Scottish, English, British, European Identities

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The last twenty years have seen much political change in Scotland, culminating in the setting up of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. These political and constitutional processes have been accompanied by intensified public discourse on and academic study of Scottish national identity. One study has been to analyse the connections between constitutional change and national identity (Paterson et al. 2000). Using data from election surveys, they note that there has been a general intensification in self-professed Scottish identity over the last two decades. While this is not necessarily on the expense of British identity, people "rarely accentuate their state identity over their 'national' identity". Furthermore, there is no straightforward connection between people's party identification and constitutional preference, with a strengthening of accentuating Scottishness across the political spectrum. (Paterson 2000; Brown 1999).

English national identity, on the other hand, is not only less studied, but generally perceived to be rather weak. One explanation for this is that while Scottish people might be used to conceptualising their identity in dualistic terms (Scottish and British), English people might tend to find it more difficult to differentiate between being English and being British (e.g. Kiely et al 2001). It has also become a standard assumption that Scotland is in a relationship of subordinance to England, with amongst others the implication that people in Scotland will be more aware of their group membership, as distinguished from the dominant English "other", than people in England, where a clear identification of the other seems to lack. This ties in with social psychology's Social Identity Theory, which argues that group identity may be less salient in the dominant group. Studies such as Susan Condor's (1996) seem to confirm this: In her study of university students' and holiday makers' sense of English national identity, assertions of English identity are generally weak and tend to be negative, instead of asserting the pride and patriotism which could be assumed in a "dominant" group. She therefore points to the necessity to ask "who is to be granted authority to decide on whether a group is 'dominant' or 'subordinate'" and to contextualisations in the study of national identity.

Amongst others, Rebecca Langlands (1999) argues that Britishness should be seen as a kind of "added value" to the cultural identities of the various nations on the territory of the British state.
In respect to **European identity**, it could be assumed that Scottish people are more ready to identify themselves with Europe than English people. First, because they are more used to dual identities, and secondly because through the SNP's slogan of "independence in Europe" Europe has been linked to Scottish interest in official political rhetoric. Starting from this set of assumptions, Huici et al 1997 analysed allegiance to Europe in Scotland (in comparison with Catalonia). However, their study showed that allegiance for Europe is not significantly higher in Scotland than in England. This might also be linked to the findings of numerous recent empirical studies on Scottish identity (e.g. Paterson et al. 2000; McCrone et al 1998) who all conclude that the increase in positive assertions of Scottish identity is not necessarily at the cost of British identities, and that people in Scotland have a very sophisticated understanding of the complex and contextual workings of multiple identities. On the one hand, there might be therefore a case for assuming that European identity as yet another factor might be readily adopted by Scottish people in certain contexts; on the other hand, there is no simple positive correlation between Scottish and European identity as opposed to a simple negative correlation between Scottish and British identity (Huici 1997).

**Multiple Identities**

Out of the wide range of literature dealing with these questions, also more general theoretical understandings of the processes of identity formation have emerged, which with their focus on identity as multiple and contextual are also of great interest to questions of European identity among Scottish/British people.

Conceptualisations of **national identities in Britain** have moved away from a simple bounded exclusiveness: either English or Scottish or British and from an image of concentric complementary circles - local, national, state and European identities all complementing each other - towards a more complex understanding of shifting, competing identities, which according to context might be invoked as either supporting or competing with each other. (Parekh (ed). 1995; Crick 1995; Miller 1995) One of the most influential methodical tools for probing into the nature of dual identities in recent years have been the so-called **Moreno questions**: rather than asking respondents about only one identity at a time, they are asked to rank their identities in a five point hierarchy: Scottish, not British; more Scottish than British; equally Scottish and British; more British than Scottish; British, not Scottish. While this method has been found a very useful tool in studying dual identities, it has been noticed that it says very little about what exactly respondents mean by these respective identities. In recent empirical studies a use of these questions is therefore often accompanied by more qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews (e.g. Paterson 2000).
This is also the approach taken by a number of empirical studies on aspects of Scottish national identity construction (McCrone 1998; Bechhofer 1999; Kiely 2000; Kiely 2001) Their assertion is that "identity has to do with claims rather than with fixed descriptions to be read off demographic characteristics" and they focus on the negotiation between people's own claims to identity, how they attribute identity to others and how they receive the claims of others: "These identity claims and attributions and their receipt are usually based on various combinations of the basic markers of birth, ancestry, residence, upbringing and commitment, backed up by other markers. The process, which appears to be governed by certain rules, varies according to the visibility of the markers, and what is known to the interacting parties". (Kiely et al 2000)

