



Nationality in Civil Society: Elite and Folk Culture in Scotland, 1707-1914

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При використанні матеріалів статті обов'язковим є посилання на її автора з повним бібліографічним описом видання, у якому опубліковано статтю. Дана електронна копія статті може бути скопійована, роздрукована і передана будь-якій особі без обмежень права користування за обов'язкової наявності першої (даної) сторінки з повним бібліографічним описом статті. При повторному розміщенні статті у мережі Інтернет обов'язковим є посилання на сайт Східного інституту українознавства імені Ковальських.

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NATIONALITY IN CIVIL SOCIETY: ELITE AND FOLK CULTURE IN SCOTLAND, 1707-1914

THE UNION, CIVIL SOCIETY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

The Union of 1707 which brought England and Scotland together into Great Britain took politics to London, but left civil society to the Scots. No evidence of a consistent political demand to restore an independent Scottish parliament is thereafter found until the 20th century, despite numerous sporadic anti-Union statements; but Scottish national identity had not disappeared. By making high politics British, and leaving everything else at home, the Union enhanced Scotland's civil society by formalising its relationship with the newly created legislature for Great Britain. Thus, it was civil society and not the state that moulded Scotland's administration and nationality (McCrone 1992; 1998; Paterson 1994; 2001; Morton 1998b; 1999; Hearn 2000). In other words, Scots used civil society to construct their nationality during the decades often called the Age of Nationalism

The Union joined two adjacent lands with an undisputed border and, since the monarchical union of 1603, a (sometimes) disputed royal line. It was between two nations that had known war between one another, yet was accomplished during a time of peace, despite tension with Catholic France. The Union was neither forced nor imposed, but differences in size, wealth and in levels of urbanisation between the two countries ensured that England would dominate, while the terms of the Act covered primarily issues of trade and economy, and, importantly, confirmed the royal line within the Protestant faith. Its lasting importance lies in the recognition it gave the formal structures of Scottish civil society. Distinctiveness from English practice was confirmed in matters of law, in education and, all importantly, in religion (secured in an accompanying Act). It left *de facto* power in the hands of the Scottish courts in Edinburgh, the Boards of Customs and of Excise and the Convention of Royal Burghs. The Scottish Secretary was in and around government until 1746, and the key government appointees - political managers - were empowered to deal, within Scotland, with Scottish affairs. It was not a democratic political structure, but it worked and lasted until 1805 when the last of its leaders, Henry Dundas, was ousted. Scotland's

political arrangements were modernized in the wake of the 1832 Parliamentary Reform Act and the 1833 municipal government reform Acts. Because of the separate legal systems in the two nations which the Union confirmed, these Acts were different from their counterparts in England.

Although until 1832 the majority had no parliamentary representation, Scotland had both members in parliament at Westminster and the right of local governance, and it was this structure that permitted the burghs (municipalities) and the counties to legislate on their own or to by-pass Westminster completely (Dyer 1986). Towns, for instance, would sponsor local Acts through Parliament in order to obtain money for improvements, or citizens would delve into their own pockets to fund their urban world. The remoteness of Westminster from Scottish affairs - physical as well as political distance - ensured that non-legislative means were used for daily administration by civil non-state institutions: associations, organisations, and the media. This mechanism of civil society was the axis of Scotland's governance between 1707 and 1914 and within this structure Scottish national identity was forged.

The key event in the politicisation of national identity is therefore the Union. Not only did it establish the parameters of civil society, but it produced a divide between elite and folk national memories. Immediately prior to and following the passage of the Act, the lower orders engaged in anti-Union petitioning, led by the Presbyterian ministers (until the independence of Scotland's religion was settled in an Act accompanying the Union). Anti-Union riots occurred in Glasgow, Stirling and Dumfries in the months following its signing and much has been made of this rioting, as proof of popular opposition (Scott 1979). Daniel Defoe, author of *Robinson Crusoe*, but then working as an English spy, was scared to leave his rooms in Edinburgh's High Street as events unfolded beneath his window. Members of the elite who signed the treaty were condemned and their motivations described as ranging from treachery to political opportunism and greed. What a *Parcel Of Rogues* was the lament of Robert Burns:

Oh would, or I had seen the day
That Treason thus could sell us,
My auld grey head had lien in clay
We Bruce and loyal Wallace!
But pith and power, till my last hour
I'll make this declaration;
We're bought and sold for English gold-

Such a parcel of rogues in a nation!

