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Doug Gay

On Englishness

In this article, Scottish practical theologian Doug Gay offers a personal and theological perspective on Englishness, tracking his own changing knowledges of it since childhood, before reading it in terms of a theological case for celebrating and protecting cultural diversity. The article offers trenchant criticisms of how Englishness is performed in public rituals and popular culture, while appreciating the dilemmas posed in the necessary work of reclaiming and decontaminating English identity. It challenges English theologians and churchpeople, in particular those within the Church of England, to accept responsibility for forging a new 'ethical' English nationalism, which can promote the common good internally and generate external relations of peace, respect and co-operation.

“Be careful of them English” from the movie “The Witness”

I have found it both a moving and challenging task to write on this theme. I am conscious that my voice was invited to be part of this conversation because of my recent and ongoing work on theology and (Scottish) nationalism. ¹ For me, as I suspect, for other contributors to this discussion, it is hard to resist the temptation to include some personal narrative. The joys of being a practical theologian are that you can simply style this as auto-ethnography and it gains due academic respectability... Joking apart, it would be hard for me to trust the reflections of someone who tried to conceal themselves and their feelings in writing on this subject. The days are gone when most academics aspired to the narrative voice of the *disembodied universal* and today more of us aspire to an honest and reflexive *standpoint epistemology*. This means recognising that ‘where we sit affects what we see’. It also means being able to hear the sound of our own voices and acknowledging our own accents. Our accents give us away. There is good apostolic precedent for this (see Matthew 26:73) and, we may infer, a clear dominical precedent as well: the Eternal Word had a northern accent. I like that thought. Jesus sounded more like (a Galilean) Christopher Ecclestone than (a Jerusalem) Hugh Grant.

I on the other hand have a southern accent, though one which comes from north of Watford (and Carlisle). I have inherited the softer (compared to Glasgow) brogue of my upbringing in south-west Scotland; polished by my lower middle class upbringing and faintly inflected by my mum’s Ayrshire and my dad’s Wiltshire accents. *Did I mention that my dad was English?* Friends resistant to or incredulous over my support for Scottish nationalism sometimes greet this revelation with an ‘aha!’ as if they have somehow found me out. In the course of this article, I hope to show you why they are wrong.

I have strong feelings about Englishness, on many different levels and of many different kinds. My feelings about Englishness are not separable from what I know or think about it, they are intimately bound up with *how* I know it. For example, to stay with how accents give us away, I have vivid childhood memories of hearing my father’s accent ‘go West Country’, even after 30 years in Scotland, as he talked to his older brothers on the phone. When I hear a

Wiltshire burr today, it stirs deep feelings of warmth and affection – it evokes memories of my two Wiltshire grandparents, buried in a cemetery in South-West Scotland near my Ayrshire grandparents. It brings back childhood holidays, Easter and Autumn, in Malmesbury and Chippenham. It recalls visits to my uncle's farm near Bath along with stories of my dad's upbringing in rural Wiltshire and his love of its landscape and local culture. But my experience of Englishness was also mediated by my mum's cousin Betty, who had been evacuated to South-West Scotland during the Second World War and lived in my home town with her aunt, my great-aunt Bella. Betty's Croydon accent could turn Galloway/Ayrshire at the drop of a hat, both intentionally and unintentionally. Her four daughters, with their sharp wits and spiky Dartford tones, were our companions on most summer holidays when I and my brothers were young.

I thought I knew Englishness – it sounded like Chippenham and Dartford – and, on the whole, I loved it. Phase two of my encounter with it began, when as a callow 17 year old, I went off to university at St Andrew's. In the early 1980s it was known unkindly as the little bit of England that drifted upwards. Some years, it had more English students than Scottish students. Within hours of arriving in Fresher's Week, I was introduced to the concept of a 'Yah'. 'Yahs' were the products of English private schools. They were, in many cases, a breed apart. They dressed differently, they acted differently, they were overwhelmingly Conservative supporting and Anglican and they spoke with a bizarre, braying accent, punctuated with the identifying 'yah'. It was a rude awakening to the stubborn remnants of the English/British class system and its manners. For the first time in my life I was meeting people who had no interest whatsoever in meeting me, knowing me or befriending me, simply because I was not one of them.

