

Performing Antiquity in Modernity: The ‘Invention of Tradition’ and the Making of British Nationalism

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Représenter l’antiquité au temps modernes : ‘L’invention des traditions’ et le nationalisme britannique

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Introduction

Modern perceptions of allegiance moved from ancient patriotic loyalties to the church, lords, or land and embraced a new idea of the nation. In Europe, the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 15th century and the conquests that followed gave way to the construction of what was coined “nation-states”. In fact, distinct ethnicities¹ were put, by peace or war, under the same political roof and had to declare obedience to a single ruler. However, these populations maintained their tribal devotion up to the end of the 18th century that marked the advent of Nationalism. In the name of the latter, all cultural differences had to be surmounted for the sake of a united entity that cemented an alleged mother national culture with political institutions. Therefore, identity became a matter of identification² with a common belonging and a shared history that started as a myth then became real by means of nationalist narratives.

This identification owed a lot to a discourse of representation which has always been used to maintain these recently emerged states and their nationalisms. British cultural theorist Stuart Hall believed that modern nations were constructed from the ashes of invasions which unified desperate cultures through “the play of power and exclusion” (Hall 1996:5; see also Hall 1992:296). Hence, states were built upon fragile cultural pillars, which has kept threatening national unity throughout history because it was rather an outcome of a cultural power rather than a matter of allegiances (Hall 1992:292). The discourse of national culture was based on narratives and meanings about the nation’s remote past

1. Cultural features shared by a group of people including language, traditions, customs, sense of place, and religions (Hall 1992: 297)

2. Allegiances happen when a group of people identify themselves with a common origin, shared characteristics, or an ideal. Identification is founded upon this process of recognition (Hall 1996: 2).

to perpetuate it in the present and create a sense of continuity, peculiarity, and deep rootedness to make a national community believe in its steady existence.

In the same context, the Irish historian Benedict Anderson considered the modern nations as “imagined political communities” that transcended space and time to dwell timelessly in the minds of their members. Albeit the fact that the smallest state’s population never encountered each other, they believed in their communion, and even if their state was large, they had no doubt about its limits and sovereignty that they would sacrifice their lives to protect (Anderson 1983:6-7). In effect, the decline of religious loyalty left a people who were predestined to adopt a new spiritual haven and that could be met by a new ideology, nationalism which secularly transformed religious “fatality into continuity, [and] contingency into meaning” (4).

In his article ‘The question of Cultural Identity’, Hall (1992) explained five aspects of national narratives including the narrative of the nation, the emphasis on origins, myths, and original people or folk, in addition to the invention of traditions (294-295). The present article is inspired from Hall’s theory, yet it focuses on the last element that was partially dealt with regardless of the ideas it generates. The concept of “invented traditions” or “neo-traditionalism” was introduced by the British Historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in a book collection entitled *The Invention of Tradition*³. They questioned the creation and evolution of modern traditions as well as their role in establishing union and cohesion between a nation’s citizens and in asserting the latter’s loyalty to the state. They concluded that most of the modern traditions were created or innovated in the 19th and 20th centuries; nonetheless they have been depicted as if they belonged to the antiquity. This focus on traditional cultures and symbols to explain nationalism came to be known as an ethno-symbolic approach developed by the British professor Anthony D. Smith in his series *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* published in 2009.

By the same token, this paper deals with the concept of neo-traditionalism in a British context. It points out their two-fold implications in the British national identity: on the one hand, invented traditions are political means to establish a timeless sense of common belonging, cohesion, and unity amongst the four different cultures of Britain: The Welsh, the English, the Irish, and the Scottish. On the other hand, it discusses its postmodern embodiment by investigating the shift in the way the ethnic pasts of Scotland and Wales were used to promote a distinct Welsh and Scottish cultures. Besides, it tackles the extent

3. In 1982, *Journal of Past and Present* organized a symposium whose contributions were collected in a book entitled *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) as a part of the series of past and present publications by the Cambridge University Press.

to what modern men are still moved by their communities' past and common memories regardless of their rebellious and unconventional attitude towards whatever ancient or conventional. The paper is divided into two parts: From Traditions to Neo-Traditions: Continuity and Change that stands as a theoretical part, as well as Invented Traditions and British Nationalism.