Nationalist opposition to the Union based on claims of popular opposition and elite bribery («bought and sold for English gold») has persisted since 1707, but only recently has this view become dominant, persisting in the face of work by historians, in particular Whatley (1994; 2000: 48), to balance all the reasons for Union.

JACOBITES AND THE UNION

The second major divide in the formation of Scottish national identity came after the Union and involved the relationship between Jacobitism, Highland-Lowland power, and popular religion. Of the three Union-guaranteed structures, the most important for civil society was the maintenance of Presbyterianism as Scotland's variant of Protestantism — whose roots went back to the Scottish reformation of 1560. This church-sponsored godliness and piety inspired home missions and charitable help for the «fallen» and the «ignorant» throughout the towns and cities. Its ministers were the most active subscribers and patrons of these voluntary organisations which were such a part of civil society, and they enhanced the combination of public morality, active citizenship and mutual obligation which had been well developed by Adam Ferguson and the Enlightenment thinkers (Paterson, 2001; Morton, 1999: 64-96).

The Jacobites, however, were not Presbyterian Protestant and their place in Scotland's nationalism is therefore ambivalent. There was support from the Lowlands for the Jacobite uprisings, but: «It was mainly Episcopalian Highland clans, who comprised some 67 per cent of the Jacobite combatants at Culloden, who continued to provide the bulk of the fighting force of militant Jacobitism, not Presbyterian Lowlanders» (Whatley, 2000: 185). The Jacobites promised to repeal the Union in 1715, but this was not a key issue during the 1745 uprising, and in all likelihood it would have remained in place following a Stuart restoration. Indeed, the failed Jacobite uprisings of 1708 and 1719, like those of the '15 and the '45, did much to take the issue of Scottish separatism away from the Union of Parliaments. National identity was diverted, its primary attention removed from the secular state.

By virtue of their political and military activity the Jacobites complicated the transition of Scottish national identity into nationalism. They were on the margins of Scottish civil society and the state. The retribution directed against them after the various rebellions were territorially specific and little affected

other parts of Scotland. The clans were led by some of the most influential and wealthiest landowners in Highland society, while simultaneously including some of the poorest people in Scotland. Their defeat was bloody and brutal, at Culloden Moor in 1746, and it was followed by a series of measures implemented to strip the social structure and ethnic symbolism from Highlanders: most notoriously, the prohibition to wear tartan for anyone except those in Highland regiments in the British army, which stayed in force until 1782 (Macinnes 1995).

Nor did the Jacobite uprising represent a divide between Scotland and England, as Lowland opposition to it demonstrated. This is corroborated by the speed with which the Lowland Scottish or English traveller, stopped seeing the Highlands as a place of barbarism and fear and began instead to imagine it as a land of discovery with an oral heritage worthy of recording (Withers 1992: 145). In Lowland mythology the Highlands, imagined as a «wild beyond» in the mid- eighteenth-century, by the middle of the next century became a «romantic primitive idyll». Indeed, the literati of the Scottish Enlightenment who tried to define Scotland's contribution to the Union, while welcoming the economic benefits of Anglicisation, celebrated an idealized interpretation of this culture within a European context (Rendall, 1998: 60). The «image of the noble Highlander» was reinforced by Jacobite songs lamenting the failure of their young leader Charles Edward Stuart. The renowned Bonnie Prince Charlie who, whilst young and handsome in '45, quickly descended into a serial adulterer with somewhat poor personal hygiene on his retreat to France, gave the greatest lustre to the Jacobite myth. As a result, the traditions of Highland Gaelic-speaking areas - the *Gaidhealtachd* - came to represent the Scottish ethnic identity - in heritage as well as in imagery. The richness of this image sustained the Jacobite cause despite the post-Culloden despair, as well as scepticism about the Union (Pittock 1991), and it was even appropriated by those it once opposed. This Highland romanticism became *the* Scottish iconic representation in the first half of the nineteenth century for the elites of Scotland and England, but in as much as it linked this identity with the world of kith and kin, rather than state and politics, it arguably weakened rather than strengthened Scottishness. Appropriately, it did not threaten the monarchy: Queen Victoria identified personally with the Jacobite heritage, bought herself a hunting lodge in Aberdeenshire - Balmoral - in 1848, adorned it with tartan carpets and tartan wallpaper, and insisted that her male staff wear kilts. Obviously, now, Jacobitism no longer posed a threat to the political order.

