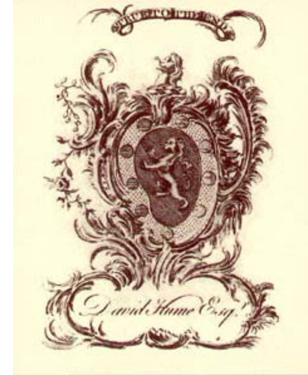

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The Problem of the National Self in Hume's Theory of Justice

DONALD C. AINSLIE

Although David Hume's theory of justice has two components—an account of the emergence of the artifices of justice and an account of why we find moral worth in those who stay within the limits imposed by those artifices—contemporary interpreters of Hume have tended to focus primarily on the former component.[1] One reason for their restricted focus is the dominance of contractarianism in contemporary liberal thought. And, despite Hume's rejection of the idea of an *original* contract (the central Whig orthodoxy of his time), he nonetheless describes the evolution of the artifices of justice as depending on their serving the interests of each person who participates in them. Thus, this component of his view has a structure similar to that of the *hypothetical* contract (the central liberal orthodoxy of our own time), best exemplified in the writings of John Rawls.[2] In this sort of contractarianism, social institutions are just only if they would be freely chosen by an impartial rational agent; this condition aims to ensure that the institutions serve the interests of each person who is to be governed by them.

In this paper I try to challenge contractarian readings of Hume by emphasizing the significance of the second component of his theory, at least as it appears in the *Treatise*. In particular, I focus on issues of nationality, issues which usually fall outside of the scope of contemporary contractarianism. In Rawls' theory, for example, how are we to understand who makes up the society the justice of which is being reflected upon? And how are we to apply

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such reflections to the particular states we happen to inhabit?[3] Ongoing nationalist struggles show that these questions are not trivial. Defining the citizenry of an otherwise just state can be the cause of more real discord than the injustices of a state in which there is agreement as to who counts as a citizen. Hume, I will argue, has a place *within* his theory of justice for consideration of these issues, for he integrates nationality into the moral component of the theory: the sympathy-based approbation of the artifices of justice is only possible if members of a society have an affinity for one another—if they form a *nation*. And I show below how Hume's theory of the passions contains the ingredients for an explanation of these national affinities. In the first three parts of the paper, I draw on Hume's discussions of justice and the passions in the *Treatise* and on his essay, "Of National Characters."

There is evidence both in Hume's philosophical writings and his personal letters that throughout his life he, like many of the other eighteenth century Scottish *literati*, felt ongoing anxiety over issues of nationality.[4] He was, after all, born only four years after his native Scotland entered into a political union with England. Thus Hume worried about the use of Scottish idioms in his writing ("the Vices of Expression, incident to this Country" [HL I 369][5]); he identified Hutcheson, who was born in Belfast, as one of his "English" countrymen, whose philosophy he hoped to emulate (T xvii); he chose England, not Britain or Scotland, as the topic for his massive *History*; and he was a consistent booster in England of Scottish men of letters—if, that is, they wrote in proper English.

In the final sections of the paper, I consider why, despite his personal unease over Scotland's place in a united Britain under English hegemony, Hume remained a steadfast supporter of the Union. Why did Hume not take the route that was to be adopted later in the century by *nationalists*, who argued that the boundaries of a state ought to correspond with the boundaries of a nation? I also consider why Hume's philosophical thoughts on nationality are left only implicit, why he did not draw attention to this important feature of his theory of justice. In attempting to answer these questions, I turn to both Hume's *History* and his personal letters.

Justice, Sympathy, and Nations

Hume approaches the issues of justice, as he approaches other issues in the *Treatise*, by considering how human nature must be structured, given that we have the moral attitudes we do towards phenomena such as property, promises, and government. Justice poses a particular problem for Hume because he does not think that it is obvious how these phenomena are related to human nature; they are artificial rather than natural because there is no naturally-occurring human motivation to pay back debts, respect property rights, keep promises, and so on (T III ii 1). This leads to the bifurcation of Hume's account

of justice, noted above: in the first part, executed in Part ii of Book III, Hume describes how we come to have the action types involved with justice. He describes how the notions of property, promises, governments, etc., were *invented*, were instituted as social artifices. In the second part of his account, Hume tries to show why these social artifices are taken to have a *moral* dimension. My main concern is with the second of these two components to Hume's account. But it is necessary first to review briefly his discussion of the emergence of the artifices.[6]

In Part ii of Book III, Hume presents a genealogical account of the artifices of justice. Given the relative scarcity of the necessities for human existence, and the instability of our hold on external goods, people in a society come to recognize that their goods are more secure when possession of them is considered inviolable—when possessions are viewed as *property*. The model for this cooperative convention is the family, the result of the "natural appetite betwixt the sexes" (T 486). That is, Hume sees a combination of selfishness and generosity inherent in human nature. And the latter, with its natural home among friends and family, points to a solution to the conflicts created by the former. In fact, the interests of a person and her circle are better satisfied when constrained by the artifice of property than they are without such a constraint (T 489); the interested "passion is much better satisfy'd by its restraint, than by its liberty" (T 492). When inconveniences in the strictness of the idea of property contained in the first "law of nature" (T 484, 526) are recognized, the second and third such laws emerge, namely those concerning the transfer of property and the obligation of promises. These artifices, too, are nothing but "more artful and refin'd ways" (T 526) of satisfying natural human passions.

Hume does not think that the last of the artifices of justice, namely government, gives rise to any laws of nature; government, unlike transferable property and promises, is not necessary for the maintenance of human society (T 539–41; but cf. T 402).[7] Nonetheless, government is helpful: it enables people to keep in mind their long-term interest in following the laws of nature, despite the frequent short-term advantage in violating them (T 537); and it helps to coordinate complicated projects which are to the benefit of all (T 538). Hume thinks that the experience which usually makes the usefulness of government apparent is war, where the need for a "captain" (T 540) is manifest. When the war ends, the society is accustomed to a structure of authority and may thus decide to continue having a leader during peacetime. However, any promise of allegiance society members might make to this leader is not the source of the continued authority of government after the promisers and the leader have been replaced by their descendants. Rather, as in the case of the other artifices, it is the interests of the members of the society in the continuation of government that supports the obligation of allegiance (T 541ff). Hume's view that a promise often creates the first obligation to government

requires that the society be small enough for all of its members to gather and to swear allegiance. Those who are not capable of making promises (young children, the mentally incompetent) are presumably bound to obey by the promises of other family members. Note, then, that Hume takes there to be significant face-to-face contact among all members of pre-governmental societies.

