltire Society who rewards the author financially.

However, just as the exchange of cultural, social and economic capital between the awarding institution, the judging panel and the award-winning author/book depends upon the cooperation of each agent, so too does the impact of the capital exchanges rely on further external agents; namely, the reader/book buyer. The relationship between the Society's Literary Awards and these particular agents is inconsistent. When it comes to the capital exchanges between readers and authors in relation to literary award culture, there are two direct interactions which will almost always occur. The author/book will exchange cultural capital, or their creative property in the form of the award-winning book, for economic capital from the reader/book buyer who will purchase or acquire the book. For the purposes of this analysis, the reader's economic capital also includes the time they have taken to actively engage with the author/book. As previously noted with regards to the impact an award can have on a book's sales, winning an award can have a sizeable effect on whether a reader is going to invest their own economic capital in an author or book.

According to previous winners, or publishers of winning and shortlisted books, an association with Saltire Society's Literary Awards does not necessarily equate to a boost in sales for the author in question and, as already discussed, such sales increases are intraconverted into economic and cultural capital for an author/book. When asked if they felt the Society's awards made a difference to the sales of books a number of publishers stated that, from their perspective, they have not seen an increase in sales for the books that have been shortlisted, or have won, an award. Martin Goodman, publisher at Barbican Press, an independent publisher based in London and Hull, noted how when *The Monster's Wife* (2014) by Kate Horsley was shortlisted for the Society's First Book of the Year Award in 2014, it made little impact on sales of the book: '[i]n sales terms, no store took THE MONSTER'S WIFE into stock, including Waterstones, and the award seems to have generated three sales.'<sup>429</sup> Likewise, James Robertson, who, as well as being a Saltire Society Literary Award winner, is the founder of Kettillonia, a Scottish based publisher of pamphlets and books of poetry, has also suggested that the impact the awards have on book sales is minimal. Robertson published Eunice Buchanan's *As Far As I Can See* (2012), which was co-winner of the Society's First Book of the Year Award, along with Tim Armstrong's Gaelic science-fiction novel *Air Cuan Dubh Drilseach* (2013), in 2013. Following Buchanan's win, Robertson said that the total number of sales of *As Far As I Can See* attributable to news of Buchanan's win was 'about 25 copies [...] most of which were ordered by Waterstones'.<sup>430</sup> Accordingly, Robertson believed that 'in terms of actual number[s] that I could say 'those have definitely come from the fact that it won that award' [it would be] about 5 or 6 copies', which he considered to be 'a tiny, tiny impact' (Robertson, 2014).

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<sup>429</sup> Martin Goodman, email correspondence with Stevie Marsden, 27 January 2015.

<sup>430</sup> James Robertson, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 7 March 2014.

Other publishers have gone as far to say the awards have no impact at all onto the sales of shortlisted or winning books. Adrian Searle, Publishing Director of Glasgow based Freight Books argues that the Society's Literary Awards 'don't make any difference' to the sales of books.<sup>431</sup> The reason for this, Searle states, is because the awards are not used as a 'marketing vehicle' for the promotion of shortlisted and winning books because 'the publishers aren't on board [with the effective marketing of the awards]' (Searle, 2014). As a result, the promotional impact of the awards, Searle suggests, is lost. Even so, others have proposed that the awards' lack of impact upon the sales of books may in fact be less to do with a failure to effectively market the awards, and more to do with the type of book that is being shortlisted or awarded. Agnes Rennie, Manager of Acair Ltd., publisher of Gaelic and English language books, who published Martin MacIntyre's novel *Cala Bendita 's a Bheannachdan* (2014), believed that being shortlisted for the 2014 Book of the Year Award had 'not impacted significantly on sales' of MacIntyre's book, but acknowledged that part of this failure may be 'due to the fact that our short listed book was written in Gaelic'.<sup>432</sup> Jen Hamilton-Emery, Director of Salt Publishing, who published Alexander Hutchison's poetry collection *Bones & Breath* (2013), winner of the Society's inaugural Poetry Book of the Year Award, also remarked how, when it comes to poetry, winning the award makes little different to sales.<sup>433</sup> This, Hamilton-Emery noted was 'not a reflection of the prize' since 'few things help poetry books sell well' (Hamilton-Emery, 2015). Similarly, Bethany Whalley, Marketing Executive at Ashgate Publishing, an independent academic publisher (at the time of writing), felt that due to the 'specialist nature' of their publications, she 'wouldn't say that [Ashgate have] necessarily felt an impact on sales as a result of the awards.'<sup>434</sup> Two Ashgate books were shortlisted for

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<sup>431</sup> Adrian Searle, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 26 June 2014.

<sup>432</sup> Agnes Rennie, email correspondence with Stevie Marsden, 2 February 2015.

<sup>433</sup> Jen Hamilton-Emery, email correspondence with Stevie Marsden, 5 February 2015.

<sup>434</sup> Bethany Whalley, email correspondence with Stevie Marsden, 28 January 2015.

awards in 2014: Richard A. Marsden's *Cosmo Innes and the Defence of Scotland's Past c.1825-1875* (2014) for the History Book of the Year Award and Iain J M Robertson's *Landscapes of Protest in the Scottish Highlands after 1914* (2013), for the Research Book of the Year Award. Whalley did feel, however, that 'in terms of getting the Ashgate name out there [the awards have been] really useful' and was 'especially impressed with the Twitter activity during the [2014] awards [ceremony]' (Whalley, 2015).

The influence that the *type* of book that wins a Saltire Society Literary Award can have on the potential sales of the book should be taken into consideration when assessing the impact the awards have on a book's sales. For example, when the 2014 Research Book of the Year winner *The Scottish Town in the Age of Enlightenment 1740-1820* (2014) by Bob Harris and Charles McKean, was also selected as the 'overall' Book of the Year Award winner in 2014, the complexities of the inclusion of academic and research books within the Society's selection of awards came to the fore. During informal conversation with me, a number of booksellers bemoaned the cost of Harris and McKean's book, which cost £130 in hardback and £30 in paperback, because the high price made the book difficult to sell to customers. A similar situation arose in 1991 when the Saltire Society Book of the Year Award went to Duncan MacMillan's *Scottish Art 1460-1990* (1990). Writing in the Spring 1992 edition of *Books in Scotland* Saltire Society Literary Award judge Ian Campbell, acknowledged, and swiftly dismissed, the potential problem the £45 price of the book might cause:

Of course it is a luxury book at a luxury price, and while the Saltire Society/*Scotsman*/STV prize can be expected to enhance a book's sale, the price-tag of £45 is likely to inhibit the book's chances of being a best seller. No matter; handsome, lucid, intensely readable [...] Duncan MacMillan's book has achieved what it set out to do, namely to introduce a huge field through word and illustration<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>435</sup> Ian Campbell, 'Parameters of Choice', *Books in Scotland*, 41 (Spring, 1992), 5-6 (p. 5).

The fact that Campbell writes with conviction about the positive impact winning a ‘Saltire Society/*Scotsman*/STV’ can have on a book’s sales is undermined by his dismissive attitude regarding the possible *negative* effects of the ‘luxury’ status and price of the winning book. Serving to illustrate that the Society’s Literary Award judging panel were aware that the pricing or genre of the book they selected as a winner of an award could potentially counteract any promotional value that came from winning a Saltire Society Literary Award. This attitude is at odds with that of the Man Booker Prize which makes a concerted effort to engage with award promotion, going as far as requiring publishers to ‘comply with co-promotional activity if one of their books should be shortlisted’ (Squires, 2007, 73).

Campbell’s comments, together with those from publishers of books which have been shortlisted for, or have won, Saltire Society Literary Awards indicate the juxtaposing views that exist regarding what kind of economic impact the Society’s Literary Awards should, or does, have on shortlisted or winning authors and books. While publishers are convinced that an association with the Society’s awards makes little to no difference to a book’s sales, Campbell implies that an increase in the sales of a book is a secondary concern for the Society’s judges: what is more important is what the book has ‘achieved’ (Campbell, 5). In other words, Campbell infers that the cultural capital exchange is the most significant outcome for winners of the Society’s Literary Awards but this argument overlooks the importance of the reader/book buyer whose agency in the Circuit of Capital Exchange is imperative in intraconverting cultural capital into economic capital. However, as Squires noted in 2007, ‘[n]o large-scale consumer surveys currently exist to clarify the attitudes of book buyers to prize-winning books’ but, Squires continues, ‘evidence from the increased sales of titles certainly suggests that they, and their associated marketing activity, have a much stronger positive than negative impact on sales.’ (Squires, 2007, 76)



Accordingly, the role the reader/book buyer plays in terms of the Saltire Society Literary Awards can be in part assessed through an analysis of the sales of books that have been shortlisted for, or have won, Saltire Society Literary Awards.

Similar to the analysis conducted by *The Guardian* into the effects of the Man Booker Prize cited earlier, the following examination assesses the extent to which being shortlisted for, or winning, a Saltire Society Literary Award may affect a book's sales. Using book sales data acquired from Nielsen BookScan UK, which provides total consumer market book sales statistics 'in excess of 90% of UK retail sales including general bookshops, internet sites [...] campus bookshops and some specialist sites such as major museums', it is possible to confirm, or disprove, the general suppositions made by publishers and Campbell as noted above.<sup>436</sup> Focusing on book sales data relating to the shortlists for the Society's Literary Awards in 2013, 2014 and 2015, it is possible to ascertain and illustrate any trends in the sales of books shortlisted for the awards.<sup>437</sup>

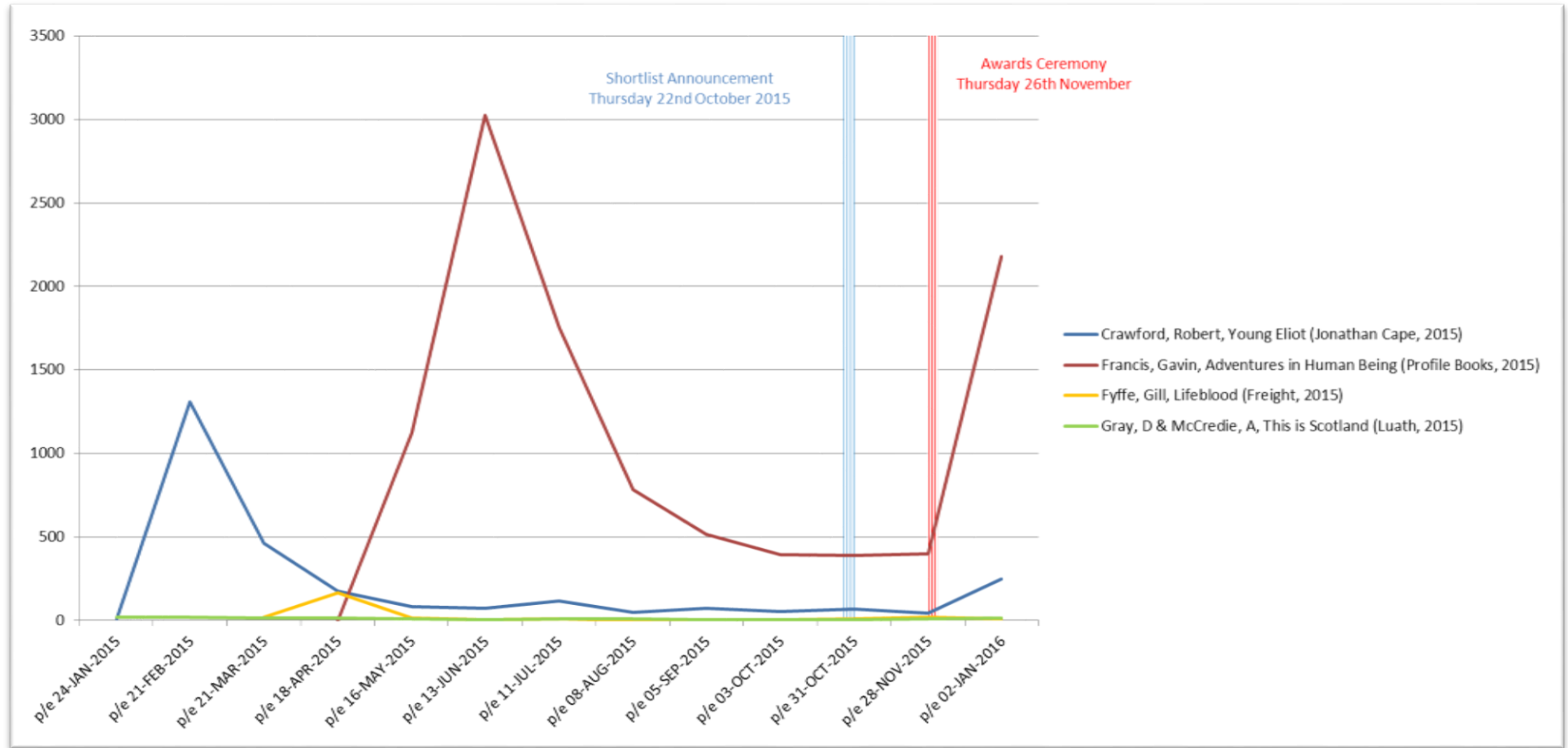
Figures 5 to 13 below show the annual monthly sales of the books shortlisted for the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year between 2013 and 2015. Demonstrating the annual sales of the books shortlisted for the Society's award, despite the fact that the shortlist and winner announcement are made late in the year, illustrates the general sales trends of the books in question of that year and thus offering a pattern by which to compare any significant changes against. For example, in Figures 5 and 6 there are huge upsurges in sales of Gavin Francis' *Adventures in Human Being* (2015) between May and June 2015 and Malachy Tallack's *Sixty Degrees North* (2015) between July and August

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<sup>436</sup> 'Nielsen BookScan', (London: Nielsen Book Services Ltd, 2013), p.6.

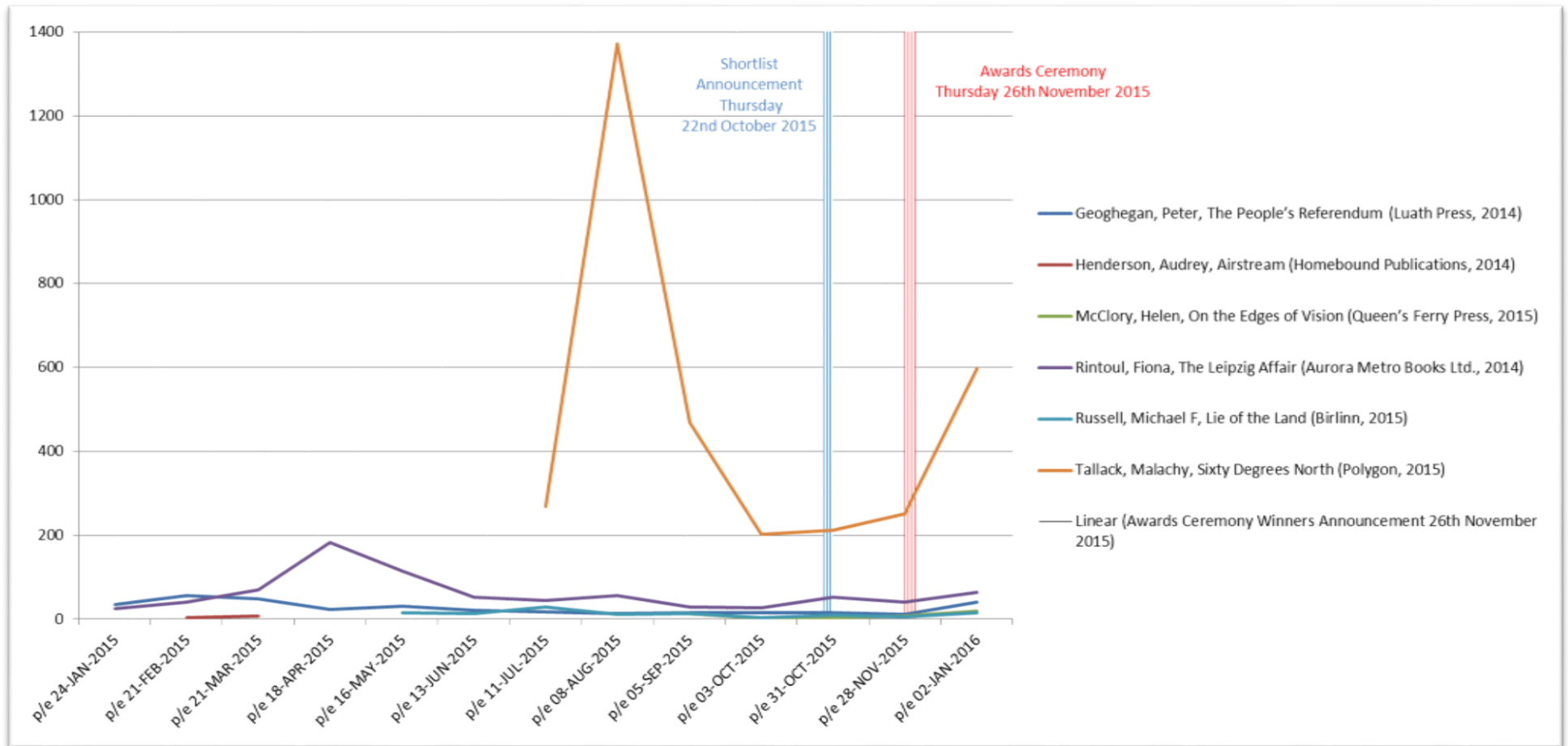
<sup>437</sup> Nielsen BookScan is currently the most comprehensive means by which book sales can be quantified. According to Nielsen BookScan: 'Nielsen BookScan International has been in operation since 1996 and current coverage is in excess of 90% of UK retail sales including general bookshops, internet sites, airport and other travel sites, campus bookshops and some specialist sites such as major museums and art galleries. Sales data collection covers both unit sales and actual consumer price paid by ISBN.' 'Nielsen BookScan', *Nielsen BookScan* (2001), p. 8. Available at: [www.nielsenbookscan.co.uk/uploads/NielsenBookScan\\_Brochure\\_Sept11.pdf](http://www.nielsenbookscan.co.uk/uploads/NielsenBookScan_Brochure_Sept11.pdf) [accessed on 13 April 2016]

Figure 5: Monthly book sales of 2015 Saltire Society Non Fiction Book of the Year Award Shortlist, January 2015 - December 2015 (in volume)<sup>438</sup>



<sup>438</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

Figure 6: Monthly book sales of 2015 Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award Shortlist, January 2015 - December 2015 (in volume)<sup>439</sup>



<sup>439</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

2015. These dramatic leaps in sales – a 170% increase for Francis and a 410% increase for Tallack – correspond with the books being selected as BBC Radio 4’s Book of the Week within those periods.<sup>440</sup>

However, considering such data in relation to the Society’s Literary Awards shortlists and winners is much more problematic. There are intimations in the data from 2013 to 2015 that an association with the Society’s Literary Awards may have made a difference to a book’s sales. In Figures 7 and 8, for example, the sales for Kate Atkinson’s novels *Life After Life* (2013), which won the Book of the Year Award in 2013, and *God in Ruins* (2015), which was shortlisted for the Fiction Book of the Year Award in 2015, appear to increase in the months following the shortlist and winner announcement. Likewise, in Figure 9, sales for Ali Smith’s *How To Be Both* (2014), which won the Literary Book of the Year Award in 2014, also increase in the month following the announcement of her win on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November. Although, this win was likely overshadowed by the announcement that *How To Be Both* also won the £10,000 Goldsmiths prize for fiction the very next day.<sup>441</sup>

Since these upturns either correspond with other award wins or occur in December, a time at which an increase in book sales is generally anticipated because of the upcoming Christmas season, it is extremely difficult to ascertain whether this increase in

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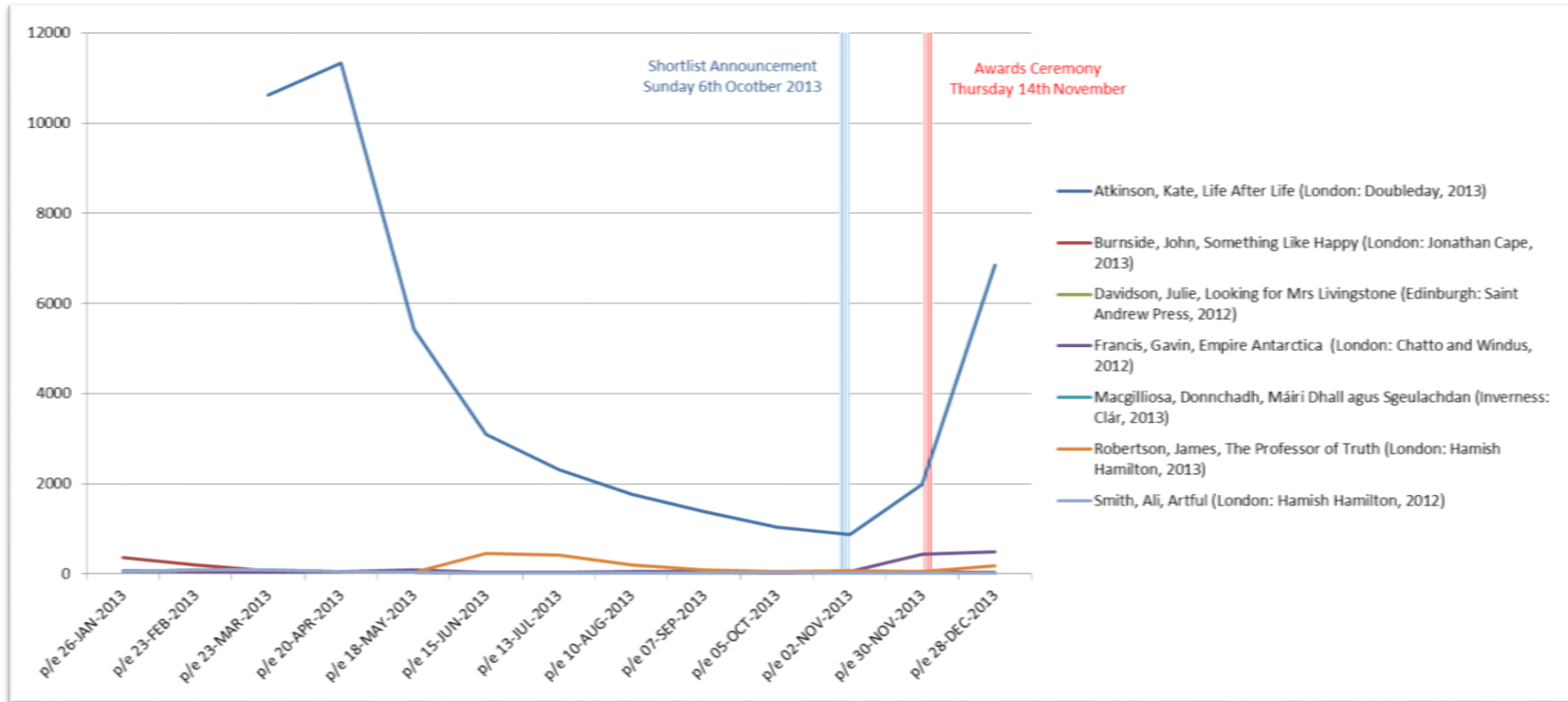
<sup>440</sup> Gavin Francis’s *Adventure in Human Being* was serialised for BBC Radio 4’s Book of the Week between Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Malachy Tallack’s *Sixty Degrees North* was serialised for BBC Radio 4. Book of the Week between Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

‘Adventures in Human Being - BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week’, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015, <<https://profilebooks.com/blog/adventures-in-human-being-bbc-radio-4s-book-of-the-week/>> [accessed 19 September 2015]

‘60 Degrees North – A BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week’, July 2015, <<http://jennybrownassociates.com/news/page/4>> [accessed 19 September 2015]

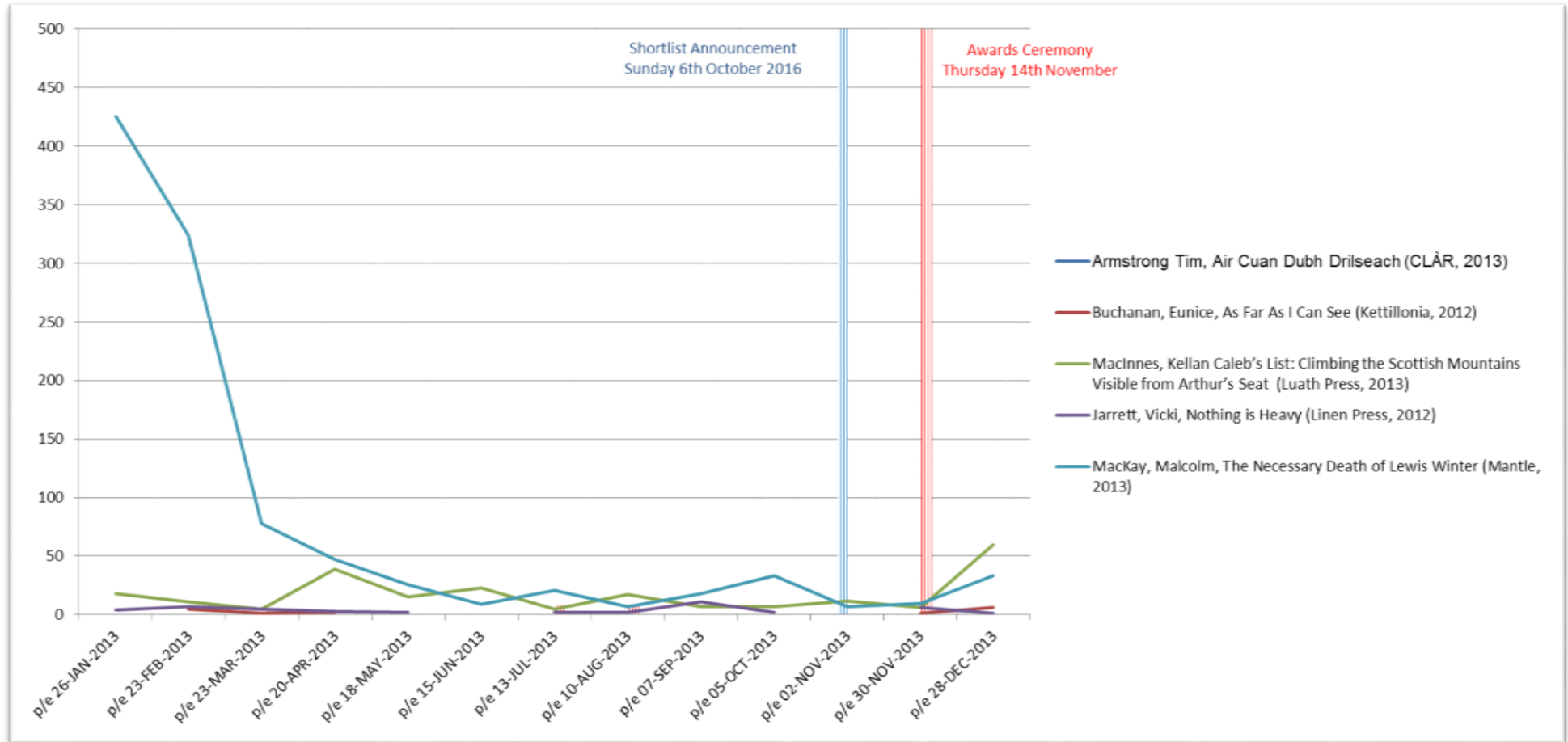
<sup>441</sup> Alison Flood, ‘Ali Smith wins Goldsmiths prize for bifurcating marvel How to Be Both’, *The Guardian* 12 November 2014 <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/nov/12/ali-smith-goldsmith-prize-how-to-be-both>> [accessed 3 September 2016]

Figure 7: Monthly book sales of 2013 Saltire Society Book of the Year Award Shortlist, January 2013 - December 2013 (in volume) <sup>442</sup>



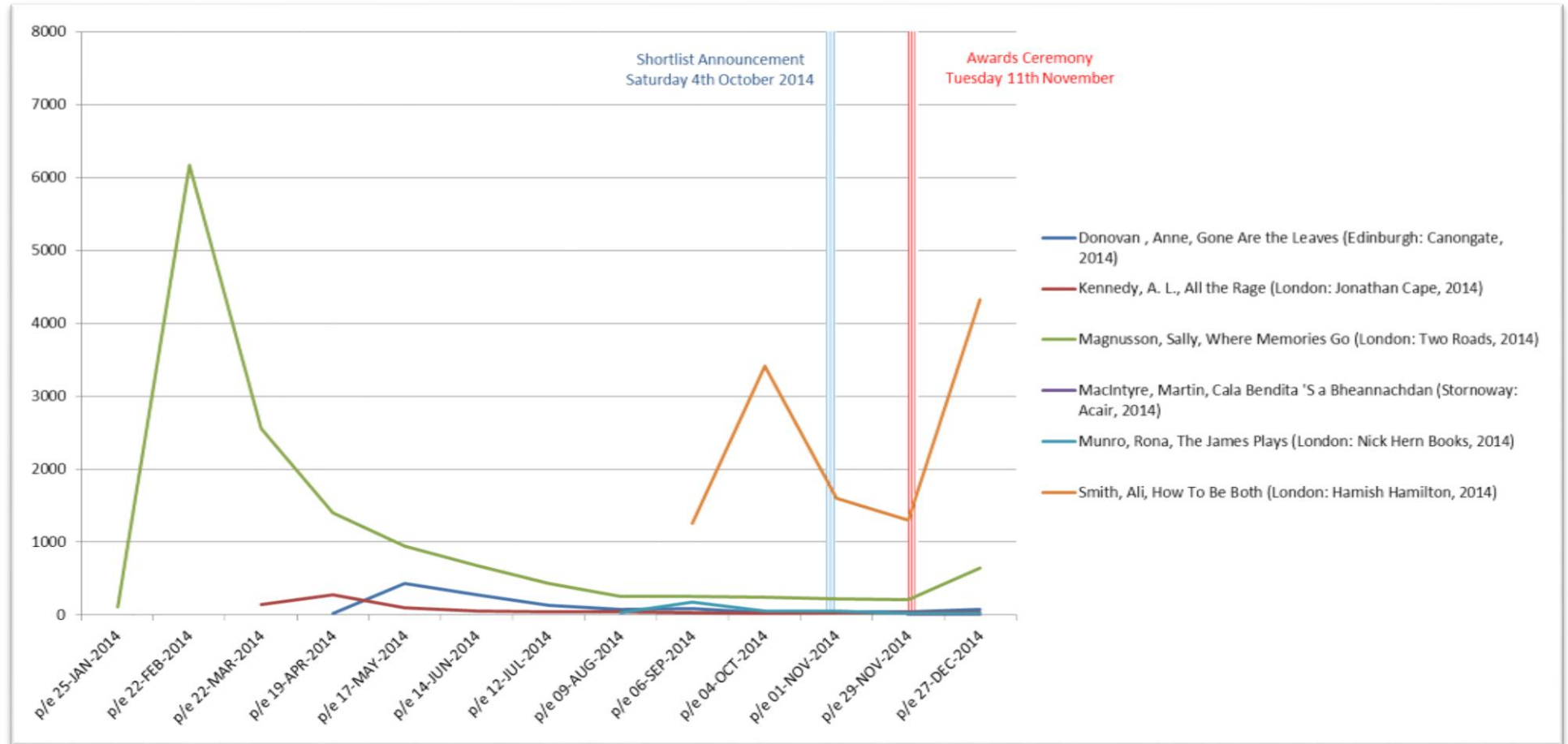
<sup>442</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

Figure 8: Monthly book sales of 2013 Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award Shortlist, January 2013 - December 2013 (in volume)<sup>443</sup>



<sup>443</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

Figure 9: Monthly book sales of 2014 Saltire Society Literary Book of the Year Award Shortlist, January 2014 - December 2014 (in volume)<sup>444</sup>



<sup>444</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

sales correlates with the announcements of the Society's award winners.<sup>445</sup> This, coupled with the fact that the shortlisted or award-winning authors who see the largest increase in sales in late November and early December are well known, bestselling authors anyway, means that it is unlikely that the upsurge in sales bears any relation to the Society's Literary Awards.

When it comes to the First Book of the Year, on the other hand, it is tempting to argue that, since the authors of the books shortlisted for the award are often unfamiliar to a wider reading audience, upsurges in sales of their books may reflect the publicity generated by their inclusion on the Society's First Book shortlist. In 2015, for instance, as illustrated in Figure 6, sales of Helen McClory's *On the Edges of Vision* (2014) doubled in the month preceding the announcement that she won the First Book of the Year Award. Both McClory and her publisher began promoting her award win with a blog posted the day after the ceremony and celebrated on Twitter by posting a picture of her book alongside her trophy.<sup>446</sup> Considering that monthly sales for McClory's debut collection of short stories had fallen to an average of 5 in October through to late November, it is likely that receiving an award from the Society increased sales of *On the Edges of Vision* in December 2015. Similarly, Figure 8 shows that book sales for Kellan MacInnes' *Caleb's List: Climbing the Scottish Mountains Visible from Arthur's Seat* (2013), which was shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award in 2013, improved by 900% in the month following the Awards Ceremony in November 2013. However, as previously noted, the fact that these surges correlate to a general increase in book sales because of the Christmas

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<sup>445</sup> In December 2014, for example, *The Bookseller* reported that 'sales for the week of Christmas were at their highest since 2010. In the final week of the year (Nielsen week 52) just under £50m (£49.87m) was spent in the seven days ending 27th December. This is up 32.4% in value on the same week last year when £37.7m was spent during Christmas week.'