The Jacobite folk identity defined Scottishness for the British elites. But it co-existed with a genre of ballads and cheap printed popular literature that was not co-opted in this way and, indeed, which could challenge the elites for control of this symbolism. Endless tales of heroism, preferably by royal, military and religious champions, gave volume to this literature. Favourite heroes included the Covenanters, defenders of Scottish Protestantism from the sixteenth century, and Scotland's two great medieval leaders from the Wars of Independence, Sir William Wallace (?1270-1305) who defeated the English at the battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297, and King Robert Bruce (1274-1329), victor at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314. Some of this literature was radicalised in the 1790s in the wake of the French Revolution (Fraser 2000), but it was unable to dislodge the established political order. Indeed, the chapbooks still did not present King Robert Bruce as *the* great patriotic hero as a matter of course, nor did the common people regard him as Scotland's preferred champion (Iwazumi 1999). Such doubt over the king's patriotism had nothing to do with his aristocratic blood or his tendency to change sides to secure political advantage. Rather, it seems that the majority of the literate and educated at the time feared that Bruce's victories, and the nationalist rhetoric embodied in the Declaration of Arbroath (1320), might inspire too many to sympathize with the ideals of revolutionary France. Similar apprehensions ensured that the memory of Wallace would likewise be celebrated in a context of loyalty to the British state. In this view the established constitutional arrangements - of which the Union was only a part - ensured the steady progress of society, even though these arrangements were based on English rather than Scottish legal and intellectual traditions (Kidd 1993). Loyalism supported by prosperity (Lynch 1991: 323; Devine 2000; Whatley 1994; 2000), meant that Scottish nationalism was based on the idea of equality with England within the Union.

NATIONALIST ORGANISATIONS IN CIVIL SOCIETY

The nationalism of Scotland's first political organisation, the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights (NAVSR, 1852-6), mixed Jacobite romanticism, loyalty to English constitutional progress and the Hanoverian monarchy, with a national identity based on local governance. The NAVSR had no members of parliament of its own, it did not raise the spectre of civil disobedience when its claims were marginalised, and it did not even demand a state for the Scottish nation. It lacked a mass membership and

existed - at best - for four years. Yet this movement represented a nationalism based on loyalty to the Union from both sides of the elite/popular divide. In many ways it was a typical bourgeois intellectual movement that straddled both groups. What distinguishes the Association were its affiliates from Scotland's municipal councils. It was from this base that the NAVSR developed its nationalist arguments. Its solutions for the apparent neglect of Scotland's governance were to come from the municipal councils and not, importantly, a Scottish parliament, and their critique was focused on the over-centralisation of government power in London. This was part of an attack on the evils of central political power in an allegedly overcentralised state, arguing that a Scottish parliament would be just another manifestation of centralized governmental intrusion into society (Morton 1996; 1999: 148-154).

According to the NAVSR Scotland and England were joined in equality, and both would continue to prosper if only the articles of the Union were adhered to. Its support from the town councillors of Scotland, in a personal capacity rather than as elected representatives, was the cause and effect of its claim that town councils, not the state, represented the solution to problems created by the neglect of government in Scotland. It was a movement on the margins of Scottish political life, as was the next organised nationalist movement, the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA, 1886-1918), yet the latter was much more explicit in its political orientation. For fifteen years the SHRA had a leadership that saw itself as natural supporters of the Liberal party (*Prospects* 1892), before being later revived as a Labour party side-show in the twentieth century. The Whigs and then the Liberals had dominated Scottish politics since 1832. It was not unusual to find Scottish elections being contested by four or five candidates professing allegiance to the Liberal party. Edinburgh's constituency during the 1852 general election offers the example of a contest between three liberals, one liberal-conservative, and one conservative. But the SHRA came into being as this hegemony was breaking up, and in the years in which Home Rule became the political cry of the Scottish nationalists, the Liberal Party was constrained to the role of Opposition — forming the Government for only three years between 1886 to 1905 (Ackroyd 1996: 272). Without access to Liberal Party policy-making, the SHRA used the regional newspapers such as the *Perthshire Courier* and the *Dumbarton Herald* to try influence the English Liberal Association. Lack of political influence forced both the NAVSR and the SHRA to mobilise public opinion by their own efforts. The number of publications by each

society was prodigious and nearly twenty-five newspapers carried comment on and from the NAVSR in the 1850s. As well as the newspapers serving the major towns, around a dozen local and regional newspapers published letters and reports from the SHRA in the 1880s and 1890s. One song for the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Stirling Bridge, commemorating the victory of Sir William Wallace over a large English army in 1297, was published widely within Scotland and in forty newspapers in the United States (Morton 2000).