If this is how the artifices of justice come into being—as means for the promotion of our interests—how does Hume account for our giving moral approbation to those who follow the artifices' restraints? Why is there more than an interest-based "natural obligation" (T 498) to be just? Hume's answer is that the "moral obligation" to be just is a consequence of our sympathizing with the "public interest" (T 500) (or the "interest of society" [T 579], the "good of society" [T 578], the "public good" [T 580, 618], or even the "good of mankind" [T 577, 578]).[8] Since the artifices of justice are useful to society, like all useful things, they cause pleasure by our sympathetically sharing the pleasure of their beneficiaries, namely the members of society (T 577). Now, however, we must consider the problem I posed in my introduction: Who *are* these members of society? And why do we sympathize with *them*?

Hume first discusses sympathy (a means for the communication of passions and, to a lesser extent, beliefs) in the *Treatise* as part of his analysis of the self-directed passions, pride and humility. When a person observes external signs of someone else's sentiment (either linguistic or bodily expressions), she comes to have an idea of it. Since Hume thinks that "the idea, or rather impression of ourselves is always intimately present with us" (T 317)[9] and that this impression of self is highly vivacious, a relation between the first person's idea of self and her idea of the other person would allow for a transfer of vivacity to her idea of his passion. This idea would then be converted into the passion itself and she would come actually to feel the same passion as he feels. When does a relation between her idea of self and her idea of the other person obtain? In Hume's initial account there is a relation of contiguity between the sympathetic communicants; they observe one another by sight and hearing. But he then says that relations of resemblance and causation are also suitable, although less efficient, for the vivacity transfer (T 318). Thus parents and children (related by cause and effect) sympathize with one another, even if not in one another's presence (so long as they receive signs of one another's passions), as do people who resemble one another in "manners, or character, or country, or language" (T 318). Since Hume's sympathy mechanism depends on the relation between the communicants, it has a *differential* nature: communicated passions are more strongly felt the stronger the relation between the communicants (T 580–81).

Note that Hume's explanation of sympathy accounts for our taking on the sentiments of only one other person. Hume does not explain our sympathizing with a group of people all at once, except insofar as it can be

analyzed into the composition of a series of dyadic communications. How then does Hume think that we can sympathize with something as abstract as "the public interest," as we must in order to recognize a moral obligation to be just?

Let us start to answer this question by considering what happens when we consider the justice of someone after having made the necessary corrections to remove any distortions caused by our own private interests. That is, we view the relevant person's character for justice from a "general point of view" (T 582).[10] If our society is still in its infancy, it will be small enough for us to have face-to-face contact with all of its members. When one of them is harmed by a violation of his property rights, then, we will be able to share in his loss by means of fairly direct sympathy. But things cannot be quite so straightforward, even in the case of a small society. For in order to count something as a violation of property rights, as an *injustice*, we must bring the act in question into contact with the artifice by which some things count as property. That is, we must recognize both the violator and the violated as members of a public with whom we share the "general sense of common interest" (T 490) that allowed the artifices of justice to emerge in the first place. In the small society, the fact that the "public" just is everyone we know can explain our ability to be moved by its interest. And the benefits that accrue to these people through the artifices of justice, or the harms suffered when the rules of justice are violated, can be communicated in the course of our ongoing interactions with the fellow members of our society.

In larger societies, however, we will not know, let alone have contact with, most of the people in our society. Hume suggests that we still can have a concern for the public interest by means of sympathy:

> [W]hen society has become numerous, and *has encreas'd to a tribe or nation*, this interest is more remote; nor do men so readily perceive, that disorder and confusion follow upon every breach of these rules [of justice], as in a more narrow and contracted society. But tho' in our own actions we may frequently lose sight of that interest, which we have in maintaining order, and may follow a lesser and more present interest, we never fail to observe the prejudice we receive, either mediately or immediately, from the injustice of others....Nay when the injustice is so distant from us, as no way to affect our interest, it still displeases us; because we consider it as prejudicial to human society, and pernicious to every one that approaches the person guilty of it. We partake of their uneasiness by *sympathy*.... (T 499; first italics added)

Hume goes on to say that a general rule causes us to apply our disapproval of injustice not only to others but also to ourselves. Note, however, that Hume

has oversimplified his view here. It is true that we can focus our attention and share in the suffering of the "distant" person who is a victim of injustice. But, just as in the case of a small society, in order to see this harm as an injustice, we must relate it to the artifices of justice for that society—the imaginatively generated customs by which property and its exchange are determined. As Hume says:

> Now every particular act of justice is not beneficial to society, but the whole scheme or system: And it may not, perhaps, be any individual person, for whom we are concern'd, who receives benefit from justice, but the whole society alike. (T 580)

Of course, our disapproval of injustice similarly requires that we take into account the "whole society alike." As Hume points out, if we fail to relate an act of injustice to the "whole society," it might seem to be not only beneficial to the parties involved, but also morally required (T 497). The moral evaluation of justice requires that we view individuals *as* members of society, with whom they have a common interest in maintaining justice. In approving of someone's justice we must sympathize with him insofar as he is grouped with others into a society. But how do we come by the requisite ideas of people necessary for this kind of sympathy?[11]

My suggestion is that we look to what Hume says at the start of the passage quoted above (T 499), where he describes the society, the justice of which is under consideration, as "a *nation*." Hume repeatedly notes that our nationalities make a difference to us, most notably in the phenomenon of "national characters" (which I examine in the immediately following section). Insofar as someone is related to a nation, then, we can assess his justice by relating him to his other co-nationals; we sympathize with the pain he suffers from injustice by considering him, not as an individual with a private sense of interest detached from that of others, but *as a member of a political society, with which he has a common interest*. The idea of him which we form in the process of the sympathy mechanism must reflect this conception of him; we must form an idea of him as a member of his nation.[12]

Thus I have argued that Hume relies on people's being grouped together into *nations*, or what might aptly be called *artificial societies*, in order to explain our ability to approve of justice as a moral quality. But what is the nature of these groupings? How does being a member of a nation come to make a difference to how we understand ourselves? How do we come to form ideas of one another in these terms? Let us call this the *problem of the national self.* In the next two sections I consider how Hume attempts to solve this problem; then, I return to the question of how nations are related to the societies that are the purview of the artifices of justice. In particular, I consider the problems that arise when our national affiliations are different from the political societies in which we find ourselves.

National Character

A possible solution to the problem of the national self may seem to be provided by the phenomenon of "national characters"—the fact that people from the same nation have a tendency to act in the same ways. Such characters are, as characters, presumably linked quite closely to self,[13] and their being shared by an entire nation gives them the generality required for a solution. Thus it seems that the moral approbation of justice could be based on sympathy with people insofar as they share a character with other members of their nation (if, that is, the nation is coextensive with the society).[14] In order to see whether this suggestion is plausible, I first examine Hume's arguments in "Of National Characters" concerning the phenomenon itself. I then suggest that his understanding of national characters, rather than providing a solution to our problem, presupposes the existence of a prior solution.