John Lewis, 'Print market solid in 2014', *The Bookseller*, 30<sup>th</sup> December 2014

<<http://www.thebookseller.com/news/print-market-solid-2014>> [accessed 15 February 2015]

<sup>446</sup> 'On the Edges of Vision wins Saltire First Book of the Year Award!', *Schietree*, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015

<<https://schietree.wordpress.com/2015/11/27/on-the-edges-of-vision-wins-saltire-first-book-of-the-year-award/>> [accessed 12 January 2016]

@HelenMcClory, Twitter, 2015, <<https://twitter.com/HelenMcClory>> [accessed 19 May 2016]

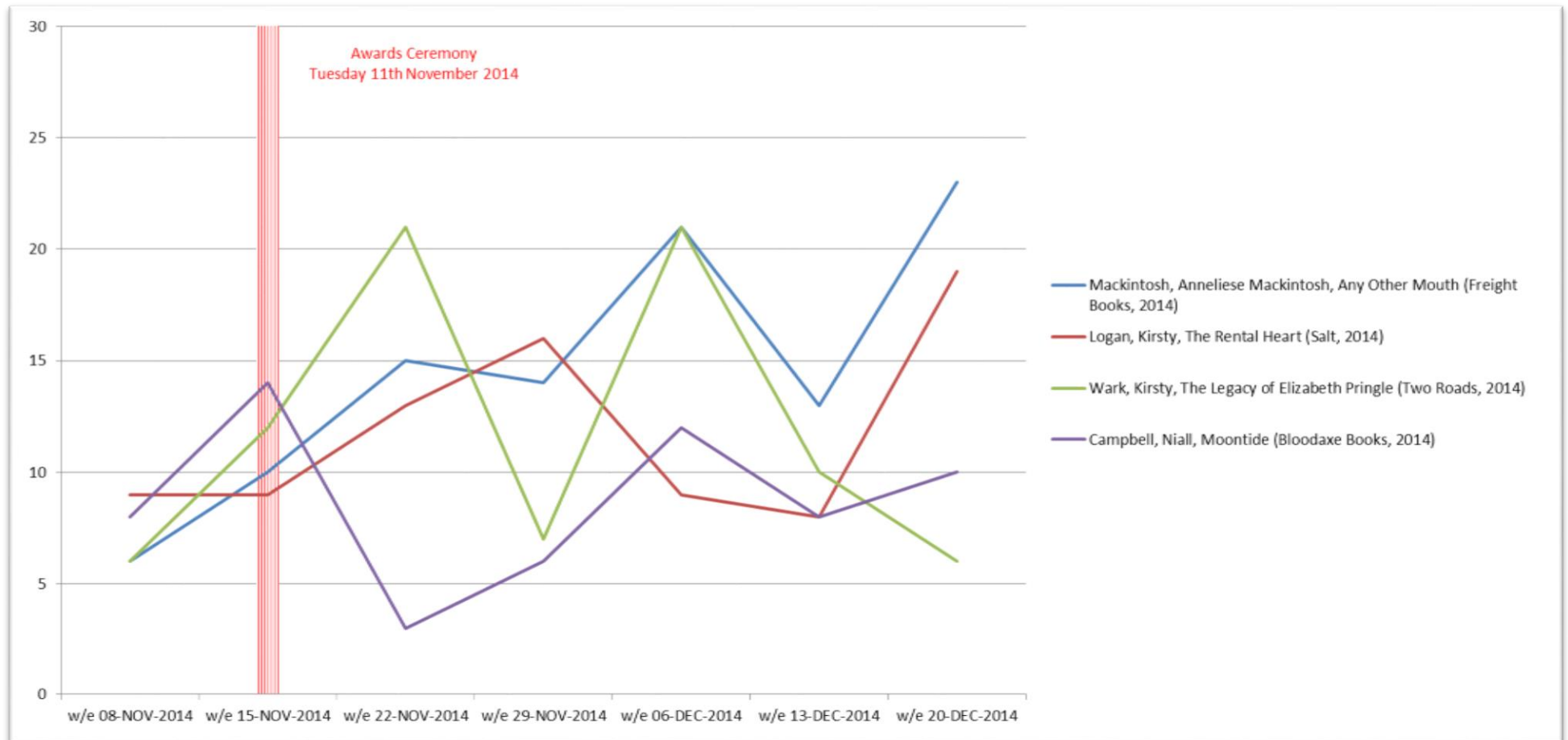


shopping season makes formulating a definitive connection between the Society's Literary Awards and book sales challenging.

Even a week-by-week analysis of post-award ceremony sales gives little indication as to whether the Society's Literary Awards have made a significant impact on the sales of winning books. Figures 10 and 11 show the post-award ceremony weekly sales for the 2014 Literary Book of the Year and First Book of the Year awards respectively. As Figure 10 indicates, sales of Ali Smith's *How to be Both*, winner of the Literary Book of the Year Award, increased by 30% in the week of the Society's Literary Awards ceremony (compared to the week before the ceremony), and by an additional 27% in the week following the announcement. Likewise, Sally Magnusson's *Where Memories Go* saw a 24% increase in sales in the week following the ceremony. However, because this level of increase in book sales is not evident across the shortlists, and since these authors, or, in the case of Magnusson, television personalities, are already well known, it is possible that this is why Smith and Magnusson saw such upsurges in sales of their books.

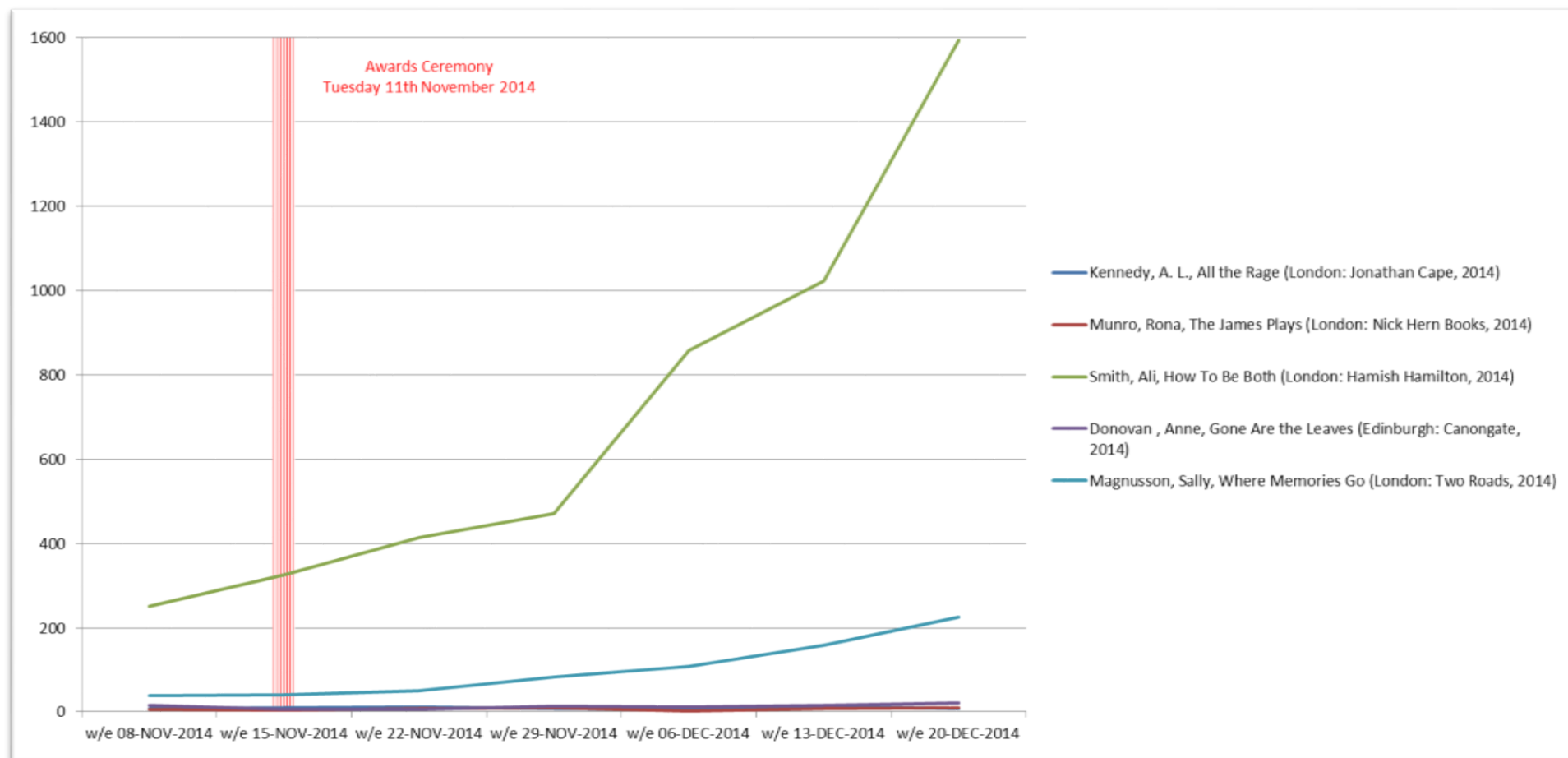
Accordingly, it is potentially more fruitful to consider the weekly post-ceremony book sales of lesser known authors. Taking the weekly sales of the 2014 First Book of the Year Award illustrated in Figure 11 as a sample, further emphasises the complexities of the relationship between the Society's Literary Awards and book sales. As Figure 10 shows, the post-ceremony weekly sales for the 2014 First Book of the Year Award shortlist are erratic, with major peaks and dips happening to the sales of all of the books. Certainly, the fact that the numbers of sales are much smaller in comparison – averaging at 12 sales a week – to the Literary Book of the Year Award will make the week-by-week changes appear more dramatic when visually displayed. Lesser known authors shortlisted for the 2014 First Book award, for example, saw an increase in their book's sales in the week following the awards ceremony.

Figure 10: Weekly book sales of 2014 Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award Shortlist, 8<sup>th</sup> November 2014 - 20<sup>th</sup> December 2014 (in volume)<sup>447</sup>



<sup>447</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

Figure 11: Weekly book sales of 2014 Saltire Society Book of the Year Award Shortlist, 8th November 2014 - 20th December (in volume) <sup>448</sup>



<sup>448</sup> Source: Nielsen BookScan.

Sales for Kirsty Logan's *The Rental Heart* (2014) and Anneliese Mackintosh's *Any Other Mouth* (2014) increased by 44% and 50% respectively (see Figure 11). Kirsty Wark's *The Legacy of Elizabeth Pringle* (2014) also saw a leap in sales by 75% in the week following the awards ceremony. Although Wark is a BBC correspondent and therefore a well-known and popular television personality, the upsurge in sales for her debut novel did correspond with the Society's Awards ceremony on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Furthermore, unlike similarly well-known authors and personalities included in the Book of the Year Award shortlist, Wark's sales did not see an upturn in the immediate weeks preceding the Christmas season.

What such analyses indicate is the problematic nature of using book sales data, particularly when the data sets are small samples, as a means of quantifying the economic impact of the Saltire Society's Literary Awards. The impact of the Society's awards is particularly difficult to quantify because the winner announcements correspond with a time in the year in which an increase in book sales is already anticipated. There are also other factors which can problematize the accuracy of placing the impact of books sales on the Society's influence alone. For example, in early November 2013 Gavin Francis' *Empire Antarctica* (2012) won the £30,000 Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust (SMIT) Book of the Year Award.<sup>449</sup> The large cash fund of this award made it 'the richest prize in Scottish literature' and this status garnered much in the way of media coverage for the prize.<sup>450</sup> It would be fair to suggest then, that the upsurge in sales for Francis' *Empire Antarctica* in

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<sup>449</sup> 'Empire Antarctica named Scottish Book of the Year', BBC News Online, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2013 [accessed 20 May 2014]

<sup>450</sup> 'Authors shortlisted for literary awards', *The Herald*, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013, p. 5.

See also: Phil Miller, 'New sponsor announced for £30,000 book awards', *The Herald*, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009, p. 11; Lori Reid, 'Writer 'honoured' to win top book award', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2009, p. 20; Calum Ross, 'Author in running for prize with portrait of bankrupt city', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010, p. 7; 'Scots writers view for £30,000 book prize', *The Herald*, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010, p. 11; 'Write Prescription', *Metro*, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013, p. 5.

November 2013 was influenced more by the SMIT book of the year award win than being included on the Society's Book of the Year shortlist.

Given that the sales figures included herein appear to confirm the previously noted thoughts from publishers such as Martin Goodman, James Robertson, Adrian Searle and Agnes Rennie, can the impact of influence of the Society's Literary Awards be quantified in another way? If the Society's awards are not following the steps of the likes of the Man Booker Prize whose 'intention to increase book sales was central to the prize's mission from its inception' with the organisers 'intentionally attempting a fusion of cultural and economic capital' (Squires, 296), what forms of capital are the Society's awards actually engaging with? As noted earlier in this analysis, Ian Campbell, the Society's longest standing literary award judge, once stated that the 'prize can be expected to enhance a book's sale' whilst simultaneously stating that the price of one of the books they had selected as a winner of the Book of the Year Award may 'inhibit the book's chances of being a best seller' (Campbell, 5). Likewise Campbell's colleague and former co-chair of the Literary Awards judging panel, Douglas Gifford, once suggested that an increase in sales of a Saltire Society Literary Award winning book is indicative of the public 'voting with their purse'.<sup>451</sup> But such statements were based on the *assumption* that the Society's Literary Awards have an impact upon the sales of books which had won or been shortlisted for the awards, and as the analysis of book sales figures above shows, it is extremely difficult to say for certain that the awards have this impact.

Despite this, and as noted earlier, the Society's Literary Awards, are still viewed as being prestigious, indicating that the leading form of capital in play throughout the exchanges between the Society, it is Literary Awards and judges, award-winning authors/books and the reader/book buyer is cultural capital. Although remaining

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<sup>451</sup> Douglas Gifford, 'Hard Decisions', *Books from Scotland*, 56 (Winter 1995), p. 7.

unconvinced of the impact the Society's Literary Awards have upon the sales of books, Adrian Searle is sure that promoting a book's win or shortlisting has the potential to increase sales. In Searle's view, an award can 'give a book credibility' (Searle, 2013). Continuing, Searle suggests that 'books are all about risk' with potential readers, including both general and professional readers, asking themselves 'Am I going to like it? Is it any good?' Searle argues that anything 'that takes away a little bit of the risk can be a good thing'. This opinion, that book awards offer a seal of approval for a book, is echoed by the writer Garth Risk Hallberg, in his article 'The Problem with Prizes'.<sup>452</sup> Hallberg, who is semi-critical of the proliferation and number of book awards in the UK and America, argues that 'literary prizes [...] do several valuable things':

First, in an era when column-inches for book coverage are disappearing from our major newspapers, [awards] offer publishers free promotion for books that deserve it. [...] In the best cases, as when the Nobel alerts us to [...] a worthy author [the author] immediately finds a broader audience. In other cases [...] an author of whom people were already aware gets a dispensation to stop worrying about whether her next book will sell [...] Literary prizes may also offer writers [...] a financial and psychological vote of confidence. Conferred on an author who has yet to find a sustaining audience, a prize purse may act as a kind of fellowship, subsidizing another three or six months of work. (Hallberg, 2010)

As well as echoing James Robertson's comments regarding the economic value of winning an award for authors, Hallberg's comments also reiterate Searle's suggestion that an award helps potential readers to decide what book they should read.<sup>453</sup> In commenting on the depletion of 'column-inches for book coverage' in relation to book award culture, Hallberg effectively suggests that literary awards are now tasked with the same job as book reviews.

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<sup>452</sup> Garth Risk Hallberg, 'The Problem with Prizes (or, Who Cares About the International Booker?)', *The Millions*, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010 <<http://www.themillions.com/2010/01/the-problem-with-prizes-or-who-cares-about-the-international-booker.html>> [accessed 25 January 2013]

<sup>453</sup> Although, admittedly, this supposition assumes that a reader or book-buyer is aware of an award shortlist or winner announcement at the time of the announcement, as opposed becoming aware of the author/books award win at a later point. A reader/book buyer making a purchase at a later date because, for example, an award win or shortlisting is stated on a book's cover, would mean that there is also a slow-burning economic capital that is not accounted for in book sales immediately following the shortlist or winner announcements. This said, quantifying when and why book buyers or readers purchase or decide to read a book is extremely difficult.

Therefore, such awards are not simply cash prizes and commendations to the author or publisher of a book, but are an indication to readers of what book they should – or should not – read.

Although Searle discusses the economic value and impact of book awards for publishers, he suggests that it is what Hallberg called the ‘psychological vote of confidence’ that is most important to authors:

I think the money is less important, I think it’s the winning of the award that is the important thing for the author, because it’s a massive accolade for them and it’s all about external affirmation of what they’re trying to achieve creatively. So, to have on your CV ‘Winner of the Saltire ...’ is fabulous, and writer’s careers are all about building these things. (Searle, 2014)

Such accolades become part of an author’s narrative of success and enable them to substantiate their cultural value as an author, a cultural value that can be converted into economic and social capital in the form of funding grants and book deals. The literary agent Jenny Brown, for example, noted that it was a ‘great thing when [...] pitching a writer to be able to say [they] won the Saltire Society First Book of the Year’ (Brown, 2015).

It would be fair to suggest then that, while the Society’s Literary Awards cannot claim to have something akin to the Man Booker or Giller Prize effect on the sales of books, the authors, publishers and cultural commentators alike will acknowledge that the awards have a cultural kudos. As this analysis has shown, this status has not come from having a substantial impact on the book sales of shortlisted or winning authors, but has developed from the Society’s status as a longstanding awarding institution which has developed reciprocal relationships with its judging panels and award-winning authors; and through these relationships each agent exchanges cultural, economic and social capital. The fact that the Society’s Literary Awards seems to have little to no effect on the sales of shortlisted or award-winning books indicates that the Society fails to effectively

demonstrate its status as an ‘arbiter’ of literary and cultural value to those agents who are not directly involved with the awards, such as the reader/book buyer. Publishers have commented on this very issue. Robert Davidson, founder and managing director of Sandstone Press, speculated that ‘many people in Scotland don’t know about the Saltire Society prizes at all’ (Davidson, 2015). Yet Sara Hunt argued that while the ‘general reading public’ are unlikely to take much notice of announcements relating to the awards, she would ‘guess [that] the prestige [of the award] is even high amongst the general public’ (Hunt, 2015). Such comments illustrate just how difficult it is to quantify the impact the Society’s Literary Awards have within Scottish literary and publishing culture. Using the Circuit of Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture goes some way to analysing literary awards whose impact is less perceptible than those awards which have a definite economic impact upon the authors and books they reward. Indeed, the purpose of this Circuit of Capital Exchange is to create a starting point from which further scholarly discussion of capital exchanges and intraconversions in literary award culture can be considered. While no two awards will necessarily function in the same way, the basic agents at play in the conferral of literary awards: awarding institution/organisation, judges, author/book and reader/book buyer, are a constant within nearly all literary awards. Furthermore, although the capital exchanges detailed within the Circuit of Capital Exchange included herein will most likely be applicable to many other literary awards, they are open and susceptible to change and development as scholarship surrounding literary award culture develops further.

What this particular study of the Saltire Society Literary Awards through the Circuit of Capital Exchange in Literary Award Culture has demonstrated is the complexities of the capital exchanges and intraconversions detailed in the works of Bourdieu, English and Squires. When it comes to the Society’s Literary Awards, the



leading form of capital that is exchanged between the various agents is cultural capital, which is a surprising fact given that literary awards are frequently discussed in economic terms, particularly in terms of cash prizes and potential increases in sales of books associated with an award. Accordingly, considering the Society's Literary Awards in terms of the Circuit of Capital Exchange enables investigation into the way in which the Society's Literary Awards actually function.

## 4.2 The Saltire Society Literary Awards and National Identity

The terms of eligibility for the Saltire Society Literary Awards have always categorised an author's qualification for the award with regards to their biological or geographic association with Scotland. As described in Part 3.1, an author's eligibility for one of the awards depends on their patrimonial or geographical connection to Scotland, or, an author's work must have a clear contextual relation to Scotland through subject matter, setting or character. Accordingly, since the Society's Literary Awards are automatically engaging with their own negotiation of the definition of 'Scottishness' in relation to Scotland's literary and publishing cultures, this chapter aims to evaluate this negotiation and demonstrate exactly how the issue of national identity exists in relation to the Society's Literary Awards. As part 3.1 of this thesis illustrates, although there were a number of early commendations and awards for Scottish books conferred by the Society in the 1930s and 1950s, there was little in the way of a formal criteria of eligibility for the award until the founding of the 'Scottish Book of the Year Award' in 1981. It was at this point, as described in Part 3.2, that the Society explicitly outlined what was meant by the term 'Scottish book'. In 1954 it was noted that 'A Book of the Year Award had been suggested' which would be 'made to the "person", publishers, authors, editor or journalist, who contributed most to Scottish Literature during the year'.<sup>454</sup> While it was never clearly explained exactly how this 'contribution' to Scottish literature was being quantified, in 1947 Alison Sheppard, the Society's Honorary Secretary and one of the key people involved in the founding of the Society, argued that 'Scottishness' alone was not enough for the Society: 'It was felt that far too much inferior work was acclaimed, simply because

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<sup>454</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Publications Committee of the Saltire Society held in Glasgow, 8 February 1954. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 937.

it was Scottish. The Society was to have first-rate standards.<sup>455</sup> However, in September 1981, Paul Henderson Scott defined exactly what the Society meant by the term ‘Scottish book’ and how it would be described in relation to the terms of eligibility for the Society’s Scottish Book of the Year Award:

The term, “Scottish Book”, would include any book by an author of Scottish descent or living in Scotland, or a book by anyone which deals with the work or life of a Scot or with a Scottish problem, event or situation [...] or a study of any Scottish issue.<sup>456</sup>

This definition has remained similar since it was articulated over thirty years ago. The criteria of eligibility for the 2015 Saltire Society Literary Awards, which was included in the Awards’ Entry Form sent to publishers and made available on the Society’s website, is a condensed version of the original terms from 1981: ‘Books must be written by authors of Scottish descent or living in Scotland, or dealing with the work or life of a Scot, a Scottish question, event or situation.’<sup>457</sup>

In 1991, Douglas Gifford, who was a Literary Award judge between 1983 and 2010, suggested that, even though other literary awards for Scottish writers and books existed, the Society’s broader terms of eligibility made the Society’s awards unique (although, this claim is scrutinised below). Writing in *Books in Scotland*, Gifford – who was also on the journal’s editorial board along with fellow judge Ian Campbell – noted the ‘glaring *unfairness* (emphasis in original)’ in the lack of representation of Scottish authors in non-Scottish literary awards such as the Booker Prize.<sup>458</sup> Decrying the fact that the ‘Booker rituals [...] seem so obviously centred on values and trends based on London and Oxbridge’, Gifford continues to explain why Scotland-specific literary awards are, in his opinion, necessary:

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<sup>455</sup> Alison Sheppard, ‘The Saltire Society: Retrospect and Intentions’, Saltire Society Perth Conference Report 1947. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 342.

<sup>456</sup> Letter from Paul Henderson Scott to Thomas Crawford, J. A. Ford, Edwin Morgan, Dr. Anne Smith, 29 September 1981. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 9393, File No. 153.

<sup>457</sup> Saltire Society Literary Awards Entry Form 2015. Saltire Society, Private Archives.

<sup>458</sup> Douglas Gifford, ‘The Saltire Shortlists’, *Books in Scotland* 40 (Winter 1991), p. 1.

[S]ince Booker *et al* aren't going to go away, then we should join them [...] or that general publicity helps Scottish books overall. [...] The real reason is that I see [the Society's Literary Awards], and McVittie's [sic], and Arts Council awards, as reinforcing a kind of positive discrimination for indigenous Scottish writing, centripetally moving all the books we consider around a hopefully ever-more-confident Scottish cultural consciousness which is manifesting itself in schools and exams doing much more to recognise native writing and language [...] I can't speak entirely for my fellow-panellists, but I do find some of this coming strongly across in their arguments – and our arguments are very healthily vigorous, disputatious, but *not* Anglo-deferential. (Gifford, 1)

Gifford continues to note that: 'the [Society's Literary Awards] over the years *do* reflect range and national variety of voice. [...] English, Scots and Gaelic have all appeared as the language of the winner.' (Gifford, 1) Gifford covers many issues relating to the nature and, apparent necessity for, national awards here. What is significant about Gifford's argument is the fact that he not only differentiates the Society's Literary Awards from the likes of the Booker Prize for Fiction, but he also suggests that the Society's awards are unique in comparison to other Scottish literary awards.

There is an element of bias in this suggestion, since Gifford is intimately connected with the Society's Literary Awards and writes this as a promotional discussion of the 1991 shortlists. Furthermore, Gifford's implication, that the Society's awards are unique in the broadness of their terms of eligibility is disingenuous. For example, the third edition of the *Guide to Literary Prizes, Grants and Awards in Britain and Ireland* published in 1984, states that, to be eligible for a Scottish Arts Council Book Award, '[a]uthors should be Scottish, resident in Scotland or writing books of Scottish interest'.<sup>459</sup> The only difference between these terms and those of the Society's Literary Awards is the fact that the Society also includes an author's 'Scottish descent' as a valid criterion. Similarly, the terms for the McVittie's Prize for Scottish Writer of the Year focus upon the national identity of the author or the 'Scottishness' of their work. In the 1988 edition of the *Guide to Literary*

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<sup>459</sup> *Guide to Literary Prizes: Grants and Awards in Britain and Ireland 1984* (London: National Book League and Society of Authors, 1984), p. 27.

*Prizes*, the terms of eligibility for the McVitie's Prize stated that the £5,000 prize will be presented to:

[...] the best substantial Scottish work of an imaginative nature first published or performed between 1 September and 31 August (a novel, collection of short stories, poetry, autobiography, theatre, cinema, radio and television scripts etc). Writers born in Scotland, or who are or have been resident in Scotland or who take Scotland as their inspiration, are eligible. Submission accepted in Scots, English and Gaelic.<sup>460</sup>

As may be expected, the analogous nature of the terms of eligibility for these three awards meant that the authors and books which were shortlisted and selected as winners for the awards were often the same. For example, in 1990 Sorley Maclean won both the Society's Book of the Year Award and the McVitie's Award for his book *From Wood to Ridge/O choille gu bearradh* (1990). Likewise in 1994, Kathleen Jamie's *Queen of Sheba* (1994), James Kelman's *How Late It Was How Late* (1994) and Candia McWilliam's *Debatable Land* (1994) were all shortlisted for the two awards. The similarities in criteria of eligibility for the various national literary awards in Scotland suggest that quantifying 'Scottishness' in such terms is considered the best, or perhaps the only, means by which to define the eligibility for a Scottish literary award.

Before moving onto an in-depth analysis of the ways in which national identity is quantified and discussed by the Society and its Literary Award judges, it is first necessary to consider the way in which such issues are considered within wider critical discourses. More specifically, this thesis establishes how nationality is discussed in relation to literary and publishing cultures. As demonstrated in Parts 2.1 and 2.2 of this thesis, the Society was born between two cultural Renaissances in Scottish politics and culture. These national revivals, during which Scotland's cultural stalwarts were fighting against the perceived suppression of their arts and traditions, corresponded with an increased interest

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<sup>460</sup> *Guide to Literary Prizes: Grants and Awards in Britain and Ireland 1988* (London: National Book League and Society of Authors, 1988), p. 27.

in Scotland's autonomy and political identity; thus epitomising Neil Davidson's assertion that 'culture may in certain circumstances be as central to a nationalist movement as political activity'.<sup>461</sup> Accordingly, debates surrounding Scottish identity inevitably became entwined with discourse surrounding Scotland's wider literary and artistic influence. From T. S. Eliot questioning 'Was there a Scottish Literature?' in 1919<sup>462</sup>, to Edwin Muir's proclamation that 'a Scottish writer who wishes to achieve some approximation to completeness has no choice except to absorb the English tradition' in 1936<sup>463</sup>, the debate as to exactly how Scottish literature can be identified thrived.

Despite the fact that Alan Bold argued that 'Scottishness is a recognised state of mind' in 1983, more recent debates surrounding Scottish literature have considered the legitimacy of categorising national and cultural identities as such.<sup>464</sup> In 2003 Liam Connell emphasised Scottish literature as a construct, as opposed to an innate element of Scotland's national heritage: 'Scottish literary criticism has been far too willing to accept the immanence of "Scottish literature" without conceding it[s] constructedness or charting the processes and motivations behind such construction.'<sup>465</sup> This notion of 'Scottish' literature as a construction was furthered by Alex Thomson in 2007:

Once we accept that a nation is not so much a thing we can touch, as a story in which we believe, the historiography of Scottish literature itself becomes an act of determination, part of the continual re-imagination of the nation's forms of life.<sup>466</sup>

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<sup>461</sup> Neil Davidson, *The Origins of Scottish Nationhood* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p. 22.

<sup>462</sup> T. S. Eliot, 'Was There a Scottish Literature?', *Athenaeum*, 1 August 1919, pp. 680-81, in Margaret Palmer McCulloch, ed., *Modernism and Nationalism* (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2004), 7-10.

<sup>463</sup> Edwin Muir, *Scott and Scotland: The Predicament of the Scottish Writer* (London: George Routledge, 1936), p. 15.

<sup>464</sup> Alan Bold, *Modern Scottish Literature* (London: Longman Group, 1983), p. 1.

<sup>465</sup> Liam Connell, 'Modes of Marginality: Scottish Literature and the Uses of Postcolonial Theory', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 23:1&2 (2003), 41-53, (p. 52).

<sup>466</sup> Alex Thomson, 'You can't get there from here': Devolution and Scottish literary history', *International Journal of Scottish Literature*, 3 (Autumn/Winter 2007), p.5, <[www.ijsl.stir.ac.uk/issue3/thomson.htm](http://www.ijsl.stir.ac.uk/issue3/thomson.htm)> [accessed 2 June 2015]

The Society's work feeds into this understanding of national identity as a constantly developing character. As discussed in Part 1 and Part 2, the Society can be identified as an organisation working within the parameters of what Hutchison describes as 'cultural nationalism' (Hutchison, 122) and the Society's ambitions and motivations are explicitly placed within the wider context of preserving and promoting Scottish national identity and culture. Indeed, such aims were legitimised by the fact that, as previously noted, the Scottish Government intervened in 2008 to assist in the financial support of the Book of the Year Award and the creation of the Homecoming Award to celebrate Scotland's cultural influence internationally. Accordingly, in positioning itself as both an institution that is dedicated to preserving Scotland's culture, arts and traditions *and* as an arbiter of Scottish literary culture and value through its literary awards, the Society is part of the 'continual re-imagination' of Scotland's culture and, in turn, its national identity. The following analysis of the Society's Literary Awards will explore the ways in which this participation manifests through the negotiations of 'Scottishness' within literary award culture.

While definitions used by the Society to quantify the 'Scottishness' of an author or book help to manage the pragmatic issue of establishing a book or author's eligibility, they are by no means clear cut and issues surrounding a book or author's 'Scottishness' remain to this day. While observing judging panel meetings between 2012 and 2015, I noted numerous occasions on which the Society's Literary Award judging panel would enquire as to the 'Scottish connection' of a book or author. One such example was commented on during an interview with Allan Boyd, who was a member of the Society's Literary Award judging panel between 1998 and 2013. Reiterating the terms of the eligibility of the awards, stating that it was 'sometimes books that are written in Scotland, with someone living for the moment in Scotland or writing in Scotland', Boyd also noted how, as a

judge, this could seem like an imperfect method of selection: '[s]ometimes you feel the author really has no real [connection to Scotland] [...] why should they be considered when they are not really Scottish?'<sup>467</sup> Boyd's comment reveals the expectation that there is a clear definition of what 'really' being Scottish is and that some authors do not fulfil this. Boyd illustrated this argument with reference to a book submitted for the 2013 Book of the Year Award:

There's that very good book last year, it was a typically English novel, [...] and you wondered 'why are we actually reading this?' Although [the author] was originally Scottish [...] but she was living in England. There's sometimes things like that when maybe an English author [is] writing in Scotland, or a Scottish author [is] writing in England and [...] you feel it's not identifying with Scotland in the way that maybe we should be identifying. (Boyd, 2013)

Although Boyd never states who he is referring to here, it is likely he is commenting on Kate Atkinson's novel *Life After Life* (2013) which was shortlisted for the Society's Book of the Year Award in 2013. Atkinson was born in York but now resides in Edinburgh and has been shortlisted for the Society's Book of the Year Award four times (in 2003, 2004, 2013 and 2015), winning the award in 2005 for her novel *Case Histories* (2004), a crime novel set in Cambridge, England.<sup>468</sup> Boyd's comment that this particular book was 'typically English' is suggestive. It not only assumes that there is a ubiquitous understanding of what a 'typically English novel' is like, but in describing it as such Boyd highlights the way in which such forms of nationalistic classifications can influence the way some of the Society's judges quantify the eligibility of the books they are reading.