1. From Traditions to Neo-Traditions: Continuity and Change

Traditions are usually contrasted with Modernity in so far as the first bears a sense of ancient constraints. In the early modernity, Renaissance thinkers appealed human beings to free themselves from dogma and induced them to articulate their reason and liberty but still within a social structure. In other words, the impact of society on individuals was still under control because people's interactions were limited by space even if not entirely like before. Therefore, European communities were still enjoying their traditions. But the rapid advance of society following the industrial and scientific revolutions, as well as urbanization, by the end of the 18th century and during the 19th century, led to the perish of traditional and agrarian aspects of life amid a complex mass. Old traditions either disappeared or clashed with the new social patterns. Hitherto, "tradition" became a conceptual issue, it needed to be defined contrary to previous times where there was no need to deal with it because it was a part of the people's lives (Kuligowski 2014:324, also Giddens 1999).

The issue of tradition was social before becoming subject to historians and anthropologists. Professor Anthony Giddens said that the break of a society with its past was remarked only by the people in the early modern times, it was "a people's stuff", and scholars were not really concerned about it (1999). The enlightenment ideals of progress and reason were still prevalent amongst the elites who believed that traditions contradicted the essence of modernity; they also assumed that ancient practices were easy dropping. Yet reality proved them wrong because the past imposed itself but with new meanings and forms. The modern liberal tendency, unexpectedly, created voids "that had to be filled by invented practices" (Hobsbawm 1983:8). Otherwise, society structures were dislocated giving way to different identities nurtured by individualism and free will, but this ebb of an old social order brought about uncertainty and doubt. Eventually, a national identity was required as a solid centre to embody all the identities, and to entrench it, tradition, with its set of rituals and values, was needed.

Any group of people inherit or acquire traditions from their ancestors and strive to preserve and keep them vivid. A tradition is a token of continuity that keeps the past alive in the present and asserts its fusion with the future. According to *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* (2006), it is defined “as customary ways and beliefs handed down (usually by oral communication, ritual, and/or imitation) from the past for present action” (Turner 2006:636). Traditions include practices and values that cope with the rules and customs of a given community and are transmitted from a generation to another through symbols, recurrent rituals and celebrations. Hence, the latter are tangible events that were evoked from the society’s heritage to recollect and consecrate the nation’s values and ideals. The cue of tradition is continuity of the past, present and future that cannot be achieved unless social activities and experiences were repeatedly practiced by society (Giddens, quoted in Hall 1992:277-278).

For example, Halloween is a long-standing tradition that existed for thousand-years. It is believed that it was introduced by the Celts on the night of the 31st of October by gathering in darkness to bid farewell to summer’s harvest and welcome winter. It represented the new year known as Samhain i.e., the end of summer. In fact, it was believed that during this time deaths wandered on earth, hence they used to make festivities to create a peaceful atmosphere. The modern means of feting through costumes party with masks of devils and saints and harvest festivals came from this Celtic ritual which was Christianised as “All Hallows Eve” or the evening before All Saints’ Day that occurs on November the 1st. Thus, Halloween’s forms of celebrations changed throughout history, but their sense of communion and linkage with the past remained.

In this context, the continual aspect of traditions was questioned by many scholars who investigated the existence of changeless traditions. Antony Giddens believed that traditions have always had the same fate even in premodern times, they were invented and reinvented throughout history and that assuming the existence of constant traditions is believing in a myth (1999). According to him, pretending that they were static is a means to portray the degree of a nation’s ancient heritage; nevertheless, most traditions witnessed many alterations in so far as the world has never been constant at the exception of some religious traditions that can be considered perpetual. British theorist Anthony Smith tackled the relation of invention and imagination with nations and nationalism and argued that Hobsbawm also believed that traditions had always been invented but what made the modern ones more remarkable is the rapid pace of social changes and developments that led to their production (1998:118).