The debate over national characters in the early modern era concerned how best to understand the differences in manners exhibited by different cultures. The problem was not only that certain characteristics are more common in one place than in another, but that a nation somehow seems to make a difference to everyone who is part of it, even if some of its members do not exhibit the dominant characteristics:

> We have reason to expect greater wit and gaiety in a FRENCHMAN than in a SPANIARD; even though CERVANTES was born in SPAIN. An ENGLISHMAN will naturally be supposed to have more knowledge than a DANE; though TYCHO BRAHE was a native of DENMARK. (*Essays* 198; see HL I 19–21)

Hume's considered view is that each of us has a national character as well as the human character and various individual characters (*Essays* 203; T 403).[15] When he discusses national characters in the *Treatise*, though, he initially dismisses them as "rash," "errors," the result of "prejudice" (T 146–7). But he then goes on to say that observation of uniformities ("the very essence of necessity") gives us warrant to think in terms of them (T 403). The same tension appears in the opening paragraph of "Of National Characters"; the "vulgar" overstate the force of national characters, while the "men of sense" are "prudent" (*Essays* 197), using them to form an initial and revisable assessment of strangers. There are two reasons for this ambivalence concerning national characters.

The first reason is connected with the place of characters in Hume's moral psychology. Characters are the causes of actions and the objects of moral assessment; that is, we understand people's actions by relating them to their character-sources, which in turn cause the moral sentiments (T 575). We must, however, distinguish between the actions that are merely the result of a person's having been brought up in a particular national culture and the actions

that are peculiar to her. In fact, we need to relate her actions to a background of expected behaviour before we will be able to discern her individual characters.[16] Thus, given that the French have a national character for gaiety, when we find out that a happy person is French, we will see her happiness not so much as a reflection of *her*, but rather as a reflection of her *nationality*. We will ascribe the (individual) character for gaiety to someone equally happy, however, if we know that he is from a dour nation (see HE VI lxv 262). This latter case shows the pitfalls in our understanding of a person's various characters; just because he has a particular national character does not mean that he acts in accordance with it. Thus Hume concludes that national characters give us both a provisional way of predicting someone's behaviour until we have more detailed knowledge of her individual characters, and a background in terms of which we can come to understand these characters.

The second reason that Hume is wary about reasoning in terms of national characters is that he recognizes the tendency of people to misconceive cultural differences, to generalize prematurely from limited experience of the nationals in question. We form our understanding of national characters through our experiences with members of a given nation. Repeated encounters with the same patterns of behaviour from members of a nation lead us to assume a causal link between the nationality and the behaviour. Since all the Frenchmen we meet seem to exhibit what we might otherwise think of as an individual character for gaiety, we infer that this trait is in fact part of their national character. But Hume knows that causal generalizations often lead to mere "prejudice." It is possible that we have met the only gay Frenchmen in existence; rather than there being a national character for this trait, we just happened to have encountered several people who shared a common individual character. Another problem is that since national characters are recognized only when members of different nations encounter one another, it is possible for prejudices formed by a few members of one nation about the character of another to spread throughout their society. As a Scot, Hume himself often felt the force of vulgar misconceptions when in England. In France, however, where there was a less prejudiced (or more favourably prejudiced) attitude towards Scots, the understanding of national characters was, if anything, a useful way to avoid possible conflicts in expectations. Hume's recommendation for a means to cure ourselves of our vulgar misconceptions is the expected one—namely, that we should increase our experience of foreigners by travelling and by maintaining an open mind, thus discovering what the different manners of other nations really are like (HL I 126).

How does Hume explain the fact that members of the same nation tend to exhibit the same characteristics? One contemporary school of thought tried to explain it by appealing to the physical environment's influence on our minds, what Hume calls "physical causes" (*Essays* 198). Climate[17] was thought to be the strongest of the physical causes. However, in "Of National

Characters," Hume argues against explanations in terms of physical causes and in favour of the influence of "moral" factors such as custom, education, economic development, and form of government.[18]

Among the many partisans of physical causes, Hume's particular target has been thought to have been the Abbé Dubos.[19] Dubos argues that since our minds are dependent on our physiology, and since our physiology is dependent on the temperature and quality of the air, changes in the air will have direct effects on our characters.[20] Hume rejects this account by appealing to cases where there is a change of climate without a concomitant change in character, or a change of character without a change in climate. He also contrasts the precision of changes in national character with the gradualness in the changes between climates (*Essays* 204).

Hume's positive account of national characters appeals to two kinds of moral causes, "fixed" and "accidental" (*Essays* 203). The fixed causes are associated with the government of a society. Just as there are fixed causes connected with professional characters because the activities that constitute a profession will have effects on a person's character (e.g., a priest's constant need to lie or dissemble will cause him to lack genuineness [*Essays* 200n]), the activities required by a particular form of government will also affect its citizens' behaviour. For example, because of the importance of political speech, eloquence will tend to be part of the character of a nation with a "popular" government (*Essays* 119); a character for superstition will often be associated with monarchies because it is in the interest of monarchs to promote reverence for religion as a means to bolster reverence for their own power (*Essays* 126).

If Hume thought that fixed causes were sufficient for the production of national characters, he could easily solve the problem of the national self, at least in the case of those societies having governments. The form of the government would produce a national character which linked its population together and enabled them to sympathize with one another as co-nationals. For Hume, however, forms of government do not fully *determine* a national character, but rather serve only to *delimit* its possible manifestations.[21] The problem of multinational states such as Britain, where different national characters co-exist despite a common form of government, shows the relative weakness of this fixed cause.[22] What then determines national characters? Hume's view is that sympathy spreads the effects throughout a society of accidental causes such as the influence of particular world-historical figures or the chance distribution of characteristics in a nation's infancy (*Essays* 203).

This account, however, needs supplementation. Consider the problem of the "precision" of national characters: "upon crossing a river or passing a mountain, one finds a new set of manners with a new government" (*Essays* 204). How does sympathy explain this precision? Hume argues that since co-nationals will be constantly interacting with one another "for defence,

commerce, and government" (*Essays* 204), they will infect one another with their affections, leading to a common character amongst all. But surely Hume, who grew up near the border of Scotland, recognized that he had frequent intercourse not only with fellow Scots, but also with, say, the English in nearby Berwick. Why, then, do they have a different national character from the Scots? It would seem that the Berwickers' character should influence the border Scots and vice versa; national characters would show a gradual transition in border areas. Both diaspora nations (e.g., Jews and Armenians [*Essays* 205]) and the fact that people retain their national characters when they leave their native land (*Essays* 205) point to a similar problem. Why do they not sympathetically acquire the manners of their new society? Hume's recognition of the differentiality typically associated with sympathy allows him to account for these anomalies. The weakness of our sympathy with foreigners relative to our sympathy with co-nationals leaves a Scot mostly unaffected by the sentiments of an Englishman. Now, however, we are back to the problem of the national self. Why does sympathy respond differentially to nationality? Why does nationality impinge on selfhood? Hume's explanation of national characters presupposes an answer to these questions; thus the phenomenon of national characters cannot by itself provide us with a solution to the problem.