Boyd continued his analysis of the 'Scottishness' of books shortlisted for Society's Literary Awards, discussing the novels *Ramshackle* (2012) by Elizabeth Reeder, which was published by the Scottish publisher Freight Books, and *Tony Hogan Bought Me an Ice Cream Float Before He Stole My Ma* (2012) by Kerry Hudson, which were both shortlisted

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<sup>467</sup> Allan Boyd interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 2 April 2014.



for the Society's First Book of the Year Award in 2012. Similar to his deliberation on the suitability of Atkinson's eligibility, Boyd considered the 'Scottishness' of Reeder's and Hudson's novels:

Kerry Hudson's novel was not entirely Scottish in a sense, although she was born in Aberdeen and a lot of the action does happen in Scotland, but I think she in many ways is [...] really English [...] and [Elizabeth Reeder] was American I think [and the book] was set in rural America. It was a very good book, it was a good book there's no question of that but again you kind of wondered 'well that ain't much to do with Scotland'. [...] She must be living and working here, but what's this got to do with Scotland, you know? Maybe that's too narrow a view. (Boyd, 2013)

Although Boyd cautiously hedges his concerns surrounding the 'Scottishness' of previous shortlistees with an admission that he may be expressing a 'narrow' point of view (which is a common discursive trait of the Society's judges, analysed in more detail in the discourse analysis in part 5 of this thesis), his comments demonstrate the potential problems the judges face when an author's national identity, or a book's content and themes, are used as a means of establishing eligibility for an award.

Boyd is not alone in his expression of the potential issues of using 'Scottishness' as the prerequisite to determining an author's or book's eligibility for a Saltire Society Literary Award. Alison Lumsden, who was a member of the Society's Literary Awards judging panel between 1998 and 2004, and became chair of the Research Book of the Year Award Judging Panel from 2014, has also expressed how the criteria of eligibility used by the Society in the qualification of authors and books for the Society's Literary Awards is potentially problematic. In interview in 2013, Lumsden recalled a minor controversy regarding the eligibility of Alistair MacLeod's novel, *No Great Mischief* (1999).<sup>469</sup> Although MacLeod is a Canadian author, his ancestry traces back to Scotland and *No Great Mischief* deals with the history of Scottish clan migration and settlement in Canada

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<sup>469</sup> Alison Lumsden, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 16 April 2014.

in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with MacLeod using Scottish Gaelic in the novel.<sup>470</sup> Discussing this book, Lumsden described how the panel ultimately decided that MacLeod's novel was not eligible for a Saltire Society Literary Award:

[T]he one book that there was some controversy about, and it was whether it was eligible, was Alistair MacLeod's *No Great Mischief*, which was obviously Canadian, but it's also very Scottish and the publisher had sent it, and there was a debate about whether it was eligible or not. [...] I think in the end we decided it wasn't, but [...] that was an interesting debate because it was about how you define a Scottish book [...] Because the definition is already fairly broad [...] There's a variety of ways in which you can be eligible, so it was interesting to have a conversation about the ways in which you couldn't be eligible!  
(Lumsden, 2013)

Lumsden in fact misremembers this particular scenario, since Alistair MacLeod's novel was in fact shortlisted for the Society's Book of the Year Award in 2000 as a newspaper report from the time confirms.<sup>471</sup> However, this does not detract from the fact that this example is an interesting case because it suggests that the discussion the judges had about the book in 2000 centred on whether MacLeod's nationality outweighed the Scottish content and themes of the book. This contrasts with the more recent example observed by Boyd of Elizabeth Reeder who was shortlisted for the Society's First Book of the Year Award because she currently resides in Scotland, despite being American born and her shortlisted novel, *Ramshackle*, being set in Chicago.

While such examples, and the broad nature of the Society's criteria of eligibility for Scottish literature, may suggest that the kinds of books and authors which are shortlisted for and win the Society's Literary Awards are diverse, a statistical analysis of the nationality or geographic location of previous shortlistees and winners of the Society's awards indicates that authors born in Scotland remain much more likely to win a Saltire

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<sup>470</sup> Alistair Macleod, 'My favourite place: Deep roots on Cape Breton', *The Star*, 14 June 2013  
<[http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2012/06/30/my\\_favourite\\_place\\_deep\\_roots\\_on\\_cape\\_breton.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2012/06/30/my_favourite_place_deep_roots_on_cape_breton.html)>  
[accessed 5 June 2015]

<sup>471</sup> Hugh Macdonald, 'Novel depicting homosexual awakening scoops Saltire prize', *The Herald*, 1 December 2000, p. 3.

Society Literary Award. Using the Society’s own criteria of eligibility (author is Scottish born, live(s/d) in Scotland, of Scottish descent or the nominated book has Scottish themes and content) the following analysis categorises previous shortlists and winners of the Society’s Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards to ascertain how many authors shortlisted for an award were Scottish born, lived in Scotland or wrote about Scotland. For the purposes of this analysis, the ‘Scottish content’ of the books in question is identified in terms of the geographical settings of the action of the novel, or the subject matter if the book is a non-fiction title. Where the setting of a novel is uncertain or undisclosed, the Scottishness of the book’s content is associated with the nationality or birthplace of the protagonist.

Table 8 illustrates a breakdown of books shortlisted<sup>472</sup> for the Society’s Book of the Year Award between 1988 and 2015 divided into the four key categories used by the Society to determine an author’s eligibility for the award.<sup>473</sup> As Table 7 illustrates, the majority of authors shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award were born in Scotland.

**Table 7: Number of books shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award 1988-2015 categorised by Saltire Society’s Terms of Eligibility<sup>474</sup>**

Saltire Society terms of eligibility	Number of books shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award between 1988-2015	Percentage (of total number of books shortlisted, 191)
Scottish Born Only	158	85%
Scottish Content Only	9	5%
Live(s/d) in Scotland Only	21	11%
Scottish Descent Only	3	2%

<sup>472</sup> In order to account for all of the books shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award since 1988, authors who have been shortlisted on multiple occasions have received a count for each shortlisting.

<sup>473</sup> Although there was an expansion of the Book of the Year Award in both 2014 and 2015, leading to the production of new awards (for Poetry in 2014 and Fiction and Non Fiction in 2015), this analysis does not include shortlists for these new awards within its count as there is not enough data from the new awards to treat them as separate datasets. It was also decided that integrating such datasets with the existing shortlists would be misrepresentative.

<sup>474</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archive.

Such figures illustrate the prominence of Scottish born authors on the Society's Book of the Year Awards. The next most common term of eligibility, at 11%, is authors who are not Scottish born, but live in Scotland, or did at the time of being shortlisted. To consider these figures in more depth: of the 158 shortlisted books written by Scottish born authors, 97 of these, or 61%, could also be categorised as containing Scottish content, such as being set in Scotland, referring to Scottish themes or having a Scottish protagonist. It is worth noting here that the Society has never explicitly explained what constitutes a 'Scottish theme', making this one of the more ambiguous elements of the criteria of eligibility. This count also includes memoirs or biographies about Scottish born authors and historical figures, such as Jenni Calder's biography of the Scottish author Naomi Mitchison *The Nine Lives of Naomi Mitchison* (1997), John Burnside's memoir *A Lie About My Father* (2006) and Nicholas Phillipson's biography *Adam Smith: An Enlightened Life* (2010).

When it comes to the First Book of the Year shortlists, there appears to be a similar weight towards more Scottish born authors being shortlisted for the award than their non-Scottish counterparts. As Table 9 shows below, 73% of the books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award were written by Scottish-born authors. Nearly a fifth of the First Book of the Year Award shortlistees were eligible for the award because they lived in Scotland at the time they were shortlisted. Further, and similarly to the Book of the Year Award, of the 99 books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award, 75% of these also included Scottish content, such as Ian Bell's biography about the Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dreams of Exile* (1993), Alan Warner's debut novel *Morvern Callar* (1995) and Sue Peebles' novel *The Death of Lomond Friel* (2010). Significantly, none of the authors of the books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award are identified as being eligible through Scottish descent.

Despite the fact that there are more books included in the count of the Book of the Year shortlist statistics, because more books have been shortlisted for this award, there is an evident parallel between the two awards, demonstrating a propensity by the Society’s Literary Awards panel to shortlist books by Scottish *born* authors.

**Table 8: Number of books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award 1988-2015 categorised by Saltire Society’s Terms of Eligibility<sup>475</sup>**

Saltire Society Literary Awards terms of eligibility	Number books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award between 1988-2015	Percentage (of total number of books shortlisted, 136)
Scottish Born Only	99	73%
Scottish Content Only	11	8%
Live(s/d) in Scotland Only	26	19%
Scottish Descent Only	0	0%

However, these figures indicate that non-Scottish authors who are eligible for the awards because they *live* in Scotland, are more likely to be writers making their debut and shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award as opposed to established authors who are shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award. At any rate, while the figures included here are a small dataset, what could tentatively be claimed from them is that books with Scottish content and/or written by Scottish born authors are significantly more likely to be shortlisted for the Society’s Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards, suggesting that such qualities are privileged by the Society’s judges when selecting books to shortlist for the award.

However, how do such issues relate to the *winners* of the Society’s Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards? More specifically, what is the breakdown of the

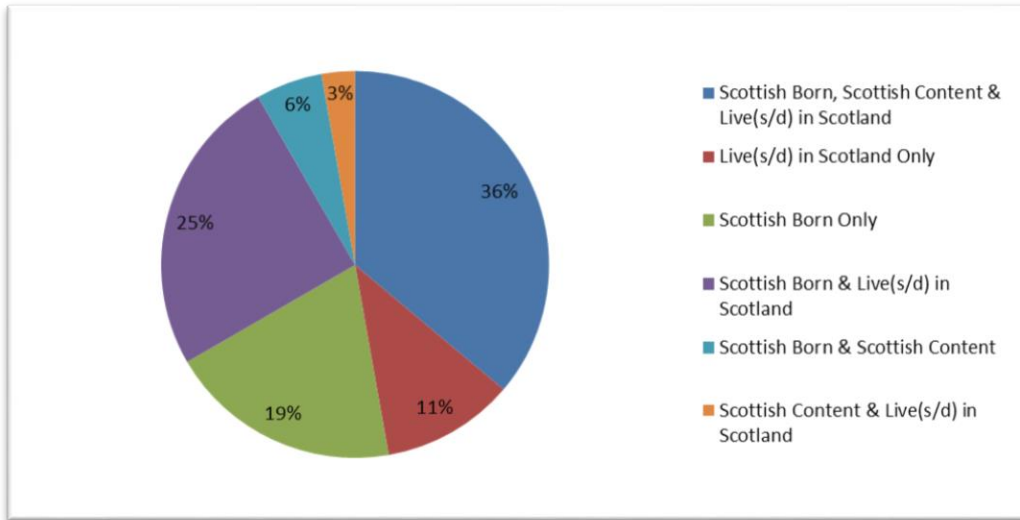
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<sup>475</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives.

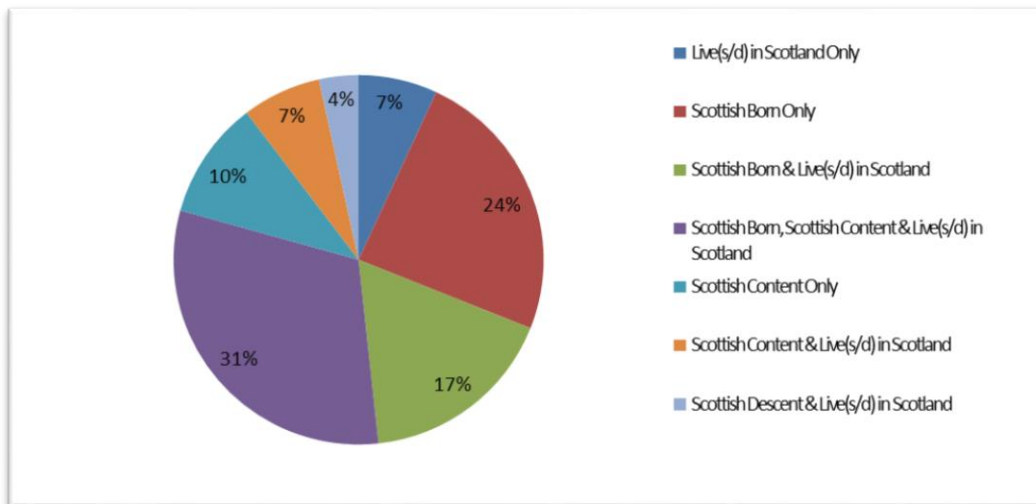
winners of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award between 1988 and 2015 relative to the single categorisation of authors in relation of the Society's terms of eligibility? For example, of the thirty-six winners of the Book of the Year Award since it was founded in 1982, thirty-two of these were Scottish born authors and the remaining four authors lived in Scotland at the time of winning the award. Similarly, of the twenty-nine winners of the First Book of the Year Award since 1988, twenty-one were Scottish-born authors; the eight who were not Scottish-born lived in Scotland. Given that Scottish-born authors dominate the shortlists of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards such figures are unsurprising. Nonetheless, further analysis of these figures, in order to ascertain the breakdown of winners who are qualified for more than one of the Society's categories of eligibility, is necessary as it may offer an indication as to how the 'Scottishness' of a winning book is quantified.

Figures 12 and 13 illustrate the breakdown of the winners of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award in terms of the four categories of eligibility used by the Society to ascertain an author's eligibility for their Literary Awards. As may be expected, the charts illustrate that the dominance of authors who are Scottish-born, live in Scotland or write about Scotland, continues through to the winners. Indeed, authors who fall under all three of these categories are twice as likely to win the Book of the Year Award as authors who are Scottish-born only.

**Figure 12: Saltire Society Literary Awards' Terms of Eligibility Category Breakdown for Thirty-Six Book of the Year Award Winners 1982-2015<sup>476</sup>**



**Figure 13: Saltire Society Literary Awards' Terms of Eligibility Category Breakdown for Twenty-Nine First Book of the Year Award Winners 1988-2015<sup>477</sup>**



Similarly, authors who comply with these three categories are four times as likely to win the First Book of the Year Award as their peers who only live in Scotland. Bearing in mind that the stats for the Society's Book of the Year Award include six more winners, and therefore slightly more data, Figures 12 and 13 offer further confirmation that the majority of winners of these particular awards are Scottish born, and living in and writing

<sup>476</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives.

<sup>477</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives.

about Scotland. Such figures reiterate the fact that, despite the Society's fairly broad terms of eligibility, preference still appears to come down to an author's biological, rather than purely geographical, connection to Scotland, with authors who adhere to the Society's 'triumvirate of Scottishness' – being born, living in, and writing about, Scotland – having the best chance of being shortlisted for, or winning, one of these awards.

This differs slightly when it comes to the First Book of the Year Award, which appears more open to authors who were not born in Scotland, but are living and writing about Scotland. This fact, however, may be more indicative of how the internationalisation and growth of the publishing industry affects the way in which writers acquire their first publications, as opposed to a subversion of the triumvirate of Scottishness. While data regarding such nuances of the Scottish publishing industry, such as figures of how many authors born outside of Scotland are published in Scotland, and how many Scottish born authors are published outside of Scotland, there are indications that there is a trend in Scottish-born authors being first published by small and independent publishers in Scotland and then, if they acquire a certain level of success, they move to multinational publishing houses based in London. James Kelman's first three books, *Not While the Giro* (1983), *The Busconductor Hines* (1984) and *A Chancer* (1985) were all published by the independent Edinburgh-based publisher Polygon Press. His fourth novel, however, was published by Secker & Warburg, an imprint under the conglomerate publishers the Heinemann Group. Kelman remained with Secker & Warburg until October 2015 when he moved to the Edinburgh-based Canongate books.<sup>478</sup> Much was made of Kelman's return to Scotland, with Kelman himself saying '[t]his is the first original publication I shall have had in Scotland in thirty years [...] I must say it feels good to be back.' (Onwuemezi, 2015). Similarly, the Scottish author Janice Galloway also published

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<sup>478</sup> Natasha Onwuemezi, 'James Kelman signs with Canongate', *The Bookseller* 13 October 2015 <http://www.thebookseller.com/news/booker-prizewinner-james-kelman-joins-canongate-314309> [accessed 14 October 2015]



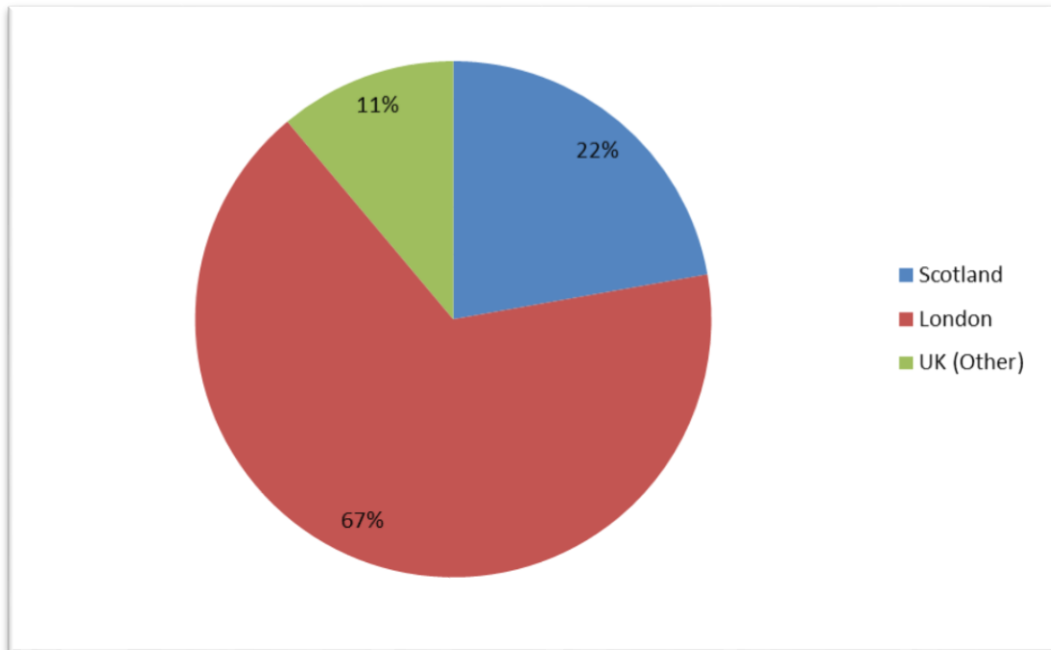
her debut novel *The Trick is to Keep Breathing* (1989) with Polygon Press, but published her second novel, *Foreign Parts* (1994) with the London-based Random House imprint, Jonathan Cape. While such examples are anecdotal, they suggest that there were instances of traceable migrations of Scottish authors from Scottish to English or London-based publishers in the mid-late 1980s and 1990s. Whether this is a trend that has continued into the 2000s is something which still needs to be determined through further analysis of author publication histories. What has been confirmed in recent years is that the print run for fiction titles by unknown authors in Scotland is small, averaging at around 500, according to Claire Squires and Miha Kovač.<sup>479</sup>

While the location of a book's publisher does not have any impact upon its eligibility for a Saltire Society Literary Award, it is nonetheless important to consider the locale of the publishers of Saltire Society Literary Award winning books as it contributes to the wider discussions noted above, and discussed in more detail shortly, regarding national identity and geography. As Figures 14 and 15 show, an analysis of the difference between the location of the publishers of Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award winners between 1988 and 2015 adds further credence to the claim that first time authors who are eligible for Saltire Society Literary Awards are more likely to be published in Scotland.

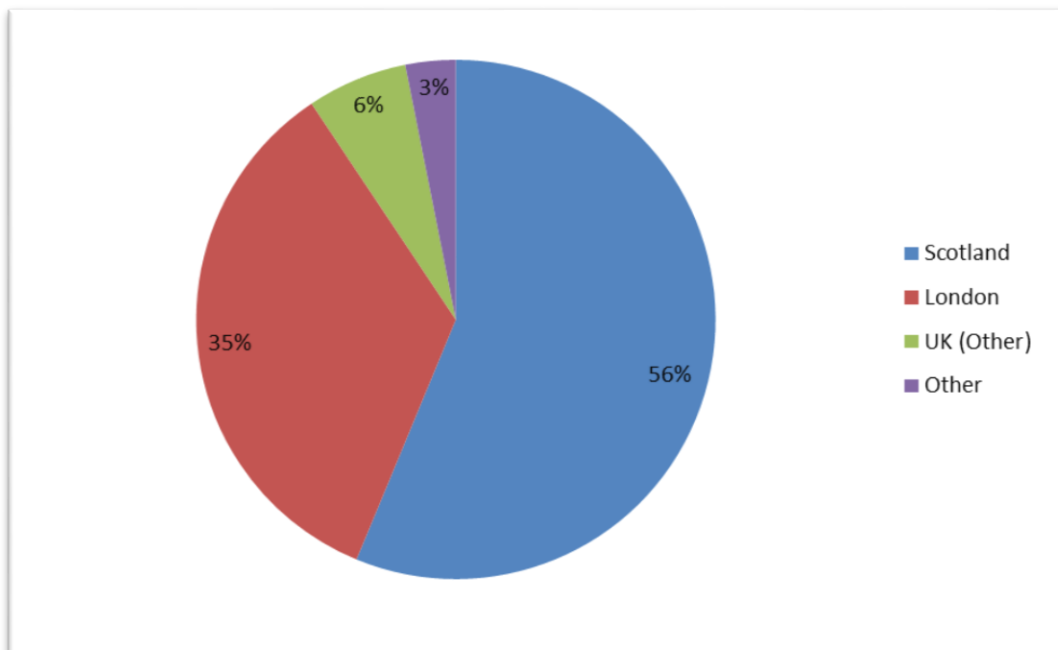
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<sup>479</sup> Miha Kovač and Claire Squires, 'Scotland and Slovenia: Making books in wee lands', *Logos* 25:4 (2014), pp. 7-19. (p. 15).

**Figure 14: Location of Publishers of Saltire Society Book of the Year Award Winners 1982-2015<sup>480</sup>**



**Figure 15: Location of Publishers of Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award Winners 1988-2015<sup>481</sup>**



<sup>480</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives.

<sup>481</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives.

Of the thirty-six books which have won a Book of the Year Award, twenty-four of these, or 67%, were published by publishers in London, England; only 22% (8) were published by publishers in Scotland. Alternatively, over half of the books which have won the First Book of the Year Award were published in Scotland and only 35% (11) were published by London-based publishers.

This statistical analysis offers some credence to the apparent trend of established Scottish authors being published outside of Scotland. Such figures also offer some substance to claims that London publishers are less likely to publish work that is considered to be ‘overtly’ Scottish, particularly from a new author. This claim was made by Adrian Searle, the Publishing Director of the independent Glasgow publisher Freight Books which was founded in 2001. Searle suggested that, the establishment of *Gutter*, Freight Books’ literary magazine for ‘new Scottish writing’<sup>482</sup> in 2009, ‘created a focal point for the new writing community’ working in Scotland (Searle, 2014). Following the development of *Gutter* as a means for this ‘new writing community’ to be published in Scotland, Searle suggests that ‘a queue formed straight away of people saying either: ‘my London publisher’s cut me loose post [economic] crash’ or ‘I’ve written a novel about Scotland and my London publisher doesn’t want it because it’s about Scotland’ (Searle, 2014). Searle continued, suggesting that new Scottish authors were approaching Freight Books saying ‘I’ve written my debut novel, there’s no way I’m going to get published in London, would you take a look at it?’ (Searle, 2014). Furthermore, when asked if he felt there was a tension between Scottish authors and London publishers, Searle said ‘absolutely’, continuing to explain:

I have absolutely, unequivocal evidence [of this] writers come to us and say [they have] ‘written this book it’s overtly Scottish [and] my London publisher doesn’t want it’. On the other hand, our sales guys are saying to us ‘take out the word ‘Scottish’ from advance information sheets. Do not mention Scotland. Call it

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<sup>482</sup> ‘About’, *Gutter*, 9 September 2014 <<http://www.guttermag.co.uk/>> [accessed 15 May 2015]

British not Scottish.’ Etc. etc. [...] [I]t’s not London publisher’s fault, it is a macro-economic fact that 45 million people in England are not interested in reading about Scotland, the content has to transcend the location. They have no particular interest in reading about Scotland, in a way that they kind of do have a bit of an interest in reading about America. (Searle, 2014)

When pressed on the fact that some Scottish authors *have* been very successful on a national scale, and are currently published by London-based publishers, such as Alan Warner, A. L. Kennedy, Jackie Kay and Janice Galloway, Searle suggested that this was because their work ‘transcends [their] Scottishness’ (Searle, 2014). This idea of an author ‘transcend[ing] national boundaries with their success’ was repeated by Sara Hunt, the owner of the Glasgow-based independent publisher Saraband (Hunt, 2015).

Searle’s arguments are substantiated by the data analyses above. Only six of the twenty-six Book of the Year Award winning books published by London publishers were eligible for the award solely because of their Scottish content. Whereas, just under half of the eleven winners of the First Book of the Year Award published in London were eligible due to their Scottish content. Accordingly, there appears to be, as Searle suggested, a correlation between the low level of ‘overtly’ Scottish content from Scottish authors who are published in London that go on to win the Society’s Book of the Year Award. In comparison, there is a higher percentage of first time authors winning the First Book of the Year Award with books identified as containing ‘Scottish content’, but fewer of these books are published by publishers outside of Scotland.

Such issues are interconnected with the Society’s Literary Awards. Writing in 1997, one of the years in which both the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year were won by books published in London, the journalist and former Saltire Society Literary Award judge, Alan Taylor, wrote that it was a ‘tragedy [...] that neither [book] is

published by a Scottish publisher'.<sup>483</sup> Taylor continues, arguing that 'If this was an isolated incident it could be dismissed as an aberration' but, in fact, as Taylor points out:

All of the books shortlisted for the premier award were published in England, including a first novel by Ali Smith, whose career was launched on the back of winning the Macallan/Scotland on Sunday short story competition, a sterling biography of Naomi Mitchison by Jenni Calder, Mr Banks's latest eruption, Edwin Morgan's *Collected Translations* and short fictions by AL Kennedy entitled *Original Bliss*. (Taylor, 1997)

Although Taylor is incorrect to suggest *all* of the books shortlisted for the Society's Book of the Year Award in 1997 were published in London – Edwin Morgan's *Collected Translations* was actually published by the Manchester publisher Carcanet – like Searle, Taylor discusses the apparent tensions between the publishing locales of Scottish writers within the context of the Society's Literary Awards. Taylor also recognises the parallel between Scottish publishers and the First Book of the Year Award. Following a list of the 'big guns of Scottish literature' who are published in London, which includes William McIlvanney, James Kelman, Liz Lochhead and Alan Warner – all of whom had won, or been shortlisted for, a Saltire Society Literary Award by this time – Taylor continues to say that:

These are not the exceptions. Very few writers who expect to make a living from their art bother with Scottish publishers. They may, as the evidence of the shortlist for the best first book of the year shows, make their debut in Scotland, but they scarper southwards soon after. This is not disloyalty or a lack of patriotism. It is purely pragmatic. (Taylor, 1997)

Like Searle seventeen years later, who stated that this pattern was not 'London publisher's fault', Taylor suggests that the real reason why Scottish authors are attracted to London publishers is because, in Scotland, there is 'precious little hope of their needs being met' (Taylor, 1997).

Such regional nit-picking may at first appear superfluous to definitions or explications of Scottish national identity and literature. Yet, the fact that the statistics

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<sup>483</sup> Alan Taylor, 'Case of the vanishing publishers', *The Scotsman*, 18 November 1997, p. 17.

included here appear to substantiate claims of regional biases – both in terms of ‘established’ Scottish authors migrating to London publishers and in terms of the Society’s predilection to award Scottish born authors – suggests that not only is there a complex negotiation of national identity in Scottish publishing, but also that, by their very nature as awards for Scottish literature and authors, the Society’s Literary awards are intrinsically involved with the negotiation and circulation of this literary national identity.

Gillian Roberts considers such intricacies between national identity and literary award culture in *Prizing Literature: The Circulation and Celebration of National Culture* (2011). Focusing on Canadian literary culture – a country which, in fact, offers a pertinent parallel to Scottish politics, culture and literature more widely<sup>484</sup> – Roberts illustrates the significance of the intersection of national identity and literary award culture and how this relates to cultural and economic capitals:

Literary prizes do particular kinds of work; they promote and perpetuate competing forms of valuing [...] and, in the context of national cultural celebration, they contribute to defining the parameters of the nation and its culture [...] Cultural and economic capitals overlap in the workings of the literary prize, but prizes dedicated to national literature also reveal a national capital at work. The ideological implications that underpin national cultural celebrations in a Canadian context are essential to understanding the work that national prizes attempt, with varying degrees of success, and the borders of Canadianness that they draw.<sup>485</sup>

Even though Roberts uses Canada as an example here, her argument could be applied to Scotland and the Society Literary Awards, particularly if Alan Bold’s suggestion that Scottishness is a ‘state of mind accepted by Scots and acknowledged by observers’ is taken into account alongside Roberts’ work.<sup>486</sup> The parallels between Scotland and Canada’s national and literary identities are, some have argued, historically based. Katie Trumpener has noted that ‘Canada’s English-language writers closely followed Scottish literary

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<sup>484</sup> For more see: Harry McGrath, ‘An Independent Scotland could look like a wee Canada’, *New Statesman*, 5 December 2012 <<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2012/12/independent-scotland-could-look-wee-canada>> [accessed 5 June 2015]

<sup>485</sup> Gillian Roberts, *Prizing Literature* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2011), p. 17.

<sup>486</sup> Alan Bold, *Modern Scottish Literature* (London: Longman Group, Ltd., 1983), p. 1.

prototypes’ and that ‘[w]riters of Scottish heritage, moreover, played a preeminent role in the literary life of Anglophone Canada’.<sup>487</sup> However, by the 1960s and 1970s, Trumpener argues, authors such as Alice Munro and Margaret Atwood ‘wrote to correct long-standing Scottish views of Canada itself’ (Trumpener, 43). Indeed, such ‘re-writings’ parallel those that were happening during the same period in Scotland during its ‘Second Renaissance’ described in Part 2.2 of this thesis.

To stay with this comparative analysis of how Scotland and Canada’s national and literary award cultures are analogous, Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo have also explicated how elements of literary award culture in Canada are intertwined with national identity. In an analysis of the national reading campaign ‘Canada Reads’, Fuller and Rehberg Sedo argue that such national reading campaigns and related literary awards are a means by which the organisers of said campaigns ‘[imagine] “Canada” and Canadian literary culture’.<sup>488</sup> Citing Benedict Anderson’s definition of the nation as ‘an imagined political community’ which is to be ‘distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined’.<sup>489</sup>

Such definitions and analytical frameworks are fitting for an assessment of how the Society positions itself in relation to Scotland’s national and literary cultures through its literary awards. Both the quantitative analyses and cultural theories discussed and analysed here demonstrate how the Society engages in the ‘imagining’, to borrow Anderson, Fullers and Rehberg Sedo’s terminology, of Scottish literary and cultural, and in turn national, identity in terms of what the Society identifies as being ‘properly’ Scottish. In establishing terms of eligibility based upon an author’s national identity, or a book’s

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<sup>487</sup> Katie Trumpener, ‘Annals of Ice: Formations of Empire, Place and History in John Galt and Alice Munro’, in M. Gardiner and G. Macdonald, eds. *Scottish Literature and Postcolonial Literature: Comparative Texts and Critical Perspectives* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 43-56 (p. 43).

<sup>488</sup> Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo, ‘A Reading Spectacle for the Nation: The CBC and “Canada Reads”’, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 40:1 (Winter 2006), 5-36 (p. 7).

<sup>489</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 6.

‘Scottishness’, the Society engages in what Roberts calls ‘defining the parameters of the nation and its culture’ (Roberts, 2011, 17). As previously discussed, as a cultural nationalist organisation, the Society is embedded within the celebration of ‘national cultural uniqueness’ (Hutchison, 124) and the Literary Awards are one means by which such celebration manifests. As an award dedicated to rewarding books from and about Scotland, or by Scottish born authors – a triumvirate of factors which, as this study shows, are privileged by the Society’s judges when selecting shortlists and winners – the Society’s Literary Award influences how the books and authors it rewards are defined in terms of Scottish national identity. This influence is likely heightened by the fact that, since 2013, the Society’s Literary Awards are the only series of ‘Scottish’ literary awards for adult fiction currently operating in Scotland.<sup>490</sup> As a result, it could be argued that the Society has the potential to have a strong influence upon the definition of what a ‘Scottish’ book is.

A problem persists, however, in defining exactly who this understanding of how ‘award winning Scottish literature’ is identified, is for. If the Society claims to select books which represent the best of Scottish literary culture, how they project this to those outside of the Society is just as significant as the definition itself. Yet the Society has been criticised for failing to effectively promote this ‘national literature’ to the nation and further afield. As some commentators have suggested, promotion of the Society’s Literary Awards outwith Scotland is nearly non-existent, a fact which amplifies the sense that the Society’s Literary Awards, and their promotion of Scottish literature more generally, is inward looking. In an article published in *The Sunday Herald* on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November

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<sup>490</sup> Besides the Saltire Society Literary Awards there are also the Scottish Children’s Book Awards organised by the Scottish Book Trust annually. These awards include categories for readers aged 3-7 years, 8-11 years and 12-16 years and are voted for by ‘children and young people across Scotland’. To be eligible, authors and illustrators must reside in Scotland.