Moreover, Modernity added an ideological aspect to traditions that distinguished them from conventions and routines; Hobsbawm believed that unlike these two, traditions have an ideological frame; they represent the superstructure in Marxist terms (1983:3). Otherwise, any nation's deposit of ancient peculiar practices and values was used to create "an elaborate language of symbolic practice communications" to meet "new national purposes" (Hobsbawm 1983:6). Anthropologist James Clifford included this phenomenon in a process of a "heritage project" that employed reconnection with the past to declare that "we exist", "we have deep roots here", and "we are different" (quoted in Kuligowski 2014:325). To attain such an objective, some rituals were innovated whereas others were invented as will be illustrated in the following section.

Eric Hobsbawm divided traditions into two types: genuine traditions which were kept alive throughout history, and invented traditions which either did not exist before modernity or were forgotten, at least in a given time, hence needed to be recollected and given new meanings in order to suit modern patterns (1983:8). It is worth mentioning again that the existence of genuine traditions was debatable as some believed that they had to be renovated for new purposes even if their form was somehow preserved such as the previously mentioned example of Halloween. As for invented traditions, Hobsbawm gave the following definition:

"Invented Tradition" is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past (Hobsbawm 1983 :1).

Invented traditions all started as a narrative about the past, be it real or mythical, that fitted into the nation's customs and therefore was not rejected by society, and ended up as an undeniable manifestation of the nation's values, symbols, and norms thanks to the repetition of the rituals that embody them. Hobsbawm (1983) said that these invented traditions were broad and imprecise, unlike the specific and strongly binding old traditions, and they were either instituted like the Royal Christmas broadcast in Britain that became traditional since 1932, or they emerged and imposed themselves in a rapid pace like Cup Final in British Association Football (1983:1). The aim of such a creation was promoting patriotism and loyalty either by establishing a social union, cohesion, and legitimizing certain institutions or cultural concepts, because in a period of

a rapid turn, new traditions were needed for the old ones were neither applicable nor flexible to rebuild identity (Hobsbawm 1983:4; also Hobsbawm1983A: 263).

Allain Babadzan, a French professor in social sciences, is one of few researchers who dealt with Hobsbawm's concepts in 'The Invention of Tradition and Nationalism'⁴ and 'Inventing Myths, Fabricating Rites'⁵. He concluded that modern states and the ruling classes tended to produce myths and national symbols and consecrated them through multiplying public commemorations and spectacles which were adapted with modern criteria (1999:14). In fact, rites and myths which are typically associated to rural societies were given a political and social function within a "new civic religion" imposed by the state in a growing industrialized, urbanized, and class divided society (14-15). He assimilated Hobsbawm's ideas with Ernest Gellner's theory of modernization that drew a bridge between culture and politics (nation and state) as the essence of Nationalism (15) i.e., culture was used to legitimize the state and to give the people a reason for unification and national allegiance.

Critics of Hobsbawm and his co-editor Terence Ranger claimed that old and new traditions were interwoven in a way that was ignored or oversimplified by their collection. It was argued that the work of elites and intellectuals in selecting and reworking ancient cultural traditions was strictly limited to the culture, language, symbols, and myths of the people involved (Smith 1989:129). Therefore, the process of inventing traditions was based "on relevant pre-existing social and cultural networks" in order to "resonate with the public and politicise them" (130). Accordingly, these traditions would not have been accepted by the peoples unless they were close to their cultural predispositions. The term invention was, hence, given to the complex manners of reinterpretation and reconstruction of the traditions and not really to imply a pure creation (130). This was opposed by Babadzan who claimed that post-modernist anthropologists agreed in trivializing the concept of inventing traditions by referring this phenomenon to the pre-modern age, and considering all traditions as historically invented, and even if neo-traditions were invented, this would happen within a process of cultural continuity (1999:20). To debunk this claim, he distinguished this concept from that of evolved traditions, considering the former as a political and social roadmap to achieve modern objectives, besides the fact that they expressed a modern ligament between tradition and culture (21).

4. Originally written in French: « L'invention des traditions et le nationalisme »

5. « Inventer des myths, fabriquer des rites? »

All in all, in his 'Rereading of Eric Hobsbawm', Paul Post pointed out that Hobsbawm and Ranger's concept was superficially read and pejoratively used by scholars who tended to refer to it when approaching "the idea of artificially developed myths and the falsification of history as well as manipulation" (1996:85). Moreover, responses to the book generally quoted only from its introduction, written by Eric Hobsbawm, or slightly cited it in general (86). However, the aim of Hobsbawm was to pave the way for more studies and research about the topic (90). Post understood Hobsbawm's concept as a "process of formalization and ritualization" that happens through an imposed and repeated "reference to the past" (Post 1996:91, also in Hobsbawm 1983:3), but he also preferred to call this process constructing or creating traditions rather than inventing them (91). He believed that traditions were constructed within rituals which created, celebrated, and expressed identity (93).