Nationality and the Indirect Passions

We need to understand how nationality makes a difference to who we are in order both to understand the sympathetic production of national characters, and to explain the possibility of our approving of a character for justice. Let us now consider how, in general, Hume takes us to acquire ideas of ourselves and others and then try to see how his view applies in the case of nationality. There has been a tendency among Hume's commentators to focus almost exclusively on his account of personal identity in the *Treatise* when interpreting his view of selfhood.[23] But in this account, where being a person is assimilated to being a continuing mind, an interlinked collection of perceptions, there is no way to capture how the self is socially and morally situated to sympathize differentially. The perception of the red shirt that I am wearing will go into my bundle of perceptions, but (unless I am in some very special circumstances [*Essays* 57]) my wearing this shirt does not ground sympathy with others who wear red shirts, even though my idea of self *qua* bundle of perceptions will resemble the ideas of others wearing red shirts. How, then, can the bundle view of self account for the singling out of the complex perception of nationality as a significant resemblance for sympathy? Hume requires the idea of self in the sympathy mechanism to be, not a mere bundle of perceptions, but rather what I call a *self-conception*, a stance towards the world or a view of how we fit into our moral and social environs. And this

is how he uses the idea of self throughout Books II and III of the *Treatise*. But how does he take us to acquire these self-conceptions? In Book II, Hume gives an account of the "indirect" passions (pride and humility, love and hatred), which cause us to think of ourselves and others in terms of the complicated circumstances that are our social and moral situations. It is plausible to interpret Hume as thinking that our experiences with these passions give content to our ideas of self and of others, content which accounts for the sensitivity of the sympathy mechanism.[24]

Hume's analysis of the indirect passions requires that their causes have qualities inherent in them which cause pleasure or pain. And these causes must be closely connected to us (T II i 2–5). Nations satisfy both these requirements in that they are taken to be fairly closely connected to us and they exhibit both good and bad qualities. Hume points out that we often feel pride in our nation because of its "external advantages and disadvantages" (T 330);[25] our "country," also, is a frequent cause of the indirect passions (T 279, 306, 352). And since he takes virtues and vices—characters approved or disapproved by the moral sentiment—to be paradigmatic causes of pride and humility (T II i 7), national characters can also serve as "qualities" in the cause of pride. Hume, for example, says of his Scottishness:

> Is it not strange that, at a time when we have lost our Princes, our Parliaments, our independent Government, even the Presence of our chief Nobility, are unhappy in our Accent & Pronunciation, speak a very corrupt Dialect of the Tongue which we make use of; is it not strange, say I, that, in these Circumstances, we shou'd really be the People most distinguish'd for Literature in Europe? (HL I 255)

His attitude towards his nation changes from pride to humility depending on which qualities he attends to in the cause; thus he exhibits the possibility of standing in complex and ambivalent relations to his nation.[26]

The nature of our national conceptions will be, at least in part, context dependent; who we are surrounded by will change how we think of ourselves. When in Paris, Hume was English (HL I 470n3); when in London, a Scot;[27] when in Edinburgh, nationality was less important than more local affiliations—a lowlander, a member of the *literati*, an ally of the moderate clergy.[28] One reason for this context-dependency is that the indirect passions are inherently comparative; their causes must be "peculiar to us, or at least common to us with a few people" (T 291). Thus the imagination needs a contrast class in comparison to which the possible cause of the passion is relatively rare; whether such conditions obtain in a given case will depend on what influences are operating on the imagination. During the Jacobite uprisings, for example, many Scots, even while in Scotland, may have been drawn to compare themselves with the rest of Britain.[29]

Hume's recognition of the context dependency of the indirect passions can also account for what has been called the "concentric loyalties"[30] of the eighteenth century Scots. They saw themselves as Scots (comparing themselves with the English) and as Britons (comparing themselves with other, primarily European, nations). And they felt no conflict between these two conceptions. Conflicts did arise, however, with the English.[31] The Scots expected the English to have similar concentric loyalties and to recognize Scots as Britons, and thus as members of the same nation. But this expectation was not fulfilled. The English tended to take England and Britain as synonyms: Scots were quite definitely foreigners or, even worse, they were simply ignored. This conflict can be understood in terms of Hume's requirement that the cause of an indirect passion be public ("very discernible and obvious...to others" [T 292]) so that it can, through the mechanism of sympathy, be "seconded" (T 316) or supported by others. Scots would recognize one another's pride in both Scotland and Britain, and thus their dual self-conceptions were amply supported while they were among Scots. But the English undermined the second of these feelings of pride, rejecting the idea that there was a close enough relation between Britain and a Scot to merit pride. (In the next section I consider what a Humean resolution of this conflict might be.)

For someone to second another person's pride or humility in something such as her nation, the seconder must form a conception of the other person in terms of her nationality.[32] But how do we come to have conceptions of others? Hume sees two ways for this to happen. The first is the flip side of pride in a nation, namely love of a co-national.[33] This love is a case of the general phenomenon of "love of relations" (T II ii 4); if we see our nationalities as making a difference to who we are, then we will see it as making a difference in others who share them (T 353). If someone lacks the feature we take to be important, or if his nationality is linked in some way to a feature we dislike—even if he does not take this link to be significant—hatred may also contribute to our conceiving of this person in terms of his nationality, as Hume experienced while in London during the political ascendancy of his fellow Scot, Bute: "Some [English] hate me because I am not a Tory, some because I am not a Whig, some because I am not a Christian, and all because I am a Scotsman" (and thus associated with Bute; HL I 470; see also HL I 517).

The second way for us to form conceptions of others—through the use of general rules—takes us to the crux of Hume's account of nationality. General rules are the result of our imagination's propensity to extend a regularity beyond what we have actually experienced (T 149–50). In the case at hand, general rules explain why, when we are in a society in which people tend to take pride in their nations, we extend that regularity to people who show no signs of that feeling, by ascribing to them pride in their nations. This allows us to form national conceptions of people who are neither co-nationals

(whom we would love) nor from a nation we hate. More importantly, Hume thinks that pride-related general rules are crucial for the emergence of social groupings; for example, the pride we attribute on account of people's wealth and power is his explanation for our dividing people into socioeconomic "ranks" (T 293). Because there is a general practice of forming self-conceptions on the basis of wealth (or in our case nationality), even those who do not overtly think of themselves in this way must still implicitly relate themselves to wealth (or nationality). Since others will conceive of them in terms of the relevant feature and interpret their actions accordingly, they are *forced* into some sort of stance towards the feature (perhaps disavowal). Pride-related general rules, Hume says, reveal the shape of moral and social space; without them, "we wou'd be very much embarass'd with every object" (T 293); we would be unable to navigate through the world.