William Wallace: Folk Memory

Scotland's first two nationalist associations are important because they show how a small group of activists were able to mobilise national identity within civil society. Politically marginal, they were limited to their own resources to form and influence public opinion, yet it was amongst the discourses promulgated in civil society by these groups that we locate understandings of modern Scottish national identity. By the 1920s the medieval patriot Sir William Wallace, for example, was presented quite clearly as a modern proletarian hero, though there were contradictory claims to his memory by both elite and popular culture (Finlay, 1997; Morton 1998a). The myth of Wallace was popularised in the verse of Blind Harry in a manuscript believed to date from the 1470s, and the first extant printed version is dated a century later. Beginning in the eighteenth century cheap printed narrative accounts based on this poem turned the Wallace story in to a myth-history known by almost all Scots. Motifs are found in Robert Burns's «Scots Wha Hae With Wallace Bled,» the most enduring of Scotland's nationalist songs in this period. The Scots-born American industrialist Andrew Carnegie claimed his patriotic fire came from reading a translation of Harry, while Louis Kossuth (1802-1884) Guiseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) and Guiseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) each signed letters of support for the construction of the National Wallace Monument (begun in 1861 and opened in 1869). The subscription was marked, like that for the monument to Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh (begun in 1840 and opened in 1844), with numerous very small donations and subscriptions. It prompted the respective management committees of each monument to emphasize the affection with which the common people, who gave what they could afford, held each man. This was not always obvious to all, as a strongly expressed argument against building the National Wallace Monument was the fear that the patriot's commemoration would be taken over by the aristocracy, the very people long accused of having failed to help Wallace during his defeat at the battle of Falkirk (1298), and represented by the traitor Sir John Mentieth who led

Wallace to his capture, trial and execution (Morton 2001). Members of the nationalist movement were also less than supportive of Scotland's elites: «The ancestors of these men were the bitterest foes Wallace had to contend against» argued John Steill in 1846. Fifty years later, Charles Waddie, secretary of the SHRA, sent a letter to the *Ayrshire Post* (22 May 1896) castigating the aristocracy's treatment of Wallace:

Every office of trust is filled by a Tory lawyer, the bench is manned by Tories determined foes to Scottish Home Rule. Their patriotism is of the sickly sentimental kind, reaching no further than singing a Scotch song, playing at golf, and wearing the tartan; but they never lift their little finger to stop the plundering of Scotland or the ruin of our national monuments. It is not to these snobs but to the people the common people of Scotland we must look for redress. History in this will but repeat itself. The nobles of Scotland deserted their country over and over again; the common people supported Wallace to free his country from English tyranny and the same people maintained their religious independence in the Covenant. There is no use in our putting any reliance upon English politicians, either Liberal or Tory, if Scotland is to remain a nation with its own laws and its own church. The electors must send up members pledged to restore to us our National Parliament. With a just federal union with England in a British Parliament, where England will not be the predominant partner, but take her fair share with the self-governing states of Great Britain. Will the Scottish Liberal party take this great work on hand - or must we seek for another?

The benefits of «Home Rule all round» were to be for those further down the social ladder: «Lower taxation, better laws, improvement of conditions of the working classes, improvement of farming classes, better trade, improvements of housing the poor, all the wants, in fact which are locally felt and are entirely disregarded in the over-burdened House of Commons in London» (James S. Waddie, *Alloa Advertiser* 11 April 1896). This class constituted the true descendants of Wallace. Here, the folk memory mobilised by a nationalist organisation in civil society rejected elite representations.

