

# National Identity Textbooks: Teaching Scottishness in the Wake of the Union of Parliaments

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## **Abstract**

*Even though the interrelation of the emergence of modern mass school systems and processes of nation-building in the modern era has evoked academic interest, such research endeavours are generally exemplified by case studies of established nation-states. Conversely, this article demonstrates the pertinence of widening the research scope beyond the synthesis of the nation and the state, by focusing on the particular case of Scotland as a nation without a state and the role schools played in creating Scottish national identity in the wake of the Union of Parliaments in 1707. Thereby focus is put on textbooks as a materialisation of curricula and an extended arm of school governance. The article concludes with insights that can be derived from this case study for the case of Scottish nationalism as well as its significance for the study of nationalism, education and their interrelation in general.*

**Key words:** loyal national citizens; nation-building; school system; Scotland.

## **Introduction**

Research endeavours centring on the interrelation between education and curriculum on one side and nation-building on the other side, have remarkably often been exemplified by discussing cases such as France, Germany or the United States. These cases, in other words, represent strong and successful nation-states, which possess not only a powerful political order but also a defined and widely dispersed idea of the nation. However, through this focus on established nation-states, they run the risk of assuming the synthesis of 'the nation' and 'the state' as being presupposed. With that, they seem to forget, or at least omit, that there are in fact states without a nation, as the case of interwar Austria exemplifies (see article by Kevser Muratovic & Florian Gimpl, in this issue), as well as ample global cases of nations without states, such as

the Catalans, Kurds, Palestinians, Sami, Tamils, the First Nations in Canada — and the Scots. The success of a nation-state is primarily expressed in the loyalty and devotion of its citizens, which are assumingly conditioned by the ties of the nation binding its citizens to a national ‘we’, rather than the legal definitions of citizenry. Thus, this paper will discuss how a certain nation without a state, that is Scotland, came to prevail even when faced with an agenda of state control which threatened to eradicate the national self-consciousness of the Scottish and replace it with ‘Britishness’ following the Union of Parliaments in 1707.

While citizenry is defined legally and can be acquired by birth or through naturalisation, national identity has to be internalised (Boser, 2016). In this context, particularly the modern school system as the “inculcator” of nationality is to be highlighted, which emerged as a contemporary of the nation-state in the modern era and is repeatedly, albeit often times superficially, linked to the nation-state as one of its “most effective and constructive tool[s]” (Tamir, 2019, p. 77) in theories of nation and nationalism (Tröhler & Maricic, under review). In order to control the daily proceedings of the school system, state and/or other agencies in charge of formal education possess two effective strategies of interreference: teacher training and teaching materials. Particularly teaching materials, with textbooks at their forefront as one of the oldest and most widely utilised educational media, are an essential part of curricula, yet are still relatively neglected in regard to their dependency on socio-political contexts by education research (Fuchs & Macgilchrist, 2017). Therefore, this paper will additionally draw attention to the prominent role of textbooks as an “extended-arm” of school governance. In the context of what can be described as the emergence of Scottish nationalist discourse in the eighteenth century – that is the creation of a common identity which was to cast a shadow over primordial clan feuds and unite the population of Scotland – the importance of textbooks becomes even more vivid. As in other Western European countries at the time, a national ideology or “imagined community” (Anderson, 1983) had to be created that would coincide with “dominant cultural convictions” (Tröhler, 2016, p. 290). The driving forces of this national unification were predominantly intellectuals, that is poets, writers and scholars (Tröhler, 2017, p. 32). And it is precisely the convictions of these intellectual and nationalist circles that found their way into Scottish schools, by including excerpts from, for instance, Robert Burns or David Hume in the textbooks and even utilising schoolbooks written by none other than Sir Walter Scott.

To put it succinctly, this paper investigates how textbooks, as an essential materialisation of the curricula, were utilised in Scottish schools after the Union of Parliaments in 1707 to preserve the supposed Scottishness of the Scottish against the new British norms and values. Therefore, in the following section, the historical and socio-political context, including the educational landscape, of post-1707-union Scotland will be traced in order to uncover the particularities of this case. Subsequently, the methodology framing the proposed examination of Scottish textbooks in regard to

their nationalist purpose will be outlined. Thereupon, a select depiction of nationalist motives, which were uncovered in the textbooks, will be provided. In conclusion, these motives will be discussed in regard to their contribution to a further understanding of the particular case of Scottish nationalism and, finally, an outlook for the future study of nationalism, education and their interrelation will be provided.