Another study, on identity constructions in Berwick-upon-Tweed (Kiely et al 2000), touches the issue of English national identity and shows how these strategies become more complicated in Border situations and how local identity may be strategically used to negotiate between complex national, state and regional identities. The study emphasises the crucial importance of context for identity construction.

**What is identity?**

Identity has received much new academic interest in the last few years, as David McCrone points out: "In many respects, 'identity' has taken over from 'postmodernism' as the intellectual fashion-accessory of the second half of the 1990s. There is good reason for this, as the fluidity and plurality of identities is part and parcel of the post-modern condition." (McCrone 1998: 31)

Theorising identity therefore to contemporary thinkers involves generally a questioning of "routes" rather than "roots": identity is not something that once was created and subsequently has become fixed and fundamentalised, but on the contrary something that is always changing, contextual, relational, and shifting:

Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually identities are about using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves. Identities [...] relate to the invention of tradition as much as to tradition itself: not the so-called return to roots but a coming-to-terms-with our 'routes'. (Hall 1996: 4)

As a reaction to this notion of identity as fluid and constantly transforming, the use of the concept of identity as analytical category itself has recently come under critique (notably Brubaker 2000, yet also Condor 1996; Hopkins and Reicher 1996). Brubaker's central argument
is that the use of the identity concept in practice does not necessitate its use as an analytical category: "We should avoid unintentionally reproducing or reinforcing such reifications by uncritically adopting categories of practice as categories of analysis". The customary disclaimers which emphasise the fluid, non-essentialist and relational nature of identity leave identity meaning nothing at all anymore: "it does not contribute to precision of analysis to use the same words for the extremes of reification and fluidity, and everything in between". Instead, Brubaker proposes alternative terms for different aspects of "identity", such as identification, self-understanding or "groupness". Taking issue with the standard assumptions of English as dominant identity and Scottish identity as subordinate as a basis for analysis, Hopkins and Reicher similarly argue that "a methodology which pre-defines the nature of the social context and the dimensions along which people are to be judged necessarily positions the individual as a passive observer and renders them powerless to advance alternative constructions". They therefore strongly argue for a stronger appreciation of context, and the ways how context is instrumentalised to further certain political ends: "[politicians of different parties] define the context in different ways so as to define different categories for self-definition, these in turn defining different courses of action as appropriate." (However, precisions such as McCrone et al's above mentioned distinctions between identity claims, attributions and receptions maintain an analytical clarity by engaging directly with the use of identity as a "category of practice").

Personal Nationalism

Another fundamental question is why people should identify in terms of as great a group as the nation at all. As Anthony Cohen puts it:

The nation is a grand generalisation that does not discriminate among, and says nothing specific about, its individual members. By contrast, the individual is highly specific and is distinguished from other individuals in innumerable and very particular ways. Why, then, do individuals elect to identify themselves (to themselves as well as to others) in terms of the nation? (Cohen 1996: 802)

As possible answer to this question Cohen puts forward the notion of "personal nationalism":