A few broke the mould. Mostly devout evangelicals, often the product of 'Bash' camps 2 whose intemperate love of Jesus had led them to quietly defect from the social haunts of 'Yahdom' and give their primary loyalty to the Christian Union. Some of them became cherished friends. They could still 'pass' if and when they wanted to, but they were looked on with a certain disapproval because they had taken the whole religion lark too far and too down market. Few of the 'Yahs' were atheists, most were establishment Anglicans, broadly Anglo-Catholic. Their preferred ecclesial and liturgical styles were elegantly integrated with an upper-middle class sensibility to form a seamless whole. Atheism was just as tasteless an option for most of them as evangelicalism.

Although most Yahs simply ignored Scots from comprehensive schools, especially if they were CU types, we were alongside one another in seminars and student societies. Here I encountered another facet of this kind of Englishness. It wasn't I came to realise, that they were smarter than us – although some of them may well have been – it was that they had been raised with a certain social confidence, a certain sense of entitlement, of being born to rule. I had no idea, aged 18, what 'going into the City' even meant, but some of my 18 year old English classmates were already clear that was what would follow their "Soc Anth" and Medieval History degrees. The other thing I realized about being a student was that while many of my fellow students were routinely described as Oxbridge rejects (something I had never coveted, so didn't feel the pain of) a disproportionate number of those who taught us were Oxbridge graduates and English to boot. 3 Phase two of my learning about Englishness was therefore an induction into issues of class, privilege and power from which grew a deep life-long antipathy to private education and a visceral aversion to upper middle class English *yah* accents.

Phase three of my encountering Englishness saw a fast track graduate entry to the Civil Service move me to London, like so many young Scots on the make before. My success in the Civil Service exams was indicative of how this profession was opening out into a meritocracy more quickly than other areas of 'the professions'. ⁴ Many others who came in with me, were similarly non-private school girls and boys. In retrospect, the incomes of civil servants were in relative decline by this stage and the smart money was going elsewhere, opening the ranks of the fabled 'mandarins' to the bright and eager lower middle classes. I only lasted 4 months as a Civil Servant. What kept me in London was the church; specifically one United Reformed Church in Hackney. After decades of decline, it was growing and being steadily reborn as a Black Majority congregation with a dynamic young Scottish minister. I fell in love with Hackney, with its multi-ethnic, multi-coloured, multi-cultured, multi-accented diversity. I went to work in an ILEA Youth Club on an inner city estate, where I was often the only white person in the room on club nights and where young black British women and men were surprisingly intrigued by my Scottishness. Few of them had been far out of London in their lives, except on school or club trips, or occasional family holidays to the Caribbean. Scotland was an alien planet to them, one where they suspected black people might not be safe or welcome. But sounding Scottish located me outside of some of the assumptions they made about white Englishmen. Regular, affectionate mocking of my accent was accompanied by curious questioning about Scotland. Mixing with black youth workers, social workers and young professionals I discovered how issues of ethnicity and racism scrambled, defied and confused categories of Englishness/Britishness. This was a period in which writers like Stuart Hall were pressing post-colonial questions about 'national' identities and Paul Gilroy would produce his seminal *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* ⁵.

Just as 1980s St Andrews had sometimes seemed hard to locate in Scotland, 1980s Hackney sometimes seemed to exist in a strange relationship to England. Few of the black or asian people I worked, worshipped or socialized with were willing to describe themselves as English. For most of them, Black British was becoming the preferred identifier – signifying a claim on the country their parents or grandparents had emigrated to, but reserving the sense that theirs was a new identity which was being produced, performed and defined in their lives and in their lifetime. Not everyone was comfortable with this term, but no-one I knew back then called themselves Black English. I was becoming aware of another hidden level of exclusion within Englishness, based not primarily on class but on ethnicity. There was a clear sense that Englishness had been appropriated by the racist right and that in ethnic/cultural terms, was still in need of decontamination. In the second (2002) edition of *Ain't No Black*, Gilroy noted that the far right's flag of choice was becoming the St George's Cross.