The existence of pride-related general rules for nationality presupposes that many people actually do take pride in their nations. When an infant is born into a society in which the general rules are already in place, she will usually internalize the pride attributed to her by the general rules and come to feel proud of her nation. She then can participate in and renew the general rules by attributing national self-conceptions to those around her. But how does this process get started? How does a society come to be one in which most people feel pride in their nation? Where do the general rules come from? Hume's theory of the passions helps us to see that there is an evolution of social feeling parallel to the political evolution of society. Whereas the starting point for the family is lust, the "natural attraction betwixt the sexes" (T 486), the starting point for the familial sense is the natural affection parents have for their children (T 402). Of course, our loving someone does not automatically mean that we come to think of ourselves in terms of that love, that we come to integrate the love into our self-conceptions. Hume explains, though, that in the case of familial loves, that transition does occur:

> Nothing causes greater vanity [a form of pride] than any shining quality in our relations; as nothing mortifies [a form of humility] us more than their vice and infamy. (T 338)

The natural love for family members is the starting point for the general rules governing national self-conceptions.

As society grows, becoming more than a mere extended family, this original, familial "principle of union" (T 486) is no longer adequate to support the sympathy needed for the approbation of justice. When society becomes still larger and we have immediate contacts with only a small segment of the population, as we have seen, Hume supposes that government emerges, primarily through the need for an organized defence in times of war. War also serves to consolidate our national feeling:

> When men are once inlisted on opposite sides, they contract an affection to the persons with whom they are united, and an animosity against their antagonists. (*Essays* 58)[34]

> When our nation is at war with any other, we detest them under the character of cruel, perfidious, unjust, and violent: But always esteem ourselves and allies equitable, moderate, and merciful. (T 348)

Wartime unites a people and gives them a set of "qualities" of their nation in which they can take pride. Thus, by the time a magistrate is established for a society, its members will be accustomed to thinking of themselves as a nation and the general rules will have emerged. And hence their pride in their nation can be refined and reaffirmed as new qualities are recognized as sources for pride.

This quick sketch of Hume's genealogy of national feeling explains some of the peculiar features of the general rules linking nations to self-conceptions. Because we are all born into a family, the general rules of nationality apply to each of us as soon as we are born (T 548, 555); nations thus satisfy Hume's fourth limitation to the causes of pride (T 292–93). Nationality is not something that can easily be changed (HE VI lxix 441n) in the same way that we cannot easily change our families. And because families are naturally considered to be related closely enough to us to merit our pride, nations are derivatively thought also to have a close relation to us (thus they satisfy Hume's first limitation to the causes of pride [T 291]).[35]

To summarize Hume's solution to the problem of the national self: He thinks that there are general rules which lead members of a nation to conceive of themselves in terms of their nationality. These rules are the result of naturally occurring passions' evolving in parallel with the artifices of justice. And the particular history of the nation in question will determine which qualities are considered relevant for its members' pride. Since national conceptions allow us to sympathize with the benefits people receive *qua* member of a society, national feeling plays an important role in the approbation of justice.

Nations and States

The place of nationality in Hume's political theory becomes more complicated when we recognize that nations need not be coextensive with the political societies created by the artifices of justice (and by the emergence of governments). In the *Treatise*, Hume seems to ignore this possibility. For example, he treats the issue of international justice, justice between states, in the section entitled "Of the laws of nations" (T III ii 11). But, as we have seen, in his later works, as well as in his own experience, Hume was well aware that nations and the boundaries of governments do not always coincide. Once a

society has evolved into a nation, the associated general rules develop with some autonomy from the political evolution of the society. Conquest, diaspora, union, or immigration can leave nations misaligned with states (*Essays* 471–72). Without a national feeling to ground sympathetic approbation of the artifices of justice, they are left supported only by their appeal to an ill-defined "common interest"; the artifices accordingly become less secure, as in the case of international justice (T 569). By the end of the eighteenth century, many political theorists and activists came to see what they thought was the obvious solution to such problems, namely *nationalism*: states ought to be reformed to be coextensive with individual nations.

Hume, however, did not explicitly discuss how to respond to the misalignment of nations and states, although he did continue to support the 1707 union of England and Scotland, an instance of such misalignment. For he found the English political institutions which were (for the most part) adopted for all of Britain in the Union to be better than the former political institutions of Scotland at securing property and liberty for Scots:

> The Scottish nation, though they had never been subject to the arbitrary power of their prince, had but very imperfect notions of law and liberty; and scarcely in any age had they ever enjoyed an administration, which had confined itself within the proper boundaries. By their final union alone with England, their once hated adversary, they have happily attained the experience of a government perfectly regular, and exempt from all violence and injustice. (HE VI lxiv 223)

Hume's approbation of the artifices of justice, here, is approbation *as a Scot*; he sympathizes with the Scots, whose interests have been promoted by the Union. The pre-existing Scottish national feeling thus allows for a moral response to the Union. There is, however, a potential instability in this situation. The artifices in question apply to the whole of Britain, not just Scotland. An attempt to approve of the artifices *as a Briton* would require a stable British self-conception; but, as we saw above, Scottish attempts to take pride in Britain were undermined by the failure of the English to "second" the pride.[36] And, despite the panegyrics of the quotation, elsewhere Hume indicates a recognition of such instabilities. In a free multinational state such as Britain, one nation tends to dominate, promoting the interests of its members over those of the lesser nations:

> It may easily be observed, that, though free governments have been commonly the most happy for those who partake of their freedom; yet are they the most ruinous and oppressive to their provinces....[A] free state necessarily makes a great distinction [between the

> dominant and lesser nations], and must always do so, till men learn to love their neighbours as well as themselves. (*Essays* 19)

Thus Hume's approbation of a British government should be understood provisionally. Even if the Englishmen governing the new state may often have favoured the English over the Scots, he seems to have felt that the comparative benefits over the former Scottish system of government mandated approval of the Union. Of course, it would be better still if, instead of being treated as mere provincials, the Scots could join with the English to approve of their government as Britons. How could this change in national conceptions be brought about?