## **The case of Scotland**

The case of Scotland is a truly unique example of nationalism, which makes its study all the worthwhile as it demonstrates the need to break open at least some of the taken-for-granted assumptions in the classical debate of nation and nationalism. While the different camps of nationalism theories have differing opinions on what constitutes the characteristics of nations and nationalism, none of the classical approaches seem to be able to fully grasp this case. Those theorists that date the emergence of nations and nationalism to the modern era, in general do not refer to Scottish attempts of creating a unified and cohesive national people as expressions of nationalism per se until at least the late nineteenth century (see e.g. Hobsbawm, 1990, p. 105), and mostly the twentieth century (see e.g. Nairn, 1983, 1997; Tiryakian, 1995). Others, which emphasise the longevity of pre-modern ties in the emergence of nationalism as a phenomenon of modernity, acknowledge Scotland to be a fully-fledged 'nation' (see e.g. Connor, 1994; Hutchinson, 2017; Smith, 1998), similarly to those assuming nation and nationalism to be something primordial (see e.g. Grosby, 2005; Hastings, 1997). For these theorists, the biggest struggle with the case of Scotland seems to be that it cannot be argued for as being derived from one ethnicity or language group (Hastings, 1997, p. 70). Moreover, it appears that generally little attention from a Scotland-centric point of view is drawn to the time period between the Union of Parliaments and nationalist protests following the First World War, almost as if the Scottish gave up or replaced their national identity during this time period (see e.g. Connor, 1994, pp. 51, 54; Smith, 1998, p. 62). The periods that do stand out in academic debates on Scottish nationalism – the thirteenth and fourteenth century (see e.g. Hutchinson, 2017, p. 23; Smith, 1998, p. 193), as well as the twentieth century (see e.g. Hechter, 2000, p. 184; Nairn, 1983, pp. 59f.) – are significant in two regards: for one, they are inherently violent time periods and secondly, they seem to be constitutive for the legitimacy of the Scottish nation and national identity.

The first decades following the union in 1707 were anything but tranquil, marked by drastic political, economic, social and cultural changes. By the time of the Union of Parliaments, Scotland and England had already been united under one crown for just over 100 years as the result of a previous marriage between the English and Scottish royal houses with James IV, king of Scots, and Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII of England tying the knot in 1503. One hundred years later, in 1603, this marriage led to the Union of Crowns, when Elizabeth I of England deceased without any direct descendants, leaving the crown to James VI of Scotland, and subsequently James I of

England and Ireland. As the reigning line was coming to an end approximately one century later, Anne Stuart, who took the British throne in 1701, as well as her sister Mary were childless and likely to remain so. Consequently, the main purpose of the union was to settle the question of succession, rendering the possibility of a Catholic monarch impossible once and for all (Whatley, 2006, pp. 224f.; Robertson, 2006, p. xiii). The question of religion had been and remained delicate in Scotland ever since, almost overnight, Scotland turned from a fairly typical and pious Catholic country to Presbyterianism during the Scottish Reformation of 1560 (Ryrie, 2006). By and large in contemporary historiography, the union between Scotland and England in 1707 is depicted as a result of negation rather than a hostile takeover, with many assumingly having agreed with its clauses and trusted in its benefits (see e.g. Hechter, 1975; Nairn, 1997; Robertson, 2006). Beyond the incisive political changes that the union brought along, harrowing famines coupled with changing labour conditions of the industrialisation caused not only migration within Scotland but also drew in high numbers of Irish immigrants during this time period (Anderson, 1995, p. 38; Coleman, 2016, pp. 23f.). After the union, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century, also came more and more opportunities for economic growth which the Scottish most willingly and actively took advantage of (Harvie, 2004, pp. 34ff.). This resulted in a rapid population explosion in what is now referred to as the *central belt* of Scotland, altering the social and cultural conditions in the new, growing, anonymous, delinquent, urban centres (Anderson, 1995, p. 38).