My time in London saw me fall in love with an Englishwoman, get married and move back to Scotland. *Did I mention my wife was English?* Understanding and appreciating our distinctive identifications as Scottish, English and British has been an interesting journey, with its share of tensions and disagreements, but also marked by shared understandings and mutual learning. We both missed London's cultural kaleidoscope and the sharpening of identity politics which had come with it. Scotland brought its own rewards for me, in a cultural moment which was growing in confidence and self-determination through the 1990s, preparing for a clear referendum vote in favour of devolved government. While this option became what the late John Smith would call, "the settled will of the Scottish people", English people mostly shrugged their shoulders and ignored what was going on. Blair and Brown's New Labour administration, supported by the votes of Scottish MPs, would provide the

crucial vehicle for enacting the UK's strange new mix of 'asymmetric devolution', but this was almost entirely driven by 'Celtic' enthusiasms. Somehow, the English carried on regardless, as if for them at least, nothing was broken which needed to be fixed. They were not really sure what had changed constitutionally about Britain, nor did they much care, aside from the massive relief felt over the signing of the Good Friday agreement and the fresh hope it brought to Northern Ireland. On the one hand, everything carried on as normal for the English in England. On the other hand, England's reticence about *constitutional* questions was in part the product of its preoccupation with *cultural* questions. English society, particularly in its great metropolitan centres was wrestling with cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity to an extent none of the other 'home nations' 6 were. The social and cultural work involved in negotiating this, produced outcomes which were both inspirational and abhorrent. Examples of respect, diversity and community cohesion jostled with instances of racism, discrimination and effective segregation. Throughout the post-Windrush decades, in all of these cultural negotiations, the meaning of Englishness and Britishness was at stake, in question and in flux.

Phase four saw us move back to London, and back again to Hackney. It felt strangely like coming home, or at least home from home. (Although I felt so far away the day the Scottish Parliament was reconvened, I had to come back to Glasgow for the weekend.) It was in Hackney that my two oldest children were born. We all agree that tips the scales for them towards Englishness – my youngest, born like me in Dumfries, opts for being *Scottish*. 7 Once again, as the century and millennium turned, an ageing white led URC congregation made the journey to being (just) majority black. Once again, I fell in love with Hackney's staggering cultural and ethnic diversity. Once again, I felt my Scottishness to be mostly a social advantage, but wondered what was happening to Englishness in the half melting-pot, half mosaic which lay around me.

Phase five is now – is life in Glasgow 2012, after another decade back in the land of my birth. It is my own involvement in the new campaign for Scottish independence; it is the dismal realization that kids in Glasgow schools still get bullied for having an English accent; it is working in a theology department alongside 10 colleagues, 6 of whom are English, 3 of whom are North American, 1 of whom is Swedish and 1 of whom is Scottish. It is living in a moment when these questions have come front and centre in my own work as an academic, but also one in which, following the stunning SNP victory in the 2011 Holyrood Elections, concerns with Scottishness/Englishness, union and independence have attracted much wider interest within and beyond Scotland. It is a good time, even a crucial time for theological reflection on national identities, even though I see too little evidence of this happening among my Theology and Religious Studies colleagues in other Scottish universities. 8

Having tried to write myself into this piece and to allow myself to speak with my own accent, I now want to use my own voice to reflect theologically on the question of Englishness. As a theologian in the Reformed tradition, I instinctively locate cultural diversity within an understanding of the human vocation to be stewards of creation. It attaches to the creation mandate to 'fill the earth' – the primary *missio dei* is the aboriginal mission to live, the sending out of the bairns o' Adam 9 and the daughters of Eve 10 to take part and place in life on earth. The whole earth is initially to be named and read as Eden, the place of divine intimacy and blessing. Subsequently, the whole earth will be read as East of Eden 11 the place of alienation and curse. Human life takes place under this double verdict. There is no place which is, in principle, closer to heaven than any other – not even Scotland. There is,

likewise, no place which is in principle, God forsaken – not even England. Every place is ‘immediate unto God’ 12. Every place is ‘away from the presence of the Lord’ (Gen 4:16). In every place on the face of the earth, women and men are raising Cain and building Enoch – improvising home in the face of homelessness.