In his discussion of pride in the *Treatise*, Hume points out that we do not have to accept problematic social circumstances which include a conflict between our pride (and hence our self-conceptions) and the attitudes of those around us (T 322–3). Those feeling the conflict (in this case, the Scots) can move to a place where the conflicts will no longer occur (i.e., Scotland or a country such as France), or those "seconding" and failing to "second" their pride can be brought to change their attitudes. The Scots tried the latter option in different ways. Some tried to replace the ideas of Scotland and England with the ideas of North and South Britain. This would, they thought, help to create the idea of a true union, both politically and affectively, while still acknowledging the distinctiveness of its two component parts; it would also help to give these parts a parity which had often been overlooked because of the English tendency to see England as encompassing all of Britain. But this very tendency meant that any attempts to reconceptualize Britain would fail, as indeed they had since 1603.[37] Ideas have a certain tenacity built by history; they cannot be overturned by fiat, only by a long process of political struggle and social change. Unfortunately for the partisans of this approach, new forms of nationalism were just then emerging, and these forms served only to consolidate the problematic English views of their nation.[38]

Another strategy for coping with the conflicts over Scotland's place in Britain was to accept most of the English terms of the national picture and to try to assimilate to it.[39] If England is Britain, then a Scot, as a Briton, must also be English. But as Hume found out, in order to be fully assimilated so as to be recognized by the English as English, a Scot must change not only his dialect, but also his personal history—an impossible challenge:

> Can you seriously talk of my continuing an Englishman? Am I or are you, an Englishman? Will they allow us to be so? Do they not treat with Derision our Pretensions to that Name...? (HL I 470)

Only if your history is an English history, if you have been sent as a child to school in the South, is there any real chance for a Scot to assimilate. And even

then, your family history means that you are still a Scot; the result is often alienation from both the English and the Scots:

> [F]ew Scotsmen, that have had an English Education, have ever settled cordially in their own Country, and they have been commonly lost ever after to their friends. (HL II 155)

Hume's final personal solution to this bind was, after pondering moving permanently to Paris, to return to Edinburgh, and thus to be in circumstances where there were fewer conflicts in national conceptions. His historical research indicated that England had integrated nations in the past. The distinction between the Danes and the English slowly disappeared after the Norman conquest (HE I iii 131), as did, "after a long tract of time," the distinction between the Normans and their subjects (HE I iv 195); the Welsh and English people were eventually united, "though it was long before national antipathies were extinguished" (HE II xiii 81; see also HE III xxx 206, xxxi 230).[40] Of course, each of these unions happened before England became free, a situation which, as we saw above, would have reduced the ease of such national integrations. Note also the violence which accompanied each of these unions (Norman domination, war against the French, and oppression of the Welsh, respectively); perhaps only a war which brought the Scottish and the English together in battle against a common enemy would allow for the emergence of the new national conceptions which Hume, I suggest, desired. Until then, he could only approve of the British state as a Scot, and retain the possibility of resistance if the English maltreatment of the Scots became "perfectly intolerable" (T 551).[41]

We can extrapolate from Hume's response to the Union a view on how to respond to the misalignment of nations and states. He seems to support the idea of a multinational state in which citizens form self-conceptions not only at the level of their nation, but also at the level of the state. Hume also seems to recognize the difficulties in forming such a state. But unless the situation is truly dire for the state's lesser nations, this recognition does not mandate attempts to redesign the state. As in so much of Hume's political theory, the context will determine which response is appropriate for a given situation.[42]

Conclusion

It might seem odd to us that Hume never provides us with an explicit presentation of his thoughts on nationality. For, as I have shown, not only does nationality play an important role in his theory of justice, he also has the conceptual resources to give a rich account of it. Our puzzled reaction, I suggest, is a result of the nineteenth century popularization of nationalist thinking, according to which national divisions in a state trump other possible sources of discontent. In contrast, Hume thought that the national divisions

in Britain were significantly less important for political stability than the party divisions. For Britain in Hume's day was still feeling the interrelated effects of the civil wars between the parliamentarians and the royalists, the animosity of the Protestants towards the Catholics, the overthrow of James II, conflict over the Hanoverian succession (including two attempts to restore the Stuarts), and rancour over the corruption of the Whig oligarchy. Hume devoted intense labour (many essays and much of the *History*) to diagnosing the errors of certain forms of party thinking. In particular, he criticized the phenomenon of "parties of principle" (*Essays* 60), parties which took themselves to be committed to true speculative principles which applied to all situations regardless of the context or consequences. So, whereas the parties saw essential and irreconcilable differences between themselves, Hume argued that their differences were less extreme and more contingent than they realized.[43]

Just as the seventeenth and eighteenth century party-men saw their political outlooks as hooking on to the metaphysical truth, contemporary nationalists tend to see nations (usually understood in terms of language and culture) as part of our essences.[44] Hume's view of nations, in contrast, is much thinner. As we have seen, he takes them to depend on national self-conceptions, which are brought about by the mechanism of the indirect passions and the political evolution of the society in question. A nation need not share a common culture; it need only have something pride-worthy in it that has generated general rules linking the nation to its members.[45] That pride-worthy quality could be the national character, its language or religion, or perhaps its form of government. Usually, there will be a complicated set of qualities which will contribute to the emergence of equally complicated national conceptions. Thus, just as Hume diagnosed the metaphysical errors of the party-thinkers of his day, we can use Hume's view to diagnose the errors of the nationalists: they fail to see how it is possible to explain the unavoidable influence of nationality on selfhood without recourse to a problematic metaphysics. They overlook the possibility of an account in terms of Humean general rules.[46]

I started my discussion with a comparison of Hume and Rawls. Hume's account of the role of interest in the emergence of justice (the first component of his theory) does share some important features with Rawls's liberalism. But, whereas Rawls can at best understand nationality as a precondition of justice, the moral component of Hume's theory shows how nationality is *internal* to justice. Given the tight grasp nationality has on how so many of us conceive of ourselves and the conflict that these conceptions can engender, I suggest that Hume teaches us an important lesson in his approach to justice and nationality. The absence of a treatment which links nationality quite closely to justice is a significant lacuna in contemporary liberalism. Hume also has a lesson for contemporary nationalists. Rather than letting nationality over-

whelm all other facets of justice, Hume's theory of justice, unlike many nationalists', retains a place for individual interest. Perhaps because Hume wrote in a transitional period in history of the concept 'nation'—he recognized the inadequacy of reductive geographic theories, but died before the rise of nationalism—he was able to construct a theory that avoids the errors of both contemporary liberals and nationalists.

NOTES

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1 See, for example, David Gauthier, "David Hume, Contractarian," *Philosophical Review* 88 (1979): 3–38; and J. L. Mackie, *Hume's Moral Theory* (London: Routledge, 1980), chap. 6.

2 Especially John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1971). Gauthier in particular has argued for a hypothetical contractarian reading of Hume in "David Hume, Contractarian." Annette Baier does not so much disagree with such a reading as think that the contractarian label distorts Hume's (and most present day liberals') views of justice; see Baier, *A Progress of Sentiments: Reflections on Hume's* Treatise (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 252–53.