CIVIL SOCIETY: ITS ASSOCIATION AND ITS CULTURE

Scottish nationality developed from a Union settlement which did not interfere with the institutions of Scottish civil society and left the nation's governance in the hands of the Scots. The depth of civil society buttressed

the state strongly. From the 1790s onwards, voluntary societies appeared in increasing numbers in British towns and cities. They fulfilled tasks for which the family, the firm and the state were found to be unsuited. They had a flexibility that other institutions could not match and the sheer rapidity of their growth in Britain was novel (Morris 1998: 299; 1999: 373-4). By the 1860s private charity probably spent more on the poor in Britain than the government spent on the workhouse system and this was even more the case in Scotland where less than half as many Scots as English poor were admitted to institutional care at the century's turn. Philanthropic-backed associational culture, not bureaucratic state intervention, was the norm in the Victorian period.

The network of Sunday Schools embodied this association-based social capital. Various denominations were entrusted with teaching, reading and sometimes writing at the elementary level, and day schools, too, were subsidised by the churches with a small contribution from the pupils. These schools were the prevailing educational experience for the poor and the working class prior to 1872, when the reform of education not only made them compulsory for all 5-13 year olds, but took the running of education out of the hands of the parish into the Scotch Education Department. Until this shift in educational provision, industrial and improvement societies such as the Society for the Industrious Blind, the Ragged and Industrial schools, provided for the disadvantaged and the unemployed. This ideology of «improvement» and the organizations it produced was not only aimed at benefiting its clients, it was also supposed to discourage wanton behaviour, long perceived as a threat to social order (Checkland 1980).

At a time when the state was distant and disinterested in Scottish affairs, and when the ideology of *laissez-faire* set limits on intervention, such organisations and associations comprised civil society. These voluntary organizations provided ideal venues of innovation, adaptation and experimentation for philanthropists in the face of rapidly changing social demands and relationships. This civil society, an area of social structure more procedural than the families, but less formal than the state, was where Scots organised themselves, debated, campaigned and intervened in the problems they faced. It was dominated by a range of conventions and hierarchies, but remained structured on the common-ground of religiosity. Class and politics and (most) sectarian divides could not challenge its coherence and from the perspective of this civil society guaranteed by the Union, a centralised state appeared as a hindrance rather than a more effective means of government.

Thus, more Union meant more power to civil society; while less (or no) Union meant centralisation of state functions and an undermining of localities' independence. No demand for a Scottish parliament in the two centuries after 1707, consequently, was not a sign of absent nationalism, but reflected a national identity rooted in civil society (Morton 1999).

Scotland's status in the Union settlement (its distance from the central government and the empowerment of its local institutions), made civil society the depository and generator of its modern national identity. Here elite and popular memories combined and separated. They jarred when remembering the histories of Wallace and Bruce and the Union - all foci of competing identities. The Jacobite threat lost its radical edge, meanwhile, once it was incorporated into royal patronage and romantic ballads. These contradictions and conflicts were a cause and a symptom of a national identity located outside the state, where there was no straightjacket of formal political process. Governing occurred through civil society and the result was a multifarious rather than a vanquished nationality in Scotland.

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РЕЗЮМЕ

Грем Мортон / Національність у громадянському суспільстві: еліта і народна культура в Шотландії 1707-1914. /

Шотландські націоналісти 19 ст. вважали, що їх країна увійшла до співдружності в 1707 р. на засадах рівноправності і саме такого трактування вимагали дотримуватись. Вони не бажали відокремлення, але це не могло бути інтерпретоване як брак націоналізму. Маючи права добровільно асоційованої частини Британії, міська місцева буржуазія не лише домінувала над церквою, школами та юридичними установами, але брала участь в утриманні приватних асоціацій та добровільних товариств, що перебували на стику інтересів держави і сім'ї. Результатом цього стало поширюване на цілий край громадянське суспільство. Спроможна до публічної діяльності через ці інституції, еліта місцевого середнього класу доводила, що шотландські проблеми виникають через надцентралізовану владу лондонського парламенту, і що рішення їх власних інституцій кращі за незалежний шотландський парламент, який здатний представити лише іншу форму жадливого централізму. Для посилення підтримки,

ці організації поширювали такі інтерпретації шотландської історії і життєписи діячів, які знаменували б рівноправність країни з Англією. Успішні війни шотландців проти англійців в часи середньовіччя, приміром, змальовувались як передумова встановлення рівноправності 1707 р. Цей юніоністський націоналізм почав занепадати наприкінці століття, коли місцеві самоврядування та добровільні товариства більше не були спроможні вирішувати проблеми, висунуті масовою урбанізацією.