

## Секция 1. Современные вопросы мировой науки: вызовы и решения («Modern Issues of World Science: Challenges and Solutions»)

### The main aspects of Scottish nationalism

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**Abstract:** This article is devoted to the main values of Scottish nationalism. However, in each period of history the semantic content of these national ideas have changed. The purpose of the article is to explore the different meanings of the Scottish national idea and trace its transformation. For this end, in the course of a retrospective analysis, the author of the article distinguishes the reference points serving for periodization. The author identifies three key periods in the formation and development of the Scottish national idea: from the XIII to the XVIII centuries, from 1707 to the 20th century (the watershed is the world war here), and the present time, when the process of colonial disintegration has led to rethinking of the role and place of the Scots in the Union with Great Britain.

**Keywords:** Scotland, Scottish nationalism, national idea, national symbol, tradition, England, empire.

It is not a secret that Scotland is a country, part of the United Kingdom. Its' great history and original culture are the occasion for existence of sentiments to be apart from the UK. However, how old in fact is so-called ancient Scottish nationalistic feeling?

Definitely, it is difficult to find out the point, when a nation or a nationalistic feeling begins, because if even we got the point, we could not be sure that the past idea about a nation was the same as the present one. However, we can follow the transformation of a national feeling; we just need to find a moment to start with. A name of the place – a country or people, which was mentioned in a written source, or a legend, which also has a confirmation in papers, could be the claim of a nation for existence. For Scotland, such a claim was clearly manifested in the iconic Declaration of Arbroath of 1320.

It was a letter, addressed from the Scottish elite to Pope John XXII with the assertion of the right of Scotland to sovereignty and independence from England. The most interesting part of the document for our research is the Scots' narration of “their” history: “...among other famous nations our own, the Scots, has been graced with widespread renown. It journeyed from Greater Scythia by way of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Pillars of Hercules, and dwelt for a long course of time in Spain among the most savage peoples, but nowhere could it be subdued by any people barbarous. Thence it came, twelve hundred years after the people of Israel crossed the Red Sea, to its home in the west where it still lives today. The Britons it first drove out, the Picts it utterly destroyed, and, even though very often assailed by the Norwegians, the Danes and the English, it

took possession of that home with many victories and untold efforts; and, as the histories of old time bear witness, they have held it free of all servitude ever since. In their kingdom there have reigned one hundred and thirteen kings of their own royal stock, the line unbroken by a single foreigner” [1].

Typically, for the early medieval text, the document begins with the rewriting of the history of the people from the creation of the world, with the indispensable reference on biblical events. This imagined history of Scots is based on a few origin myth-stories. The main one is about Scotta, a daughter of Egyptian pharaoh, who left Egypt with the Jews and long wandered until she settled in Scotland. Her traveling was described in the Declaration of Arbroath without naming her. However, she could be regarded as a legendary ancestress of Scots.

Otherwise, the English thought that the Trojan named Brutus was the founder of the early royal dynasties of Britain. This legend was written in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (‘History of the Kings of Britain’) by Geoffrey of Monmouth. In this way, the Declaration of Arbroath was the culmination of ideological battle of origins between England and Scotland. Speaking in the most general terms, England was inhabited by tribes of the Germanic root and was conquered by Normans. Scotland was inhabited mostly by Celtic tribes of Scots and Gaels. The Norse were in the northern and western isles. The Picts in the north and east were also the important component for further Scottish nation. The tribal union between the Scots of Dalriada and The Picts was the first step to the foundation of Scotland.

Unfortunately, scientists have not yet succeeded in understanding the tribal kinship of the Picts. The mystery of these people was used in ideological battle of origins of the Middle Ages. The peoples’ right for existence depended on the myth-stories about whose origin is more ancient or who were the founding peoples of the nation. That is why the English side tried to impose that the Scots originated from the German root. Not far from the legend about Brutus another theory that “Picts were ‘really’ Teutons (‘Germans’)” [2] appeared. However, Scotland promoted its’ own theories of origin to resist these English claims. The Scottish elite minimized Pictish roots by claiming that Scots had vanquished the Picts, or even had exterminated them. This anti-Pictish myth dominated for a long period. Its’ echoes easily can be found in the literary work of Robert Louis Stevenson, named “Heather Ale: A Galloway Legend”.

Thereby, such evidence can be regarded as the first manifestation of the national idea of Scotland. Its meaning suggested not being English, while the English imposed the reverse position. So, we may see that ancient myths and legends became a sort of historical narration. Every side has been appealed to it for centuries, using both in politics and even in science. If one asks, if understanding of roots is still important for nowadays, the English historian Hugh Trevor-Roper with his work “The Invention of Scotland: Myth and History” should be

mentioned. As David McCorne notes, the English historian tried “to undermine the claims to Scottish autonomy” by this work [3]. Despite the fact that the book was published after the death of the scientist, in 2008, materials for it were compiled in the 1970s, just before the first referendum attempt to restore the Scottish parliament. The main Scottish national symbols are observed in Trevor-Ropers’ work as relatively recent inventions of the English themselves, not the Scots.