3 See Bernard Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 102–104.

4 See Jane Adam Smith, "Some Eighteenth-Century Ideas of Scotland," in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement: Essays in Scottish History of the Eighteenth Century*, edited by N. T. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), 107–124; Rosalind Mitchison, "Patriotism and National Identity in Eighteenth-century Scotland," in *Nationality and the Pursuit of National Independence* (*Historical Studies* 11), edited by T. W. Moody (Belfast: Appletree, 1978), 73–95; and T. C. Smout, "Problems of Nationalism, Identity, and Improvement in later Eighteenth-Century Scotland," in *Improvement and Enlightenment*, edited by T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1989), 1–21.

5 I use the following abbreviations to Hume's works with parenthetical page references:

T	*A Treatise of Human Nature*, edited by L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2nd ed. revised by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).
Essays	*Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, edited by Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987).
HL	*Letters of David Hume*, edited by J. Y. T. Grieg (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932)
HE	*The History of England*, edited by William B. Todd (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987).

6 For a fuller account see Baier, chaps. 10–11.

7 Hume is somewhat reluctant to treat allegiance to governments as an aspect of *justice*. Although it sometimes sounds as if he takes the three laws of nature to exhaust the content of justice (note the break at T III ii 6 before the issue of government is taken up), he also describes governmental authority as an issue of "civil justice," as opposed to one of "natural justice," connected with the laws of nature (T 543).

8 A Humean obligation is recognized when we would disapprove of the character of someone who omitted the action in question (T 517).

9 The interpretive problems concerning the status of this ever-present idea-impression of self are legion and I will not enter into them here. I discuss them in "Sympathy and the Unity of Hume's Idea of Self," presented at the 22nd International Hume Conference, University of Utah, Park City, July 1995.

10 Recall that for Hume moral assessment is primarily of what he calls "individual characters." See note 15.

11 Of course, most of the time it is relatively clear who is and who is not part of our society. My question concerns both how it has come to be this way, and why the society we belong to makes a difference to our sense of who we are.

A similar problem arises in the case of the natural obligation to be just. Once we can no longer simply take society to consist of all of our acquaintances, we must include people who are complete strangers in our reflections on our "common interest." What, then, determines the boundaries of our society? In the case of international justice (justice between states or political societies), Hume argues that the fact that we have so few interactions with members of other societies lessens the need for respect of the artifices of justice (T 569). Why then do we view some strangers as part of our society, and some as members of another? Why can we not simply exclude the stranger from our society and then take his belongings with relative impunity? The answer, of course, is that societies exist prior to our reflections on their justice. What counts as a society evolves along with the artifices themselves.

12 This sympathetic manoeuvre will be much easier when we assess the justice of a co-national than when we evaluate a foreigner. And Hume requires that we correct for the difference in the ease of sympathetic communication (T 581). This does not, however, speak against the need to relate someone to her

national grouping when assessing her justice. Indeed, it is part of Hume's more general view that we must assess characters in terms of their effects on all those who are affected by them. In the case of justice, this means that we must relate the character to the whole society, rather than to those immediately harmed or benefitted by the character in question (T 580).

13 The question of how Hume integrates characters into his moral psychology is difficult. See Jane McIntyre, "Character: A Humean Account," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 7 (1990): 193–206, for one possible answer.

14 Note that Hume points to a commonality of character as easing sympathetic communication (T 318).

15 Hume uses 'character' primarily to mean what we would call a "character trait," although he will also call the structured group of such traits that make up someone's personality 'her character'. A "national character," like a character in the latter sense, consists in a set of characters for various qualities. Thus a person might be said to have individual characters (character traits) for generosity, raillery, and tennis; a national character that includes courage and the love of liberty, and an admirable character (i.e., personality) overall (see Baier, 188).

16 This point is made most clearly in "A Dialogue," which follows the second *Enquiry*.

17 'Climate' had a much broader sense in the eighteenth century than it does today. Johnson, for example, defines it as: "(1) A space upon the surface of the earth, measured from the equator to the polar circles; in each of which spaces the longest day is half an hour longer than in that nearer to the equator. From the polar circles to the poles, climates are measured by the increase of a month. (2) In the common and popular sense, a region or tract of land, differing from another by the temperature of the air" (*A Dictionary of the English Language*, [London: Knapton, Longman, et al, 1760]). See Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), chap. 9; and Christopher J. Berry, "'Climate' in the Eighteenth Century: James Dunbar and the Scottish Case," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 16 (1974): 281–292.

18 The national character debate was connected with the controversy over whether the intellectual culture of the moderns was comparable with that of the ancients—the so-called "Ancient-Modern Controversy." Note, however, that there was no clear connection between views on these two debates: partisans of both sides of the Ancient-Modern controversy can be found using either climatic or moral accounts of national characters in support of their views. Cardy suggests that Dubos was the first to discuss the question of climatic influences on character as an independent topic. See Michael Cardy, "Discussion of the Theory of Climate in the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 163 (1976): 73–88; see also Ernest C. Mossner, "Hume and the Ancient-Modern Controversy, 1725–52: A Study in Creative Scepticism," *University of Texas Studies in English* 28 (1949): 139–153. Hume discusses the Ancient-Modern controversy in a number of his essays, most notably "Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations"

and "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences."

19 Ernest C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1954), 79; and Peter Jones, *Hume's Sentiments: Their Ciceronian and French Context* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982), 93–106.

Some of the other supporters of the view that physical causes are responsible for national characters are Jean Bodin, Pierre Charron, John Barclay, and John Arbuthnot. See discussions of this issue in Mossner, "The Ancient-Modern Controversy"; Cardy; and Glacken, Part IV.

Montesquieu, in Part 3 of *The Spirit of the Laws*, translated by A. M. Cohler, B. C. Miller, and H. Stone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), also endorses the idea that climate has a significant effect on character. However, his version of the idea was produced contemporaneously with Hume's (1748). It seems that Hume had already published "Of National Characters" by the time he read *Spirit* (Mossner, *Life*, 218), although Roger Oake takes an opposite position in "Montesquieu and Hume," *Modern Language Quarterly* 2 (1941), 234n.

Malebranche gives his version of the climate thesis in *The Search After Truth* (translated by T. M. Lennon and Paul J. Oscamp [Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980], 94–95), linking it to the debate over national characters. Given Hume's knowledge of Malebranche (see T 158, 249), it seems plausible that he was also one of Hume's main targets in "Of National Characters."

20 Abbé Dubos, *Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting* vol. 2, translated by T. Nugent (London: John Nours, 1748), 177.

21 Note that Hume does not mention the role of forms of government in determining national character in his first treatment of the issue (T 316–17). And in the *History* Hume says that the determination of the form of a government depends in part on the character of the people (HE IV App. iii 384–5).