Helen Croney, *2013 Scottish Children’s Book Awards – Shortlist Announced*, 18 June 2013  
<<http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/blog/2013/06/2013-scottish-childrens-book-awards-shortlist-announced>>  
[accessed 5 June 2015]



2001, criticisms from ‘Scotland’s foremost literary agent’ Giles Gordon were reported.<sup>491</sup> Gordon’s issue with the Society’s Literary Awards pertains to its inability to generate interest outside Scotland’s close-knit literary community and therefore the impact and cultural kudos of the award is diminished. More recently, the Society has blamed such poor publicity upon the lack of support the Literary Awards have received from press and media institutions, based both within and outside Scotland. During his closing comments for the Society’s 2013 Literary Awards ceremony held in Mitchell Library on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November, the Society’s Executive Director, Jim Tough, commented on his disappointment at the lack of coverage from BBC Scotland. Similarly, following the announcement of the 2015 Man Booker Prize winner on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015, the Society tweeted: ‘We look forward to our Saltire Literary Awards, the largest in this country, receiving similar media interest to Man Booker!’<sup>492</sup> Ten days later, following the announcement of the Society’s 2015 Literary Awards shortlists, the Society made another public comment about BBC Scotland’s failure to promote the awards: ‘Great print coverage for #SaltireLiterary shortlist, acknowledged as Scotland’s most prestigious lit awards. Not a peep from @BBCScotland’.<sup>493</sup>

What the above examples indicate is the problematic nature of national literary awards. It seems that, because national awards are seeking to reward literature from, or about, a specific geographical location, garnering interest in the awards outwith, or even within, this location is inherently more difficult since the awards are presented as being specific to the location. As Gillian Roberts notes: ‘national literary prizes, by virtue of the fact that they celebrate literature included on the basis of its nationality, are partly

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<sup>491</sup> Juliette Garside, ‘Top writers’ agent slams Scotland’s book award’, *The Sunday Herald*, 25 November 2001, p. 7.

<sup>492</sup> The Saltire Society, 13 October 2015 <[https://twitter.com/Saltire\\_Society/status/653965472795348992](https://twitter.com/Saltire_Society/status/653965472795348992)> [accessed 13 October 2015]

<sup>493</sup> The Saltire Society, 23 October 2015 <[https://twitter.com/Saltire\\_Society/status/657578721977741312](https://twitter.com/Saltire_Society/status/657578721977741312)> [accessed 23 October 2015]

responsible for constructing a national literature, and, by implication, the boundaries of the nation itself.’ (Roberts, 2011, 24). While the positives of the construction of this ‘national literature’ are evident – it aids the promotion of literature(s) from and about areas that may not, ordinarily, receive much in the way of promotion or publicity – the example of the Society shows that the ‘boundaries of the nation itself’ that such awards propagate and reinforce are potentially constrictive. This is the leading problem with literary awards that are explicitly nationalist in their approach and define eligibility in terms of an author’s national identity and the Society’s Literary Awards illustrate the ultimate irony of such awards. The Society’s criterion of eligibility perpetuates the notion of Scottish literature as being an ‘other’ which is perceptibly different to other national literatures. In a practical sense, such terms of eligibility are necessary as a baseline selection process by which the Society can ascertain which books can justifiably be entered for a Scottish literary award, but by their very nature such terms do not exist within the vacuum of the Society’s work: interpretations and understandings of such terms can differ. Furthermore, as the reflections from judges cited at the beginning of this analysis illustrate, despite the fact that there are terms of eligibility which aim to clarify who is eligible for a Saltire Society Literary Award, there are differing understandings as to what constitutes a ‘Scottish’ book amongst the judges.

Such inconsistencies, coupled with the Society’s failure to effectively and consistently promote its Literary Awards, have affected the extent to which the Society has been able to contribute to the Scottish literary canon more generally. Indeed, despite being situated within the cultural nationalist position of celebrating and promoting Scottish literature, the Society’s engagement with notions of national identity via its Literary Awards has proven ineffective because the reach and reputation of the awards is, as discussed earlier and in Part 4.1, limited. This may change in the coming years. It is

possible that as Scotland's only remaining literary awards dedicated to celebrating literature from and about Scotland, the Society will position itself more emphatically as an arbiter of *Scottish* literary excellence, and the financial support from Creative Scotland goes some way to legitimising the Society's position. However, what this study of the Society's Literary Awards in relation to notions of Scottish national identity evidences is the problematic nature of national literary awards which attempt to represent or encapsulate definitions of national identity that are ever-changing.

### 4.3 The Saltire Society Literary Awards and Gender

Writing for the Book Machine blog in April 2013, Felice Howden argued that '[g]ender has no place in media coverage of [...] book awards by mainstream media' and argued that media coverage which focuses upon the gender imbalance of literary award shortlists and judging panels is 'perennially absurd'.<sup>494</sup> She continued to suggest that news reportage of literary awards continually relies upon an 'easy (and false) dichotomy' which is drawn from 'long-blurred gender lines' (Howden, 2013). Howden's comments were written in response to an article on *The Guardian* newspaper's website which highlighted the fact that the shortlist for the 2013 Arthur C Clarke Award for science fiction was an all-male one, despite the judging panel being 'mostly female' (although, of course, this criticism is problematic as it is based on the assumption that women judges would be more likely to vote for women writers).<sup>495</sup> Five months later, in September 2013, Lesley McDowell also wrote about women writers and contemporary literary award culture. Writing in *The Herald* newspaper, McDowell focused her attention on what she believed to be a trend of Scottish women writers winning a variety of literary awards and writing accolades:

Two weeks ago Kerry Hudson, Aberdeen-born author of *Tony Hogan Bought Me An Ice-cream Float Before He Stole My Ma*, won the Scottish Mortgage and Investment Trust First Book Award. That's not so remarkable in itself until you realise she's the fifth woman to win this prize in the last six years, joining a mix of fiction and non-fiction writers like Sue Peebles, Sarah Gabriel, Andrea McNicoll and Jane McKie. Fellow nominee Jenni Fagan was hailed as one of Granta's Best Young British Writers earlier this year (and earned a selection for Oprah's Book Club and a New York Times review by Michiko Kakutani).

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<sup>494</sup>Felice Howden, 'Gender has no Place in Media Coverage of Book Awards', BookMachine blog, 8 April 2013 <<http://bookmachine.org/2013/04/08/gender-has-no-place-in-media-coverage-of-book-awards/>> [accessed 10 September 2014]

<sup>495</sup>Alison Flood, 'Arthur C Clarke award announces all-male shortlist', *The Guardian*, 4 April 2013 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/apr/04/arthur-c-clarke-award-shortlist-all-male>> [accessed 10 September 2014]

Denise Mina topped it off by winning the Theakstons Old Peculiar Crime Novel of the Year Award for the second year in a row.<sup>496</sup>

Considering this run of success for Scottish women writers, McDowell questions whether this is ‘the beginning of a new “matrilineal” heritage, poised to take over fiction, poetry and non-fiction where a ‘patrilineal’ tradition has left off?’ (McDowell, 2013).

What such examples demonstrate is the contemporaneity and controversy of the issue of gender in relation to literary award culture in the UK. While Howden takes a vehement stand against what she views as a ‘non-existent’ distinction ‘between male and female writers’ (Howden, 2013), Flood and McDowell use specific examples to draw attention to the evident and ongoing gender imbalances in literary award culture. Although Howden offers an interesting alternative perspective on the representation of women writers in literary awards, her suggestion that reports which draw attention to gender imbalance in literature are ‘lazy’ and belong ‘in the past’ is flawed (Howden, 2013). An examination into the Saltire Society Literary Awards’ relationship with both women writers and judges is imperative to acquiring an understanding of how the awards function within contemporary literary and publishing culture. Furthermore, these insights into the representation of women writers and judges in the Society’s Literary Awards will contribute to understandings of how women are represented in Scotland’s literary and publishing industries more generally.

For many years gender has remained pertinent to conversations related to literary award culture. The Bailey’s Women’s Prize for Fiction (formerly the Orange Prize for Fiction), for instance, was launched in 1996 in direct response to an all-male shortlist for the Booker Prize in 1991 and the fact that by 1992 ‘only 10 percent of novelists shortlisted

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<sup>496</sup>Lesley McDowell, ‘Women begin to lead way in Scottish Literature’, *The Herald*, 21 September 2013 <<http://www.heraldscotland.com/books-poetry/comment-debate/women-begin-to-lead-the-way-in-scottish-literature.22182685>> [accessed 10 September 2014]

for the Booker Prize had been women'.<sup>497</sup> Founded by the author Kate Mosse and literary agent Jane Gregory, the Bailey's Prize is awarded annually to 'any full length novel, written in English by a woman of any nationality'.<sup>498</sup> The launch of the Women's Prize for Fiction was marred by criticism that the award was sexist, with the Booker Prize winning author A S Byatt saying that she was 'against anything which ghettoises women'.<sup>499</sup> Indeed, controversies surrounding this award continue to resurface, over 20 years after it was first conferred. In 2012, Sebastian Shakespeare argued that '[w]omen just don't need the Orange Prize', and that the award was 'rightly attacked as patronising and positive discrimination gone wrong' when it was founded.<sup>500</sup> More recently, former Orange Prize for Fiction winner, Lionel Shriver, suggested that winning the award was 'not as meaningful' as winning the Man Booker, since the Women's Prize for Fiction 'eliminate[s] half the human race from applying'.<sup>501</sup>

As such criticisms of awards for women writers have burgeoned in recent years, so too have statistical analyses which highlight the gender disparity of literary awards open to both men and women. In 2015, the author Nicola Griffiths published a statistical analysis of the gender balance of the Pulitzer Prize, Man Booker Prize, National Book Award, National Book Critics' Circle Award, the Hugo Award and the Newbery Medal between 2000 and 2014.<sup>502</sup> Griffiths' study focused upon the gender of protagonists, as well as the author, of books which had won the above awards over a fifteen year period. From her

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<sup>497</sup> Kate Mosse, 'History', *The Bailey's Women's Prize for Fiction*, 9 March 2013 <<http://www.womensprizeforfiction.co.uk/about/history>> [accessed 6 April 2016]

<sup>498</sup> 'Rules', *The Bailey's Women's Prize for Fiction*, 8 March 2013 <<http://www.womensprizeforfiction.co.uk/about/rules>> [accessed 6 April 2016]

<sup>499</sup> Marianne MacDonald, 'Sexism storm as women-only book prize launches', *The Independent*, 26 January 1996, p. 2.

<sup>500</sup> Sebastian Shakespeare, 'Women just don't need the Orange Prize', *London Evening Standard*, 25 May 2012, p. 15.

<sup>501</sup> Alison Flood, 'Lionel Shriver rubbishes plans for dedicated Year of Publishing Women', *The Guardian*, 10 March 2016 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/mar/10/lionel-shriver-rubbishes-year-of-publishing-women-kamila-shamsie>> [accessed 06 April 2016]

<sup>502</sup> Nicola Griffiths, 'Books about women don't win big awards: some data', 26 May 2015 <<http://nicolagriffith.com/2015/05/26/books-about-women-tend-not-to-win-awards/>> [accessed 27 May 2015]

study, Griffiths came to the conclusion that the majority of books written by women that win major literary awards are written from the perspective of a male protagonist, going as far to say that ‘the more prestigious the award, the more likely the subject of the narrative will be male’ (Griffiths, 2015). The results of Griffiths’ study were startling: of the fifteen books that won the Man Booker Prize for Fiction between 2000 and 2014, only two were written by women and were about women or girls: none of the fifteen Pulitzer Prize winners during this period were books about women/girls or written by women (Griffiths, 2015). Such results led Griffiths to conclude that: ‘The literary establishment doesn’t like books about women’ (Griffiths, 2015).

Borrowing Griffiths’ method and terms, an assessment of the representation of women writers and protagonists among the winners of the Society’s Book of the Year Award between the same period (2000-2014) yields similarly disconcerting results.<sup>503</sup> Of the fifteen books which won the Book of the Year Award between 2000 and 2014, eight were written by, and focused on, men. Just two books which won the award during that time – Liz Lochhead’s *Medea* (2000) and Janice Galloway’s *Clara* (2002) – are both written by, and about, women. Such results appear to undermine the optimistic reverie cited at the beginning of this section which suggested Scotland’s literary culture may buck trends and follow a more ‘matrilineal’ lineage (McDowell, 2013). Despite this optimism, McDowell also acknowledged the ‘long-standing patrilineal nature of the Scottish literary tradition’, suggesting that this is a tradition which:

[...] still sees Scottish Literature departments at universities dominated by studies of Fergusson, Burns, Hogg, Scott and Stevenson. It’s a tradition that asks: who will be the successor to Alasdair Gray and write the next *Lanark*, the next great

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<sup>503</sup> Griffiths’ ‘analysed the last 15 years’ results for half a dozen book-length fiction awards: Pulitzer Prize, Man Booker Prize, National Book Award, National Book Critics’ Circle Award, Hugo Award, and Newbery Medal.’ Her method was to ‘collate the gender of the writer (I assumed that when reviews talked about an author as “she” or “he” that author identifies as female or male respectively) with that of their protagonist/s (whether in first or third person); sometimes based on my own reading of the book, more often on reviews.’ (Griffiths, 2015).

bench-mark in Scottish fiction? Who will be the successor to James Kelman and be the next Scot to win the Booker Prize? (McDowell, 2013)

For McDowell, the ‘unspoken assumption behind these male-dominated questions is inevitable: it will be a man [...] That's the way our tradition goes.’ (McDowell, 2013)

When it comes to the representation of women writers in Scottish literature, this appears to be the crux of the matter: Scottish women writers are consistently side-lined in favour of their male counterparts.

As the brief example of the division of Book of the Year Award winners above illustrates, such issues concerning the representation, or lack thereof, of women writers in Scottish literary culture is inseparable from the history and development of the Society’s Literary Awards. In fact, it is argued that the shortlists for the Society’s Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards not only offer an insight into the propagation of books written by Scottish women writers since 1982, but can also be analysed to indicate the representation of women writers within Scottish literary and publishing culture more widely. Even though such records can only represent a small selection of the literature being produced by Scottish writers in this period, as it only includes work nominated for the Society’s Literary Awards, this data is nonetheless useful in assessing the impact and role of Scottish women writers upon the Scottish literary landscape in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Society’s Literary Awards are also intimately associated with discussions regarding Scottish women writers since a number of the key figures in critical academic discourse surrounding gender and Scottish literature are former, or current, Society Literary Award judges. This point not only reflects the fact that the Scottish literary community is a relatively small one, but it also means that many of the women writers who are discussed by academic critics have frequently been considered for the Society’s



Literary Awards.<sup>504</sup> While such critical literature does not discuss literary award culture in any detail, these scholarly works, as well as contemporaneous commentary regarding the representation of women writers in Scotland, are invaluable to an analysis of women writers and Scottish literary award culture. The definitions and parameters by which the term ‘Scottish women writers’ is used throughout this analysis, for example, is discussed in much of the literature related to this topic. As noted by Gifford and McMillan, and Christianson and Lumsden, terms such as ‘Scottish’, ‘women’ and ‘writer’ are changeable classifications.<sup>505</sup> The flexibility of such terms is particularly pertinent to literary awards, which rely on rules of eligibility as a means of classification for an author’s entitlement for an award. However, since the most important criterion of eligibility for the Society’s Literary Awards is the geographic or national status of the author, and all of the books considered in this analysis will adhere to these particular terms, the ‘Scottishness’ of the women writers discussed therein is determined in terms of the Society’s own terms of eligibility.<sup>506</sup>

Before moving on to a detailed statistical analysis of the gender balance of the Society’s Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award shortlists and winners, the wider cultural and historical contexts of the promotion and representation of women in Scottish literature and publishing culture from the 1980s to the present day must be established. It has been argued that, historically, Scottish women writers have been ignored or overlooked when it came to the narration of Scotland’s literary history. As the

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<sup>504</sup> See: D. Gifford and D. McMillan, *History of Scottish Women’s Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997); A. Christianson and A. Lumsden, *Contemporary Scottish Women Writers* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); Monica Germana, *Scottish Women’s Gothic and Fantastic Writing: Fiction Since 1978* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010); and, Glenda Norquay, ed., *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Women’s Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

<sup>505</sup> Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan, *A History of Scottish Women’s Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), p. xv.

Aileen Christianson and Alison Lumsden, *Contemporary Scottish Women Writer’s* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 2-3.

<sup>506</sup> The full criteria of eligibility for the Saltire Society Literary Awards is detailed in part 3 of this thesis. How such criteria specifically relates to national identity is discussed in more detail in part 4.2 of this thesis.

editors of one of the first major scholarly texts studying Scottish women writers, Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan suggested that they could ‘claim with some confidence that what has in the past been perceived as the “Scottish Tradition in Literature” has been both male generated and male fixated’ (Gifford and McMillan, xix). This tendency for Scottish women’s writing to be ostracised from literary histories and, ultimately, from the formation of the British literary canon, is, Gifford and McMillan argue, particularly significant. Scottish women writers have not only been viewed as ‘unequal to their male Scottish counterparts’ but have also been viewed ‘as junior literary sisters of English women writers’ (Gifford and McMillan, xix). One of the terms Gifford and McMillan use to describe the way in which Scottish women writers have been historically viewed is ‘minor’. In other words, Scottish women writers have been continually portrayed as playing lesser roles in the development of Scotland’s literary and cultural development.

Such negation of the work of women writers was cause for debate in the 1980s and 1990s. In an article entitled ‘Superiorism’ published in an issue of *Cencrastaus* in early 1984, Carol Anderson and Glenda Norquay argued that ‘the cultural life of Scotland [...] has been largely dominated by men’.<sup>507</sup> Anderson and Norquay also theorised that the ‘potential contribution of women to contemporary Scottish culture ha[d] been stunted’ by the failure of the Scottish Enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to recognise the historic contribution by women to Scottish culture (Anderson and Norquay, 9). Similarly, writing in a special edition of *Chapman* entitled ‘The Women’s Forum’ ten years later, Joy Hendry noted how a previous edition of the journal, ‘Woven by Women’, published in 1980, was ‘a milestone [...] as the first Scottish publication to focus on women’s cultural achievement across the artistic spectrum in Scotland’.<sup>508</sup> Hendry continued, arguing that, in the early 1980s writers and commentators ‘still had to argue that in almost every field

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<sup>507</sup> Carol Anderson and Glenda Norquay, ‘Superiorism’, *Cencrastaus*, 15 (1984), p. 8.

<sup>508</sup> Joy Hendry, ‘Editorial’, *Chapman*, 74-75 (1993), p. 3.

not only *could* women contribute to good work, but they *already had*' (Hendry, 3). Also writing in 'The Women's Forum', the Scottish writer and poet Tessa Ransford suggested that such issues relating to the denigration of women writers and artists remained pertinent in the early 1990s. In an essay entitled 'The Case of the Intellectual Woman', Ransford argued that 'intellectual women' were a 'phenomenon which our society in Scotland or in the UK generally is not entirely happy with'.<sup>509</sup> Ransford continued to suggest that '[t]he intellectual woman is in serious danger of decapitation in our society, now as in the past. Her head is of value only if cut off from her body and her body appreciated only if cut off from her head.' (Ransford, 152)

Latterly, a more positive approach has been taken when considering the representation and influence of Scottish women writers upon Scottish culture and literature. In *Contemporary Scottish Women Writers*, Alison Lumsden and Aileen Christianson note how the exclusion of Scottish women writers in discussions of Scotland's literary and cultural development in the 1970s and 1980s was followed by an influx of writing from Scottish women in the 1990s.<sup>510</sup> This escalation of writing from Scottish women necessitated that the contribution from Scottish women writers to Scotland's literary landscape be re-examined:

The 1990s have seen the addition of many new Scottish women writing from a more confident assumption that being female and being Scottish are linked and culturally positive. The breadth of the work of contemporary Scottish women writers now ensures the redrawing of the literary map of Scotland, allowing for these writers a natural assumption of place in a culture previously more accessible to male Scottish writers. Women writers have become fully part of 'the bedrock' of this 'small/and multitudinous country'. (Christianson and Lumsden, 1)

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<sup>509</sup> Tessa Ransford, 'The Case of the Intellectual Woman', *Chapman*, 74-75 (1993), p. 148.

<sup>510</sup> Alison Lumsden and Aileen Christianson, *Contemporary Scottish Women Writers* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p. 1.

Such comments suggest that, while Scottish women writers had been absent, or completely ignored, for much of the 1970s and 1980s, the 1990s brought with it a new age of Scottish literary culture which saw women writers observed and honoured for their contribution to Scotland's literary and publishing industries.

Given that this is the socio-political and cultural environment in which Scotland's publishing industry appears to have been functioning in the 1980s and 1990s, it seems inevitable that the Society's Literary Awards were affected by the industry's, and society's, wider disregard for Scottish women writers. A statistical analysis of the gender balance of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award shortlists, winners and judging panels will determine the extent to which the Society's Literary Awards reflected such prejudices against Scottish women writers. The following quantitative examination adds to the existing scholarship surrounding Scottish women writers, and the representation of women writers in literary award culture more generally, by authenticating perceived trends in contemporary Scottish literature.

The statistics for this analysis are taken from the lists of nominations and shortlists of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award since 1982 and 1988 respectively. However, when it comes to comparative analyses of the two awards' representation of women writers, only data from 1988 to 2014 will be used for the Book of the Year Award so as to ensure the comparative analysis is balanced. As the longest running and most consistently presented of the Society's Literary Awards, the records for these particular awards are the most comprehensive and therefore the most fruitful. In order to make this count as precise as possible, entries solely authored or edited by women have been counted alongside books by multiple authors, which include men and women. If an entry is authored by both male and female writers, each author receives the same credit (a count of '1'). If a writer has more than one book nominated or shortlisted in any

given year, each book has received a count towards the total number of entries. The purpose of such methods of calculation is to ensure the most accurate totalling of the number of male and female writers nominated or shortlisted for the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards.

Between 1982 and 2014 over 2,026 books were submitted for the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year awards (since 1988)<sup>511</sup>, of this total number of entries, just under a third – 640 entries – are authored, co-authored or edited by women.<sup>512</sup> As Figure 16 below shows, the number of entries from women almost always accounted for around a third of the total number of entries in any given year and, on average, the percentage of entries from women writers per year was just 28%. There are a number of years in which the number of entries from women writers accounted for a larger number of the total entries: 2006 (43%), 2013 (42%) and 2014 (40%). Moreover, in 1985 four of the eight entries nominated for the Book of the Year award were by women writers, but this balance of nominations was not reflected in the shortlist. Of the six books shortlisted for the 1985 Book of the Year award two were from women writers but only one was authored solely by a woman: Naomi Mitchison's *Among you Taking Notes* (1985). The other book shortlisted for the award was Agnes Owens' *Lean Tales* (1985), a collection of short stories by Owens, Alasdair Gray and James Kelman.

However, in order to conduct a more nuanced analysis of the representation of gender in the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year awards, each award

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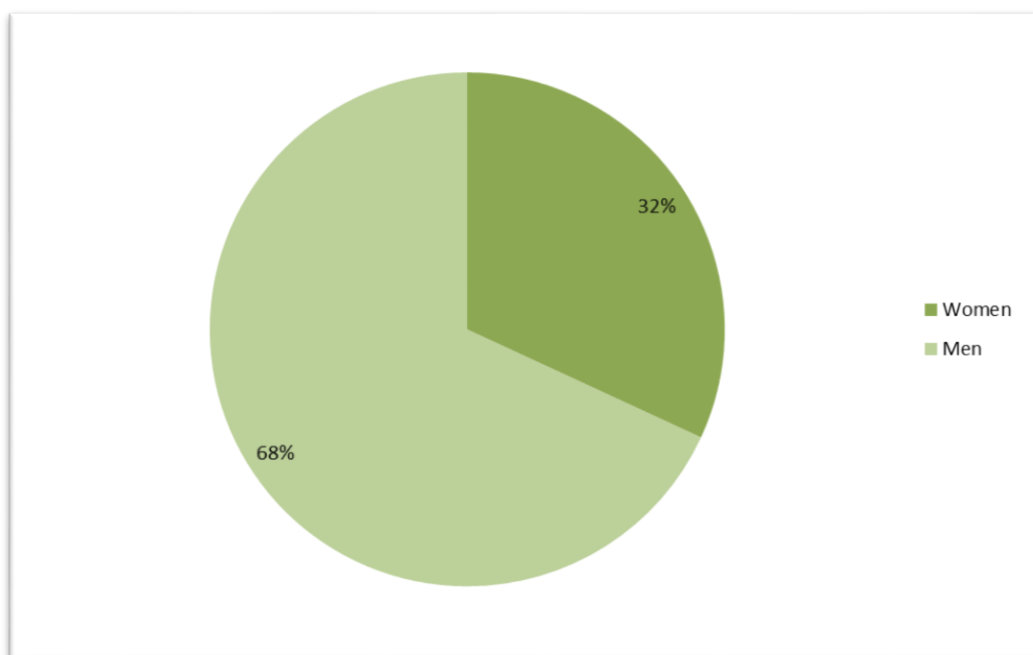
<sup>511</sup> Since the Book of the Year and the First Book of the Year awards were adjudicated by the same judging panel, for many years the nominations for each category were not organised separately. Accordingly, the total figure of nominations, 2,026, includes nominations for both the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year. While efforts were made to determine exactly which books adhered to the Society's criteria of eligibility of 'first' books and which did not, it was often difficult to definitively ascertain this because biographical information for some authors is unavailable or conflicting. Therefore, for simplicity, the gender breakdown of the total number of nominations amalgamates the figures for both the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year awards.

<sup>512</sup> This total does not include submissions for 2000 and 2009 as records for these years are currently unavailable. The records of the annual submissions for the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year have been collated using a pre-existing database created by the Saltire Society which was supplemented with submissions lists from previous years in the Society's archives.

must be considered in turn, beginning with an analysis of the breakdown of shortlists and winners for the Book of the Year award. It remains important, however, to note that women were represented in the shortlists of the Book of the Year award between 1982 and 1988. Four women were shortlisted for the award between 1982 and 1988 (inclusive). Dorothy Dunnett was shortlisted for the inaugural Book of the Year award, receiving a ‘commendation’ for her novel *King Hereafter* (1982). Naomi Mitchison’s memoir *Among you Taking Notes* (1985) and Jessie Kesson’s collection of short stories *Where the Apple Ripens & Other Stories* (1985) were shortlisted in 1985 and 1986 respectively. Mitchison’s novel *Early in Orcadia* was also shortlisted in 1987, alongside Muriel Sparks’ *The Stories of Muriel Spark* (1987), which won the award. Sparks’ collection was the first book by a woman to win the Book of the Year Award.

To return to the data considering the Book of the Year award between 1988 and 2014, of the 185 books shortlisted for the award during this time, 59 (32%) of these were by women, as illustrated by Figure 16.

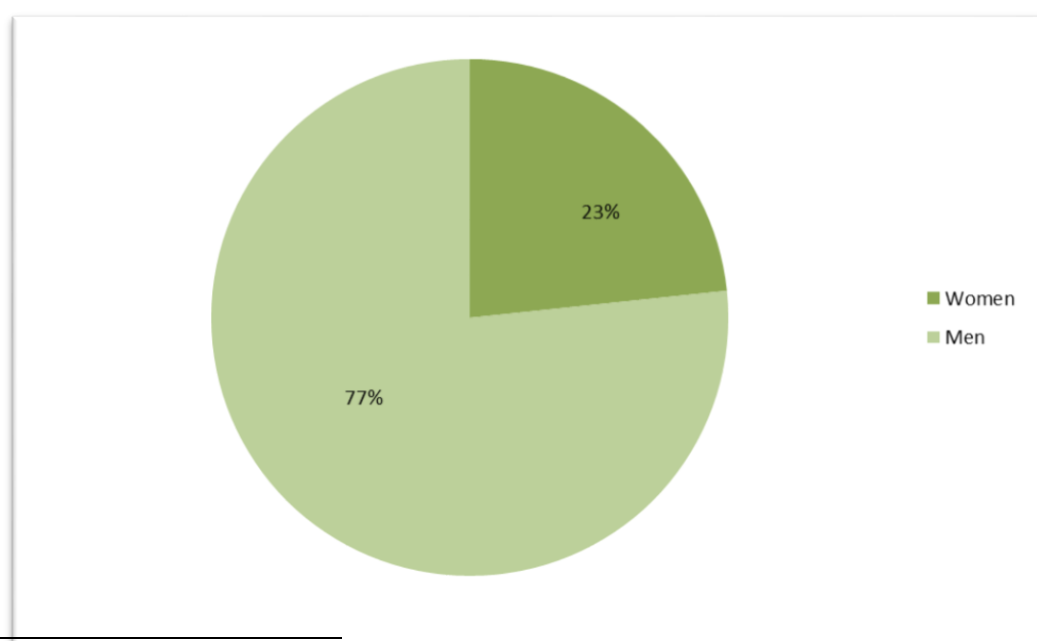
**Figure 16: Breakdown of the Shortlists of the Saltire Society Book of the Year Award between 1988 and 2014 by Gender in percent.**<sup>513</sup>



<sup>513</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives.

Of the 59 shortlisted for the award, only 7 women went on to actually win the award. Following Sparks' win in 1987, Liz Lochhead was the next woman to win the award for her play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* (1989). However, this award was shared with Allan Massie's *A Question of Loyalties* (1989) in 1989. The next woman to win the award was A. L. Kennedy in 1995 for her second novel *So I am Glad* (1995), but this was also conferred jointly, with Kennedy sharing the award with Neal Ascherson's collection of essays *Black Sea* (1995). As a result, the next woman to be the sole recipient of the Book of the Year Award was Liz Lochhead for her play *Medea* (2000) in 2001, fourteen years after Spark was the first woman to exclusively win the Award in 1987. Following Lochhead's win in 2001, the Book of the Year award was conferred to women writers four more times up to 2014. Janice Galloway received the award in 2002, for *Clara* (2002), Kate Atkinson's *Case Histories* (2004) won in 2005, A. L. Kennedy received the award again in 2007 for her novel *Day* (2007) and Ali Smith won the 2014 Book of the Year award for her novel *How to be Both* (2014).

**Figure 17: Breakdown of the Winners of the Saltire Society Book of the Year Award between 1988 and 2014 by Gender in percent.**<sup>514</sup>



<sup>514</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives

As Figures 16 and 17 illustrate, there is a significant decrease in the number of women represented at each stage of the judging process for the Book of the Year Award. While 32% of the books included within the shortlists for the award between 1988 and 2014 are by women writers, when it comes to the selection of winners, this figure drops to just 23%.

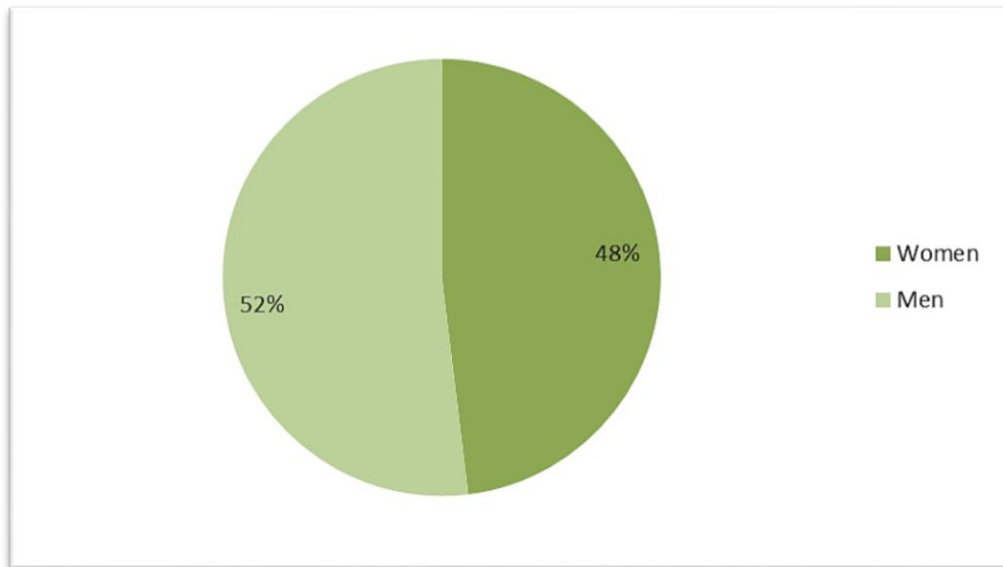
Women writers appear to have fared slightly better when it comes to the Society's First Book of the Year Award. Of the twenty-eight winners of the award between 1988 and 2014, 43% of these were women. Four of these Awards were conferred jointly: to both Crisden Whyte for *Uirsgeul/Myth* (1991) and Jackie Kay's *Adoption Papers* (1991) in 1992; Liam McIlvanney, for *Burns the Radical: Poetry and Politics in Late Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (2002), and Louise Welsh's *The Cutting Room* (2002) in 2002; Simon Hall's *The History of Orkney Literature* (2010) and Sue Peebles' *The Death of Lomond Friel* (2010) in 2010; and Tim Armstrong's *Air Cuan Dubh Drilseach* (2013) and Eunice Buchanan's *As Far As I Can See* (2012). The other awards went to Sian Hayton for *Cells of Knowledge* (1989) in 1989; A. L. Kennedy's *Night Geometry and The Garscadden Trains* (1990) in 1991; Ali Smith's *Free Love* (1995) in 1995; Kate Clanchy's *Slattern* (1995) in 1996; Meghan Delahunt's *In the Blue House* (2001) in 2001; Maggie Fergusson's *George MacKay Brown: The Life* (2006) in 2006; Eleanor Thom's *The Tinkin* (2009) in 2009; and, Sarah Fraser's *The Last Highlander: Scotland's Most Notorious Clan-Chief, Rebel and Double Agent* (2012) in 2012.

However, as Figures 18 and 19 indicate, while women writers have been better represented in the First Book of the Year shortlists – accounting for a near equal 48% of the books nominated for the award (see Figure 18) – when it comes to the selection of



winners of the award, there is another significant fall in the inclusion of women writers (see Figure 19).