2. "Invented Traditions" and British Nationalism

In 'Do We really Need Britannia', British political theorist Bernard Crick declared that one must distinguish between nationalism and Nationalism, the first "is a strong national consciousness" whereas Nationalism with a big N "implies separatism" (2009:154). In this context, British neo-traditions are two-fold: some could join its components together as others could separate them apart and break its union.

The United Kingdom, as we know today, accomplished its union in 1800, apart from Southern Ireland that acquired its independence in 1922. The story of Britain began in the 13th century when Wales became a part of England, yet its modern form started to be built in 1707 with the English-Scottish Union under the name of Great Britain. Hence, Sir Peter Scott thought that it "is an invented nation, not so much older than the United States (cited in Colley 1992:309)". In fact, Britain as a nation-state, conventionally, or as a state-nation⁶ in Linda Colley's terms belong to modernity rather than classical times. Nevertheless, the representations of Britishness in royal rituals, national celebrations, and movies give one the impression that this nation has existed such since a remote past and has always been great and glorious. This sense of continuity endows Britons with a feeling of unity and attachment to their common past and eternal fate together. Therefore, the belief in an authentic and archaic British nation was produced by a modern narrative of Britishness.

6. Linda Colley believes that Britain is a state made of different nations rather than a nation state with a single nation that embodied all the four nations (2014).

Narrating Britain as a united nation was propped by new national symbols and devices that were created to generate a sense of cohesion amongst the people. In effect, the Industrial Revolution allowed a massive production of invented traditions especially from 1870 to 1914; these neo-traditions were threefold according to their functions: the ones that aimed at achieving a social cohesion, those endorsing authority and political institutions with legitimacy, and finally those that inculcated beliefs and values (Hobsbawm 1983:09). The present article sheds light on modern national devices such as national flags and anthems in addition to the shift of the monarchy's symbolism from an authoritarian power to a personification of unity and nationalism.

The waving of a nation's flag is an expression of identification and pride, the same as the singing of national anthems. A similar manifestation of national identity did not exist in the premodern era, and early modern age. In the British context, flags and anthems denotes sovereignty and hence identity as a mirror of the nation's steady history (Hobsbawm 1983:11). In fact, "God Save the Queen" became a national anthem in 1825, but it had existed long before as a patriotic song; it was revived and given a symbolism that fitted into a national purpose which made it the earliest European national anthem. Besides, the current Union Flag was shaped in two stages; it was first made of England's cross of Saint George and Scotland's cross of Saint Andrew in 1606 after the union of crowns between England and Scotland whereas Wales was an English province, this primary flag was bound with the Irish cross of Saint Patrick following the union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1801. This multi-nation flag symbolizes British nationalism, it has been present whenever the British union was glorified or implored, for instance, during the two World Wars it was used to call Britons to participate in the war as a single nation, more recently it was used during the Brexit campaign to make them vote for withdrawal from the European Union to take back their sovereignty and identity.

Furthermore, before the emergence of nationalism by the end of the 18th century, the British people identified themselves with their regional allegiances. The collective memories and common celebrations, that shaped their cultural identity, were limited to their regions: for instance, they were interested in their heroes' funerals more than the Monarch's (Cannadine 1983:116). The British did not derive their identity and unity from the Crown as in the 20th and 21st centuries. In 'the Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition'. C. 1820-1977', British historian David Cannadine asserted that only when the Monarchy changed its authoritarian attitude that it gained its popularity and became a symbol of British nationalism.

He discussed the British popular attitude towards the Crown which witnessed its ups and downs throughout history. Royal rituals existed in the early history of Britain but not with the same grandeur and symbolism of today; between 1820 and 1870, the royal influence on politics and society minimized its popularity as well as the people's interest in its ceremonies (Cannadine 1983:109). Besides, royal rituals and celebrations shifted from being a manifestation of the royal family's connection with the aristocracy to an expression of the nations' unity and remembrance especially after the decline of the aristocracy (116).