Another story of the Scottish nationalism is devoted to the question of union of 1707. David McCorne, a Scottish sociologist, told: “Even asserting that it was ‘treaty’ of union, rather than conquest (as in Wales and Ireland), makes a historical point with much political force” [4]. However, he concludes that the Union was then a compromise, which contained safeguards for the continuing independence of Scottish law, religion, education and local government. Scottish merchants were benefiting skillfully not only from the expanded markets, but also from colonial goods and resources, as many researchers have noted. “The empire provided markets for Scottish products, while the Caribbean was a source of cheap cotton for the growing Scottish textile industry, which dominated the first phase of industrialization. Some of the profits from the tobacco and sugar trades were invested in domestic production, and went into the acquisition of landed estates, where property owners were often active ‘improvers’ of agriculture. By the 1839s, Scotland was entering a period of rapid industrialization, dominated by the heavy industries in the west of the country” [5]. In addition to trade, the Scots in the British Empire were known as courageous mercenaries and professional soldiers. Their actions, as well, spread the fashion for “all Scottish” in the empire, after the episodic battle at Balaklava (1854) in the Crimean War. Later William H. Russell reported in *The London Times* that he could not see anything in a skirmish between Russians and British except “the thin red streak, tipped with a line of steel” of the 93rd [6]. In addition, the Scots succeeded in missionary activity, bringing to the aborigines of new territories the notion of Protestant ethics and the idea of liberalism as they could understand it. Tom M. Devine argued that a huge role was assigned to religion, which not only helped to strengthen relations with England, but also influenced the consolidation of Scottish identity itself [7].

On the other hand, H. Trevor-Roper insisted that the creation of an independent “Highlander tradition” was not earlier than the late 18th or even 19th centuries. It was produced from the Irish-Celtic culture and many symbols of Scotland were the inventions of the Englishmen. For example, “Kilt” (philibeg) remained unknown until the XVIII century, when an English Quaker from Lancashire, Thomas Rawlinson decided to improve the dress of his employees from Glengarry (A valley in the Scottish Highlands, near to Inverness) [8]. Even if

we turn to the works of H. Trevor-Roper, who is skeptical of the entire Scottish tradition, we will see that the period of the empire was a landmark for its emergence.



Robert Gibb

The 93rd (Highland) Regiment forming "The Thin Red Line"  
at the Battle of Balaklava, Crimean War, 25th October 1854

D. McCorne also designates three pillars of Scottish nationalism during the period of the empire: Protestantism, unionism and imperialism [9]. In addition, all of them were shaken after two world wars, when the period of the disintegration of the British colonial power began. Of course, the new democratic values have aroused a wave of colonial nationalism, propagating the sovereignty of oppressed peoples and the rejection of missionary instructions. In addition, during the process of decolonization, in the 20th century, the need for military mercenaries gradually fell away.

An active movement supporting home rule for Scotland began in the 1920s and 30s with the support of the Labour Party. The Scots National League (formed in 1921) and the Glasgow University Scottish Nationalist Association (formed in 1927) were the forerunners of the Scottish National Party, founded in 1934 [10]. Its' program included self-government, and, possibly, in the future, independence. The Early Years campaigns could be characterized as a search or renaissance for national symbols: for example, a protest of 1948 against the alleged dissolution of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlands regiments (those, that made the act of bravery in the Crimean War), but they were sent to Korea in 1950.

However, the parliamentary measures of the SNP did not suit radical students, boldly stealing the Stone of Destiny (The Coronation Stone of Scotland) from Westminster Abbey in Christmas morning of 1950. It was exhibited as a symbolic theft, and a stone wrapped in the national flag of Scotland was returned to the government of Great Britain. Moreover, to tell the truth, such an illegal action had more success in attraction on people. It put itself on record in history with a

continuance, because the Stone of Destiny was returned to Scotland in 1996, shortly before the second referendum on the restoration of the Scottish Parliament, which was successful.

Besides the renaissance of 'old' national symbols, the SNP was searching for the new ones. The development of oil fields in the North Sea off the coast of Scotland became a new political campaign during the 1970s in making their economic case for Scottish autonomy or even independence. Its' widely publicized slogan was "It's Scotland's oil", which helped the SNP to gain 7 seats in the House of Commons at the February election and 11 seats in the October election [11].

Despite this significant political shift, the referendum on the restoration of the Scottish Parliament in 1979 failed. In addition, the preparation for the repeat holding of the referendum required new agitation of people. However, this is another topic to discuss, to which I will dedicate my graduation research. The only thing worth mentioning here is that, in general, the modern stage of the Scottish national idea (XX century) is characterized by a rethinking of its symbols, the place of Scotland in the United Kingdom, the desire for two main goals of this period – the restoration of the Scottish Parliament (Holyrood) and the independence of Scotland.

To sum up we have three features of 'being Scottish': the first one means not to be English and trying to create an ancient and brave history. The second one was established on three institutions of church, unionism and empire. For this period 'being British' was more profitable in different cases especially since it had not stopped to remain a Scotsman and cultivate and spread (by missionary work) Scottish values. Finally, the new one is connected with the restoration of the national parliament and the devolution process and searching for independents. Its' characteristics consist in the revival of old national symbols and finding the new ones.

All in all the history plays an important role like the base for future conceptions of nationalism, so politics apply to it actively.

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