This double verdict of blessing and curse, already anticipates a fluid and mixed assessment of lived experience. On the one hand the unity of humanity in creation, as bearers of the *imago dei*, ‘trumps’ and relativises all other distinctions, insisting on one human race. On the other hand, this basic human unity and equality is reiterated across the face of the earth in myriad contexts.

This thought is extended in important and suggestive ways by the French Reformed theologian Jaques Ellul, in his reading of the Babel narrative in Genesis 11. 13 Ellul’s reading allows us to move beyond the traditional sense of the confusion of language as curse and punishment and to place it into the realm of divine providence. In the face of the fascistic project of one people, one language, we can move to speak of the Blessings of Babel. Linguistic and cultural diversity may be read here as resources which enable resistance to imperialism, which reject the attempt to secure power through imposing uniformity. This reading can be layered over the earlier Genesis mandates to fill the earth and steward it, to tend the garden and name life within it. After Genesis 11, the ‘subduing’ must not be a mere reduction, the naming must be polyglot, the blessing must be international and all embracing (Gen 12:1-3).

To switch genres from narrative to law, the mosaic of cultural diversity can be read in terms of a basic obligation to display equal regard – to love our neighbour’s cultural/ethnic/linguistic identity as we love our own. Christianity early on perceived that its message and its scriptures were translatable, even if the church has often struggled to live up to the ethical implications of that insight, just as Israel has not always blessed other nations. Those implications have been supremely well articulated by the Gambian missiologist Lamin Sanneh in his seminal book *Translating The Message*:

Christianity is first and foremost a pluralist religion... As Paul affirmed, there is no respect of persons with God (Rom 2:11) and nothing in itself is unclean (Rom 14:14). The positive sides of these statements are equally valid: all persons are precious in God’s sight (1 Pet 2:4) and all things indeed are pure (Rom 14:20). In the same fashion, no one is the exclusive or normative pattern for anyone else and no one culture can be God’s favourite. 14

The whole of Sanneh’s text deserves to be widely studied, but his work along with that of Scottish scholar Andrew Walls 15 and Welsh scholar Dewi Hughes 16 points to an understanding of ‘gospel and culture’ relationships which decentres privileged cultures and honours marginalized or oppressed cultures:

Thus, mission as translation makes the bold, fundamental assertion that the recipient culture is the authentic destination of God’s salvific promise and as a consequence, has an honored place under the “kindness of God”... By drawing a distinction between the message and its surrogate, mission as translation affirms the *missio Dei* as the hidden force for its work. 17

This has major implications for Christian practice, for Christian ministry and for Christian political thought. Under the providence of God, we may discern a double vocation. The first

call is to be grateful stewards of that which comes to us as gift through the work of God in creation; which is to be valued both because of its intrinsic beauty and worth and because it forms part of a cultural ecology whose thriving enables resistance to imperialism and fascism. The second call is to respect and be jealous *for* the way in which our neighbours share this calling in respect of their cultural inheritance.

This double vocation is exercised in relation to a double verdict. Our cultural identities belong within our tangled and flawed human inheritance, existing in relationship to the blessing and judgment of God. My respect for both my cultural identity and for yours, does not remove the need for repentance and renewal on all sides. For every Christian, their performance of their cultural identity is decisively linked to their journey of discipleship and sanctification, undertaken within the church local and catholic. This double vocation/double verdict holds for political theology as well and offers a clear orientation for Christian political witness in the public sphere, which is capable of being expressed in common 'secular' programmes.