Consequently, the meaning of rituals was reinvented; even if most of the events existed before, their form and significance changed, and they recurrently became a part of the people's memories. Even though, they have always been depicted as "a thousand-year-old tradition" and "hundreds of years" and that the English have always been "good at ceremonials" (Cannadine 1983:102). In fact, today's meanings that embody popular union and ideals would not be obtained if the period of complete indifference of the British towards their Monarchy did not take place because figuring out that there was a problem with the people's interest in royalty led to adapting the rituals with their inclinations. Some rituals, such as coronation, indeed existed and reoccurred for a long time but as they celebrated stability or national glories in premodern age, the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 was an occasion to express continuity, community, and nostalgia to old victories especially throughout speeches and hymns in a shaky modern age (105). The meaning of ritual changed profoundly in 1877-1914; when Queen Victoria became empress of India, old rituals were innovated and new ones were created because Britain was now a great empire; in addition to the aftermath of the Second World War with the British decline and the invention of television (108).

After the decline of the British Empire, the only national aspect that kept British nationalism breathing was the British Monarchy, as well as, their tradition of liberty and democracy. When Britain was a great empire, there was no need to celebrate royalty because enough self-confidence was spread amongst the British (Cannadine 1983:112). Internationally, the world was calmer unlike the end of the 20th century which marked "a world of fear, tension and rivalry" (126). In the past, the celebrations were more about the greatness of the nation than today's vision of the monarchy as a symbol of continuity and unity. In *Who Runs this Place*, Anthony Sampson pointed out that in a rotating world, the current Queen Elizabeth II remained the only "fixed point" at least "in the eyes of her generation" (2004:32). The Queen embodies a spirit of the British nation that is represented as having an ancient and glorious past, which gives their his-

tory a continuous romantic aspect (34). This depiction promises British Unionists with an eternal life for their Britannia and surely torments the republicans.

Consequently, ritual innovations needed to be done in order to call back the British to gather under their royal umbrella after the fall of their empire. Old ceremonies were arranged according to modern criteria whereas others were invented, which reached its peak with the invention of the radio and television to diffuse Royal speeches in Christmas and the opening of Parliament. These repeated rites constructed a unifying image of the king/queen that shaped and nurtured British Nationalism. Roger Scruton said that “Tradition and example are far more reliable than abstract argument; rituals and ceremonies, because they exist without an explanation [are] far more likely to contain the truth of things than any intellectual doctrine (quoted in Wellings 2007:409)”. When Royalty disengaged from politics, it bought its popularity, hence from political disputes between the four components of the kingdom, “the Queen could still represent the spirit and unity of the nation” (Sampson 2004:35). Besides, she is also admired by the members of her Commonwealth nations.

Royal Weddings have taken new significance with the advance of the Media. They became closer to the people as manifestations of the British tradition and heritage. For instance, the wedding of Prince Charles and Catherine Elizabeth Middleton in April 2011, in addition to the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, in May 2018, regardless of the controversies that surrounded it, had great impact on Britons. The magnificence of royal events did not exist two centuries ago as they were claimed to have been a kind of disasters (Kuligowski 2014:327). However, they were reshaped and adapted with modernist features throughout the 20th century. The royal Christmas broadcast from 1932 on the BBC also had a nationalist symbolism by depicting the Monarch “as the father figure of his people” (Cannadine 1983:142). In brief, after the First World War, such ceremonies became an expression of an institutional continuity which was given the aspect of a tradition (Babadzan 1984:313).

To conclude the unifying aspect of invented traditions, ancient styles of architecture were used to glorify important buildings such as the British parliament which was rebuilt in the 19th century and in the aftermath of the Second World War with a gothic style as a way to express the nation’s ancient and antique history (Hobsbawm 1983:2). Moreover, sport of the masses was a modern means to articulate a nation’s attachment to their country. Great Britain has a single team of athletes who compete in the Olympics in order to raise the union flag since 1896. That is why it is considered as a recent national expression to affirm the country’s solidarity (Babadzan 1984:310). However, it is also

a means of division between the components of Britain, for each part of the UK has its own team, which is perceived as “new expressions of nationalism”, that distinguish Welsh rugby from English Soccer and Gaelic football in Ireland (Hobsbawm 1983b:300). In sport occasions the different anthems of these nations are sang and their different flags are raised.