Amidst all of these developments however, there were remarkable constants and independent institutions in Scottish everyday life: the Scottish legal, religious and educational institutions. Particularly the educational system remained strikingly untarnished until the 1840s when legislative interference from London slowly began to alter Scottish education (Bischof, 2015, p. 210). Within traditional Scottish education history, the Scottish school system is commonly portrayed as pioneering in comparison to continental Europe, arguing that it encompassed a comparatively wide and active network of schools all across the Scottish territory as early as the eighteenth century (Anderson, 1995; Hechter, 1975; Houston, 1985). However, while the myth of the superiority of Scottish schooling was undoubtedly not created out of nothing, one cannot yet speak of a fully-developed, all-encompassing modern school system in the wake of the union, as schools were still largely locally organised, with attendance varying not only geographically but also seasonally, and thus differed immensely across the nation. While most schools fell under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church, which regularly dispatched ministers to examine children's 'Christian knowledge' and inspect schools (Anderson, 1995; Durkan, 2013; Vance, 2000), one similarly cannot yet speak of a nation-wide curriculum which was implemented in all Scottish schools either. Nonetheless, an inquiry commissioned by the House of Commons in 1838 and published in 1841 indicates that there were books written for the use in schools which were commonly utilised in Scottish classrooms. These textbooks are analysed in the

following in regard to their presumed contribution to educating loyal, distinctively and consciously Scottish citizens after the Union of Parliaments.

## Methodology of uncovering the Scottish in Scottish schools

The argumentation provided in this article is grounded in the contemporary “social constructionist” approach to nationalism, developed by the political scientist Umut Özkirimli (2017, pp. 217-227), which understands nationalism as a “discourse, a particular way of seeing and interpreting the world, a frame of reference that helps us make sense of and structure the reality that surrounds us” (ibid., p. 218). What differentiates nationalism from other, for instance, political or religious discourses according to Özkirimli is its *identity*, *temporal* and *spatial* claims (ibid., pp. 220f.), i.e. dividing the world into “us and them” with homogenous and fixed perceptions of identity, positing a linear, historic heritage of the nation, and persisting on the existence of a “territorially rightful homeland”. This is not to say that nationalism loses its effectiveness because it is socially constituted; on the contrary, it is its social constitution and institutionalisation that makes nationalism “‘real’ in its consequences” (ibid., p. 220). Or in the words of the historian John Gillis, quoted by Özkirimli (2017, p. 218), national identities “are not things we think *about*, but things we think *with* [sic!]”.

By understanding nationalism as a daily reproduced discourse or discursive frame of thinking, this theoretical approach allows non-aggressive or *banal* (Billig, 1995) forms of nationalism to be included as objects of research, as they are i.a. fostered and performed in and through school systems. Accordingly, in order to uncover the strategies employed in post-1707-schools in Scotland to frame the national minds of Scottish pupils, a form of discourse analysis has to be applied. With the so-called *linguistic turn*, various approaches to understanding the way we think have been developed, all sharing the premises of a linguistically constructed world. In that, the distinction of *parole* and *langue*, developed by Ferdinand de Saussure, is conductive, assuming a superordinate, theoretical, regulating system, or *langue*, and an actual act of speech, *parole* (Tröhler & Horlacher, 2019, p. 10). Particularly John G.A. Pocock’s transformation of de Saussure’s concept was operationalised for this project, as he highlighted the historical study of political discourses and placed the value of analysis on the *langue(s)* rather than *parole(s)* and their emergence. “For anything to be said or written or printed,” Pocock (1987, p. 20) emphasises, “there must be a language to say it in”. Thus, in order to understand a discourse, a historian must examine its linguistic expressions, i.e. its “acts of speech and the conditions and contexts in which these acts were performed” (ibid., p. 20).

In this particular case, the linguistic expressions to be studied are the textual contents of schoolbooks used in post-1707-union Scotland. In consideration of the claims distinguishing nationalism from other discourses (Özkirimli, 2017), the sampling was contained to English, History and Geography textbooks as it can be assumed, given the nature of their content, that these subjects provide the most fruitful opportunities for

conveying national ideologies and educating national identity. The sample of books was collected by carefully cross-referencing works on Scottish school bibliography in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see Eddy, 2010; Law, 1965; Law, 1989; Moore, 2012) with a questionnaire commissioned by the House of Commons, published in 1841, which asked Scottish schoolmasters to list i.a. the books used in their schools to teach a number of subjects, in order to find the most commonly read textbooks. Ultimately, the sample comprised 26 books, including 12 English, 8 History and 6 Geography books (a list of which is provided at the end). It should be noted, that dictionaries which were commonly utilised as English books and therefore frequently listed in the questionnaire, were excluded from the sampling as they rarely included full sentences. Additionally, while the title of textbooks suggests the subject they were written for, they were in fact often used to teach more than one subject.