Nationalism is an expression of self-identity. It is to say, "I am Scottish", when Scottishness means everything that I am; I substantiate the otherwise vacuous national label in terms of my own experience, my reading of history, my perception of the landscape, and my reading of Scotland's literature and music, so that when I "see" the nation, I am looking at myself. (Cohen 1996: 803-4)
"What it means to be Scottish" is thus not synonymous with any one political party's representation, but crosses the party divide: "material and political interests are too discrepant, but the interest with which the widest range of people may be able to identify is one which offers them an explanation of their selves and which gives them an added value: of their Scottishness and all that entails culturally." (Cohen 1997)

Is there then actually a "Scottishness" out there, or is it all only personal, differing constructs? Cohen suggests that the "objective correlative" may be in form rather than in content, and this form is what he calls "peripheral vision" (Cohen 2000): the centrality of the concepts of boundary and peripherality to understandings of Scottishness. Just as in politicised Discourse the cultural diversities of "Scottishness" become homogenised and turned against "the English", and the "claim of peripherality can be mobilised to cut ties with the centre and to become a new centre of its own", so is also the relation between self and nation one where our individual interpretation of the nation comes to stand for the whole, even if other people's vision of their nation might be completely different: "Our vision is from a peripheral point, even if we may think of our ego-originating vision as central." Peripherality here is both "the enlightened David measuring himself against the Philistine", and "characteristic to the way in which people relate to collective identity".

**Ethnic/civic nationalism; exclusion and inclusion**

These questions of identity formation, tied in with notions of exclusion and inclusion as they are, relate to another standard dichotomy of nationalism studies, the distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism, the first being defined mainly by its allegiance to a particular social system and constitution and the second resting on a more "cultural" understanding of nationhood. While this distinction is still seen as a valid analytical concept by a number of authors, it is generally acknowledged that both are idealtypes and often are complementary rather than exclusive, and that even the most political, civic state identity, has a cultural component, in the sense that the way we live our lives is "cultural". (Smith 1991; Yack 1999). Moreover, the tendency to equate "civic" with "good" and "ethnic" with "bad" has been criticised by many theorists for a number of reasons. (especially in Beiner (ed.) 1999; Brown 1999) Not least amongst these is the fact that civic values themselves might be instrumentalised to the exclusion of others (e.g. Hall 1996; Yack 1999). Therefore Henderson (1999) and others suggest that civic and ethnic nationalism as normative concepts should be replaced by looking at the inclusive or exclusive nature of nationalisms instead.
Generally, *Scotland* is seen as an instance of "civic" rather than "ethnic" nationalism. (e.g. McCrone 2001). For example, in an empirical study (Paterson et al 2000) which asked respondents in Scotland what they thought to be the main prerequisite for citizenship, a considerable number suggested residence in the country, a fact that puts them in front of other European countries where birth and ancestry still are seen as more important factors for citizenship, as Paterson et al (2000) point out. However, in political rhetoric Scotland's civic attitude is sometimes invoked to contrast it to other nations, especially the English, a process which lends support to the argument of the sometimes exclusive nature of civic nationalism (Henderson1999, Hopkins 2001). Henderson argues, that "Scottish identity" is reified by political nationalists who invoke allegedly civic Scottish values to build a "partisan consensus" of what Scottish identity is. Scottish interest is perceived as consisting in safeguarding these values through autonomy from England, so that more unionist inclined people are portrayed as un-Scottish: "if individuals are wont to feel themselves as outside the nation in Scotland, it is more likely because of their political values than on account of their language or ancestry". Similarly, Hopkins argues that "the differentiation between Scottish and English nationalism was organised to define acts of discrimination as incompatible with the Scottish identity" and that it is therefore important to "investigate the construction, dissemination and reception of different versions of the nation's boundaries".