Globalization resurrected Britain’s regional and local identities that were united under a single national identity. Stewart Hall spoke of “the return of ethnicity”⁷i. e., cultural identities that were gathered under a mother national culture reemerged with a nationalist goal. These nations turned their preference to belong to the universal rather than the national scope, of course, with a more attached loyalty to their regional belongings. The growth of nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales notwithstanding the independence of Southern Ireland can illustrate their increasing aspiration for autonomy. Now, we are witnessing Scottish preference to remain in Europe rather than the United Kingdom after the British withdrawal from the European Union. In ‘The Past in the Future’, Jonathan Friedman (1992) declared that “dominant modernist identities” grew in certain conditions namely the hegemony of their nation-states and their rapid expansion; when this status disappeared, subnational identities reemerged, he concluded: “the dehegemonization of the western dominated world is simultaneously its de-homogenization” (837). Britain loss of empire and role in the world led its components to seek a more influential entity.

English historian and professor of modern history Hugh Trevor Roper contributed to the collection of *The Invention of Tradition* with a paper about the origin of the Scottish tradition entitled ‘The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Culture of Scotland’ (1983:15-42). He claimed that the Scottish kilts with a tartan pattern were but a recent innovation that indeed had their roots in the antiquity but with different forms and meanings. In fact, it had a different form (a belted plaid) than today’s short skirts, that were developed in the Industrial Revolution by an English industrialist who made the ancient kilt favorable to factories work (Giddens 1999). Actually, the old one was referred to the west of Scotland’s Highlanders that were depicted as rather Celtic Irish by the pride Saxon Lowlanders (East of Scotland) (Roper 1983:15). After the English-Scottish Union 1700, notably the end of the 19th century, kilts became, in addition to bagpipes, symbols of Scottishness to reclaim the Scottish tradition “as a manner to protest” against the English hegemony (15). The recreation of a Scottish tradition started with the rewriting of the Highland’s history as an independent

7. Return of ethnicities represented a shift from national identities to local identities that are attached more to global rather than national identifications. (Hall 1992: 304)

culture, with peculiar and ancient traditions, that influenced rather than was influenced by Ireland, and how this culture was bestowed to Lowland Scotland (16). Therefore, the aim of the revival of an ancient and typical Scottish culture was to prove the latter's existence before Great Britain and use it politically. Nevertheless, the kilts and pipes were regarded by some Scottish nationalists as a strategy to distract the scots attention from their nation's real distinctive imprints such as the scots law in addition to their actual achievements in literature and industry.

In the same collection, Welsh Historian Prys Morgan spoke of the Welsh renaissance in 'From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period'. He argued that the Welsh strayed away from their culture in a given period, from the 16th to the 18th century, where they became like the English and lost their self-confidence especially that their legal system and old language were anglicized (Morgan 1983:44). However, in the 18th century their past traditions were revived by scholars and patriots who at the same time recognized the decay of Welsh cultural features and resurrected them (43). However, Morgan questioned the truthfulness of this past that he considered invented because it was based on myths that described the Welsh as the prime British people, besides their Christian conversion and sacrifice to defend their nation against the pagan Saxons, and their native princes (45). Welsh nationalism and desire for autonomy leans on their revived history and traditions that make the Welsh people feel different from the other nations of the UK.

Conclusion

The article is composed of two sections. The theoretical background has investigated the concept of invented traditions either by referring to Eric Hobsbawm's introduction and 7th chapter, entitled 'Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914', in *The Invention of Tradition* in addition to other articles that dealt with the topic. It concluded that traditions were massively produced in the instable modern period in order to establish a solid basis to nationalism and to enhance states link with their citizens through making existed rituals and values convenient with national purposes, as well as, creating new national symbols and devices. The second section referred to the second, third, and fourth chapters of the book to tackle the role of modern traditions, such as royal rituals and national devices including flags, anthems, and sport, in consecrating the British Union which is threatened by regional nationalisms, induced by a process of inventing traditional pasts namely in Scotland and Wales.