Following Pocock's (1987) 'archaeological tools', the first methodical step, i.e. to familiarise oneself with the social and historical context in which a discourse or *langue* is created and being used, was already carried out in the contextualisation of post-1707-union Scotland. This assessment of the Scottish case, coupled with the methodological considerations described above, provided first indications for significant expressions, symbols, norms and values of Scottish nationalism and were recorded in a 'preliminary dictionary' containing possible national motives to be found in the textbooks. These motives were subsequently verified, expanded, altered and/or omitted through a first analysis of the six most prominently listed books in reviews of Scottish school bibliography and the 1841-questionnaire; being Ewing's (1816b) *System of Geography*, Robertson's (1793) *Abridgement of the History of Scotland*, Scott's (1826) *Beauties of Eminent Writes: Volume I*, Stewart's (1828) *Compendium of Modern Geography*, Simpson's (1818) *History of Scotland* and Thompson's (1835) *Collection in Prose and Verse*. These books, which made up around one quarter of the total sampling, were subsequently examined in regard to national motives; or in the words of Pocock (1987), *parole* that was derived from the *langue* of Scottish nationalism, for which the preliminary dictionary served as a referencing point. Upon analysing these books, the dictionary was provisionally expanded with all findings of national utterances of the first run-through, before examining the remaining 20 books. As the aim of this study was to explore possible strategies employed in Scottish schools to frame the national minds of its pupils, it can be assumed that this 'dictionary', as the addition 'preliminary' suggests, is not complete and should be expanded through further study of Scottish textbooks and other educational media, provided they are still accessible, to fully understand the *langue* of Scottish nationalism, its paradigms, intentions and limitations, and its development over time.

## Findings: National motives in Scottish textbooks

The analysis of Scottish textbooks utilised in the century and a half following the Union of Parliaments in 1707 uncovered the embedding of at least nine recurring



national motives derived from a strong belief in the existence and legitimisation of ‘the Scottish nation’, expressed in English, History and Geography books alike. In order of the frequency of the number of textbooks that contained each national motive, these motives comprise: (1) *Scotland as a distinctive and independent nation* (88.5%), (2) *the character of ‘the Scots’* (80.7%), (3) *benefits of the British union* (77.9%), (4) *beauty and benefits of the Scottish landscape* (69.2%), (5) *national heroes* (65.4%), (6) *love of homeland* (61.5%), (7) *England as the (ancient) enemy* (57.7%), (8) *Scotland’s superiority compared to other nations* (57.7%) and (9) *the Highlanders* (53.8%). In the following, the three most frequently employed national motives, with abridged references to other motives, will be depicted (for more detail see Maricic, 2019), beginning with the most constitutive assumption of Scottish nationalism – that the Scottish nation, albeit now annexed to the kingdom of England, is fundamentally distinct and, more importantly, independent and free – followed by the most persistent ambivalence in the Scottish national discourse – the attitude towards the British union – before turning to the supposed ‘character of the Scots’.

### ***Scotland as a distinct and independent nation***

Given the content of Geography, it is inevitable that within these textbooks a decision has to be made on how to label the territorial status of Scotland. Notably, all Geography books treated Scotland as a distinctive ‘kingdom’, ‘country’ or ‘nation’, demarcated from its union-partner England, within the ‘British Empire’. In comparison to Geography books, English and History books were not only concerned with labelling the ‘factual’ territory of Scotland, but also with the ‘necessity’ and historicity of Scottish freedom and independence. Particularly History books are drenched with accounts of long and gruesome wars which are depicted as being imperative to defend or regain Scottish independence and freedom. In this, the i.a. ‘brave’ and ‘prudent’ character of the Scots and important historical figures, which were portrayed as national heroes, willing to risk their own lives, were repeatedly described and even used to legitimise the continuing wars between Scotland and England. These heroic Scots are most captivatingly described in historic narratives as admirable, strong, clever and courageous young, predominantly but not exclusively, men who, alone or with a much smaller number of combatants, through and for the love of Scotland, defeated an overbearing and cruel foreign enemy, which was in most cases their neighbour, ancient enemy and current union partner — England.