Another dimension of the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of political communities is the conception of "*ethnic minorities*". The Parekh Report (2000), for example, stresses the need to acknowledge that Britain always was heterogeneous and that one single British national narrative as it still is taught in schools and underlies many public institutions obscures this fact. He also suggests that the very language of "ethnic minorities" and the "need to integrate" them evoke a false picture of a large homogeneous majority and various equally homogeneous minorities, failing to acknowledge both the internal diversities of these groups and above all the increasingly fluid boundaries between them. The findings of a study of schoolchildren's construction of citizenship and national identity in Northern England (Carrington 1998), which show that although there is no overt racism amongst these young children, they still tend to define "Britishness" in terms of birth, ancestry and religion, might be a case in point. The Parekh Report stresses also the contextual importance of British devolution for "normalisations" of heterogeneous and thus also multicultural concepts of Britain. Likewise Saeed et.al. (1999), in a study of Glasgow Pakistani teenagers, suggest that the discussion on national identity in Scotland has also assisted notions of dual identities of "ethnic minorities".
In relation to **European identity**, the dichotomies ethnic/civic and exclusive/inclusive open up a whole range of questions. On the one hand, the contrast nationalism/Europeanism sometimes seems to suggest that nationalism is the bad ethnic opposite of good civic Europeanism (Schlesinger 1991; Habermas 1996; Delanty 2000). However, these notions are often underwritten by exclusive identity models which assume either loyalty to the nationstate or to Europe, and put less emphasis on considerations of multiple identities which are contextually negotiated, as outlined above. This ties in with studies which show that British identity itself is sometimes conceptualised in opposition to, and to the exclusion of, Europe. (Schlesinger 1997) While sometimes Europe is seen as a possibility for civic redemption from ethnic nationalism, this is a reminder of the sometimes less benign implications of civic nationalism. Hearn (2000), on the other hand, shows how for example in Scotland Europe occasionally has served as a superior forum to which claims are addressed which are perceived to be left unanswered by the Westminster parliament.

Saeed explicitly refers to the European context for the task to promote and "normalise" dual identities among "ethnic minorities". However, little systematic work has been done so far explicitly on national/European identities of young people and how they may differ or correlate with that of general studies. (Analyses of voting behaviour in Scotland have shown little differentiation between age groups, at most a slight tendency not to vote at all amongst under 35 year olds (Brown et al 1999).

**Citizenship/ Civil Society**
One field of study which has been particularly influential in the study of Scottish nationalism in recent years is the notion of civil society (McCrone 2001, Paterson 1994, Hearn 2000). Civil society in this respect is understood as the institutional framework within which national identity is constructed and negotiated:

The civil institutional apparatus of Scotland, whether it is the education system, the legal system, a distinctive press, financial system and so on, provides a social template which has not only sustained "Scotland" as an idea, but has given it a social system of governance which only in the final year of the twentieth century re-instituted a formal parliament. Scotland is sustained as a nation through its institutional practices. (McCrone 2001: 47)

In the context of Youth and European identity this may be of importance, since civil society is also the framework in which identity formation in young people takes place (e.g. Hall 1999). At the same time, youth itself is seen as "a period of political socialisation" (Frazer and Emler 1997), and therefore as a period when the gradual entry into adult "civil society"
takes place. This might seem contradictory, with identity on the one hand today widely
defined as "routes rather than roots", i.e. as a constant process of becoming, while on the
other hand the concept of youth and citizenship education involves some notion of a definite
goal: youth as the process of identity formation which will have been completed with the
status of adulthood. At the same time, youth as an exemplary period of transformation lends
itself to the study of identities and how they might be perceived as changing. There are only
a few comparative studies so far on how youth is socially constructed differently in different
European countries (Wallace and Kovatcheva 1998; Bynner et al. 1997)

One interesting issue in this context is the impact of the educational system on formations
of national identity. Not only is the educational system itself a significant part of "civil society" and
therefore of the institutional framework within which formations of national identity generally
take place - in Scotland it is one of the three national institutions which were preserved in the
Union of 1707 and continued to preserve a sense of Scottish "national" identity while not
colliding with British state identity (Morton 1998, Paterson 1994) - it is also the site were
notions and values of "citizenship" are first transferred and formed. Lindsay Paterson (2001), for
example, points to the crucial role which universities and their educational agendas play in the
current context of simultaneous regionalisation and Europeanisation. Carrington et. al. 1998
argue in a study of the impact of the educational system on children's construction of national
identity that the relatively few patriotist or racist voices among children are due to the impact of
a pluralist educational system. By contrast, others (e.g. Parekh report) denounce the national
school curriculum - which still propagates the history of Britain as uninterrupted, homogeneous
story - as "unmitigated disaster" and call for a rewriting of British history which takes into
account the different stories of Britain as perceived from a Scottish, Muslim etc. angle.