**Figure 18: Breakdown of the Shortlists of the Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award between 1988 and 2014 by Gender in percent.**<sup>515</sup>

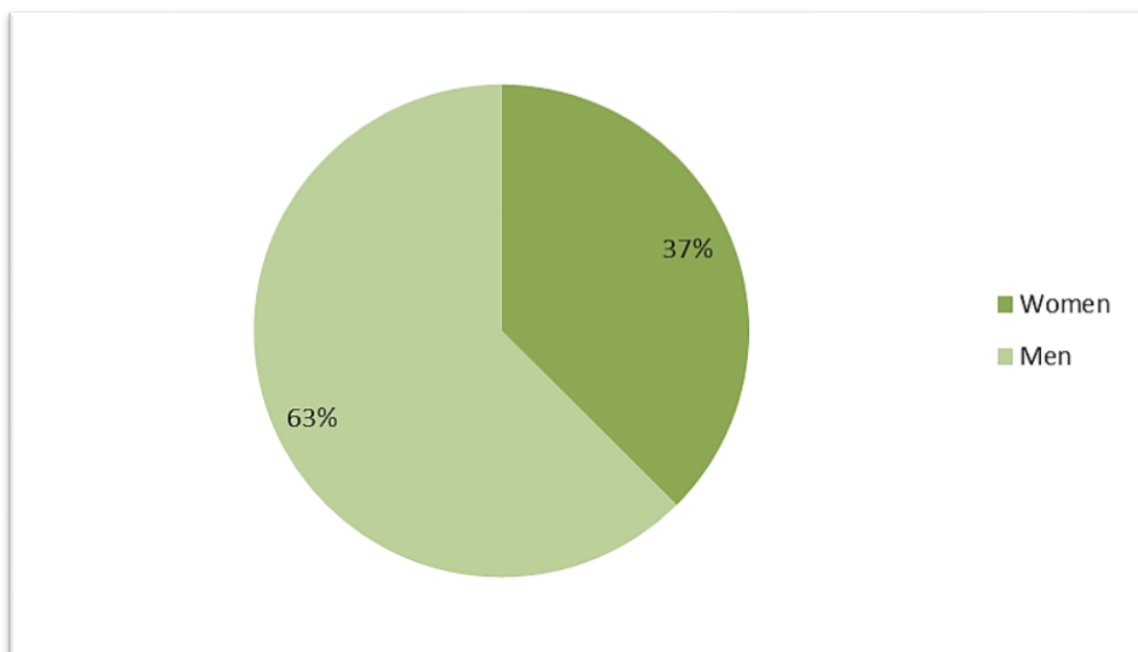


Of the 32 winners of the First Book of the Year award, around a third of these (12) were women, meaning that men are nearly twice as likely to win the First Book of the Year award as women; this is despite the fact that women make up nearly half of the total number of shortlisted entries for the award. The diminution in the inclusion of women between the shortlisting and selection of winners for both the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year awards is approximately the same, around 10%, indicating that something must happen at the final stages of adjudication of the awards which leads to a near identical omission of women writers for the two awards.

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<sup>515</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives

**Figure 19: Breakdown of the Winners of the Saltire Society First Book of the Year Award between 1988 and 2014 by Gender in percent.** <sup>516</sup>



There are, of course, a number of factors that may influence the absence of Scottish women writers from the nominations, shortlists and winner's roll calls for the Society's Literary Awards. The Society's awards can only evaluate books which have been published and so if fewer books by Scottish women writers were published during this time the Society's nominations and shortlists would reflect this. While there is no year on year record of the number of books being published in Scotland between 1988 and 2014, nor is there any data illustrating the percentage of men to women being published during this time, some of the Society's Literary Award judges have suggested there were fewer women being published in Scotland in the late 1980s through to the mid-late 90s. Alison

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<sup>516</sup> Source: Database collated from Saltire Society Private Archives

Lumsden, who was a member of the Society's Literary Awards judging panel between 1998 and 2004, and became the Chair of the History Book of the Year Award Panel in 2014, speculated that 'it's probably true that there were more books by men than women published' during the six year gap in which no women won the Society's Book of the Year Award between 1989 and 1995 (Lumsden, 2014).

Lumsden's hypothesis was echoed by the former Literary Award judge (2004-2010) and current Chief Executive of Publishing Scotland, Marion Sinclair. Sinclair, who was Editorial and Marketing Assistant at Polygon between 1988 and 1990, and Editorial Director at Polygon between 1990 and 1997, agreed with this suggestion about the gender imbalance of Scottish literary and publishing culture during the 1980s, noting that literature in the 1980s 'would probably have been heavily male dominated'.<sup>517</sup> When asked whether this may have been an issue in the UK publishing industry as a whole, Sinclair believed that 'it was probably worse in Scotland than it was in the rest of the UK'. Sinclair continued, observing that:

when I think back to the eighties in terms of the women, in terms of the female writers [...] Agnes Owens was around then, Liz Lochhead, Shena MacKay, but there probably weren't all that many female Scottish novelists in the mid-eighties, between say '82 and '88. I think things probably started getting better in 1988 [...] I'm guessing that towards the late eighties [...] women writers - both in terms of poetry and fiction - began to come up in terms of numbers. (Sinclair, 2014)

Such retrospective hypotheses suggesting that there were more men being published in Scotland than women is supported both by the data gathered from the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year award nominations, shortlists and winners discussed above, and, by the critical works cited at the beginning of this analysis. The academic works of Gifford, McMillan, Norquay and Anderson all indicate that Scottish women writers have been systematically ignored or forgotten within literary histories of Scotland and Britain.

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<sup>517</sup> Marion Sinclair, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 31 March 2014.

Likewise, the contemporaneity of the articles by Anderson, Norquay and Ransford indicate that this was an issue recognised by some of the Scottish women writers working in Scotland at the time.

However, while it could be suggested that the gender imbalance of the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year award nominations merely reflect this general gender imbalance within Scottish literary culture, it does not explain why women writers are less likely to make it through to the final stages of the Society's adjudication process than their male counterparts. If the Society's figures were simply reflecting the presence of women writers more generally, we would still expect to see a consistent representation of women throughout each stage of the competition at the very least. However, the fact that the representation of women writers shortlisted for the awards drops by 10% from the shortlists to the winners suggests there are discrepancies at the final stages of the competition that cannot be explained by chance alone. If the probability of women writers winning the awards does not reflect their statistical representation within the data sets, it may be that there are other factors which influence the selection of women writers as winners. For example, if there were more women on the judging panel in the years women writers won the award; one might expect this to influence the selection of female winners. Nonetheless, in the years in which women were recipients of the Book of the Year Award (1987, 1989, 1995, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2014) the judging panels were rarely balanced in terms of gender. Between 1987 and 1993, Isobel Murray was the only woman on a panel of up to seven. Joyce McMillan joined the panel in 1994 and Alison Lumsden joined in 1998. Following the addition of McMillan and Lumsden, there were a number of years (1999, 2000, 2003) during which the gender balance of the panel of six was evenly split. However, in all other years between 1998 and 2005 (when Lumsden left the panel and Marion Sinclair joined), the balance of the panel shifted to four men and three women

because Ian McDonald joined the panel as a Gaelic advisor for the final stages of the competition.

Former Literary Awards judging panel chair Ian Campbell stated that when he became a chair of the panel, and had ‘some influence’ over the selection of the panel’s members, he intended for there to be ‘an equal representation of genders’.<sup>518</sup> This concept of having a balanced judging panel, Campbell suggested, was ‘still quite a new idea’ when he became co-chair of the panel with Douglas Gifford in 1995 (Campbell, 2014). Indeed, when speaking about the gender balance of the judging panel retrospectively, the judges recall that there was more balance to the panel than there actually was. Ann Matheson, who joined the panel in 2006, believed that the Literary Awards judging panel had ‘always been balanced’ and that, as long as she had been a member ‘it’s always been balanced [...] probably about 50/50’ (Matheson, 2014). Matheson continued to say that ‘In my time there have always been 4 women’ (Matheson, 2014). This, however, is not the case. Matheson joined the panel in 2006; joining McMillan and Sinclair as the only three women of a panel of seven judges; and, between 2006 and 2013, there were only ever three women on the panel (Claire Squires replaced Sinclair when she stepped down from the panel in 2010). As the histories of the awards detailed in Part 3 illustrate, particularly that of the AMM Award, gender imbalance on the Society’s Literary Award panels was a consistent problem, so much so that 2014 was the first year in which the Literary Awards’ judging panel was in fact balanced.

The fact that Matheson recalls gender balance amongst the panel when there was none is also reflected in comments from Lumsden regarding the disproportion of male to female winners of the awards. On hearing about the large gaps between women writers winning the Book of the Year award, Lumsden was surprised but argued that she ‘didn’t

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<sup>518</sup> Ian Campbell interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 8 April 2014.

perceive any gender bias at all in the committee' (Lumsden, 2014). She continued to suggest that 'obviously the gender balance was good [...] but you never got a sense that gender was really an issue at all in the discussions' (Lumsden, 2014). While Lumsden maintained that, from her perspective, there was no 'positive' bias towards women writers, and that 'there was never a sense of "well we better give it to a woman"', she also suggested that the attitudes of the women who were members of the panel would have prevented any negative bias *against* women writers, indicating that she, Murray and McMillan would 'almost [be] watching out for female writers' (Lumsden, 2014). Such discrepancies between the statistical imbalance of women and men writers and judges, as well as the inconsistencies between individual memories and historical detail suggest that there is a complex and entrenched level of gender bias at work within the Society's Literary Awards that, while inadvertent, no less affects the outcome of the awards themselves.

It is with this in mind that this analysis proposes that the seemingly inherent gender bias against Scottish women writers within the Society's Literary Awards is evidence of a form of implicit social cognition identified as *implicit stereotyping*.<sup>519</sup> This sociological approach<sup>520</sup> contends that 'incidental exposure to stereotypical knowledge unconsciously, yet selectively, influences judgment' and that 'stereotypes and attitudes can operate unconsciously'.<sup>521</sup> Banaji et al go on to argue that '[c]ulturally pervasive stereotypes about social groups, whether consciously accepted or rejected by the individual, may produce

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<sup>519</sup> Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald, 'Implicit Gender Stereotyping in Judgments of Fame', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68:2 (1995), 181-198.

<sup>520</sup> Banaji, Hardin and Rothman, as well as Banaji and Greenwald, have come to conclusions regarding implicit stereotyping following experiments assessing the 'involvement of memory and other cognitive processes in stereotyping' with regards to gendered judgments of fame. Their work, which indicates that both men and women have a propensity to associate fame and prestige with men rather than women, is a good basis from which to assess how implicit bias may affect the Saltire Society Literary Award judges' judgment of men and women writers.

Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald, 'Implicit Stereotyping and Prejudice', in M. P. Zanna and J. M. Olson, eds., *The Psychology of Prejudice: The Ontario Symposium*, 7 (1994), 55-76 (p. 63).

<sup>521</sup> Mahzarin R. Banaji, Curtis Hardin and Alexander J. Rothman, 'Implicit Stereotyping in Person Judgment', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65:2 (1993), 272-281, (p. 272).

stereotyped judgments, even by members of the stereotyped group (Banaji et al, 278). Within the context of the Society's Literary Awards, the 'culturally pervasive stereotype' is the historic notion that women writers are absent from Scottish literary culture because they are not as talented or accomplished as their male-counterparts.

This implicit stereotyping is further exemplified by the way in which the Society and the Literary Award judges administrate and discuss the awards. As women writers are more likely to be shortlisted for, and win, the First Book of the Year compared to the Book of the Year, it could be argued that this has made the award more accessible for women writers historically. However, as already discussed, the First Book of the Year Award has repeatedly been presented and viewed as a 'minor' award by the Society and Literary Award judges, both in terms of economic and cultural value. To be precise, for the first two years of its existence, the prize fund for the First Book of the Year was £1,000, £500 less than for the Book of the Year award. However in 1990 the prize funds for both Awards were raised: the Book of the Year was increased to £5,000 and the First Book of the Year was increased to £1,500. Between 1990 and 2014 the First Book of the Year Award prize fund remained £3,500 less than the Book of the Year and this only changed with the introduction of a new prize fund system in 2014 which saw all Saltire Society Literary Award category winners receive £2,000. Therefore, winners of the First Book of the Year award between 1990 and 2014 received 70% less than Book of the Year award winners. Since women writers are statistically more likely to win the First Book of the Year award this economic imbalance mirrors the society-wide inequities between the income of men and women. According to a report published by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and employment law advisor XpertHR, women earn up to

35% less than men in similar occupations, a figure that emulates the economic difference between the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards.<sup>522</sup>

Moreover, on numerous occasions, internal reports and meeting minutes from judging panel meetings have referred to the Book of the Year award as the 'main' award. Minutes from a meeting of the Literary Award judging panel held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 1996 referred to the entry lists for the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year awards as the 'main list' and 'First Book list' respectively.<sup>523</sup> There is evidence this happened again in 2002, 2006 and 2008.<sup>524</sup> Such semantic differentiation between the awards also happened in correspondence between the Society's Administrator, Kathleen Munro and representatives from sponsors. In a letter to Keith Bales in April 1997, an employee of *The Scotsman* newspaper, who sponsored the Book of the Year award between 1988 and 2000, Munro stated that '*The Scotsman* has supported the main Award since 1988.'<sup>525</sup> The use of such terminology can be interpreted in a number of ways. With regards to the private meeting minutes that are only circulated among the Society's Council and Literary Award judges, referring to the Book of the Year as the 'main prize' may well have been an innocuous means of easily and quickly distinguishing between the awards. Similarly, given the First Book of the Year Award's status as an award for first books, its so-called 'minor' status may also relate to the early career status of the author.

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<sup>522</sup> Simon Goodley, 'Gender Pay Gap: Female Bosses Earn 35% Less Than Male Colleagues', *The Guardian* 19 August 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/aug/19/gender-pay-gap-women-bosses-earn-35-percent-less-than-men>> [accessed 10 April 2015]

<sup>523</sup> Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 25 September 1996. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31.

<sup>524</sup> Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 30 October 2002. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31; Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 13 November 2002. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31; Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 1 November 2006. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31; Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 15 November 2006. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31; Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 17 September 2008. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31; Literary Awards Panel Meeting Minutes, 4 November 2008. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 13517, File No. 31.

<sup>525</sup> Letter from Kathleen Munro, Saltire Society Administrator to Keith Bales Business Development Director, *The Scotsman*, 28 April 1997. Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (NLS), Acc. 12393, File No. 84.



A number of authors, such as A. L. Kennedy, Ali Smith and Michel Faber who have won the First Book of the Year Award (in 1991, 1995 and 1999 respectively) have gone on to win the Society's Book of the Year Award (in 2007, 2014 and 2015 respectively). Such patterns contribute to the construction of the narrative that the First Book of the Year Award is a 'minor' award received early in an author's career before they win the 'major' Book of the Year Award further in their career. However, the fact that such terminology was also used in correspondence with the sponsor of the award, suggests that this terminology may have been used as a means of reinforcing the import and prestige of the Book of the Year award. In both instances there is a sense that the value and prestige of the Book of the Year is more important than that of the First Book of the Year.

While such semantic occurrences are likely unintentional developments that are only used, from the perspective of the Society's administrators and judges, to differentiate between the awards, by referring to the Book of the Year Award as the 'Main' Award, the Literary Award judging panel and representatives of the Society have inadvertently placed the First Book of the Year award in the position of being the antonymous 'minor' Award. Consequently, since this is the award that Scottish women writers are more likely to be shortlisted for and win, there is a sense that the Society's Literary Awards are maintaining the traditional characterisation, or stereotype, of Scottish women writers as 'minor' contributors to Scottish literary culture, as highlighted by Gifford and McMillan. Such reiteration of the 'minor' status of Scottish women writers is demonstrative of what Banaji et al refer to as the 'cumulative effects of individual stereotyped judgments' (Banaji et al, 1993, 279). Once adopted from external influences (i.e. Scottish culture more widely), such 'stereotyped judgments' are unknowingly perpetuated among the Society's Literary

Award judges who function as a distinct social group.<sup>526</sup> Writing about the formation of implicit and explicit attitudes within groups, and how these relate to individual responses or interpretations of attitudes and stereotypes, McConnell et al explain that ‘group knowledge may impact implicit attitude formation even when perceivers devote considerable cognitive resources to understanding social targets’.<sup>527</sup> Even if individual panel members (or ‘perceivers’) express opinions which acknowledge the lack of recognition of Scottish women’s writing (i.e. show ‘understanding [to] social targets’), as Lumsden did when reflecting upon her experience as a judge, the individual, implicit opinions of a panel member will likely be influenced by the groups’ more universal opinion; which, is influenced by external cultural biases anyway.

This argument goes some way to explaining why certain members of the panel recall a greater gender balance to the awards and the judging panels than there really was. The fact that Lumsden and Matheson remember being part of a panel that was gender balanced is indicative of how their personal attitudes have implicitly influenced their interpretation of events. As Ziva Kundra suggests: ‘we may have inaccurate memories of our own past behavior and attitudes [...] we may be mistaken about the prevalence of various attitudes and behaviors among our peers’.<sup>528</sup> Therefore, because Lumsden and Matheson regard themselves as being sympathetic to the issue of gender balance anyway, they have not only assumed that their principles were reflected in the selection of award winners during their time as judges, but also incorrectly recall the general attitude of the panel as being entirely impartial to gender. Nevertheless, the statistical analyses of the gender imbalance of the shortlists and winners of the Book of the Year and First Book of

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<sup>526</sup> Further explanation and demonstration of the Society’s Literary Award judging panels functioning as social communities of practice with shared objectives is explicated in Part 5 of this thesis.

<sup>527</sup> A. R. McConnell, R. J. Rydell, L. M. Strain and D. M. Mackie, ‘Forming Implicit and Explicit Attitudes Toward Individuals: Social Group Association Clues’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94:5 (2008), 792-807.

<sup>528</sup> Ziva Kundra, *Social Cognition: Making Sense of People* (London: MIT Press, 1999), p. 5.

the Year awards denote that this cannot be the case. The Society's gender imbalance appears to be both reflective and symptomatic of wider issues within Scotland's literary and cultural history. A statement which is further substantiated by the fact that the gender imbalance evident in the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Award shortlists is narrowing as society becomes more conscious of gender disparity more generally. Comparing the five years at the start of each decade (1990 – 1994, 2000 – 2004 and 2010 – 2014), for example, shows that the inequality between the number of male to female authors being shortlisted for the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards has reduced. In terms of the First Book of the Year Award, the change has been dramatic, with female authors accounting for 32% of the total number of shortlistees between 1990 and 1994, with this rising to 57% (2000 – 2004) and 67% (2010 – 2014) in the following decades. The change to the Book of the Year shortlists has, however, been incremental, with just under a quarter (24%) of shortlisted books between 1990 and 1994 coming from female authors. This rose to 34% between 2000 and 2004, but only to 36% between 2010 and 2014, indicating that the Society's gender inequities, particularly in relation to the Book of the Year Award, are not evening as quickly as might be expected.

The purpose of this analysis was to consider the Saltire Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards in relation to wider issues pertaining to gender representation in Scottish literary and publishing culture. What this examination has shown is the extent to which the Society's Literary Awards reflect, as opposed to subvert, historic and existing gender imbalances in Scottish culture. As noted, there has been a historic failure to recognise women writers in Scotland which is reflected in the Society's Book of the Year and First Book of the Year shortlists and winners roll calls. Despite the fact that critics argued that there was a change in tide in the late 1980s and early 1990s regarding the general gender balance in Scottish writing, this analysis indicates that

Scotland's literary culture was still dominated by men. The fact that perceptions of the gender imbalance in Scottish writing do not align with the statistics discussed here parallels the misconceptions held by members of the Society's Literary Awards judging panels. This lends credence to the argument that the Society's judges have participated in implicit stereotyping based upon the 'culturally pervasive stereotype' (Banaji et al, 278) that Scottish women writers play a 'minor' role in Scottish literary and publishing culture, hence the propensity for women writers to be more likely to win the oft-called 'minor' First Book of the Year Award rather than the Book of the Year Award.

Further analysis of the representation of women writers in Scotland's publishing history is undoubtedly needed to advance this area of critical inquiry: however, this analysis of how the Society's Literary Awards engage with gender issues has started the process of identifying misconceptions that surround gender in relation to Scottish literary award culture and Scottish literary and publishing culture more widely.

## **5 Judging the Saltire Society Literary Awards: A Discursive Analysis**

To bring this socio-cultural and historical analysis of the Society's Literary Awards to the present day, the following section presents a discursive analysis of Literary Award judging panel meetings held by the Society's Literary Award panel in late 2014. The Society's Literary Award judges have played a crucial role in the development and advancement of the awards over the years with many judges, as already noted, being members of the panel for several years. Accordingly, acquiring an understanding of the way in which the judges interact, discuss and judge books they are assessing for the Society's Literary Awards is imperative to obtaining a comprehensive understanding of how the Society's Literary Awards operate today.

### **5.1 Introduction**

When discussing the process by which the Saltire Society Literary Award judges adjudicate the Book of the Year or First Book of the Year Awards, judging panel member Joyce McMillan has described the process as a 'deliberative' and 'discursive' one.<sup>529</sup> Having experience as a judge for a number of cultural awards, including the Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland (CATS) and Creative Scotland's 'Made in Scotland'

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<sup>529</sup> Joyce McMillan, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 4 February 2014.

Fund<sup>530</sup>, McMillan explained how the verbal exchange of opinions that take place during discursive judging panel meetings is a significant part of the decision making process:

The Saltire Society decision making process runs for months and so you can listen to someone talking about a book that you've read quickly and thought wasn't very good, and think 'oh, well maybe I missed that, maybe I should go back and re-read it.' [...] You can talk people round, depending on the quality of your arguments. And I must say I absolutely love these discursive processes, I don't think I would do as much kind of judging panel work as I do if I didn't really love it. (McMillan, 2014)

McMillan continued to argue that such social, discursive interactions are in fact key to legitimising decisions made by judging panels adjudicating for cultural awards:

[...] everyone has a view and, in a sense, everyone's view is as valuable as everyone else's, but what matters is that your view should be in discussion, [...] it's not a cultural response, and it's not the response of a healthy culture if you're just talking about a whole load of individual responses. What a healthy culture does is debate its individual responses and gradually build up a body of always challengeable opinion about what's been going on, in terms of the value of the work. (McMillan, 2014)

Echoing McMillan's thoughts on this issue in a different interview, another longstanding judge, Ann Matheson, highlighted the importance of judging panel meetings in the assessment of books submitted for the Saltire Society Literary Awards:

I think it's really imperative - and I think that's why the panel is a good idea - because very often [...] you'll have formed your own views, but then when you realise a book or an aspect of it may strike another panel member in a different way, and it's when you get these ideas coming forward that you're very often prompted to read [the book] or to look for a different aspect. So I think that whole process of discussion is really imperative and really important in coming to - as far as possible - a united view. (Matheson, 2014)

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<sup>530</sup> The Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland were first awarded in the year 2002-2003 and include five categories of awards for Scottish theatre: best production, best male performance, best female performance, best design and best new play.

'Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland', 12 February 2010,

<<http://www.criticsawards.theatrescotland.com/CATS/about.html>> [accessed 18 January 2016]

The 'Made in Scotland' Showcase is a curated event at which Scottish performance is presented during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and is supported through the Scottish Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund.

'Made in Scotland Programme 2016: Funding Guidelines', 18 February 2015

<<http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/targeted-funding/made-in-scotland>> [accessed 18 January 2016]

This notion that decisions made by the Society's Literary Award judges develop from verbal negotiations between the judges during panel meetings is significant because it offers some indication as to the way in which we may be able to understand exactly *how* the Society's Literary Award judges come upon their final decisions regarding shortlists and winners.

Further, despite the fact that literary award judgment culture has become a ubiquitous sub-culture of the literary and publishing industries, there is little in the way of analysis of exactly how the 'judgment' element of literary award culture is defined. Understandings of what it is to be 'a good literary award judge' come largely from journalistic or autobiographical accounts from judges.<sup>531</sup> Such personal accounts reiterate notions of efforts to be 'fair and objective' (Mountford, 2013), the scale of the task at hand (Savidge, 2013) and of the judging process being collaborative and discursive (Cooke, 2015). The fact that such assessments of the processes of different literary awards, from different people, are similar indicates that such elements are considered innate to the literary award judging process. Accordingly, this analysis will illustrate how such reoccurring notions often underlie the social actions of the Society's Literary Award judges during panel meetings.

Motivated by such comments from McMillan and Matheson, as well as observations I made during Saltire Society Literary Award judging panel meetings, the final part of this thesis assessing the historical and cultural impact of the Society's Literary Awards analyses two key judging panel meetings which took place in 2014. Using data from these meetings, the following analysis will consider the way by which judges make

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<sup>531</sup> See: Lyda Mountford, 'Judging the Guardian first book award and seeking an objective verdict', *The Guardian*, 28 November 2013, <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2013/nov/28/judging-guardian-first-book-award>> [accessed 6 July 2015]; Simon Savidge, 'What it's like to judge a literary prize', *Waterstones Blog*, 19 June 2015, <<https://www.waterstones.com/blog/what-its-like-to-judge-a-literature-prize>> [accessed 6 July 2015]; Rachel Cooke, 'Rachel Cooke: the pleasure and pain of being a Folio prize judge', *The Guardian*, 30 March 2015, <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/mar/30/pleasure-pain-picking-folio-prize-winner>> [accessed 6 July 2015]

decisions and express their opinions about books when judging for Saltire Society Literary Awards. The purpose of such an examination is to firstly identify and corroborate the claims made by McMillan and Matheson and, secondly, to investigate the social and discursive dynamics of judging panels discussing books for literary awards. More specifically, this analysis will position the Society's Literary Award judging process as a form of 'social action' which is exhibited in a series of collaborative and negotiated practices.

Although critical assessments of literary award culture have also acknowledged the discursive nature of literary award judging processes, none have attempted to assess the nuances of such social and discursive developments within literary award judging processes. James F. English describes the 'discussions that take place among judges and administrators' as 'the discourse internal to prizes'.<sup>532</sup> Similarly, when discussing the television and radio broadcasts of celebrity judging panel meetings for Canada Reads, Gillian Roberts argues that the fact that such 'discursive aspects of the competition [...] are aired in the first place, potentially invites further discussion and dissension.'<sup>533</sup> While English and Roberts here highlight the two different types of discourse that surround literary award culture – the private and the public – the following analysis aims to bring private conversations into the public sphere, offering transparency and critical evaluation of the ways in which literary award judges discuss literature. It is hoped that such analysis will go some way to democratising the process of adjudication of literature for awards which almost exclusively takes place behind closed doors.

The critical discourse surrounding this particular area of literary tastes and public, or social, reading has most commonly used evidence from reading groups or major social

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<sup>532</sup> James F. English, *Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (London: Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 6.

<sup>533</sup> Gillian Roberts, *Prizing Literature: The Celebration and Circulation of National Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), p. 38.



reading campaigns. Much of this critical analysis related to contemporary literary award and reading culture makes reference to Pierre Bourdieu's philosophies surrounding 'hierarchies of taste' as described in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*.<sup>534</sup> For Bourdieu, appreciations of cultural artefacts, and in particular the classification of 'legitimate' works of art, are not confined to a select few individuals who remain compelled to delegate such classifications, but are in fact inherently tied to wider understandings of social class and cultural status. Taking this concept forward, Bourdieu argues, allows for a greater understanding of the influence and implications of cultural developments upon 'works of art':

[...] it becomes possible to establish whether these dispositions and competences are gifts of nature, as the charismatic ideology of the relation to the work of art would have it, or products of learning, and to bring to light the hidden conditions of the miracle of the unequal class distribution of the capacity for inspired encounters with words of art and high culture in general. (Bourdieu, 28)

Such understandings of the impact socio-cultural status can have upon engagements with 'works of art', and the implications such hierarchies of culture can have upon popular culture, are exemplified in work analysing the linguistic and social developments within community or public reading engagements. For instance, using examples of comments from media commentators and readers interviewed in focus groups, Anouk Lang notes how certain forms of award culture, such as the Richard and Judy Book Club, are often stigmatised because of their concurrent status as arbiters of both literary ('high') culture and television ('low') culture.<sup>535</sup> Similarly, Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo have suggested that 'cultural hierarchies of taste still adhere to reading materials, at the very least across the broader purview of reading and incorporate more than just books.'<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. by Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1984).

<sup>535</sup> Anouk Lang, 'A Dirty Little Secret': Taste Hierarchies and Richard and Judy's Book Club', *Participations*, 7.2 (November 2010), 316-339.

<sup>536</sup> Danielle Fuller and DeNel Rehberg Sedo, *Reading Beyond the Book* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2013), p. 48.

Summarising what much of the critical commentary surrounding hierarchies of taste in reading and literature considers, Wendy Griswold argues that ‘reading is a product of social organization and an immense infrastructure’ which includes ‘Educational institutions, media tie-ins, non-profits, and entire industries [which] encourage and sustain [...] the reading group phenomenon’.<sup>537</sup> In *Reading Across Worlds*, James Procter and Bethan Benwell expand further Griswold’s idea of the ‘immense infrastructure’ of reading, suggesting that,

It is through this ‘immense infrastructure’, to which we might add online reviews, print journalism and literary criticism by academic readers and other professional commentators, that book groups typically enter the literary field. Such institutional and discursive structures, and the ‘regimes of value’ (Frow, 1995) associated with them help shape the dispositions, evaluative regularities and position-takings of our readers [in the following study].<sup>538</sup>

What such critical literatures show is, while the socialization of reading and the discourse and hierarchies of value surrounding it, are much discussed, particularly in relation to literary award culture and book groups, there is little to no specific discussion of how such issues function among literary award judges. Accordingly, building upon the kind of critical analyses demonstrated above, this chapter will consider meetings between Saltire Society judging panel members as yet another part of the ‘immense infrastructure’ of reading and will position such meetings in relation to wider issues concerning social reading and valuations of literature.

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<sup>537</sup> Wendy Griswold, *Regionalism and the Reading Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 68.

<sup>538</sup> James Procter and Bethan Benwell, *Reading Across Worlds* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 148.

### 5.1.1 Methodology

With the social nature of reading and the discursive quality of the Society's judging panel meetings in mind, this chapter will frame the data included herein in terms of discursive psychology. Discursive psychology 'studies how psychology is constructed, understood and displayed as people interact in everyday and more institutional situations' and is used as an analytical approach when considering a corpus of data collected at two Saltire Society Literary Award judging panel meetings in 2014.<sup>539</sup>

Discursive psychology (DP) is favoured over other forms of critical discourse analysis because it remains focused upon the 'social and relational' nuances that can develop during conversation within groups. Specifically, through works from Jonathan Potter, Derek Edwards and Margaret Wetherell<sup>540</sup>, DP has developed from 'three core observations about the nature of discourse':

First, discourse is both *constructed* and *constructive*. It is constructed in that it is made up of linguistic building blocks: words, categories, idioms, repertoires and so on [...] Discourse is also constructive in that these versions of the world are a product of the talk itself [...] The second main principle is that discourse is action-oriented [...] in talking and writing we are primarily carrying out actions [...]

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<sup>539</sup> Sally Wiggins and Jonathan Potter, 'Discursive Psychology' in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology*, ed. by Carla Willig and Wendy Stainton-Rogers (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2010), p. 73.

<sup>540</sup> See: Jonathan Potter, 'Discourse analysis and discursive psychology' in *Qualitative Research in Psychology: Expanding Perspectives in Methodology and Design*, ed. by P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes and L. Yardley (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2003), pp. 73-94; Jonathan Potter and Derek Edwards, 'Discursive social psychology', in *The New Handbook of Language and Social Psychology* (London: John Wiley, 2001), pp. 103-118; and, Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell, *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1987).

Discourse is the primary medium for social action [...] Third and finally, discourse is situated. It is situated within a specific sequential environment; words are understood according to what precedes and follows them. (Wiggins and Potter, 2010, 77)

In view of such observations, the overall purpose of this analysis is to assess how the Society's Literary Award judges interact during judging panel meetings and consider how they make decisions regarding the books they are discussing for an award. As the latter sections of this analysis will illustrate, this study highlights vernacular trends, such as reoccurring metaphors or comparisons in discussions between Saltire Society judging panel members and the importance of their social interactions upon the decision making process. Ultimately, this analysis will position the judges as members of a community of practice, whose shared objectives are reflected and expressed in their communications with one another.

Before moving into analysis I will explain how the two judging panel meetings are discussed in this chapter. This analysis examines transcriptions based upon audio recordings of two Literary Award judging panel meetings that took place in late 2014. The audio recordings were recorded and transcribed by the author. For the purpose of this analysis, the two meetings are referred to as Meeting One and Meeting Two and the symbol '=' has been used to designate when a speaker talks over another speaker.

### **5.1.2 Meeting One**

The purpose of Meeting One, held at 12pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October at the Society's Headquarters in Edinburgh, was for the Literary Awards judging panel to decide upon the winners for the First Book of the Year and Literary Book of the Year Awards. This was the third meeting the panel arranged to adjudicate for the 2014 First Book and Literary Book of the Year Awards. During two previous meetings held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014, the Literary Awards judging panel discussed and decided upon the longlists and shortlists for the First Book and Literary Book of the Year Awards.

Historically, the Society's Literary Awards judging panel would hold three meetings to decide upon the longlists, shortlists and winners of the Awards. There would commonly be two meetings held to whittle the nominations down to a longlist, with the selection of shortlists and winners being finalised in the final meeting. However, since the reconfiguration of the system of adjudication that was instituted by the Society in 2013, the judges are expected to discuss the books they are assigned with their partner(s) before attending judging panel meetings. This means there is now an extra layer of discussion which takes place either through email and telephone correspondence, or through face to face meetings between the pairings.