Moreover, all History books were titled something like ‘History of Scotland’, indicating, banally and with that efficaciously, that England and Scotland have different national histories which thus must be told separately. In English books, which usually contain a selection of verse and prose written by various authors of not only Scottish origin, it appears that poems in particular were commonly selected to express the zeal for Scottish independence. In Sir Walter Scott’s (1826b) *Beauties of Eminent Writes*, for instance, the section of poems to be recited in class – a common rubric in contemporary English

books – included poems written by 22 Scottish, 20 English and 4 Irish poets. Whereas English and Irish poems centred around topics such as ancient Greece, navigation or animal cruelty, most Scottish poems depicted glorious battles and national heroes, and emphasised patriotism and the love of Scotland. Thus, speaking about Scotland as a distinct and independent nation almost immediately constituted the expression of love and devotion. This can be demonstrated by many examples, yet most vividly perhaps with Sir Walter Scott's poem *Patriotism or Love of Country* (title varying in the textbooks; see Anon, 1833; Leitch, 1839; M'Culloch, 1827; Scott, 1826b). In this poem, Sir Walter Scott appears to equate not being patriotic with committing a sin, for which the only possible consequence seems to be, as morbid as it sounds, dying:

[b]reaths there the man, with soul so dead, Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land! Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd, As  
home his footsteps he hath turned, [...] [then; VM] [t]he wretch, concentr'd  
all in self, Living, shall forfeit fair renown, And, doubly dying, shall go down"  
(Scott n.d. as cited in Scott, 1826b, p. 166).

That this was a message intended specifically for the Scottish people becomes clear in the second verse of the poem, when he addressed "Caledonia" directly – an ancient name of the territory that is in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and to this day, called Scotland. With that, this short excerpt from a poem found in four of the examined English books, expresses very memorably all three essential characteristics of nationalist discourse, that is presupposing a direct link between identity and territory, an ancient national history and a primordial homeland – in fact, in even as little as three words: "my native land".

### ***Benefits of the British Union in 1707***

The depictions of Scotland throughout its allegedly long national history certainly convey the impression that the History book authors seemed to unanimously agree on the naturalness and desirousness of the Scottish zeal for independence in the past as well as the strong public dissent surrounding the Union of Parliaments in 1707. Generally, the enforcement of the union was depicted as being dreaded by all Scots as it "was regarded as about to put an end to the national existence of Scotland" (Simpson, 1818, p. 150); being of substantial disadvantage to the Scottish as, for instance, Sir Walter Scott (1829) claimed that "even those who had expected the most unfavourable terms, were not prepared for the rigour of the conditions which had been adopted" (Scott, 1829, pp. 285f.); and only being instituted with "the influence and the bribes of the ministers" (Morrison, 1831, p. 73).

It is surprising, however, that a consensus regarding the consequences of this union for Scotland's authority cannot be found within the textbooks for the subject most constitutively dealing with the socio-political context of a nation, that is history. In line with the depiction of the territorial status of Scotland in most of the Geography books, Simpson (1818) and Morrison (1831) acknowledge the political Union of Parliaments,



but still consider Scotland as distinctly different than England, with its own and political actions, laws, religion, and people. While Morrison (1831) claims, that “the separate history of Scotland [terminated]” (*ibid.*, p. 65) with the union, he continues to discuss the following decades in regard to their significance for Scotland, and not for Great Britain in general unless the context is international or, at times, geographical (i.e. ‘the island of Great Britain’). A brilliant example for this differentiation between Great Britain in the international context and enduring Scottish distinction can be found in Simpson’s (1818) account of the battle of Waterloo. The depiction of the victory over Napoleon, portrayed as the deciding battle for peace in Europe, vividly exemplifies the conviction of Scotland being a vital and autonomous country after the British union. While Simpson did describe “the glory of the British and their illustrious commanders” (Simpson, 1818, p. 321), which achieved the victory over Napoleon, he simultaneously emphasised the role of the Scottish soldiers, which supposedly formed their own military division. Not only were these Scots portrayed as having taken over the lead of the “old imperial guard”, but they were furthermore assumed to have exclaimed “Scotland for ever!” as they were charging against the French enemy (cf. Simpson, pp. 316f.); once again, expressing the Scottish unwillingness to abandon their national identity and independence. Similar to Morrison (1831), Leitch (1845) and Scott (1829) ascribe the same value to historical battles for Scottish independence and suppose that Scotland’s complete autonomy vanished with the union; yet they, too, differentiate between Great Britain mostly in international contexts and Scottish peculiarities. In Robertson’s (1793) and Stewart’s (1829) historical accounts, the time period following the union was omitted completely, even though the books were written decades later.