An influential concept in this regard is therefore the question of "citizen education", i.e the
possibility and desirability of educating children into "active citizens". Tom Hall (1999; 1998)
for instance argues about the close interconnection of locality and identity formation, and how
identities of young people become asserted by claiming public space, which also is always
shared with others, so that notions of identity networks and shared identities become increasingly
salient. He is however doubtful about the value of the concept of "citizen education", since there
are inherent contradictions between the space and the identities young people are supposed to
find for themselves and the ways and values in which these interests are channelled by the state.
Citizenship is according to Hall a prime example for this, since while adulthood is the attaining
of more plural identities - white, female, muslim etc. - citizenship is an undifferentiated status,
which moreover does not provide the same opportunities for everybody, so that it also always
suggests exclusion. Moreover, as Hall points out, while "emerging social identities are
negotiated through social interaction, citizenship usually is no matter of negotiation at all", not even between the individual and the state. Finally, the concept of education "for" active citizenship is a contradiction in terms, with the ultimate risk of educating "subjects" rather than active citizens. Hall's is a powerful critique which opens up questions about "what citizenship means, to whom and how it is attainable and maintainable". It also questions the easy trust in "civic Europeanism", derivable from common interests, by pointing firstly to the exclusions of citizenship, both literal and in the possible conflict between the automatic attaining of the legal status and the restrictions to fully assert it (he cites the example of entering citizen status as an unemployed claiming social benefit, which both "underlines " and "undermines" the citizenstatus). Secondly he problemises the relative remoteness of citizenship identity to personal identities, which are constructed and developed in immediate social interaction and not nolens volens conferred upon by the state. A similar stance is taken by Frazer and Emler (1997) who analyse the connection of political awareness, apathy and racism in young people and their attained levels of education. Is education the cause of this or just a mediating influence? Is higher education itself the cause for political awareness and "good citizen" behaviour, or is the increasingly mass system of higher education actually also impeding this, e.g. because of the resulting higher unemployment for graduates, where "the perceived status will not be matched by the prescribed status", and because higher education generally will not engender as much self-esteem and resulting tolerance against others any more? Instead of a blind trust in citizen education, they propose that "we must focus on the variety of collectives, institutions and relationships in which young people participate, and just as importantly those from which they are excluded".

Delanty 2000 argues for the necessity of the creation of a common civic culture of Europe as common cultural ground of identification, similar to Habermas' constitutional patriotism (e.g. Habermas 1996). A number of authors are sceptical about the practicability of these ideas. Schlesinger (1997) for example argues that broad public engagement in the European polity would be a necessary precondition for the creation of a single European "communicative space", and that the incitements of constitutional patriotism may be insufficient for this significant shift of loyalty from the national to the European plane to occur. Similarly Gavin (2000), concentrating on Anderson's concept of the nation as "imagined community" generated amongst others by a common media, asks in how far Europe could be a similar community, based on civic entitlements and imagined through a common communicative space. In a study of British media coverage of European issues he arrives at the conclusion that there is much left to improve, since what is transmitted is less a suggestion of "Britain in Europe", than an opposition between "Britain" on the one side and "Europe" on the other. Probing the theory that the civic
entitlements and benefits to be gained by Europe will engender widespread loyalties to Europe, he states that there is almost no mention of such benefits in the media coverage, with European infringements of national interest by far abounding, and that therefore even if there was some ground to the entitlements theory it severely lacks in practicability.

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