In the final part of this paper, I want to turn my attention to how we might approach a Christian understanding of Englishness and a vision for its future development.

Englishness, its definition and performance represents a cultural and historical project which takes place under the blessing and judgment of God. Like every other cultural and national identity, it is something imagined ¹⁸ and constructed by women and men, as they live out the divine commission to fill and 'subdue' the earth, to tend and name, share and delight in creation. That imagining and construction takes place East of Eden where it is marked, broken and systematically distorted by sin. It also takes place in the light of divine revelation, under the lordship of Jesus Christ and in response to the work of the Holy Spirit. It takes place within the dynamic of human history which is being led to find its eschatological fulfillment in Christ, the desire of nations.

As such, for Christians, the performance of Englishness is an aspect of discipleship, to be marked by gratitude, discernment, repentance and what Richard Bauckham has called the purging and renewal of Christian imagination. ¹⁹ As with all discipleship, it takes place within the church catholic, conscious that its own honoured place (Sanneh) under the kindness of God, exists alongside that of every tribe and language and people and nation (Rev 5:9). It exists alongside, not above or beneath these others. To the extent that its performance embodies a persecution, denigration or oppression of how others may legitimately perform their cultural/national identities it is called to repentance and reform. To the extent that its own legitimate performance is subject to persecution, denigration or oppression by others, it is authorised for resistance and self-advocacy.

The work of discernment is therefore a key theo-political task. It involves an ongoing ethical audit of history and tradition for which the Jewish/Christian scriptures offer key resources, as they are read and re-read by the church catholic down through the ages. It involves the church praying that God will raise up those with prophetic insight, who will lead all those who share in the life of England into new understandings of its past and present and new visions for its future. It involves those who 'claim' Englishness in listening to the voices of others who claim it and others who critique it. An example of this type of discernment can be found in the final chapter of Stanley Hauerwas's 1999 edition of *After Christendom*, where he gives explicit attention to how Christians are to read the history of America, naming the teaching of

history in public schools as a key arena for this task. Are Christians to read this history, in the tradition of a certain kind of Enlightenment rationalism as “a story of unity” or is to be told “as a story of violence and domination”? 20

History is the key site for this work of discernment. Hauerwas highlights the importance of those the Scots philosopher Alasdair McIntyre calls “genealogists” in this task. 21 For us, the readings of English history by feminist and postcolonial historians offer an alternative story of Englishness, which gives priority to the oppressed and dispossessed. Such re-readings need not and do not remain within the pages of academic journals, as the 2007 bicentenary of British Abolition of the Slave Trade proved. For all its flaws and for all the continuing controversies about reparation, the widespread social, cultural and educational marking of this event can be seen as a small move towards the kind of national repentance necessary for the renewal of Englishness. 22 The vital task of reshaping a postcolonial history of England is, however, still very much a work in progress. 23

In addition to, though not apart from, such historical work, there is the work of reshaping everyday discursive habits within England and Britain, where those habits carry flawed and offensive assumptions about English identity. A particular source of offence and annoyance is the daily stream of references in the media, in the Westminster parliament and often still in academic lectures, articles and conferences, which use the term “England” when the reference is to the whole of the United Kingdom. Legendary current affairs programmes like Radio 4’s *Today* have still not managed to adjust their lexicon to take account of asymmetric devolution and routinely ‘forget’ that London ministers have no responsibility for their brief in Northern Ireland, Wales or Scotland. The assumptions are crass ones and they reflect a classic imperialistic reflex, of the powerful assuming their own identity, name and concerns are identical with those of a larger whole, of which they are but one part. The new Englishness needs to learn its place and mind its tongue. While I am sensitized to the constant erasure of Scotland within this kind of English-talk, other minorities will hear their own exclusions more loudly.