In comparison to historical narratives, the discussion of ‘contemporary’ Scotland displays an interesting juggling act of two essential yet seemingly contradictory national motives, i.e. the benefits of the British union and England being the (ancient) enemy. While it was the English who so often threatened and, as it was the case at the time as well, compromised Scottish independence – this was the common rhetoric of post-union Scottish history discourse – there now seemed to be reason to endure a ‘partnership’ with Scotland’s biggest foe. Generally, as was depicted above, the enforcement of the union was portrayed as being dreaded by all Scots in the textbooks. Over time however, representing another consensus of the Scottish textbook authors, advantages of the union are believed to have manifested themselves in the second half of the eighteenth century, predominantly in Scottish industry and commerce. Morrison (1831) aptly summarises these benefits in his catechism-like History book with the question “What was the state of Scotland during the reign of George III?” (*ibid.*, p. 80), to which pupils were supposed to reply: “The beneficial effects of the Union now appeared, and Scotland made rapid advances in agriculture, manufactures, commerce, literature, and refinement” (*ibid.*, p. 80). Furthermore, constituting another alleged benefit of the union, it was supposed that already through the Union of the Crowns in 1603, Scotland and England formed a political superpower, which neither kingdom could have achieved on its own (see e.g. Simpson, 1818, p. 150). It is particularly striking that the benefits

arising from the union are predominately discussed in regard to their significance for Scotland rather than the British Empire. Moreover, it appears to have been of utmost importance to the textbook authors to portray Scotland as being a valid contributor to the union, and in many regards even superior to England, and at times all of Europe, especially in regard to education (see e.g. Stewart, 1828, p. 100), agriculture (see e.g. Guthrie, 1771a, p. 174) and warfare (see e.g. Simpson, 1811, pp. 314ff.).

### ***The character of the Scots***

Similar to the chasm between the old and new relationship with England, a distinction is made between ‘the historic’ and ‘the modern Scot’. Throughout historical accounts in all three subjects, Scots were praised for being “barbarous, fierce, and warlike people, but strongly attached to their country, and averse to the yoke of a foreign power” (Morrison, 1831, p. 10). Yet, this supposedly ‘natural’ barbarism of the Scots was simultaneously often described as hindering progress in olden times, which is why the union and its legislation were particularly praised for presumably instating tranquillity and order in Scotland which in turn fostered i.a. economical, agricultural, religious educational, and scientific growth (see e.g. Guthrie, 1771a, pp. 177f.; Robertson, 1793, pp. 65f.). However, these accounts appear not to have served the purpose of eradicating the image of a strong and brave Scottish population. On the contrary, as Sir Walter Scott’s poem *Ancient and Modern Edinburgh* cited in the English book *Instructive Extracts* (Anon., 1833, pp. 304f.), which describes the constant readiness of its inhabitants to defend “Caledonia’s Queen” Edinburgh, exemplifies. Accordingly, Scottish pupils, even in an allegedly tranquil time of peaceful and beneficial union, were thus instructed to be ready and willing to defend their nation.