22 Even though Scotland and England were under the same government, Hume emphasizes that they have distinct national characters (*Essays* 202n, 207).

23 Even when there is a recognition of the importance of other texts for understanding Hume's views on selfhood, many commentators still take the section on personal identity as his 'official' view. See, for example, Terence Penelhum's "Self-identity and Self-regard," in *Explaining Emotions*, edited by A. O. Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 253–280; "The Self in Hume's Philosophy," in *David Hume: Many-sided Genius*, edited by K. R. Merrill and R. W. Shahan (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 9–23; and "The Self of Book I and the Selves of Book II," *Hume Studies* 18 (1992): 281–91; also, see Jane McIntyre, "Personal Identity and the Passions," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 27 (1989): 545–557.

24 I do not have room in this paper to defend the interpretation of Hume's theory of self that I have sketched here. I give a more detailed account in "The Indirect Passions and the 'Concern we take in Ourselves,'" in *Self, Sympathy, and Society in Hume's* Treatise of Human Nature (Ph.D. dissertation, University

of Pittsburgh, forthcoming). Amelie Rorty and Nicholas Capaldi agree that pride plays a central role in giving content to our idea of self; see Rorty, "'Pride Produces the Idea of Self': Hume on Moral Agency," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 3 (1990): 255–269, and Capaldi, *Hume's Place in Moral Philosophy* (New York: Peter Lang, 1989), chap. 5.

25 Hume makes this claim about love; but the parallel between pride and love (T 332) makes my claim unproblematic.

26 Hume would say that the contrary passions would be alternating, not simultaneous (T 441–2).

27 See Smith.

28 Mossner, *Life*, 418 and Part III.

29 Accordingly, for a Scottish intellectual in the eighteenth century, the upheavals around nationality could create protean self-conceptions. For example, Smout says of James Boswell:

> Like so many of his class and time, [Boswell] was a bundle of jumbled identities, at one moment a sentimental Jacobite ('all agreed in our love of the Royal Family of Stuart'), at another an affectionate Hanoverian ('I love from my soul "Great George our King"'), at one moment refusing to visit Wilkes in gaol because 'I am a Scotch laird and a Scotch lawyer and a Scotch married man. It would not be decent,' at another celebrating what he describes as his own 'English juiciness of mind'. (Smout, 9; quotations are from G. Turnbull's "James Boswell: Biography and the Union," in *History of Scottish Literature* vol. 2, edited by A. Hook [Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen Press, 1987], 157–74.)

Pride- and humility-based self-conceptions each take their turn here depending on the circumstances of comparison. Note the occurrence of Boswell's commitment to different nationalities under different specifications (e.g., British *qua* Hanoverian, Scottish *qua* Jacobite, English *qua* intellectual), and when in a Scottish context, the dominance of class and professional loyalties over a more general commitment to Scottish nationality.

30 Smout, 2–3, who borrows this notion from Anthony Smith's *The Ethnic Revival.*

31 Smith "Some Eighteenth-Century Ideas," and Smout.

32 I use the phrase "form a conception" here in parallel with my use of "self-conception" earlier. That is, just as a self-conception is a stance we take towards the world, we form a conception of another when we see her as having such a stance. We can distinguish, then, between forming of conception of someone, where we think of her in term of her place in the world, and merely perceiving her, where we do not attend to such features.

33 Note that Hume's restriction of love only to people (T 329) leaves him no conceptual space for making sense of patriotism as Johnson defines it in the *Dictionary*: "love of one's country; zeal for one's country." Thus Hume, unlike many other eighteenth century political theorists, does not stress the importance of patriotism in his writings. Putting the sympathetic

identification with co-nationals *qua* co-nationals before self-interest seems to be his version of patriotism. Roger Emerson helped me to see this point.

34 Hume also thinks that once we recognize a "common interest" with someone, we come to have a sense of affiliation with him or her. He points to the benevolence and love we feel for our business partners consequent to our having a shared interest with them (T 383). Presumably, a war will also make our common interest with other members of our society evident to us.

35 The remaining limitations to Hume's "system" of pride and humility (T II i 6) have already been discussed: the limitation to rare causes, the requirement that the cause be public, and the influence of general rules.

36 The Highlanders in Scotland probably felt a similar conflict with the Lowlanders over the definition of Scottishness. The Lowlanders tried to resolve this conflict by annihilating a distinctive Highland culture and appropriating the remaining symbology. See Rosalind Mitchison, "The Government and the Highlands, 1707–1745," in *Scotland in the Age of Improvement,* 24–46.

37 Arthur Williamson discusses some of the contradictions in the earlier, religiously inspired, attempts by Scots to unify Great Britain in "Scotland, Antichrist and the Invention of Great Britain," in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland,* edited by J. Dwyer, R. A. Mason, and A. Murdock (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982), 34–58.

38. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 88–92.

39 As the terms of the Union included the establishment of the Scottish church and the preservation of the Roman civil law tradition, the Union itself would have to be amended (or ignored) for true assimilation to occur.

40 Note that Hume presumably means not that the Welsh stopped existing as a distinctive nation, but that the Welsh were no longer recognized as being Welsh by the English. The eighteenth century Scots wanted the English both to recognize a dual Scottish nationality (Scottish and British) and to adopt their own dual nationality (English and British).

41 The question of why more Scots did not avoid this conflict by a rejection of their concentric loyalties to a united Britain—why Scots did not develop a full-blooded revolutionary nationalism in the style of, say, the Hungarians—has vexed many scholars. Anderson (89–90) suggests that the relatively free and successful access of the Scottish bourgeoisie to the English intellectual and commercial centres undermined the patterns necessary for the emergence of typical nineteenth century nationalism.

42 See Richard Dees, "Hume and the Context of Politics," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30 (1992): 219–242, on Hume's contextualism.

43 See Donald Livingston, *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), chap. 9.

44 See Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism,* 3rd ed. (London: Hutchinson University Library Press, 1966).

45 It might be the case that the rise of nationalism in our contemporary culture has affected the general rules linking pride to nations, by restricting to

cultural factors the sorts of qualities in a nation we deem possibly pride-worthy.

46 Hume himself seems to make a similar mistake in his infamous footnote (*Essays* 208n) on race in "Of National Characters." Rather than seeing "complexion" as a characteristic which, through a historical process, we have come to see as meriting pride or humility, he sees it as an essential attribute (at least for "Negroes"). For a discussion of the historical ramifications of Hume's mistake, see Richard Popkin, "The Philosophical Bases of Modern Racism," in *Philosophy and the Civilizing Arts*, edited by C. Walton and J. P. Anton (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1974), 126–153, and "Hume's Racism," *Philosophical Forum* 9 (1977/78): 211–226.