English presumption is not just a pervasive verbal tic; it continually resurfaces in public rituals and focal practices within popular culture. I write this in the summer of 2012 in the immediate aftermath of Queen Elizabeth’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The so-called “National Service of Thanksgiving” which was ostensibly done in the name of the Union/United Kingdom/Britain was a brazenly English and Anglican show, held in St Paul’s Cathedral and effortlessly and arrogantly dominated by the Church of England. Rowan Williams, j’accuse. The Church of England is not established throughout Britain, but only has this status in England. A similar disgraceful presumption surrounds the Coronation ritual, where the unholy alliance of Lambeth, Buckingham and Westminster palaces simply assume their ongoing right to determine the location, protocols and key actors. 24 At the Queen’s Coronation in 1952, the Archbishop of Canterbury refused to serve communion to the Moderator of the General Assembly, or any other non-Anglicans, causing serious hurt and offence to the Church of Scotland. Few Anglicans have the faintest idea that their behaviour on these occasions is even questionable. Consumed with issues of ecclesiastical and aristocratic protocol, they fail to see the gross ecumenical failures involved. Its failure to discern its catholicity in this area, shows the Church of England to be blinded by a refined, elite form of cultural imperialism. The irony is that if the St Paul’s service had been labeled the “English National Service of Thanksgiving” this line of offence could have been avoided 25 but the self-understanding and self-denial involved in such a redesignation seems beyond

the capacity of the English clerical and court elites. Coming royal weddings, royal funerals and coronations will test this harsh verdict. Perhaps only Scottish independence will force a change of tack?

Not only official public rituals misperform Englishness, focal practices within English popular culture display similar presumptions and distortions. When England plays football and I write in the early stages of the 2012 European Football Championship, the British national anthem is played before the game and the fans sing 'Rule Britannia' from the terraces. This example of England appropriating British symbols (bracketing their merits which are questionable in both cases) is more interesting because it takes us to the heart of a major dilemma. English nationalism is a complex beast, which lacks an adequate ethical or political articulation. It is subject to strange self-imposed repressions, such that until recently most English people have struggled to own it, choosing instead to mask it with the symbols and rhetoric of Britishness. The shadow side of English presumption is a form of liberal 'shame', which has allowed the far right to appropriate Englishness. In the face of new forms of national self-consciousness growing within Scotland and Wales, England is being left embarrassingly exposed and is only now making belated efforts to redeem and decontaminate its own identity. Granting much to Paul Gilroy's critique and recognizing the serious issues still persisting in Northern Ireland, I believe the 1990s did witness a new phase in the process of opening and pluralizing the meaning of Britishness, with the direction of travel away from a white, Anglo-Saxon, protestant hegemony. One of the key indicators of this was the way in which black and Asian people living in England, preferred to identify themselves as British rather than English. In the first decade of the 21st century, young Muslims in Glasgow were relaxed about Scottish nationalism, perceiving no threat from it (even if they did not support it personally) and willingly identifying themselves as both Scottish and British. In parallel studies, young English Muslims expressed different views – perceiving English nationalism to be threatening to them and preferring the more inclusive rubric of Britishness. 26

In popular culture, commentators began to notice the return of the St George's Cross, the 'English' flag, from the late 1990s/early 21st century, particularly among English football fans at international tournaments. There were also signs that far right groups were migrating 'back' from the Union flag to the St George's Cross as their symbol of choice. This raised the dilemma for Englishness in the 21st century, the new era of devolution, that the symbolic language it needed was being 'recontaminated' by the far right. It is significant that the most vocal and threatening of the new far right groups has styled itself the *English Defence League*. This represents a gain in so far as it bears witness to Britishness becoming more plural and less hospitable to far right appropriations. It represents a challenge however, in its bid to regroup around Englishness, just at the time when that cultural identity needs to be made widely and democratically available for a post-devolution era.