While the qualities of the ancient Scots were to be praised, not all of them were assumed as being suitable for the post-1707 modern and civilised era of Scotland. The ‘modern Scot’ was consequently characterised as “industrious, frugal, prudent, hardy, and brave” (Stewart, 1828, p. 37). However, the ancient Scottish attributes most noticeably carried on to the physical description of ‘the Scot’, who was now also generalised as being “lean, clean limbed, can endure incredible fatigues, [and with] adventuring spirit” (Guthrie, 1771a, p. 177), possessing furthermore “a fondness for the memory and language of their forefathers beyond, perhaps, any people in the world; but this attachment is seldom or never carried into anything that is indecent or disgusting, though they retain it abroad as well as home” (ibid, p. 177). While some textbook authors more strongly than others emphasised the benefits of the British union and also depicted undesirable qualities of the Scottish (see e.g. Graham, 1837, pp. 313-320; Guthrie, 1771a, p. 177), only Ewing (1816b) in his *System of Geography* argued for the necessity of fully assimilating to English characteristics and customs. In that, he supposed that the conduct of the superior classes in Scotland had already begun to assimilate to the English, while the peasantry still held onto their “amusements, superstitions and manners” (ibid., p. 45).

## Conclusion

Upon analysing the textbooks which were commonly utilised in Scottish classrooms after the Union of Parliaments in 1707 until at least the 1840s, it appears that the books not only served the goal of depicting and legitimising Scotland as a demarcated and mighty nation, but also to convey what was expected of the pupils as they were taught to think of themselves as being distinctly *Scottish* citizens. Thereby Scottish nationalism, in comparison to academically often discussed examples of established nation-states, faced the particular challenge of joining its constitutive aversion against England with the new and indisputable political order agreed upon in the Union of Parliaments. Scottish philosopher George E. Davie (1961, p. xxii) aptly summarises this complex conviction by stating that while the Scottish pursued a “unification in politics” with their English neighbours, a “separation in ethics” remained. As the national motives uncovered in the English, Geography and History textbooks alike convincingly display, this particularly Scottish nationalist discourse was most certainly fostered within the school system.

Even though the content of the national motives seems to be comparatively broad, ranging from ancient battles to agricultural achievements of the present, they all, more or less *banally* (Billig, 1995), legitimise Scotland as a distinct nation by referring to its territory, temporality and/or identity of its citizens (Özkirimli, 2017). Commonly these national motives, as well as the nationalist claims, were intertwined in the textbooks, as Simpson’s (1818) admittedly extensive but insightful description of national hero William Wallace exemplifies:

*Wallace was a patriot and hero endowed with gigantic strength of body, with heroic courage of mind, with disinterested magnanimity, with incredible patience and ability to bear hunger, fatigue, and all the inclemencies of the season; and had through the course of many years with signal conduct, intrepidity, and perseverance, defended against a cruel and overbearing enemy, the liberties of his native country, whose sons must ever regard his memory with the warmest feelings of gratitude and affection; whilst they drop the sympathetic tear over his unhappy fate.* (Simpson, 1818, p. 37)

Moreover, this quote indicates that the significance and effects of nationalist discourse were in fact conscious to the textbook authors, whereby similar statements can be found in other textbooks as well. Most obviously, Stewart (1829) addresses the effects of national remembrance and praising national heroes, when describing the reason for which Edward I conquered Wales: “[...] because they used to sing songs and tell stories about the brave actions of the Welsh heroes; by which they kept up the courage of their countrymen, and their resolution never to submit to an English king” (ibid., p. 37). Thus, the analysis of Scottish post-1707-union textbooks confirms the central role of textbooks within curricula, as an intersection of everyday school experience and external control, and with that an essential tool of nation-building.

Of course, textbook analysis, too, is not without its limitations. In this particular case study, the limitations of a historical textbook analysis were foremost encountered in the reliable identification of the most commonly utilised textbooks in the inquiry commissioned by the House of Commons in 1838, which could be questioned for its reliability, simply due to possible copying mistakes, legibility and at times unclear referencing. Therefore, the schoolmaster's answers were verified through academic work on Scottish textbook bibliography. Once the books were identified, the procurement of each of the book's first editions presented a hurdle that could not be overcome in all instances. Furthermore, it remains unknown how these textbooks were in fact utilised in the classrooms and whether, for instance, certain passages were highlighted during lessons or, conversely, even left out.