It is also worth noting that, due to the introduction of the Poetry Book of the Year Award, the Poetry Book of the Year Award judging panel were included in some of the meetings that took place in 2014. Since it was the first time the Poetry Book of the Year Award judges had judged for the award, they attended the first two Literary Award panel meetings to acquire a sense of how the adjudication process worked. Accordingly, the Society's Poetry Book of the Year Award judges were present for the Literary Award

longlist meeting that took place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014 in an observational, rather than participatory, status.

Not all of the Literary Award judging panel members were present for every meeting. One panel member was absent from the shortlisting meeting which took place in September and a different panel member was absent from the final meeting, Meeting One, which is discussed here. This is an important issue to highlight, as this means that judges were not present for two of the key meetings at which final verdicts – the selection of shortlists and winners – were made. Furthermore, there were additional participants in Meeting One who, while not always direct contributors, were present throughout the meeting. These included a postgraduate student who was observing the meeting for a series of blog posts about the books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award; the Society's Executive Director, Jim Tough; the Society's Events Assistant, Alison Thomson; and the author.<sup>541</sup> Of these observers, Tough was the only person to participate in the discussion that took place during Meeting One and would only comment on practical or logistical issues relating to the awards and did not offer opinions on the books being discussed. However, as is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, some of the contributions made by Tough did alter the course of the discussion, particularly towards the end of meetings. All the participants or observers who were present for Meeting One sat together around a large table for the duration of the discussion.

The structure of Meeting One, which was one hour and thirty-five minutes long, was formed by the shortlist that was decided upon at the previous meeting. The Chair of the Literary Awards judging panel opened the conversation with a discussion about the six books shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award, discussing each book in turn alphabetically by author's surname. Following a thirty minute discussion of this shortlist,

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<sup>541</sup> Sarah Boyd, 'Student Blogs: Reading and Reviewing the Shortlisted Book for the First Book of the Year Award 2014', *The Saltire Society* 23 October 2015 <<http://www.saltiresociety.org.uk/awards/literature/literary-awards/student-blog/>> [accessed 1 March 2016]

the panel eliminated three books. The Chair then prompted the panel to move on to a discussion of the First Book of the Year Award shortlist, which also comprised six books. Similarly to the Literary Book of the Year Award discussion, following another thirty minutes of discussion of the six books shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award, the panel also eliminated three books. During the final half hour of the meeting the panel selected the winner of each of the categories. Returning to the Literary Book of the Year Award, the panel spent twenty minutes deciding upon the winner. In the final ten minutes of the meeting, the panel selected the winner of the First Book of the Year Award. The meetings discussed here were open ended and were not placed under time constraints.

### **5.1.3 Meeting Two**

Meeting Two, held at 6pm on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October at the Society's Headquarters in Edinburgh, was the first of its kind to be convened in the history of the Society's Literary Awards. The reorganisation of the Literary Awards in 2013, discussed in detail in Part 2.6 of this thesis, necessitated that each of the Chairs of the Society's Literary Awards meet to select a Book of the Year Award winner from the winners of each of the five category winners (First Book, History, Literary, Research, and Poetry Book of the Year Award). Accordingly, Meeting Two brought together the four Chairs of each of the Literary Award judging panels. Since the Chair of the Literary Award panel also acted as Chair of this meeting, two members of the Literary Awards judging panel were invited to speak for each of the categories assessed by the Literary Awards Judging Panel. Thus, there were six judges participating in Meeting Two. Similarly to Meeting One, Tough and I were also present for the meeting, but, as before, Tough was the only observer to participate in the conversation held by the judges.

Unlike Meeting One, at which all attending participants were present, two of the judges contributing in Meeting Two participated via a telephone conference call. This altered the dynamic of the meeting, since it meant that on numerous occasions the participants who were contributing by telephone asked other members of the group to raise their voices because they were unable to hear some comments. Furthermore, as one judge commented during Meeting Two, an element of the communication between the judges who were present and the judges who were not was lost, since non-verbal gestures or cues were imperceptible.

The structure of Meeting Two was slightly different to Meeting One in that, rather than use the Book of the Year Awards shortlist as the starting point of the discussion, the conversation began with the Chair of the meeting suggesting a number of criteria by which



to assess the books the judges would be discussing. Following this, discussion about the specific books in contention began ten minutes into the conversation. The conversation that developed during Meeting Two followed a less formal structure than Meeting One, since the participants did not sequence the conversation by referring explicitly to the alphabetised shortlist of books they were discussing. However, there were times when participating judges specifically called upon the Chairs of certain panel to explain or describe the book their panel had selected as a winner. Notably, this happened about half way through the meeting when one of the judges, who was participating via conference call, noted that they had not received a reading copy of one of the books being discussed. This prompted the Chair for Meeting Two to ask the relevant category Chair to explain the content of the book and why the panel had selected the book as a winner. Following thirty minutes of discussion in Meeting Two, the participants began to eliminate books. Within ten minutes of beginning this process of elimination, the judges had eliminated the majority of the books and were left with two books to decide between. The final twenty minutes of the hour long meeting were spent deliberating between the two books and the winner was selected after fifteen minutes of discussion.

In order to preserve the anonymity of the participants of Meeting One and Meeting Two, when extracts and direct quotations are used from the meetings, the participants have been randomly assigned an alphabetical character as follows:

Meeting One Participants	Meeting Two Participants
Judge A1	Judge A2
Judge B1	Judge B2
Judge C1	Judge C2
Judge D1	Judge D2
Judge E1	Judge E2
Judge F1	Judge F2
Judge G1	

The following sections of this study will conduct in-depth analyses of Meetings One and Two in terms of key critical discourses pertaining to DP, discourse analysis and socio-cultural understandings of hierarchies of culture.

## 5.2 The Saltire Society Literary Award Judging Panels as Communities of Practice

As the first critical analysis to consider the discourse of participants of literary award judging panels, it is useful, and necessary, to position this particular kind of discourse analysis within the wider context of critical discourse analysis and research. As illustrated in the previous section, the function of the meetings discussed in this analysis is for the Society's judges to choose a book that will be awarded a prize from the Society. As such, during these meetings the judges are pursuing a shared objective. It is argued throughout this analysis that the way in which the Society's judges approach and discuss this objective is unique to them, so much so that certain phrases or terminologies are used and acquire meanings within the specific context of the Society's Literary Award judging panel meetings. As a result, this study proposes that the Society's Literary Award judging panel should be considered in terms of what Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger initially identified as being a 'community of practice'.<sup>542</sup> A community of practice is defined as:

an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavour. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge in the course of their joint activity around that endeavour. A community of practice is different as a social construct from the traditional notion of community, primarily because it is defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages.<sup>543</sup>

This definition of a community of practice is developed from Wenger's assertion that a group who negotiate definitions of 'competence'<sup>544</sup> through discourse can be identified as a community of practice if they adhere to the following three features: mutual engagement,

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<sup>542</sup> Jean Lave & Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 81 – 113.

<sup>543</sup> Penelope Eckert and Sally McGonnell-Ginet, 'Communities of Practice: Where Language, Gender and Power All Live', in *Language and Gender: A Reader*, ed. by Joanne Coates (London: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd. 1999), p. 490.

<sup>544</sup> Etienne Wenger, 'Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems', *Organization* 7 (2000); 225-246 (p. 229).

joint enterprise and a shared repertoire.<sup>545</sup> Explaining these three features and their function in relation to communities of practice, Wenger writes:

First, members are bound together by their collectively developed understanding of what their community is about and they hold each other accountable to this sense of *joint enterprise*. To be competent is to understand the enterprise well enough to be able to contribute to it. Second, members build their community through mutual engagement. They interact with one another, establishing norms and relationships of *mutuality* that reflect these interactions. To be competent is to be able to engage with the community and be trusted as a partner in these interactions. Third, communities of practice have produced a *shared repertoire* of communal recourses – language, routines, sensibilities [...] stories, styles, etc. To be competent is to have access to this repertoire and be able to use it appropriately. (Wenger, 2000, 229)

As the following sections of this chapter will illustrate, the Society's Literary Award Judging Panels engage with, and adhere to, these three features. More specifically, examination of Meetings One and Two will demonstrate how the Society's Literary Award judges negotiate their communications with each other through a series of unique linguistic and social interactions.

According to Wenger, '[p]ractice does not exist in the abstract. It exists because people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another' (Wenger, 1998, 73) and it is just such negotiations or 'mutual engagements' that the Society's Literary Award judges participate in when meeting to discuss and adjudicate awards. When it comes to the judges, for the most part, they engage in face-to-face group meetings. Since 2013, however, the number of group meetings has altered because of the changes made to the adjudication process. Before these changes, all panel members would discuss all of the books submitted for the Literary Awards during the longlist meeting, but since 2013 this meeting has become an opportunity for each pairing or group to express which books they feel the rest of the judging panel should read. Another factor that has altered the arrangement of these meetings is the Society's attempt to align the public

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<sup>545</sup> Eienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 73.

announcement of the shortlists with other public events, such as Wigtown Book Festival which takes place in October each year and at which the Society's Literary Award shortlists were announced in 2013 and 2014.<sup>546</sup> Although such alterations have at times changed the pattern of meetings attended by the Society's Literary Award judges, it does not change the fact that the majority of the process is conducted as 'mutual engagement'.

The 'joint enterprise' the Society's judges share is the adjudication and selection of the 'best' book submitted for the First Book and Literary Book of the Year Awards. Indeed, because the judges are completing this judgment on the Society's behalf, some of the values of this joint enterprise are arguably influenced by the values of the Society itself. Certainly, the joint enterprise of the Society and its Literary Award judges is also closely related to the 'shared repertoire' used by the judges, since many of the values they express, such as the importance, accessibility and cultural merit and quality of a book, are traits shared by the Society itself in its constitutional aims.<sup>547</sup> Such demonstrations of shared ideologies via similar terminologies acquire their significance in specific relation to, and context of, the Society. A further, more metaphoric, example of how the Society's judges have acquired their own linguistic repertoire is the repetition of the Literary Award judge's description of the difficulty of judging between non-fiction and fiction books as being like comparing 'apples and pears'. Although this is a well-known idiom, the Society's judges use this in a very specific context and it is within this context that the phrase acquires a particular meaning. This particular example is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

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<sup>546</sup> There was also a minor change to this schedule in the late 1980s and early 1990s made to accommodate a change in sponsor, which is discussed in more detail in part 2.2 of this thesis.

<sup>547</sup> The Saltire Society, 'Celebrating the Scottish imagination...' 13 September 2015  
<<http://www.saltiresociety.org.uk/saltire-society/>> [accessed 1 March 2016]

The development of such conventions and phrases are, as Wenger argues, features established by the Society's judging panels that have since become part of the shared repertoire of signs and practices used by the judges:

The repertoire of a community of practice includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice. (Wenger, 1998, 83)

It is likely that the reason such words and concepts are practised by the Society's Literary Award judges is because a number of the judges have been members of the judging panels for many years. In terms of the Literary Award panel, one judge has been a panel member since 1983, another since 1994 and two other judges have been panel members since 2006. Likewise, a judge of the History Book of the Year Award has been a panel member for seven years and one of the judges who joined the Research Book of the Year Award panel in 2014 was a former member of the Literary Awards panel between 1998 and 2004. As a result of this consistency of membership of the Society's Literary Award panels, it has been easier for the longstanding members of the panel to adapt and preserve certain practices which give the Society's Literary Award judging panels, as a community, a sense of continuity and longevity.

Despite the fact that, as noted in Part 3, the lack of rotation of judging panel members has been a cause for concern for the Society and judges in the past, the long-standing status of some of the Society's panel members means the panels are involved in a complex social structure. The panels are made up of a number of individuals who bring specific and varied expertise to a joint, or mutual, objective. As a result, the community of practice will both reflect and influence the development of each individual's role and personae within the group. As McGonnell-Ginet argues:

social meaning, social identity, community membership, forms of participation, the full range of community practices, and the symbolic value of linguistic form are being constantly and mutually constructed<sup>548</sup>

It is because of this constant and mutual construction that the Society's Literary Award judging panels function as a community of practice with identifiable and regularly occurring practices. Furthermore, such practices have, in part, been developed by those who have participated, and continue to participate, in the management of the panels over the years.

This, of course, is not to say that the Society's Literary Award judging panels are immune to wider socio-political and cultural influences. As noted above, the most obvious and direct potential influence is that of the Society itself, whose ethos and ideology underpin the terms of eligibility which prescribe which books the judges will decide between.<sup>549</sup> Furthermore, since the judges are members of other communities of practice – a number of the judges for example, are academic scholars, and will therefore adhere to the typical codes of practice within that particular community – their participation in multiple communities, Eckert and McGonnell-Ginet argue, will also influence their individual identities which are 'based in the multiplicity of this participation.' (McGonnell-Ginet, 100) It is for such reasons that, as Wenger describes, a community of practice is 'neither a haven of togetherness nor an island of intimacy insulated from political and social relations' (Wenger, 1999, 77). Identifying such social and collaborative facets of the process of adjudication by the Society's judges is imperative when considering the social actions performed by the judges throughout the decision making process.

The Society's Literary Award judging panels cannot be considered solely in terms of their languages and practices, but should also be considered as part of wider socio-

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<sup>548</sup> Sally McGonnell-Ginet, *Gender, Sexuality, and Meaning: Linguistic Practice and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 102.

<sup>549</sup> The Saltire Society's ethos and ideology is discussed in more detail in Part 1: Historical Contexts. The terms of eligibility of each award is detailed in their respective sections in Part 2: The Awards.

political and cultural discourses pertaining to literary awards and literary value. James F English notes how analyses of literary award culture must take into consideration the wider implications of the decisions made by those involved in the administration and adjudication of literature for awards:

We need an analysis that takes the prize seriously on its own best terms, recognizing the high ideals and good faith of many of its participants, while also recognizing that those ideals and that faith are themselves part of a social system of competitive transaction and exchange which prizes serve and by means of which all cultural value is produced. (English, 7-8)

Such arguments relating to the cyclical and interdependent nature of exchanges of literary and cultural value are discussed further in Part 3.1 of this thesis, but should also be taken into account throughout this discourse analysis of the Society's Literary Award judging panels' valuation of books shortlisted for the Literary Awards. As the following sections of this chapter illustrate, the conversations held by the Society's Literary Award judges are integral to the circuit of cultural capital illustrated in Part 3.1. Indeed, the remaining sections of this study illustrate how five key linguistic phenomena and specific themes (Positive Expression and Politeness, Key Interventions, Familiarity and Shorthand, and, Genre and Form) identified through DP and discourse analysis of Meetings One and Two, can be used to facilitate an understanding of how literary award judges discuss and engage with books nominated for awards.



### 5.3 Positive Expression and Politeness

Throughout the course of both Meeting One and Meeting Two it became clear that the Society's Literary Award judges were inclined to discuss books in positive terms, even when the book they were discussing was not 'in the running' for an award. For example, when discussing a volume of poetry shortlisted for the First Book of the Year Award, the members of the Literary Awards panel maintained that, while the book was unlikely to win the award, they still 'respected' it:

Extract 1

Judge B1: Would anyone like to speak for it?

Judge F1: Do[esn't] seem as though we never enjoyed it or don't respect it very much.

Judge B1: Oh yes, we respect it, we put it there.

Judge A1: Fair enough to be in the shortlist, but=

Judge C1: =Yeah, I think [s/he's] very good, I'd like to see more.

Likewise, the three Gaelic speaking judges, who were telling their fellow non-Gaelic speaking panel members about a Gaelic book shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award, spoke in similar terms during Meeting One:

Extract 2

Judge D1: [...] I like this book, I think the stories are, they're very enjoyable. I particularly like the way in which [the author is] able to use different languages. To me that's the thing that's unusual about this book, and it doesn't seem in any way artificial, it flows very, very easily. On the other hand I wouldn't see this as a top contender. [...]

Judge F1: [The author is] also playing with time [...] and this is done very seamlessly, you know=

Judge D1: =Uh huh=

Judge F1: =It doesn't seem over artificial=

Judge G1: =Uh huh=

Judge F1: =it's skilfully done.

Judge G1: [...] Again to come back to what [Judge D1] said, I don't see this as a top contender, but I think it is good. And again I warmed to it more than I felt earlier on.

Extracts 1 and 2 exemplify the way in which the Literary Award judges can mitigate negative opinions, or the suggestion to eliminate a book from consideration, with expressions of their enjoyment of the book.

This pattern of positive expression from the judges, even when discussing books they do not believe to be ‘top contenders’ in relation to other books shortlisted for the same prize, is likely influenced by two factors. Firstly, the books being discussed in Meeting One had been selected as the shortlist for the Literary and First Book for the Year Awards. Thus, the judges participating in Meeting One had already decided that the books being discussed were of a high enough quality to be shortlisted for an award and remain in the running to win. It is therefore possible that the judges were using positive rather than negative language to describe the books because they felt that all of the books really were of a particularly high quality and had the potential to become the overall winner. However, the second factor that may affect the way in which the judges chose to express their opinion of a book in Meeting One may relate to the social dynamics of the group itself. It is possible that the judges preface their negative opinions with positive testimonies in order to be polite and evade offending their fellow judges, and to avoid appearing disrespectful or flippant towards the books being discussed. This is evidenced not only by the judges’ tendency to discuss books in positive terms, but also when a number of the judges suggest that their dislike of a book is caused by a fault on their own part. Such proclamations further exemplify how the Society’s judges function as a community of practice through ‘mutual engagement in some common endeavour’ (Eckert and McGonnell-Ginet, 490).

When discussing a book shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award in Meeting One, one judge noted how they ‘continued to have problems’ with a particular author:

Extract 3

Judge A1: [...] I continued to have problems with [this author], unlike the rest of the world. So maybe I better say that and I'm happy to listen to what everybody else says, and I will consider the enthusiasm that is generated and decide how to proceed accordingly.

Judge C1: Well I wasn't here at the previous meeting so I didn't get to hear how this shortlist came about for people but I, I recognise why [this author] is widely admired. I always feel when I'm reading [his/her] work that I can see [him/her] researching it and I can see [him/her] writing it and it never carries me away and so I also have issues with [this author] in places.

Judge A1: Oh! I thought I'd be on my own.

Judge C1: No. ((*Panel laughs*)) I always feel on my own about [this author] as well. I find it overly studied and self-conscious=

Judge A1: =Yeah=

Judge C1: =and that's what some people like about it=

Judge A1: =Yeah, quite, quite=

Judge C1: =but anyway, I always have that issue.

Following further conversation about the book and its author, which developed from this exchange of opinions between Judge A1 and Judge C1, Judge A1 used a somewhat anecdotal reference as a means of justifying his/her reactions:

Extract 4

Judge A1

I read somebody saying last week that all judgement is really autobiography, and I'm conscious of that and any reaction like this is a personal one which can be quite different from, in a sense, a sort of cool, broad assessment of a book or an author's place in the scheme sometimes.

This statement raises a number of issues regarding how this judge views his/her own opinion and personal attitudes in relation to the wider judgements of the panel. In stating in Extract 3 that they believed they had failed to recognise the exceptional qualities of this book, 'unlike the rest of the world', and following this with a substantiative statement that 'any reaction like this is a personal one', Judge A1 proposes his/her inability to appreciate the book is a *personal* flaw. In effect, Judge A1 blames him/herself for failing to identify, understand or agree with the positive feedback the book and author had received from other members of the judging panel and wider critical responses. Indeed, when Judge A1 is referring to 'the rest of the world', it is an exaggerated reference to the high amount of

critical praise the book had received from literary reviewers. Judge A1's reference to a comment s/he read from an external 'authority', which stated that 'all judgement is really autobiography', is a further attempt to reiterate that his/her feelings towards the book come from personal opinion and may not truly reflect the quality of the book. This is a highly significant development because Judge A1 appears to be mitigating their own authority so as not to potentially disenfranchise or offend other members of the panel who may in fact enjoy this book and author.

Such mitigation of opinions may be an example of what Jonathan Potter identifies as the potential 'stake and interest' that a person may hold with regards to an issue being discussed.<sup>550</sup> At their 'strongest', Potter argues that stake and interest are indicative of a speaker's 'stake in some course of actions which the description relates to' and that '[d]escriptions may be broadly inspected in relation to a backdrop of competencies, projects, allegiances, motives and values.' (Potter, 1996, 125). In other words, in Extract 4 Judge A1 is asserting that his/her personal reaction to the book being discussed may hinder their objective evaluation of it. This precursory description is not only an example of Judge A1 performing what Potter calls 'stake inoculation' (Potter, 1996, 125) – a speaker's deliberate undermining of their own opinions in order to prevent negative reaction – but it also suggests that Judge A1 believes the other judges value objective opinions over subjective ones, hence Judge A1's stake inoculation.

As Extract 3 illustrates, Judge A1's comments are supported by Judge C1, who also admits that s/he has 'issues' with the book in question. Yet, similarly to Judge A1, Judge C1 undertakes a form of stake inoculation, acknowledging that s/he '[u]nderstand[s] absolutely why people admire [the book],' and reiterates that s/he 'didn't dislike' the book, but that his/her negative reaction was 'what always happens [...] with [this author]'. As

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<sup>550</sup> Jonathan Potter, *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1996), p. 124.

well as Judge C1 reiterating once again that his/her ‘issues’ with this particular author and book are ‘sort of personal’ ones, later in the course of Meeting One, Judge E1 also suggests that his/her preference for fiction and prose, as opposed to poetry, and ‘lyric poetry in particular’ is also indicative of a ‘personal taste thing’. Such emphases upon the judges’ personal reactions and preferences to the books they are adjudicating for Saltire Society Literary Awards are important. In choosing to express their dislike of a book in this way, the judges are politely tempering negative comments about a book that some of their fellow panel members have already expressed a preference for.

There is further evidence of this in Meeting Two when Judge F2 explains his/her disagreement with the other panel members who are discussing a poetry collection – which is described by Judge D2 as an ‘extremely assured collection’ – as a reflection of his/her own lack of knowledge:

Extract 5

Judge F2: I’m not a literary person [...] so I kind of differ slightly, but I liked the point you’d made about accessibility. I found [this book] not, to me, accessible, to the non-poetry reader if you like, whereas I did find the other [book of poetry] really accessible and striking in terms of, you know, language and all the rest of it. I found [the] language [...] very engaging, I mean something better than that actually, but certainly the language was important I could see it. I could see what [the author] was trying to do, but I didn’t get meaning

Judge B2: =It didn’t do it for you?=  
=

Judge F2: (*Direct response to question inaudible*) So yeah, that’s my feeling about that one, as a non-literary person.

In mitigating his/her opinion of a book of poetry that fellow judging panel members have praised, and which has already been selected as a category winner, with the caveat acknowledgment that s/he is ‘not a literary person’, like Judges A1, C2 and E1, Judge F2 suggests that the difficulties perceived in the book are reflective of his/her own failings. While Judge F2’s assertion that the book’s ‘language was important’ appears to show that s/he had some understanding as to why his/her colleagues revered the book and why it had been selected as a Saltire Society Literary Award winner, it is possible that this disclaimer

is polite ‘face-saving’ rhetoric intended to deflect negative reactions to Judge F2’s comments. Considering an individual’s ‘face’ as their ‘public self-image’, Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson argue that:

normally everyone’s face depends on everyone else’s [face] being maintained, and since people can be expected to defend their face if threatened and in defending their own to threaten others’ faces, it is in general in every participant’s best interest to maintain each other’s face, that is to act in ways that assure the other participants that the agent is heedful of the assumptions concerning the face given<sup>551</sup>

In view of this, Judge F2’s reiteration of his/her understanding of the importance of the ‘language’ of the book being discussed in Extract 5 is possibly a face-saving action intended to protect Judge F2’s credibility and reputation (through membership categorization devices) *and* preserve the convivial way in which the judges were discussing the books being adjudicated. Furthermore, in repeating his/her self-professed status as a ‘non-literary person’, a declaration which bookends Judge F2’s statement of opinion, the judge is also reaffirming that his/her opinion is not as valid as his/her colleagues who are, in Judge F2’s opinion, literary specialists. In using this rhetoric, Judge F2 avoids undermining, and therefore offending, his/her ‘literary’ colleagues. This is also demonstrative of how the judges use what Harvey Sacks defined as membership categorization devices (MCDs) and membership categories (MCs) to contextualise their individual status within a Literary Award judging panel meeting. As Pomerantz and Fehr note, ‘Sacks showed that in the ways we use categorization, we display understanding of the rights and obligations of persons to whom certain categories apply.’<sup>552</sup> Accordingly, in stating that s/he are ‘not a literary person’, Judge F2 is using a membership category

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<sup>551</sup> Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.61.

<sup>552</sup> Anita Pomerantz and B. J. Fehr, ‘Conversation Analysis: An Approach to the Study of Social Action as Sense Making Practices’, in *Discourse as Social Interaction* ed. by Teun A. van Dijk (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 1997), p. 68.

device to abdicate their judging authority in this particular instance.<sup>553</sup> Further, Judge F2 is simultaneously categorising themselves as being non-literary and their colleagues as being literary by hinting towards such binary oppositions amongst the judges.

This hedging of opinions may, as noted earlier, be an attempt on the part of the judges to express their opinions in as polite a manner as possible. Politeness and its related theories are an integral element of the kinds of socio-linguistic studies considered in DP. Theoretical frameworks concerning understandings of politeness are demonstrated in the work of Robin T. Lakoff (1973), and Brown and Levinson (1987), and further developed by Deborah Cameron (2001) and D. J. Goldsmith (2006).<sup>554</sup> Writing in 1990, Lakoff defined politeness as: ‘a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange’.<sup>555</sup> Brown and Levinson further developed the field of politeness theory with detailed analyses of the differences between ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ politeness, and the possible ways in which speakers can ‘hedge’ their opinions (Brown and Levinson, 116) or make presuppositions about what an addressee may want to hear (Brown and Levinson, 122). However, as Sara Mills illustrates, although the tradition of politeness theory often depended on the assumption that ‘politeness is akin to being nice, considerate, and thoughtful’, it may in fact be used in a ‘manipulative, strategic way’, as illustrated in

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<sup>553</sup> The understanding of Membership Categorization Devices, Membership Categories and Category-Bound Activities used for this analysis is taken from works by William Housley and Richard Fitzgerald, and Emanuel A. Schegloff who have analysed and summarised the work of Harvey Sacks.

William Houseley and Richard Fitzgerald, ‘The Reconsidered Model of Membership Categorization Analysis’, *Qualitative Research*, 2:1 (April 2002), 59-83.

Emanuel A. Schegloff, ‘A tutorial on Membership Categorization’, *Journal of Pragmatics* 39 (2007), 462-482.

<sup>554</sup> Robin Tolmach Lakoff, ‘The logic of politeness; or, minding your p’s and q’s’, *Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society* (1973): 292-305.

Deborah Cameron, *Working with Spoken Discourse* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 2001)

D. J. Goldsmith, ‘Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory’, in *Explaining Communication: Contemporary Theories and Exemplars*, ed. by B. Whaley & W. Samter (New York: Routledge, 2010), pp. 219-236.

<sup>555</sup> Robin Tolmach Lakoff, *Talking Power: The Politics of Language in our lives* (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1990), p. 34.

Extract 5.<sup>556</sup> Mills argues that '[p]oliteness may function as a way of avoiding responsibility and it may be used as a way of hiding one's real intentions.' (Mills, 60)<sup>557</sup>

Such censoring of opinions may not only be an attempt to express negative opinions in a polite way, but may also be a form of defence mechanism used by the judges so they can mitigate negative opinions. If a judge articulates their animosity towards a book or author as being representative of the judge's own deficiencies and personal feelings, rather than as issues with the book and author, the judge not only avoids offending his/her colleagues, but is also less likely to be pressed for further explanation or reasons as to exactly *why* s/he dislikes the book or author in question. In this context, personal taste is therefore understood to be something that is specific and intrinsic to the individual that, while potentially inexplicable, can justify a judge's opinions towards books being assessed for an award.

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<sup>556</sup> Sara Mills, *Gender and Politeness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 59.

<sup>557</sup> It must be noted that while Politeness Theory is useful in relation to this particular assessment of social action and interaction between the Saltire Society Literary Award judges, it takes a slightly different approach to Discursive Psychology which is focused upon the ways in which mental states and emotions are referred to and deployed in conversation as opposed to speculating about how feelings are reflected in talk.



## 5.4 Familiarity and Language

As discussed in the previous section of this analysis, the Society's Literary Award judges appear to favour describing books they are assessing for an award in positive terms as a 'face-saving' mechanism. However, yet another reason why the judges may try to maintain a respectful manner when adjudicating books for awards is because they are often discussing books with colleagues with whom they have worked for a number of years, during which time they have established themselves as an operational community of practice. What is arguably one of the most distinctive aspects of the Society's judging panels, particularly the Literary Award Judging Panel, is the fact that a number of the judges have been members of the panel for over ten – and in some cases over thirty – years, a fact which has, at times, drawn some criticism from commentators.<sup>558</sup> Writing in 2007 the literary critic and writer Stuart Kelly suggested that the fact that the 'judging panel has been broadly the same since 1995' left it 'prone to aesthetic lethargy and institutional stagnation'.<sup>559</sup>

Positive and negative implications of long-standing literary award judging panel members aside, the long-term status of many of the judges means that a familiarity, and apparent empathetic understanding between the panel members, has developed and is exhibited throughout their discussions, particularly in Meeting One. Indeed, because some members of the Society's Literary Awards judging panel have been working together as judges for many years, they have begun to use shorthand references and phrases that have acquired unique meaning within the specific context of Society's Literary Award judging

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<sup>558</sup> While there are examples of book and literary awards which are adjudicated by long-standing jurors – most notably the Nobel Prize for Literature and the Prix Goncourt for French literature, both of which select jurors from long-standing members of the Nobel Committee and the Société littéraire des Goncourt (commonly known as Académie Goncourt) – very few awards in the UK are administrated and adjudicated as such.

<sup>559</sup> Stuart Kelly, 'Saltire Flies the Flag but Struggles to Run Best of Scots Talent up the Mast', *Scotland on Sunday*, 11 November 2007, p. 12.

panel meetings. As is demonstrated in this section, the panels have developed their own lexicon by which to discuss books they are adjudicating for awards.

From the beginning of Meeting One, the suggestion that this meeting is the latest in a long line of similar meetings is indicated by the opening comments from the Chair of the panel:

Extract 6

Judge B1: In the past we've opened the floor at this stage, and invited anyone who wants to speak about any significant book that they feel strongly about to kick off at this stage. Could I invite anyone, having re-read these, I'm sure we've all had to dive back into them, anyone that wants to make a statement, not a speech, but a statement, this would be the time to do it.

Several things manifest from this introductory remark from Judge B1, the Chair of the Literary Awards panel. Firstly, Judge B1 asserts how the panel has functioned 'in the past' as a precursor to his/her invitation to the panel to offer comments. On the one hand, this may be for the benefit of those present who have never attended a Saltire Society Literary Award judging panel meeting before. This was the first meeting attended by, for example, the Student Blogger. Likewise, one of the judges who joined the panel in early 2014 had attended the longlisting and shortlisting meetings, but had not yet attended a meeting at which the panel chooses a winning book. Another reason why Judge B1 may have iterated that there was a customary way by which the panel approached this part of the adjudication process may have been to emphasise the continuity of an established method by which the Society's Literary Award judges discuss the books nominated for the awards. Placing this emphasis upon the 'regular' way by which the panel approach discussing the books shortlisted for the awards could be a means by which Judge B1 aims to legitimise the discussion that is about to commence. This instance once again reiterates the panel's status as a community of practice, reaffirming Wenger's three key behaviours of communities of practice: joint enterprise, mutuality and shared repertoire (Wenger, 2000,

229). In stating that ‘In the past we’ve opened the floor at this stage’, Judge B1 suggests that, while semi-informal, there is a structure and method to the conversations the panel have and, more importantly, that these conversations are open and, by implication, democratic.

That said, this suggestion of the fair and democratic way by which the conversation will develop is undermined by the fact that, opening the conversation as Chair of the panel, Judge B1 reiterates his/her position as the ‘leader’ of the group, a role which is further intensified by his/her invitation for the other panel members to contribute to the discussion. Although welcoming of his/her colleagues opinions, Judge B1 still aims to restrict the comments from the panel, stating that the panel members should make a ‘statement’ and ‘not a speech.’ Such declarations from Judge B1 are arguably demonstrative of a form of discourse management and, as such, Judge B1 is effectively asserting his/her authority within the group. An understanding of this form of discourse management has been developed from the work of Barbara Johnstone et al. who describes discourse management as ‘vocalizations [...] use[d] to manage the flow of talk’<sup>560</sup> and Bethan Benwell, who describes how the leader of a book group will ‘signal’ their authority through discourse management.<sup>561</sup>

The sense of familiarity that exists within Meeting One is not only prevalent in relation to the interactions between the judging panel members, but is also evident in the judges’ knowledge of the books they are discussing for the awards. For example, when comparing two authors – who are both previous winners of Saltire Society Literary Awards – shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award, the panel not only discuss

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<sup>560</sup> Barbara Johnstone, Kathleen M. Ferrara, Judith M. Bean, ‘Gender, politeness, and discourse management in same-sex and cross-sex opinion-poll interviews’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 18 (1992), 405-430 (p.408).

<sup>561</sup> Bethan Benwell, ‘A pathetic and racist and awful character’: ethnomethodological approaches to the reception of diasporic fiction’, *Language and Literature*, 18 (2009), 300–315 (p. 308).

the books in terms of their personal reactions to the shortlisted book, but also in terms of their *previous* reactions to other work by the same author:

Extract 7

Judge C1: Now you see I find [Author A] exceptionally clever always, I think there's always layers and layers of stuff going on, I think [s/he's] emotionally incredibly astute. I get completely emotionally carried away with it. So that to me is a clear distinction to the way I respond to [Author A] and the way I respond to [Author B].