The study of the origin of modern nations throughout examining traditions highlights that the past remains decisive in determining a people's present and future. In fact, in modern ages humans are presupposed to dismiss all sorts of doctrines and conventions, even though, they still need to hold onto an essential motif and exist for it. Nationalism has tended to replace religious affiliations by creating a sacred relationship between a unified cultural entity and political institutions. But in the case of Britain, the union has been shaken by the revival of local and universal identities, therefore another type of nationalism has emerged with globalization in order to break nations' union instead of establishing it.

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Abstract

Premodern regional and religious loyalties were replaced by a common allegiance to national identities during the modern era. Hence, identification with a mother national culture had to be promoted in order to establish cohesion and solidarity amid the members of newly constructed nation-states regardless of the peoples' long-standing social and cultural differences which were already shaken in a declared liberal era. Benedict Anderson (1983) believed that this new form of communion, the nation, represented an "imagined community" that was nurtured by Nationalism. The latter, according to Eric Hobsbawm (1983), was ideologically driven by a set of "invented traditions" that were meant to perform a distant past in a modern plot to give an audible articulation to national myths and symbols through renovated rituals and new national devices. This article is set up on an ethno-symbolic approach to relate Britishness narratives of union and devolution with Hobsbawm's concept in terms of maintaining the British unity namely through the Monarchy as a personification of a consolidated nation, in addition to its implication in the split of Britain through the revival of Scottish and Welsh identities in an age of "the return of ethnicities".

Keywords

Invented traditions, Nationalism, Britishness, Union, Separatism, Monarchy

مستخلص

تبنت الحداثة مفهوما جديدا للانتماء بهدف لم شمل المجتمعات الأوروبية المختلفة في أمة واحدة تخضع للكيان السياسي ذاته. من أجل تحقيق ذلك أصبحت الهوية الوطنية ضرورية لتحقيق التماسك والبعد الجماعي. يعد بنديكت اندرسون (3891) الأمة 'جماعة متخيلة' تغذيها القومية التي يعتبرها أريك هوبسباوم (3891) أيديولوجية تستند على مجموعة من 'التقاليد المبتكرة' نتجت عن استخدام القوى السياسية لمفهوم الماضي لخلق أساطير وطنية جديدة عن طريق إحياء طقوس قديمة أو اختراع شعارات وطنية جديدة. يستند هذا المقال على مقارنة العرقية الرمزية لربط قصصية الهوية البريطانية مع مفهوم هوبسباوم فيما يتعلق باستمرارية الوحدة البريطانية من خلال تجسيدية النظام الملكي في وحدة الأمة بالإضافة إلى توظيف المفهوم لاستيعاب تقسيم بريطانيا عن طريق إحياء الهوية العرقية في كل من اسكتلندا وويلز في عصر عودة العرقية.

كلمات مفتاحية

التقاليد المبتكرة، القومية، الهوية البريطانية، الوحدة، الانفصالية

Résumé

L'identité nationale est une invention moderne qui a été développée pour établir une cohésion et un sens collectif parmi les membres des États-nations nouvellement construits. Benedict Anderson (1983) considérait cette nouvelle forme de communion, la nation, comme « communauté imaginée » stimulée par le nationalisme. Ce dernier, selon Éric Hobsbawm (1983), reposait sur une idéologie entraînée par un ensemble de « traditions inventées », ce concept dévoilait que les pouvoirs politiques utilisent la notion du passé pour créer de nouveaux mythes nationaux à travers des rituels rénovés, des nouvelles cérémonies ou emblèmes nationaux. Cet article est fondé sur une approche ethno-symbolique pour établir un lien entre les narratives de la Britannicité et le concept d'Hobsbawm en termes de maintien de l'unité britannique, notamment à travers la monarchie en tant que personnification d'une nation consolidée, en plus de son implication dans la désintégration de La Grande-Bretagne par la renaissance des identités écossaise et galloise dans une époque de « retour des ethnies ».

Mots-clés

Traditions inventées, Nationalisme, Britannicité, l'union, la désintégration