Nonetheless, these textbooks which frequently display national motives, were written and read during a time in Scottish history when many traditions, which are now considered ancient and constitutive, were being invented (Coleman, 2016). While Scotland itself was not a nation-state, it was confronted with a new political order, which had stripped the Scottish government of its powers, within a world of slowly emerging nation-states, which exhibited the prospects of forming an independent state. Subsequently, from monuments for William Wallace to dressing in kilts and playing bagpipes to express national union rather than clan separation, Scottish everyday life and self-image underwent drastic processes of unification, rendering, albeit not always peacefully, ancient clan ties as a hindrance in creating a national consciousness and a cohesive, solidary people. Consequently, recognising that Scottish pupils are educated in schools to believe in the Scottish nation and their placement within it, and understanding the particularities of Scottish nationalism, are crucial in order to understand aggressive or extreme expressions of nationalism, as they were for instance recently displayed in repeated calls for the resolution of the union within the debates over Brexit. Contrary to modernist theories of Scottish nationalism, this should not be taken to mean that nationalism did not exist in Scotland prior to protests against the union in the 1920s. Instead, it appears to be a constitutive element of Scottish nationalism to put the nation's welfare in first place, which is why it is then not surprising that extreme forms of nationalism are not materialised unless the benefits of a partnership with England no longer outweigh the zeal for Scottish independence. For the future study of Scottish nationalism and other cases, as will be discussed in the following, it will be pertinent to examine the development of nationalist discourses over time, for which a comparison of their (re-)production in the school system, and their materialisation in textbooks, will offer fruitful insights.

## **Outlook**

Scotland as a case study more broadly demonstrates the importance of breaking open the limitations of theories of nation and nationalism conditioned by discussing nationalism as a predominantly political, that is state-bound phenomenon of the

modern era, as it exemplifies that politically motivated protests and actions appear to not have been necessary to secure the existence of a nation and the loyalty of its citizens. In this sense, the Scottish case exemplifies the need to expand the research objects of theories of nationalism beyond established nation-states, with that widening the understanding of the terms *nation* and *nationalism*, as it appears that *nation* is mistakenly often used synonymously to the term *state* (Tröhler, 2020).

Furthermore, for the academic study of formal education this entails that even though the past thirty years have seen strong efforts towards an international or even global standardisation of school curricula, and especially international organisations such as the OECD or the European Union, with their international comparative tests, are often causing furores (Bürgi & Tröhler, 2018; Grek & Lawn, 2009; Sivesind et al. 2012), it should be acknowledged that the development of curricula has so far been left in the hands of national government agencies. And, even more importantly, this national stronghold over formal education is not only performative in its jurisdiction but in the goals the school system is supposed to serve as well. In regard to the interdependence of nation-building and schooling, this case study offers a fruitful starting point for academic inquiry, as schools are shaped externally through textbooks and other educational media, and in turn internally shape the distinctly national minds of their pupils. However, whichever element of the school system is chosen, it is pertinent to treat its actors as *floating signifiers* (Meyer, 1992), i.e. nationally-minded pupils as well as teachers, headmasters or education policy makers, who themselves were taught what it means to be a citizen of their respective nation(-state) when they had been at school. Thus, whether the research endeavour aims at understanding a specific case of nationalist discourse or the conditions of a certain school curriculum or educational experience, it should now be more evident that this can only be achieved by intersecting the fields of nationalism and curriculum, respectively education.

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# Udžbenici nacionalnoga identiteta: podučavanje škotstva nakon ujedinjenja parlamenata

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## **Sažetak**

*Čak unatoč tome što je međusobna povezanost pojave modernih sustava masovnoga školovanja i procesa izgradnje nacije u moderno doba izazvala akademski interes, takva istraživačka nastojanja uglavnom su predstavljena studijama slučaja uspostavljenih nacionalnih država. S druge strane, u ovome radu ustraje se na širenju istraživačkoga spektra izvan granica sinteze nacije i države, fokusirajući se na poseban slučaj Škotske kao nacije bez države i ulogu koju su škole odigrale u kreiranju škotskoga nacionalnog identiteta nakon ujedinjenja parlamenata 1707. godine. Stoga, fokus je na udžbenicima kao materijalizaciji kurikula i produženoj ruci školske vlasti. U zaključku rada donose se uvidi dobiveni u ovoj studiji slučaja o škotskom nacionalizmu kao i važnosti proučavanja nacionalizma, obrazovanja i njihove općenite međusobne povezanosti.*

**Ključne riječi:** *izgradnja nacije; lojalni nacionalni građani; školski sustav; Škotska.*