Judge A1: I agree. They're like chalk and cheese.

Judge D1: I absolutely agree with that, but I would say that this book, to me, is not of the same quality as earlier books=

Judge A1: Are you talking about the [Author A]?=

Judge D1: =[Author A], yes=

Judge A1: =OK.

Judge D1: I just find it really quite, in parts, it's uneven, and quite difficult to understand. Which very often [s/he] isn't.

Judge B1: Is that because [s/he] has established good earlier books against which you're measuring this book?

Judge D1: Yes, that's possible. Because I've admired [his/her] earlier books so much.

This conversation indicates that, when it comes to discussing books written by well-established and prolific authors, the judges not only compare the books to each other, but also compare an author's new book to his or her past work.

In addition to this, in Extract 7 the judges compare their reactions to reading the latest book from Authors A and B to past reactions or experiences they have had when reading the same authors' work. Judge C1 states that the experience s/he had reading the book by Author A shortlisted for the 2014 awards was similar to reactions s/he had in the past when reading the author's past books, stating that 'this is what always happens to me with [him/her]'. However, whereas in the case of Author B Judge C1 used his/her past experience to legitimise his/her dislike of the author's latest novel, suggesting that there is something innate about the author that s/he does not like, when it comes to Author A, Judge C1 notes that s/he 'find[s] [Author A] exceptionally clever always' and that there are 'always layers and layers of stuff going on' in Author A's books. This repetition of 'always' has the dual purpose of both emphasising Judge C1's own knowledge of Author

A's writing, as it suggests that Judge C1 has read a sufficient amount of Author A's writing to be able to make a statement that refers to the majority, if not all, of the author's work, and accentuating Judge C1's argument that Author A *consistently* writes books of a high quality.

Joining in on this discussion about the quality of current and past work by Author A, Judge D1 also expresses his/her opinion in terms of past reactions to the author's work. However, Judge D1 notes how 'this book, to me, is not of the same quality as earlier books' and that the book was 'uneven' and 'quite difficult to understand'. This reaction, Judge D1 suggests, is not the reaction s/he would normally have towards books by Author A because these are not characteristics Judge D1 commonly recognises in Author A's writing. What is key here is the questioning from Judge B1 who explicitly asks whether Judge D1's current reaction is based upon her/his knowledge of Author A's past work. More specifically, Judge B1 asks Judge D1 if the reason why s/he is uncertain of the quality of Author A's latest book is 'because [Author A] has established good earlier books against which you're measuring this book?' to which Judge D1 admits that 'Yes, that's possible. Because I've admired [his/her] earlier books so much'. This direct question from Judge B1 reveals that members of the panel are acutely aware of the fact that their colleagues compare the books they are adjudicating for the Society's Literary Awards to other books by the same author, as well as comparing them to the other books shortlisted for the award. Such social and discursive interactions between the Society's Literary Award judges are further evidence of their status as a community of practice, as they mutually negotiate their preferences through conversation.

The judges did not only compare books they were considering for the Society's Literary Awards in 2014 to past books by the same author, but also compared books shortlisted for the 2014 Awards to books that had been shortlisted for, or won, the awards

in previous years. For instance, when discussing one of the books shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award in 2014, Judge E1 acknowledged that, while it may not be the judges' regular 'standard of comparison', it was 'quite useful' to think about the qualities of past winners when considering books of a similar form or genre for the 2014 award:

Extract 8

Judge E1: Yeah, definitely, although I suppose as well, thinking and then again I know this isn't our standard of comparison but sometimes it's quite useful, and I know not everyone was here then, but thinking about the [Author Z] short stories and how they worked as a collection last year=

Judge F1:=Yeah=

Judge E1:=compared to how these work as a collection, and again we're not judging those two against the other but sometimes it's useful to do that to think 'what has an author achieved in and of his or her own right and against other short story collections that we've, you know, rewarded in previous years.

What such comments reveal is that the Society's judges do not consider books they are reading for the awards in any given year in a vacuum, but in fact position the books both in relation to their contemporaneous rivals *and* past works, both by the same and different authors. This is a significant dialogic development as it relates directly to that fact that several of the judges have been on the panel for many years and have therefore amassed a particular knowledge of the books that have been submitted for the Society's Literary Awards in the past. The judges then use this past experience in the adjudication of books submitted in the present. In interview, longstanding Saltire Society Literary Award judge, Ian Campbell, acknowledged that this method of comparison of an author's current work with past work was one by which he appraised books by so-called 'established authors'. Campbell maintained that, 'If [the book is] by an established author, I'd ask myself: "is this up to their standard"? That's one criteria that I would always ask.'<sup>562</sup>

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<sup>562</sup> Ian Campbell, interviewed by Stevie Marsden, 8 April 2014.

Although all of the authors shortlisted for the Society's Literary Book of the Year Award in 2014 were previously published, they were not all discussed in comparative terms with regard to the author's former publications. Discussions about the other titles shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award in Meeting One focused upon the generic style and potential readership of the book, as opposed to the enduring reputation of the author. When discussing a novel shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award, a number of judges commented on how their opinion had changed on second or third readings of the book:

Extract 9

Judge B1: [...] What about [Author C]? I re-read it and was less warmly inclined on a second reading.

Judge C1: I found it quite hard work. I mean I see what there is to admire about it but I found it, I don't know, I found it difficult to say very much about it because it's a book I didn't feel terribly engaged by whilst also admiring certain things about the ambition of the narrative and the research and you know=

Judge D1: =Language=

Judge B1: =Language yes=

Judge A1: =And the language yes=

Judge C1: =I found the language a little=

Judge G1: =The language was lovely=

Judge C1: =I always feel a bit put off when something is described as 'rich, poetic language'. I always feel it's a bit, I found it a little over-embroidered myself but, but that's a style and you know it's what [s/he] wants to do. [...]

Judge G1: I liked it very much the first time out, but a bit of distance and contemplation about it, it has fallen down the list a bit for me=

Judge B1: =Right=

Judge G1: =I think it, it sags in the middle. It goes from being, having a terribly engaging air of mystery about it at the beginning, which it recaptures somewhat towards the end, but there's a long lull in the middle where it becomes a pedestrian plot, and that's what it did.

Judge A1: I would go with that, yeah. I agree.

Judge C1: Yeah.

Judge E1: I think, I mean I kind of, re-reading it I wished it had been a novella or even a short story=

Judge G1: =Uh hum=

Judge C1: =There wasn't enough=

Judge E1: =because there's something so, for me when I started reading it again, I thought I love this language, I really like what [s/he's] doing with the description and the prose style and the, and then I just thought 'oh god

do I have to read this=  
Judge C1: =More and more, yeah=  
Judge E1: =whole book again?' Not because it's in this, you know, slightly  
over-wrought language, I don't think it's that at all, I just think knowing  
that there wasn't actually enough of a story from=  
Judge G1: =Uh hum=  
Judge C1: =Maybe that's it, yeah, it just felt stretched a bit thin, uh hum=  
Judge E1: =my perspective to carry it through. And I think that's exactly what  
[Judge G1] said actually.

Unlike Extract 7, in Extract 9 there is very little reference to the author of the book the judges are discussing. There is no comment on the author's previous books; instead there is a clear focus on the technical elements of the book that the judges find problematic. Most notably, the judges focus upon the language and the structure of the book.

The discussion that develops about the language of the book in Extract 9 illustrates how the panel can talk over each other in an attempt to deduce or add to a speaker's next comment. When Judge C1 is describing his/her reaction to the book and refers to specific elements such as the 'narrative' or the 'research' demonstrated in the book, Judge D1 adds 'language' to Judge C1's list of the book's most notable features. As most of the extracts included here demonstrate, this kind of interruption is common amongst the Society's Literary Award judges but it is not necessarily intended to be discourteous or impolite. Rather, as the next section of this chapter argues, such interventions are not only demonstrative of their familiarity and collective pursuit as a community of practice, but are also highly influential upon the development of the discursive process itself. For example, in Extract 9, the intervention from Judge D1 completely changes the direction of the conversation; because of this change, a number of other judges express *their* interest or admiration for the language of the book and, consequently, Judge C1 is prompted to respond to this specific element of the book too.

Another way in which a sense of familiarity and collective pursuit manifests itself in the discourse between Society's Literary Award judges is through the use of certain



phrases or terms that have acquired specific meanings within the context of the exchanges that take place between the judges. One key example of this is the repeated use of the term ‘apples and pears’, or variations of this, such as ‘apples and oranges’ or ‘chalk and cheese’ as stated by Judge A1 in Extract 7. These phrases are frequently used to represent the difficulty the judges have in adjudicating between different literary forms or genres, the complexities of which are discussed in the final section of this chapter. The extracts below illustrate how these phrases are used by the judges in Meeting One:

Extract 10

Judge F1: But it wouldn't be appropriate for it to do that, the kind of book it is.

Judge A1: Quite. That's perfectly true.

Judge G1: Indeed yes

Judge C1: This is why this kind of decision is impossible really when you just have to, you know, let certain things go. Apples and oranges!

Extract 11

Judge B1: Now, can I wheel the oil tanker around to talk about the First Book of the Year? Am I right in saying that it's between [three authors]?=

All judges:=Yes=

Judge A1:=I think you are=

Judge B1:=And that's apples and pears all over again!

Judge C1: It certainly is! (*Laughs from judges around the table*)

Extract 12

Judge C1: That puts us down to [Author C] versus [Author D], which is crazy apples and oranges. I mean they're such=

Judge E1: =It really is! =

Judge A1: =Yeah quite=

Judge G1: =Yeah, it is apples and oranges.

In these examples, although three of the judges say the phrase ‘apples and oranges’ and one says ‘apples and pears’, there is a general consensus and acknowledgement from all the judges of what is meant when this idiom is used. This suggests that the judges collectively agree that this phrase suitably describes the task of comparing books of different genres and forms. The reactions to the phrase, which range from laughter to repeating the phrase with added emphasis, indicate that, while this is a light-hearted and

potentially oversimplified means of describing the problems faced by the judges, there is still a collective understanding of what the metaphor means.

In Meeting Two, the phrase ‘apples and pears’, is favoured over ‘apples and oranges’:

Extract 13

Judge A2: That might cut across some of the generic problems we’re about to hit

Judge E2: Uh-huh, yeah that’s good. No that will help, because otherwise it’s apples and pears.

Judge A2: There you go! That’s what we said!

Extract 14

Judge A2: [...] these are three suggestions, just to make a discussion out of what we’ve all described as the apples and pears that we’re about to start comparing.

Extract 15

Judge A2: Shall we give some fresh air to the other books and bring them into the discussion? This is when the apples and pears really becomes difficult.

Extract 16

Judge D2: [...] as a general rule we felt that it was rather unfair to set a first poet against someone like [Author Z], or in previous year’s [Author W] [...] there’s a sense in which you really, it’s almost apples and pears again and it’s expecting a very great deal of a first volume of poetry to take on the big beasts in the poetry field.

Since this metaphor, or variations of it, alludes to a very specific issue faced by the judges, and is present in both Meeting One and Meeting Two, in which there were different judges participating, it would be fair to suggest that this phrase has become a discourse convention of the Saltire Society Literary Award judgment process. In addition to being used in both Meeting One and Two, the phrase has also been stated on numerous occasions during Saltire Society Literary Award judging panel meetings that were observed, but not audio recorded. The reoccurrence of this three word phrase, which has become a short hand reference for the Society’s judges to signify a substantial issue the panels discuss and contend with on a regular basis, is important as it reiterates the fact that the judges use

words and phrases which accrue particular meanings within the specific context of their judging panel meetings. Indeed, the phrase has accumulated such an exact meaning that when the term was used during an interview about the judging process, one judge exclaimed ‘That’s my phrase! I’m the one that started that!’<sup>563</sup> This shared understanding and use of specific phrases suggests that the judges should not be considered as a group of separate individuals who are brought together to communicate their different expertise, but are in fact a cooperative group who should be considered in terms of the distinctive behaviours which define them as a unique community of practice.

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<sup>563</sup> Comment anonymised to protect identity of judge.

## 5.5 Intervention and Participation

As noted in the previous section, and as all of the extracts included in this analysis thus far have shown, the Society’s Literary Award judging panel meetings are a discursive process developed through intervention between speakers and a variation of contributions from participants. The Saltire Society Literary Award judge Joyce McMillan, who is cited at the beginning of this study, describes the panel meetings as being discursive processes in which ‘individual responses’ are used to ‘gradually build up a body of always challengeable opinion’. However, analyses of the proportion of participation from each of the judges who attended Meeting One and Two suggests that this process may not always be as entirely equal as it first appears. In addition to this, interjections or interventions from judging panel members, or other participants, during the discussions between the Society’s Literary Award judges can alter the direction of the conversations and therefore shift the focus of the discourse from one book or theme, to another.

A quantitative analysis of the transcripts of Meeting One and Meeting Two indicate the potential imbalance that is evident in the discussions held between the Society’s judges. Tables 10 and 11 illustrate the word count for each judge who participated in Meeting One and Meeting Two:

**Table 9: Meeting One held at Saltire Society Headquarters, Edinburgh, 20 October 2014**

Meeting One		
Judge	Number of Words spoken	Percentage of Overall Words
A1	1395	8%
B1	2309	13%
C1	3564	20%
D1	1745	10%
E1	3966	23%
F1	888	5%
G1	1561	9%

Other Participants	2036	12%
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**Table 10: Meeting held at Saltire Society Headquarters, Edinburgh, 27 October 2014**

Meeting Two		
Judge	Number of Words spoken	Percentage of Overall Words
A2	1721	19%
B2	950	10%
C2	1224	13%
D2	1483	16%
E2	1026	11%
F2	1027	11%
Other Participants	1664	18%

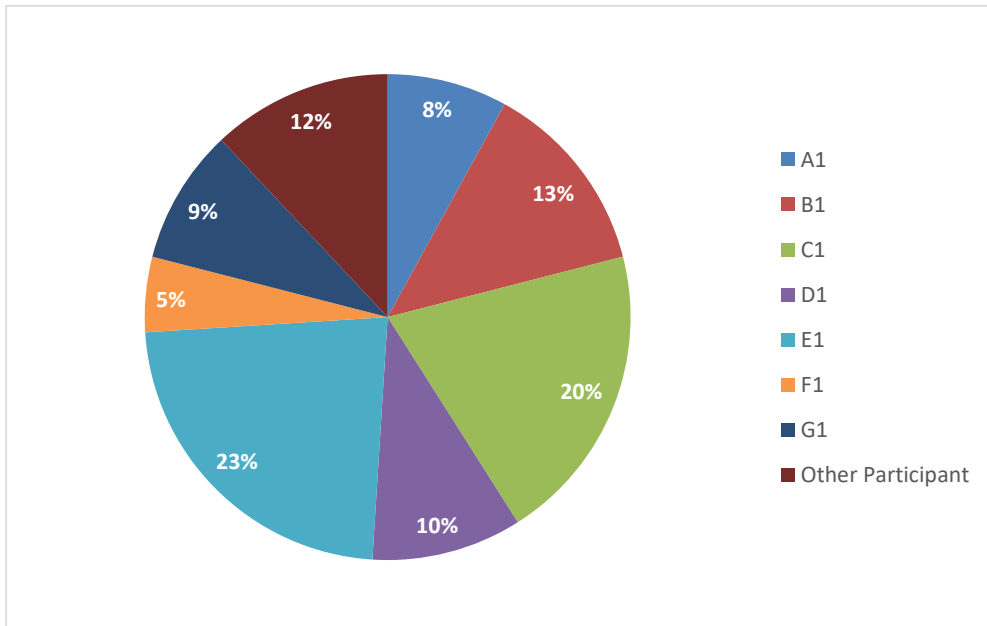
It is important to note that any comments from the judges that did not directly relate to the adjudication of the Society’s Literary Awards have been removed from this count, although this was a minimal proportion of the discourse in total. The word count from ‘Other Participants’ account for comments relating to the awards made by the Society’s Executive Director Jim Tough.

The disparity in the ratio of words spoken by the judges in Meeting One and Meeting Two is more clearly observable when illustrated in the charts in Figures 20 and 21 below. As Figure 20 highlights, two judges, Judge C1 and E1 appeared to dominate Meeting One, being the two judges who spoke most often, with Judge E1 seemingly saying one quarter of the total number of words spoken during the adjudication process. When considered in comparison to Judge F1, who only said 888 words throughout Meeting One, both Judge C1 and Judge E1 participated nearly four and a half times more than Judge F1 throughout the discussion. Only three of the judges: Judges A1, D1 and G1, contributed a similar amount to Meeting One. However, Table 10 and Figure 21 reveal that such imbalances were not as sizable during Meeting Two. Despite the fact that it is clear that Judge A2 and D2 dominated the conversation held between the judges during

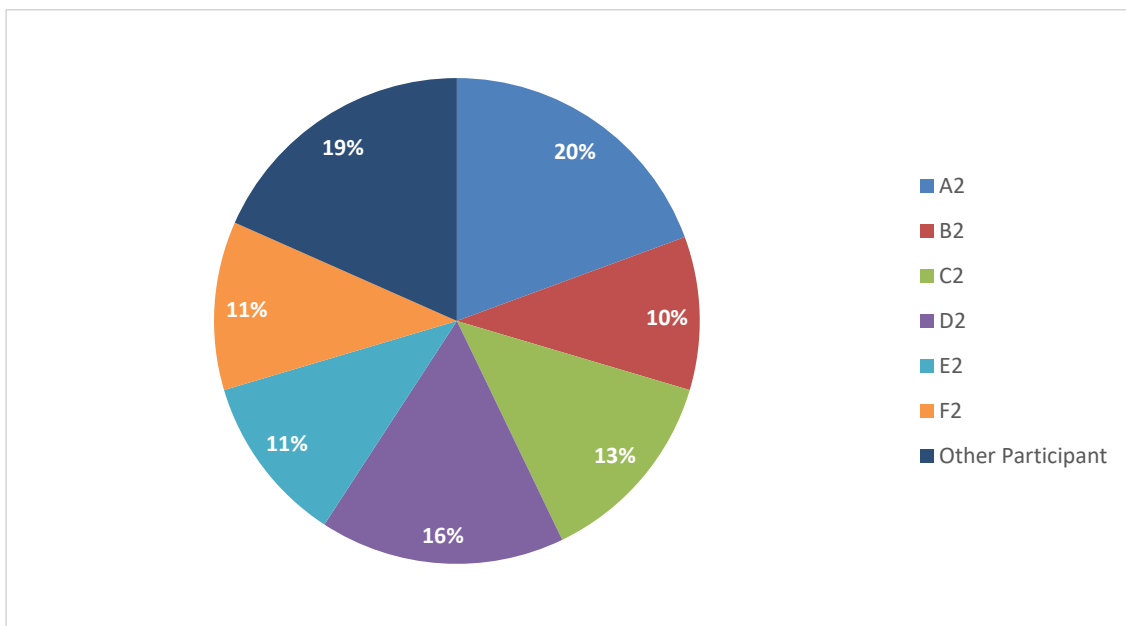
Meeting Two, the difference is not quite as acute as it was during Meeting One. While such figures are a useful means of completing a quantitative assessment of the discourse balance of Meeting One and Two, this data must be contextualised so as not to offer a false sense of levels of participation. For example, despite Judge F1 and Judge B2 saying a near similar number of words in their respective meetings, with Judge F1 speaking 888 words and Judge B2 speaking 950 words, Meeting One was longer than Meeting Two and therefore fewer words in total were said during Meeting Two. As a result, the percentage difference of how many words were spoken by Judge F1 in Meeting One and Judge B2 in Meeting Two is significantly different, with Judge F1 contributing 6% of the words spoken during Meeting One, and Judge B2 contributing 13% in Meeting Two.

However, the most significant aspect of this quantitative analysis is the fact that it brings into question the comments from McMillan and Matheson cited in the introduction of this chapter. This numerical analysis of the quantity of judges' individual participations during two key meetings indicates that, far from being demonstrative of what one judge called 'a united view', the judging panel meetings discussed here are in fact dominated by certain judges. Certainly, such counts do not account for non-verbal expressions made by participants in Saltire Society Literary Award judging panel meetings, such as the nodding or shaking of heads. Yet, having observed judging panel meetings between 2012 and 2015, I would argue that this loss of non-verbal indications should not be considered as something which would significantly alter how the data sets in Table 9 and Table 10 are read: it simply *is* the case that some of the Society's judges vocalise their opinions more than their colleagues.

**Figure 20: Percentage of words Spoken by Participating judges in Meeting One**



**Figure 21: Percentage of words Spoken by Participating judges in Meeting Two**



Nonetheless, a way in which the statistics do fall short is in demonstrating exactly *how* the balance of discourse plays out during judging panel meetings. To be specific, although Judge A1 and Judge G1 spoke a similar number of words, 1,395 and 1,561 respectively,

the manner in which these contributions were made were very different. Judge A1 was less likely to make lengthy comments, with many of the judge's comments being minimal responses of agreement such as 'yes/yeah' and 'quite'. While Judge G1 also made similar short comments in order to agree with another judge's comment, s/he would also make longer statements, of up to 100 words in length, detailing their own opinions.

While the quantitative analysis of the transcriptions of Meeting One and Meeting Two discussed in this analysis may be an imprecise means of quantifying the participation of the judges, such statistical analyses do offer an insight into whether judging panel meetings are a cooperative discursive process as some judges have indicated in interview. However, what the data intimates is that the judges participating in judging panel meetings may perceive the process by which they adjudicate books shortlisted for awards to be more inclusive and egalitarian than it actually is. If there are judging panel members who are not participating as much as their colleagues, or when they do contribute to discussions they are saying less or only agreeing with the comments made by their fellow judges, this suggests that the debates the judges are having are imbalanced and based upon the strong views of a few. This is not to say that the Society's judging panel meetings are prejudicial to certain members of the panel, but it does mean that the extent to which each judge participates in the meetings is variable. In turn, this means that the range of opinions and comments that are expressed during the adjudication of books for Society's Literary Awards may not be as extensive as would first be assumed from a panel of up to ten different participants. On the other hand, this imbalance of participation may be yet another example of the way in which the Society's Literary Award judging panels, and potentially other cultural award judging panels, function as a group which discursively negotiates the assignment of cultural and literary value collectively.



By its nature, this quantitative survey also lacks evidence of the qualitative aspects of the discussions held during Meeting One and Meeting Two. To be specific, while the data may indicate which judges spoke more frequently, it does not reveal the judges who were the most influential in terms of key interventions which changed or shaped the focus of the discussions. Closer critical analysis of the discourse reveals how the judges can engage with, and directly borrow, comments from their colleagues as displayed in Extract 17 (taken from Meeting One) below:

Extract 17

Judge C1: I find it a little phoney [...] I just felt I was watching a bit of a performance and it never quite felt really rooted. It's an ambitious thing to do for a first book=

Judge A1: =Uh-huh=

Judge G1: =It is yeah=

Judge C1: =and maybe there's always a cast of phoniness to someone's first novel ((*laughs*)) I don't know, unless they're a genius. I can't say I was totally gripped by it.

Judge B1: It didn't survive a second reading for me.

Judge A1: Yeah

Judge F1: You do, you are watching a performance definitely.

Judge D1: Bits of it, parts of it are well written.

Judge F1: But I enjoyed it, I enjoyed it very much.

Judge B1: Well it's very, it's memorable and individual sure.

Judge F1: You don't really know where it's going, I don't think.

Judge A1: No.

This extract typifies how the balance of participation indicated by Table 9 actually played out during Meeting One. It is Judge C1 who makes a somewhat lengthy and detailed analysis of the book the judges are discussing, while the other participators, Judge A1, B1 and F1 offer shorter approximations that follow on from the comments from Judge C1. Interestingly, this extract corroborates with the qualitative data: Judge C1 is one of the judges who contributes more, in terms of word count, to the conversation in Meeting One. However, what is important to consider with regards to Extract 17 is the fact that it illustrates how the comments or opinions of one judge can be used by other judges to reveal his/her own thoughts. Once Judge C1 ends his/her comment by saying 'I can't say I

was totally gripped by it', the following statements from Judge B1, A1 and F1 build upon the comments from Judge C1. Judge B1's comment 'It didn't survive a second reading for me', signifies agreement with Judge C1, and Judge A1 agrees directly with a simple proclamation of agreement with Judge B1. Following this, Judge F1 refers back to something Judge C1 had said moments earlier, repeating his/her comment that reading the book felt like 'watching a performance'.

There is a similar collaborative exchange during Meeting Two. As one judge explains his/her opinion of a book, other judges offer their own comments, or acknowledgements of agreement, throughout:

Extract 18

Judge D2: Yes they point out the limitations of the statistical accounts=

Judge B2: =What ministers like to say what was nice about their own Parishes=

Judge D2: =Yeah. I thought it was an astonishing piece of work. [...] I found that absolutely fascinating, it wasn't a home for a certain class of people unless you had a clock on the mantel piece! ((*Judges laugh*))

Judge B2: And it's an eminently dippable into book isn't it?

Judge D2: Yeah, yeah.

Judge B2: You don't have to read it all.

Judge D2: Yes that's right. So that offsets the fantastic wealth of information in it. It is digestible, although as I say the academic footnoting and the detail in it is overwhelming=

Judge A2: =It's fantastic, they actually say which bundle of papers they got the stuff from and tell you where in the bundle the information is found, but you don't have to read it, not really.=

Judge B2: =Not really.

What is interesting about this particular exchange is the fact that, at the beginning, it is led by Judge D2 but, because of interjections from other judges, it becomes a collaborative dialogue between three judges. The additional comments from Judge A2 and Judge B2 in this sequence effectively build upon what has already been said by Judge D2. Moreover, despite the fact that Judge D2 instigates this particular discussion of the qualitative methodologies of the book in question, his/her role as the apparent 'leader' of this section of the conversation is assumed by Judge A2 by the end of this extract when Judge B2 becomes an assenter, repeating the opinion of Judge A2.

As previously noted, such interruptions are not intended as impolite or discourteous attempts to subvert the conversation taking place, but are indicative of how the kinds of discussions the judges can develop during adjudication meetings.<sup>564</sup> While Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson argued that interruptions are violations of turn-taking, more recent interpretations have suggested that interruptive ‘turn-taking is a normal and expected element of conversation and discourse development.’<sup>565</sup> As Robin Wooffitt writes when describing ‘organisation of turn-taking’:

At the start of any period of interaction, neither party knows in advance how many turns they will take [...] how long each turn may be, whether or not someone else will join in [...] Yet, despite these and numerous other uncertainties, it is highly likely that turn transfer will be achieved in an orderly fashion: there will be very few periods where more than one party is talking, and these will be relatively short-lived.<sup>566</sup>

Given that conversation has been described as a ‘rhythmic interchange of verbal emissions’ through which a ‘common social experience’ develops, interruptions from the Society’s Literary Award judges are considered to be symptomatic of natural conversation as opposed to inappropriate or impolite disturbances to the flow of speech.<sup>567</sup> In fact, Jack Sidnell argues that ‘overlapping talk’ can be representative of the intricate organisation of conversation:

overlapping talk is typically not, in fact, the product of conversationalists “not listening to one another”. On the contrary, extended episodes of overlapping talk provide some of the most remarkable displays of fine-grained orderliness in conversation.<sup>568</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> Indeed, Jennifer Coates has illustrated how interruptions in turn-taking can be indicative of the ‘organization of friendly talk’ between individuals who know each other well. When discussing overlapping speech, Coates notes that ‘overlapping speech is not [always] seen as competitive [...] because the various contributions to talk are on the same theme.’

Jennifer Coates, ‘Organization of friendly talk’ in *Women Talk: Conversation between Women Friends* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1996)

<sup>565</sup> Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A. Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, ‘A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation’, *Language*, 50:4 (1974), 696-735.

<sup>566</sup> Robin Wooffitt, *Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis: A Comparative and Critical Introduction*, London: Sage, 2005 p.26

<sup>567</sup> Donald Allen and Rebecca F. Guy, *Conversation Analysis: The Sociology of Talk*, (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1978), p. 11.

<sup>568</sup> Jack Sidnell, *Conversation Analysis: An Introduction* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2010), p. 52.

Just such ‘fine-grained orderliness’ is arguably demonstrated in the conversations held between the Society’s judging panels and is caused by the judges’ sense of familiarity and collegiality as described in the previous section.

Although the majority of the interruptions that occur during Meeting One and Meeting Two are expressions of points of view and are not necessarily intended to disrupt or change the direction of the conversation, other, more explicit instances of intervention do alter the course of the conversations held. As a result, these interventions changed the structure and focus of the discussions as they developed.

During both Meeting One and Meeting Two there were two key interventions which influenced and altered the progress of the discussion taking place. In Meeting One, this came one hour and ten minutes into the conversation at a point at which the panel were trying to select a winner of the Literary Book of the Year Award from the three remaining possibilities. Following a short conversation, in which all but one of the judges offered their opinion on the remaining titles, the Society’s Executive Director, Jim Tough, who up until this point had only participated in the meeting as an observer, asked a judge who had seemingly failed to state their opinion what they thought of the books in question:

Extract 19

Jim Tough: Just as an interested observer, [Judge B1], you've not really said much about where you sit with regards to these three books.

Judge B1: I try not to.

Jim Tough: I was just wondering if that, I don't know, if that's worth chatting about?

Judge B1: I've read all of the three books that were in contention three times, and my view of [Book 1] hasn't changed, it's as good now as it was to begin with. [Book 2] I thought was splendid, and still think is splendid. [Book 3] I thought wasn't as good, and on the third reading I'm convinced it's the best.

Judge A1: Huh! ((*Judges laugh*))

Jim Tough: I'm so glad I asked!

The significance of Tough's intervention in the judges' conversation here cannot be overstated. What seems like a simple inquiry into Judge B1's opinion completely changes the focus of the conversation, with the judges moving on to discuss Book 3 in detail following Judge B1's declaration that it is 'the best'. The exclamation of surprise from Judge A1, and the laughter from the other members of the panel, indicates that they recognised how significant this admission really was: the humour comes from the fact that such a simple statement of opinion had dramatically advanced the debate. There is something unusual about the fact that a Saltire Society judge must be directly prompted for their opinion, since their role demands that they share their thoughts with their colleagues in order to come to a collective decision about the books they are judging. Nonetheless, Judge B1's reluctance to offer an explicit opinion may be yet another example of how the judges try to remain polite and courteous to their colleagues because they do not want to be seen as domineering or inconsiderate. However, in this instance, Judge B1's failure to openly state his/her views was potentially inhibiting the development of the judges' discourse.

A similar incident occurred halfway through Meeting Two when Judge D2 asked the panel if it was possible to eliminate any of the books they were discussing for the Book of the Year Award, stating that it was helpful to question 'are there two or three books here that we feel in the end aren't possibly quite such strong contenders as the others?' This direct enquiry led to the panel of judges swiftly eliminating two books that were in contention for the award, thus changing the focus of the subsequent discussion. What such examples of key interventions illustrate is how direct questions or enquiries can alter the concentration of the discussion between judges and lead to definitive decisions being made much more swiftly than they may have been made through turn-taking exposition alone. Consequently, it is slightly disingenuous to describe Saltire Society Literary Award

judging panel meetings as a *gradual*, discursive process, since, without such interventions – from both judges and observers – the discussion would possibly fail to effectively develop in a conclusive manner.

## 5.6 Genre and Form

Having discussed the group dynamics of the Society's Literary Award judging panels in Meeting One and Two in the previous sections of this chapter, this final portion considers one of the key ways in which the judges categorise the books they are adjudicating for awards. As this section illustrates, the judges commonly discuss the genre and form of a book both in terms of how such thematic or structural features can affect their engagement or interpretation of a book, and in terms of the potential wider reception of the book or author being discussed.

The judges participating in Meeting Two were comparing a range of different types of book including two volumes of poetry, two academic non-fiction books and one novel. As a result of this wide range of forms – which, as noted in the section above were referred to as ‘apples and pears’ – the judges in Meeting Two often discussed the books in terms of their ‘accessibility’ and potential readership:

Extract 20

Judge D2: This is a book written for a broad readership isn't it? =

Judge B2: =Yes, yes. And it is very accessible

Judge D2: =And a very welcome and necessary book, you might argue. And if you set it against [the other non-fiction book], it's just a different kind of writing altogether =

Judge F2: =Yeah, yeah =

Judge D2: =it doesn't have the research background that the [other] book has at all.

When Judge D2 asks ‘This is a book written for a broad readership isn't it?’, s/he is enquiring as to whether the book is intended for a ‘broad’, non-academic, audience, as opposed to the other non-fiction book being discussed during Meeting Two, which is considered by the judges to be a determinedly academic book. When discussing the ‘academic’ non-fiction book, Judge D2 suggests that, while it is an ‘astonishing piece of work’ and ‘clearly a contender, in academic terms’, s/he also felt that ‘for the non-

specialist reader' the book was 'quite a hard read'. The implication being that a greater emphasis on academic research is off-putting to a wider, 'non-specialist' audience. Accordingly, the discussions between the judges during Meeting Two revealed the tension between assessing the non-fiction books in terms of their 'readability' and their academic credentials. As further examples will illustrate, such issues of the readability or 'accessibility' of a book were not only central to how the judges in Meeting Two assessed the books they were judging, but also became key to how they expressed their own reaction to the books they were discussing.

At the beginning of Meeting Two, the accessibility of the books being discussed was raised as being one of the key criteria by which the judges could assess the books they were adjudicating for the Society's Book of the Year Award:

Extract 21

Judge A2: [...] I was trying out three ideas, to see if we could start a discussion going [...] One is to ask how much appears to have gone in to the preparation of a book? And whether that should be a criterion. One is how the result is presented and how accessible it is; and that could be a criterion. And one is the originality of whichever genre it is which is being worked in, and that could be a criterion. But these are three suggestions, just to make a discussion out of what we've all described as the apples and pears that we're about to start comparing.

Some of the judges expressed uncertainty about the legitimacy of using accessibility as a benchmark by which to judge books shortlisted for the Book of the Year Award. Responding directly to Judge A2's suggestion, Judge C2 stated that s/he was 'not sure about accessibility' as a criterion by which to assess books, but was 'happy to discuss' this further. Furthermore, later on in Meeting Two, Judge E2 describes accessibility as a 'red herring', particularly in relation to poetry. However, once raised as a potential criterion of assessment, the notion of the 'accessibility' of a book was consistently discussed throughout Meeting Two. The words 'accessible' and 'accessibility' were said fourteen and six times respectively during Meeting Two, twice as many times as the words



‘language’ and ‘interesting’ (see Table 1). Putting this into perspective, during Meeting One the words ‘accessible’ and ‘accessibility’ were never stated, nor were any variations or similar turns of phrase with the same meaning, such as ‘approachable’, used in its place. ‘Language’ and ‘interesting’, on the other hand, were said twenty-three and thirty-five times respectively in Meeting One (see Table 1). Therefore, when discussing books for the Book of the Year Award in 2014, the judges in Meeting Two considered a book’s ease-of-access, and therefore a potential reader’s engagement with the book, as well as a book’s technical or generic features.

As Meeting Two developed, it became evident that the issue of accessibility was considered to be inextricably linked to the genre and form of the books being discussed:

Extract 22

Judge F2: [...] I think it’s great that [as] a sociologist [the author] has managed to write that book without using virtually any sociological jargon, which is an achievement in itself!

Judge B2: Indeed, yes. Absolutely=

Judge A2: =In terms of impact.

In Extract 22, Judges F2, B2 and A2 note how, despite the fact that the book they are describing is written by an academic sociologist, the book’s lack of subject specific, technical ‘jargon’ makes it more accessible ‘in terms of impact’. In other words, the judges felt that the potential influence of this book, in relation to the range of readers it may appeal to, was increased by the absence of subject specific terminology. The book is described by one judge as including ‘factual stuff’ which is ‘beautifully done’ whilst simultaneously being ‘wonderfully [...] entertaining’. Indeed, throughout Meeting Two this particular book was often discussed in terms of being both academically insightful *and* enjoyable to read in a way as to suggest that such reactions to academic research are mutually exclusive. Such language reveals that the judges participating in Meeting Two were not only interested in the informative and educative nature of this particular book, but were also impressed by the fact that it presented information in an ‘entertaining’, and

therefore readable and accessible, way. These shared values are yet another example of the way in which the Society's Literary Award judging panel perform as a community of practice, highlighting their 'shared repertoire' and sense of 'mutuality' (Wenger, 2000, 229).

Such discussions of importance of the 'impact', 'accessibility', and 'readability' of books being assessed for a literary award are significant because it shows that, while the judges may not directly refer to a specific reader or audience, elements of their discussions remain focused on the potential influence their selections may have on the reading public. These conversations highlight the fact that the judges are functioning as what Beth Driscoll refers to as 'tastemakers', or 'individual mediators of literature'; selecting books which they feel most suitably represent the 'best' of Scottish literature.<sup>569</sup> Studies into reading cultures regularly deal with such issues pertaining to the quality or superiority of texts being read by wide audiences and how they are selected. Along with Driscoll, the work of Fuller and Rehberg Sedo, and Benwell and Proctor, consider Pierre Bourdieu's philosophies of hierarchies of taste and the 'Aristocracy of Culture' in relation to reading publics, and, as it is argued here, these models are inherently relevant to an analysis of the way in which the Society's Literary Award judges discuss books.

Bourdieu suggests that the basis for conceptions of 'taste' and 'legitimate' cultural practices comes from hierarchies of social and educational standing.<sup>570</sup> More specifically, Bourdieu argues that 'cultural practices [such as reading], and preferences in literature [...] are closely linked to educational level [...] and secondarily to social origin.' (Bourdieu, xxvi). In other words, Bourdieu believes that an individual's understanding of, or relationship with, culture and art largely depends on their level of education and social status. Indeed, for Bourdieu the 'reading' of a work of art is 'a stage in a process of

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<sup>569</sup> Beth Driscoll, *The New Literary Middlebrow* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p.27.

<sup>570</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, translated by Richard Nice (London: Routledge Classics, 2010), p. xxiv.

communication which presupposes practical or explicit mastery of a cipher or code' (Bourdieu, xxv) and such 'mastery' comes from educational and social competencies. This concept of how hierarchies of taste and the legitimisation of culture can depend upon an individual's level of education is particularly pertinent to understanding how the Society's judges consider, and present, their own aptitude for judging literature.

Of the ten judges who participated in the adjudication process during Meeting One and Meeting Two, all but two of the judges hold doctorates in their respective fields of scholarly research in Scottish history and literature. Academic credentials give the Society's judges authority and what Bourdieu calls 'cultural competence' (Bourdieu, xxv) to judge books for an award. This is reiterated by Fuller and Rehberg Sedo who argue that:

All creative labor that produces cultural events focused on the sharing of reading brings with it some influence on public opinion about the value of book reading and literary taste. Similarly, all cultural workers situated within what we characterise [...] as the reading industry benefit from the social prestige that is attached to the relatively "high culture" practice of book reading, and to their own "artistry and knowledge" as professional and/or expert readers (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2008, 102). (Fuller and Rehberg Sedo, 166)<sup>571</sup>

If we accept that a large portion of the judges' authority comes from their academic and intellectual credentials, the fact that the judges discuss the 'accessibility' of a book is interesting because they are making such judgments based upon their *own* abilities and understandings of the books they are reading. As Bourdieu explains:

[...] the apprehension and appreciation of the work also depend on the beholder's intention, which itself is a function of the conventional norms of governing the relation to the work of art in a certain historical and social situation and also of the beholder's capacity to conform to these norms, i.e. his artistic training (Bourdieu, 22)

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<sup>571</sup> In this passage Fuller and RehbergSedo refer to Hesmondhalgh and Baker's article 'Creative Work and Emotional Labour in the Television Industry' in *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25 (2008), 97-118.

During Meeting Two, one judge questioned his/her own ‘capacity’ due to a perceived lack of ‘artistic training’, and in Extract 5 Judge F2 suggests his/her status as a ‘non-literary person’ may be the reason for their failure to fully engage with one of the books being discussed: a comment which once again equates issues of accessibility with the generic form of a book.

However, when referring to the issues his/her fellow judges had raised in relation to the fiction and non-fiction books they were discussing in Meeting Two, Judge C2 suggested that it was unhelpful to consider some literary forms in terms of their accessibility. Following a discussion in which the judges participating were comparing the merits of a non-fiction book with a fiction book, Judge C2 said:

Extract 23

Judge C2: [...] although I absolutely take on board everything everyone said about this being a book you have on your shelf and it’s important for years and years to come, [it’s] not necessarily for all types of reader, and I suppose [...] this is why I was slightly concerned about the accessibility question because [...] that’s an unhelpful [...] way of thinking about things that aren’t intended to be that way [...]

Here Judge C2 highlights the incongruity of considering books of different generic styles and form in terms of their accessibility since not all books are ‘intended to be’ accessible in the way research-based, non-fiction books are. Judge C2 disagrees with the notion of judging a *fiction* book in terms of its accessibility when this is not necessarily a priority for the author of a fiction book in the same way it may be for a non-fiction author who is presenting research findings. As a result, Judge C2 believes the ‘accessibility question’ is ‘unhelpful’ to the judging process. This differentiation between the two ‘types’ of book the judges are discussing in Meeting Two is important because it indicates that the judges are aware of the potential problems that can arise when trying to discuss books intended for different readerships in similar terms.

A similar issue affecting how the judges approached particular styles of writing arose during Meeting One, when the judges were discussing the adjudication of one of the books shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award. The book, a trilogy of plays which were performed in Edinburgh in the months preceding Meeting One, caused some issues for one judge, who felt it important to ascertain exactly *what* the Society's Literary Award judges were considering when judging this particular book:

Extract 24

Judge A1: [...] Are we judging an 'event of cultural significance' to quote somebody or other who wrote to us?

Judge C1: No, it's a book.

Judge D1: No, the text.

Judge A1: Are we judging a dramatic performance?

Judge C1: No.

Judge E1: No, certainly not.

Judge A1: So we're judging a book?

Judge D1: Yes, the text.

Judge A1: Right, I felt it wasn't terrific to read. It may have been fantastic in the theatre=

Judge C1: =On stage=

Judge A1: =but it wasn't fantastic to read it seemed to me. One had a sense of how it ought to go in the theatre but it didn't seem to me to be a book for reading. It was a book for creating a show out of.

As well as illustrating how the judges may consider the wider implications of a book they are assessing for an award, particularly, in this case, in terms of the book's potential 'cultural significance', Extract 24 highlights once again the complexities of reading books of different generic forms. Indeed, similar to the issue arising from the comparison of a fiction and non-fiction book in Meeting Two, the problem with the book of plays discussed in Extract 24 is the fact that the book is also a script: Judge A1 summarises this point with the assertion that 'It was a book for creating a show out of'. This issue is also highlighted when Judge E1, who attended a production of one of the plays, said s/he 'really enjoyed reading it' because s/he had the 'fantastic staging in my head' when reading the text.

A similar issue arose again during Meeting One when the judges were debating the qualities of the only non-fiction book shortlisted for the Literary Book of the Year Award. While Judges G1 and C1 repeatedly describe the book as ‘impressive’ and Judge E1 notes that it is ‘beautifully written’, another judge suggests that the book is ‘kind of important [for] non-literary reasons’. This suggestion was reiterated later in the meeting when, in reaction to Judge G1’s unease about the fact that the non-fiction book was to be ‘knocked out’ of the running ‘by virtue of being non-fiction’, Judge C1 stated:

Extract 25

Judge C1: But it’s not just that though [...] what we were saying about it was that in comparison to these [fiction] books what it does with language is not quite the same level of sophistication. I think it’s not just that it’s non-fiction, although that does make it a bit of an odd fit as well. For me personally it’s not exactly the fact that it’s non-fiction, it’s the fact that it’s not dealing in quite as sophisticated a manner with ambiguity and emotion and things.

Such comments reveal how the judges in Meeting One approached comparing the non-fiction and fiction books shortlisted for the Literary and First Book of the Year Awards. The fact that Judge C1 notes that the non-fiction book is ‘an odd fit’, yet again reiterates that the judges believe books of different genres and forms can complicate the adjudication process. Moreover, Extract 25 exposes how the generic form of the book can become central to conversations surrounding a book’s suitability as a potential award winner.

The extracts from both Meeting One and Meeting Two discussed in this section illustrate just how important the generic categorisation of a book can be to debates surrounding its accessibility for readers and its suitability for a Saltire Society Literary Award. Far from focusing solely on the language or narrative structure of the books shortlisted for the awards, the Society’s judges also take into consideration whether the form or structure of the book is appropriate for the intended, or potential, audience. Such conversations are evidence of how literary award judges discuss books they are assessing for awards, both in terms of the value of the content of the books that have been submitted,

or shortlisted, for an award and in terms of how a book's genre and form adequately presents material to the reader. The fact that the Society's judges discuss books in this way is important because it reveals that they are not only considering a book in terms of its content, but also in terms of its structure and, perhaps more importantly, its purpose. This focus on the function of books is indicative of the judges' efforts to select books that are not only 'beautifully written', but also important in terms of the status and position the book holds within the wider context of the literary marketplace and the Society.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this discursive analysis of meetings held by Saltire Society Literary Award judging panels was to critically evaluate the way in which the Society's judges discuss books they are adjudicating for awards in order to acquire a sense of how judges interact and reach verdicts. Prompted by suggestions that the Society's Literary Award judging process is a discursive one, this study measures the extent to which this claim is an accurate description of the way in which the Society's Literary Award judges adjudicate literature for awards. Considered within the critical framework of discursive psychology, with a specific focus on the social, as well as the dialectal, communications between the judges, this study highlights the intricacies involved in negotiation of opinion, taste and value amongst the Society's judges.

There are a number of key findings illustrated in this analysis. Firstly, this study shows how Saltire Society Literary Award judges are much more likely to moderate their language, assuaging negative comments in favour of positive terminology in order to demonstrate their personal opinions in a polite manner. The purpose of this is, in the case of the Society's judges, the avoidance of causing offence to colleagues they have been working with in this capacity for many years. However, as this study illustrates, such determined efforts to uphold politeness and maintain 'face-saving' compromises can also be demonstrative of a judge's manipulation of the discussion to avoid taking responsibility, or having to explicitly state, their own opinions. This seeming reluctance to



disclose immediate opinions may be a defensive action intended to enable the judge to maintain their authority, particularly in relation to their own experience and expertise. Indeed, as it is such experience and expertise which enables individuals to act as ‘individual mediators of literature’ (Driscoll, 2014, 27) on the judging panels, it is reasonable to suggest that maintaining such polite impressions through positive vocabularies and dialogues is as much about maintaining the respect and cohesion within the group as it is about establishing social and cultural hierarchy within the group.

This leads to a further, and arguably the most significant, finding of this study. Namely, that the Society’s judging panels function as communities of practice, sharing the three key objectives identified as central to the cooperation of such communities: joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire (Wenger, 2000, 229). As this analysis has shown, the fact that that judging panels perform as unique communities of practice is demonstrated in a number of ways, including their use of a context-specific lexicon, the collaborative nature of their exchanges and their reciprocal endeavour of reading, discussing and selecting books as award winners. There are two crucial elements of this understanding of the Society’s Literary Award judging panels as communities of practice that should be broadened further. Firstly, the significance of the groups’ collaboration and engagement with the task at hand over a series of meetings should not be underestimated. This study has proven that the year-on-year continuity of membership of Saltire Society Literary Award judges has further enforced the communality of the group. Secondly, and related to this, is the fact that as a community functioning within Scotland’s wider socio-cultural literary landscape, the Society’s judging panels should be considered as one part of what Wendy Griswold refers to as the ‘social organisation’ and ‘immense infrastructure’ of reading (Griswold, 68). Of course, as noted, there are criticisms placed against this continuation of membership of Society’s judging panels, but the purpose of

this particular study was not to evaluate the success of such methods, but instead consider how judging panels adhering to such approaches function.

Central to all of the findings highlighted within this study is the way in which language is used by the Society's Literary Award judges. As discourse is the key form of communication exercised by the Society's judges, acquiring an understanding of how language operates within this particular community of practice is imperative. What discursive analysis of the transcriptions of Meeting One and Meeting Two exemplify is the means by which the Society's Literary Award judging panels facilitate their roles within panel meetings. Conducting both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the language used by Society's judges not only enables a deeper understanding of the ways in which the judges discuss books nominated for a Saltire Society Literary Award, but also offers insight into the ways in which they interact and function as a community of practice.

This analysis was framed within the critical discourse of discursive psychology allowing for an equal examination of linguistic and social behaviours within the Society's Literary Award communities of practice. It was important for this study to be wide in its scope because it is the first of its kind to consider discourse analysis and the social behaviours of a literary award judging panel. And while there is much in the way of critical analysis of other forms of social or public reading, such as reading groups and national reading schemes, there is little research into literary award judging culture. As this study demonstrates, such areas of critical study in relation to literary award culture remain fruitful, and it is hoped that this study will inspire as many questions regarding the way in which literary award judging panels function as it aims to answer.

## 6 Conclusion

This thesis has constructed a history of the Saltire Society Literary Awards and considered them in relation to Scotland's socio-political history and Scottish literary and publishing culture more widely. Furthermore, this thesis has situated the Society's Literary Awards in relation to wider critical discourses concerning literary award culture. The purpose of this thesis was three-fold. Firstly, it has filled a conspicuous gap in modern Scottish cultural history by offering a historically accurate description of the founding of the Saltire Society in 1936 and the development of the Society's Literary Awards up until 2015. Secondly, this thesis demonstrates how the Society's Literary Awards function in relation to key critical discourses pertinent to contemporary book award culture, such as forms of capital, national identity and gender. Finally, this thesis proffers an in-depth analysis of book award judgment culture. Through an analysis of the linguistic and social interactions between Saltire Society Literary Award judges, this thesis is the first study of its kind which considers exactly *how* literary award judging panels facilitate the judgement process.

This study began with a descriptive history of the Society's founding years to establish a socio-political and cultural context from which to build a comprehensive history of the Society's Literary Awards. Creating this history enabled further discussion of the Society's Literary Awards and work since, as Part 2 of this thesis illustrates, the

Society was born at a time in the mid-1930s when Scotland's national and cultural identity was being scrutinised by writers, politicians and historians. The Society was founded at a critical inter-war period during which Scottish writers, artists and cultural commentators re-imagined Scotland's political and cultural identity. The Society, therefore, was a product of this reformative era in Scotland's modern history. The Society's identity and position within this inter- and post-war reformation is reflected in the Literary Awards, which are a means by which the Society tries to accomplish some of its constitutional aims. While it is impossible to say whether or not the Society would have emerged under a different set of circumstances, it is fair to surmise that the Society's impetus and constitutional foundations reflected contemporaneous sentiments regarding the preservation of Scottish national identity, tradition, culture and heritage. In illustrating the Society's formative years, Parts 2.1 and 2.2 offer a foundation from which understandings of how the Society's literary awards evolved. Indeed, this history of the Society highlights how it was plagued with issues regarding finances, membership and personnel. Such issues affected the Society throughout the late 20<sup>th</sup> and into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and are reflected in the administration of the Literary Awards which were often affected by the same issues. This history, and the issues the Society has encountered along the way, has made the Society's Literary Awards what they are today.

Part 3: The Saltire Society Literary Awards (1936 – 2015), is the first comprehensive descriptive history of the development of the Society's Literary Awards to be completed. Despite now being the only series of awards dedicated to celebrating Scottish literature to remain in Scotland, such histories of the Society's Book of the Year, History Book of the Year, First Book of the Year and Research Book of the Year Awards reveal the financial and administrative problems the Society regularly came up against when trying to establish its literary awards. Securing and maintaining external financial

sponsorship has been one of the leading problems for all of the awards, particular in the mid-to-late 1990s and early 2000s and one of the causes for this was the fact that the Society's Literary Awards often had confused or disjointed histories, making it difficult for the Society to substantiate the oft-repeated claim that they were Scotland's most prestigious Literary Awards.

Likewise, each of the awards came up against the same administrative problems, the most prominent being a lack of rotation in judging panels and confusion surrounding nominations. Indeed, all four of the Literary Awards discussed in Part 3 considered the permanency of judging panel members at some point in time. What is most intriguing about this issue is the fact that although the need for more frequent rotation of panel members on the Literary Awards panels has often been discussed, it is an issue that remains unresolved to this day. As noted in Part 3.3, for example, there was explicit discussion of the composition of the judging panel, particularly in terms of the gender balance, or lack thereof. Since 2012 there have been some changes made to the Society's Literary Award judging panels, but these have largely been additions as opposed to retirement of long-standing members.

The confusion surrounding the nomination process was also influenced by these unchanging and somewhat inward looking judging panels *and* by the Society's failure to adhere to the nomination rules it would assign to the awards. For example, in the 1980s most of the nominations for the Book of the Year and First Book of the Year Awards would come from the judging panel, despite the fact that the conditions of the award stated that they should come from the editors of literary magazines and newspapers. On the one hand, this issue was affected by the fact that a number of the judging panel members were contributors to Scotland's literary magazines at the time anyway, but, on the other hand, this lack of wide-ranging nominations affected the range and scope of the literature being

discussed by the judges. While it is unlikely such problems will be unique to the organisation of the Society's Literary Awards, the reoccurrence of these difficulties over the course of the Society's 80-year history makes them and their effects central to understanding the history and development of the Society's Literary Awards.

Part 4: The Saltire Society Literary Awards and Critical Discourse, explores further the notion that detailed analysis of the Society's Literary Awards can advance understandings of areas of critical discourse. Using both quantitative and qualitative research methods, Part 4 demonstrates how the Society's Literary Awards function in relation to three key areas of critical debate: the forms of capital, national identity and gender. Part 4.1 demonstrates how the Society's Literary Awards function in terms of Bourdieu's three forms of capital – cultural, economic and social – through the use of the Circuit of Cultural Capital Exchange. The analysis proposes that the Society's cultural capital, which is illustrated by the continual references to the Society's 'prestigious' status, is not easily intraconverted to economic capital, despite this being the type of capital intraconversion most closely associated with literary awards. A quantitative analysis of book sales, for example, suggests that the Society's Literary Awards do not lead to an increase in sales for books which are shortlisted for, or go on to win, the Society's Book of the Year or First Book of the Year Awards. Likewise, while the social capital associated with the Society's long-standing judging panel members is intraconverted into cultural capital for the awards, their professional statuses do not necessarily increase the marketability or promotion of the awards or the Society. It is believed that the Circuit of Cultural Capital Exchange (Figure 4), through which the relationship between the Society's Literary Awards and the forms of capital are assessed, should be developed further and used in other analyses of literary awards more widely.

Part 4.2 highlights the issues surrounding the nature of literary awards which rely upon, or are categorised by, national identity. Indeed, the fluidity of definitions of Scottish national identity has made the relationship between the Society's Literary Awards and this particular area of socio-cultural progress problematic. What Part 4.2 states is that, in relying upon what may be over-simplified notions of what defines a Scottish writer or book, the Society has perhaps failed to fully engage with the wider issues pertaining to the representation of Scottish identities within Scotland's literature. However, Part 4.2 shows how this, almost disjointed, interaction with national identity is not caused by the Society's Literary Awards but by the UK's publishing industry more widely. The evidence presented in Part 4.2 suggests that Scottish literary and publishing culture has a complex relationship with English literary and publishing culture, particularly in terms of the status and reputation of Scottish authors published in each locale, which is reflected in the history of the Society's Literary Awards.

Similar to Parts 4.1 and 4.2, Part 4.3 uses both qualitative and quantitative research methods to investigate the relationship between the Society's Literary Awards and the representation of Scottish women writers. This analysis revealed that the perception of the Society's unbiased observance of the work of Scottish women writers was inaccurate: Scottish women writers are less likely than their male counterparts to be shortlisted for, or go on to win, the Society's Book of the Year or First Book of the Year Award. While women writers fared slightly better when it came to the First Book of the Year, these awards still fail to confer the prizes equally: 63% of the award's winners between 1988 and 2014 have been men, as opposed to 37% of women. This thesis considered this outcome to be an example of implicit stereotype bias which reflected the representation of Scottish women writers in literature more widely. Reading the results alongside critical discussions of the position of women writers within Scotland, and the UK in general, as

well as historical accounts of the representation of Scottish women writers and artists demonstrated how the Society's bias mirrored the systemic gender imbalances within Scottish culture generally.

Finally, Part 5: Judging the Saltire Society Literary Awards: A Discursive Analysis, presents a discursive analysis of two Saltire Society Literary Award judging panel meetings. Drawing upon critical frameworks frequently used within the field of linguistics, Part 5 positions the Society's Literary Award judging panels as communities of practice whose social interactions both reflect and influence the judging process. This consideration of the interactions between the Society's Literary Award judges in such terms revealed how the long-standing judges have developed particular group dynamics and lexicons which are unique to their judging processes and panel meetings. Functioning as a community of practice, the Society's Literary Award judging panels negotiate their roles and decisions through particular turns of phrase, face-saving compromises and politeness techniques. Such characteristics indicate that the longstanding status of many of the judges means they have developed friendly rapports which are acknowledged and respected while they are judging books for the awards. Positive and polite language was also employed by the judges when they discussed the authors and books they were judging. While further research is needed to determine whether the actions highlighted in Part 5 are common amongst literary award judging panels more generally, this analysis of the Society's Literary Award judging panel concludes that their behaviours are a consequence of the long-established status of some members of the panel and the awards and newer members conforming to established practices.

The objective of this thesis was to construct a history of the Society's Literary Awards and consider their position in relation to Scotland's wider socio-political history, and its literary and publishing culture. What this thesis reveals is how, despite often being



plagued by problems regarding finances and personnel, the Society's Literary Awards have endured as a key feature of Scottish literary and publishing culture, so much so that they are now the only series of awards dedicated to awarding Scottish fiction, non-fiction, poetry and first books, as well as academic history and research books. Due to the persistence and enthusiasm of the Society's administrators and literary award judges the awards have continued to thrive and evolve to accommodate developments and demands in Scottish literary culture.

While some of the financial and personnel issues the Society came up against appeared to have been overcome by the time the Book of the Year Award was formally established in 1982, there are fundamental issues with the Society's Literary Awards that have affected their development. The main issue is one this thesis aims to remedy: the Society has consistently failed to articulate and present its own history and the history of the Literary Awards. This lack of a clear narrative has made the Society's Literary Awards difficult to promote and market, which is one of the reasons why the impact of the Awards, in terms of book sales for example, is limited. Indeed, this failure to effectively position itself within Scotland's literary and publishing culture has led to the Literary Awards – and the Society's work more generally – seeming somewhat inward looking. This perception is not helped by the fact that some members of the Society's Literary Award judging panels have been members for over twenty years. Such consistency has some positive outcomes. Long-standing judges have an unparalleled knowledge and experience of the history of the Society's Literary Awards and they can function, as Part 5 of this thesis illustrates, as communities of practice working towards a common goal.

However, there are negative implications of unchanging judging panels. The lack of rotation in the panels has meant that the awards were administered and judged in the same way for many years. It was not until the engagement of an Executive Director in

2012, and consideration of reports about the Literary Awards I completed for the Society in 2013 and 2014, that changes were made to the Awards' schema. Further, the Literary Award judging panel membership and the Literary Award shortlists and winners roll call have historically been dominated by men. What is interesting about this historic gender imbalance of the Society's Literary Awards is the fact that it has gone largely undetected by its own judges. This is a fact which leads to a further problem with the Society's Literary Awards and its work more generally: namely, that the perception of how impactful the Literary Awards are held by those who work closely with the Awards, such as the judges and its administrators, does not correspond with the actual impact the award has. As Part 4.1 of this thesis indicates, the cultural impact of the Society's Literary Awards is limited, with the consequence that the possibility of this cultural capital being intraconverted into economic capital is hindered. Indeed, the Society could view the examination presented in Part 4.1 as a means by which they can identify at which stage the breakdown of intraconversion of cultural to economic capital happens and use this to inform progression in this particular area of the administration of the Literary Awards.

While such disparities have no doubt affected the success of the Society's Literary Awards over the years, they are reflective of wider issues in Scottish literary and publishing culture relating to, for example, wider questions regarding national identity and gender imbalance, which emphasises yet again the way in which the Society reflects Scotland's wider socio-cultural condition. This leads to a further conclusion of this thesis: that this kind of micro-analysis of literary awards is imperative to both constructing full cultural and literary histories of locales and furthering critical discourses related to literary award culture. The field of literary award culture criticism and analysis can only be developed with such comprehensive studies of awards, which present examples of how awards have functioned and developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century.

While this research has aimed to be as comprehensive as possible, there are limitations to its reach and scope. One such limitation is the lack of historic book sales and publishing data about books in Scotland. Book sales are one of the clearest ways in which the impact of literary awards can be quantified and they would be extremely useful in acquiring a sense of the impact the Society's Literary Awards had on shortlisted and winning books when the awards had major sponsors like RBS and *The Scotsman*. However, any reliable data before the founding of Nielsen BookScan in 2001 is difficult to source. The data acquired from Nielsen BookScan that is used in this thesis was also limited in its detail. I was only able to acquire one set of week-by-week book sales by contacting Nielsen BookScan directly and purchasing them. Otherwise, the data offers month-by-month sales, which makes assigning trends or spikes in sales to certain dates, such as shortlist or winner announcements, very difficult.

Further limitations of this thesis are influenced by the restricted range of the project as opposed to external or uncontrollable factors. This thesis did not have the space to cover the Society's History Book of the Year and Research Book of the Year Award in greater detail. Analysis of these awards in relation to the critical frameworks discussed in Part 4 would be productive in furthering understandings of how literary award culture functions, particularly in terms of non-fiction and research books. Likewise, while there is a brief discussion of the Society's inclusion of books written in Gaelic and Scots alongside English language texts in the deliberation of books for the Literary Awards, I was unable to deal with this particular aspect of the awards in any great detail. Yet there is certainly more to be studied, particularly in relation to issues pertaining to understandings of national and cultural identity that are discussed in this thesis. However, these limitations are viewed as potential areas of further examination as opposed to detriments to this thesis.

Indeed, there are a number of aspects of this thesis that are ripe for further study or expansion. First and foremost, the critical discussions in Part 4 should be considered as starting points from which further examination into the Society's Literary Awards can be completed. Since the Society's Literary Awards are made annually, new data is available year on year to add to the current dataset, allowing for further analysis and detection of trends or patterns. Moreover, these critical frameworks should also be considered in terms of different approaches or methodologies. It would be productive, for example, to consider discussions surrounding the Society's Literary Award and national identity in terms of the content of award winning and shortlisted books. Although this is touched upon in this analysis, deeper examination into the Scottish content and language of the books shortlisted for the Society's Literary Awards would be interesting and beneficial.

However, much of the further research that could come from this thesis is not necessarily specific to the Society's Literary Awards. One of the aims of this thesis is to exemplify how interdisciplinary studies of literary awards can contribute to understandings of literary award culture, as well as literary and publishing culture more widely. Accordingly, the approach this thesis has taken could be used as a template upon which further descriptive histories and analyses of literary awards (and, indeed, cultural awards more generally) may be based. As noted in Part 1.2, far too long examinations of literary award culture have failed to offer comprehensive histories and analyses of the administration and adjudication of the awards. Understanding such elements of an award benefits further study of the award since, as this thesis has shown, such factors can influence the way in which the award is managed and marketed. As such histories of awards are compiled a more complete view of the history of literary award culture will be constructed, allowing for further research into this fascinating area of literary and publishing culture.

The field of literary award culture would also benefit from more comparative analyses of awards. As noted in Part 4.2, there are parallels between the way in which national and cultural identities are engaged in literary award culture in Scotland and Canada, and such comparisons warrant further analysis. Likewise, the gender analysis conducted in Part 4.3 could be expanded into a formal comparative analysis of how gender functions in literary award culture more widely. Further, given that the Society's Literary Awards have a minimal impact on the book sales of their shortlisted or award winning authors, it would be interesting to compare this with awards that do have a significant effect on book sales – such as the Man Booker or the Giller Prize – to see how the Circuit of Capital Exchanges functions for awards with very different wider impact.

Likewise, the discursive analysis completed in Part 5 was the first study of its kind to consider the language and social interactions of literary award judging panels. While this analysis concluded that the Society's Literary Award judging panel performs as a community of practice, similar studies of other literary awards are needed to ascertain whether this is a trend in literary award judgment culture or whether this is unique to the Society's Literary Awards. This research method might also be applied to consider other aspects of literary award culture, such as the extent to which the gender of an author is discussed by a judging panel; or whether judges discuss the potential cultural and economic impact of the books they are shortlisting or selecting as winners. If access were permitted to researchers to conduct this kind of study into literary award judgment culture, this would further understandings of how judges judge books for awards.

Such suggestions for further research should be considered as recommendations as to how the field of literary award culture may be expanded. However, there are also a number of recommendations which are specific to the Society's Literary Awards to be made as a result of this research. Firstly, there would be great benefit in the Society taking

control of the narrative history of its Literary Awards. As discussed in Part 4.1, much of the Society's prestige comes from its status as a well-established organisation and the longevity of its awards, but the story of this history is confused at best and largely unknown at worst. Getting to grips with this history, and effectively retelling it, will allow the Society to clarify the identity, purpose and aims of the Literary Awards, making them more accessible to those who view the awards from the outside.

Finally, an underlying motif of this thesis has been the lack of rotation within the Society's Literary Award judging panels and how this has affected the impact and success of the awards over the years. The suggestion to increase rotation within the panel has been made on numerous occasions by Society administrators and award judges over the years, but it is one worth repeating. While the longevity of a panel is constructive for continuity, it is not conducive to creating a literary award which reflects societal and cultural changes. Indeed, it is ironic that, given how influenced by socio-political and cultural events the founding of the Society was, there has been a reluctance to effectively engage with contemporary literary and publishing culture by inviting different judges to join its Literary Award panels. The Society's Literary Awards would benefit from this kind of progression in their administration.

This research fills a discernible gap in Scotland's literary and publishing history between 1936 and 2015. In the construction of this history of the Society's Literary Awards this thesis offers a substantial insight into the workings of Scottish literary and publishing culture. The approach taken to conduct this research has exemplified how an interdisciplinary approach to the field of literary award culture, which implements frameworks associated with literary and publishing studies, book history, oral history and linguistics, is a particularly constructive approach when completing a descriptive history that positions findings within wider critical discourses. It is believed, therefore, that this

thesis makes a significant contribution to the current critical debates surrounding literary award culture and should inspire and insight further examination of these areas.

Additionally, this research will undoubtedly aid the Society's own understanding of how its Literary Awards have developed over the years. Indeed, given that the Saltire Society's work is wide-ranging, this thesis assembles just one portion of the full history of the Society's work since 1936. It is, however, a suitable start to the construction of a full history and understanding of the Saltire Society and its work.

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### **Audio Recorded Judging Panel Meetings**

Meeting held at Saltire Society Headquarters, Edinburgh, 20 October 2014

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## **Email Correspondence**

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