Despite all the criticisms advanced here of how Englishness is often performed as a cultural identity by people who should know better, I have great sympathy for those trying to respond to the ethical/political dilemmas just outlined. I also admire those prophetic figures, not least the singer Billy Bragg, but also academics such as Maurice Glasman 27 and politicians like Jon Cruddas, who have begun in recent years to argue for the need to compete from the left for the cultural definition of Englishness.

Only relatively small numbers of anarchists and utopians imagine we can take our leave of nation-states any time soon. For the rest of us, if we are committed to some form of liberal

democracy, the ethical and political challenge is how to live with forms of national identity, negotiating and disciplining them in ways which restrain their potential for evil and promote their capacity to serve the common good. The Edinburgh based, North American anthropologist Jonathan Hearn has written what I believe to be the best recent book in this area, his 2006 *Rethinking Nationalism*. 28 Hearn argues that:

Liberal democracies do not so much transcend nationalism as domesticate it, routinizing its dynamic by channelling it through core political institutions. On the one hand, nationalism is seriously altered by this context, *de-fanged* for the most part and rendered less dangerous. But on the other hand it is an indispensable aspect of the state's ongoing need for legitimacy and inevitable competition between social groups to define the wider society of which they are members. *Nationalism is a basic part of how relatively stable democracies legitimate and re-legitimate themselves* [emphasis added] 29

English Christians and their theologians need to reclaim English nationalism, even if they do not believe in English (or Scottish) independence, since the UK Union we all belong to for now at least, is already a multinational union. It is in claiming and disciplining it that it can become the limited and 'broken' form of nationalism which I believe is the only kind Christians are justified in supporting and the only kind which deserves the epithet 'ethical'.

An ethical nationalism is one which rejects absolutism, imperialism and essentialism. It rejects absolutism because it recognizes every nation exists under God. It rejects imperialism, because it is called to relationships of equal regard with other nations. It rejects essentialism, because it recognizes we are all 'mongrel' nations. 30 There are two key tests for an ethical nationalism: its capacity to enable internal mobilization for the common good of all citizens and its capacity to generate external relations of peace, justice and co-operation.

English people should aspire to this kind of nationalism. Taking full political and moral responsibility for their Englishness would make them better unionists, whatever form the union survives in. It would also make them better neighbours.



Doug Gay is a Church of Scotland minister, who teaches Practical Theology at the University of Glasgow and is also Principal of Trinity College, the Church of Scotland's College at that university. A regular Greenbelt speaker, he is author of *Remixing The Church*, London, SCM, 2011 (see [Anvil review](#)). His *Honey From The Lion - Christian Theology and the Ethics of Nationalism*, will be published by SCM in 2013

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Endnotes

- 1 *Honey From The Lion: Christian Theology and the Ethics of Nationalism*, will be published by SCM in 2013
- 2 A variant of Scripture Union camps originated by Sidney Nash and catering for boys from elite English public (=private) schools
- 3 On this see Harvie 1994,150ff where he considers how rapid post Robbins university expansion in the 1960s led to many staff groups in Scottish universities being dominated by English academics with Oxbridge PhDs
- 4 For a summary of recent (2012) research on Social Mobility across professions see the report of the All Party [Westminster] Parliamentary Group <http://www.appg-socialmobility.org/>
- 5 Gilroy:1987
- 6 To use the old footballing designation some of us remember fondly
- 7 A strange echo of my own family – my two older brothers were born in England, myself and my younger brother in Scotland. Given the dual heritage of our parents, we tended to associate with the land of our birth; though unlike my kids, all four of us sounded very Scottish
- 8 Credit is due to Peter Scott for organizing a Lincoln Institute conference on *Patriotism* in Manchester, May 2012. Papers, including my own contribution, are to be published in a special issue of the Anglican journal *Modern Believing*. Ian Bradley is an important exception among Scottish based theologians, in his work on the monarchy and the union state
- 9 A phrase used by Hamish Henderson in his famous song, the *Freedom Come All Ye*.
- 10 I know this from C S Lewis, though it is presumably much older?

11 cf. Genesis 4; the haunting phrase used by novelist John Steinbeck as title for his 1952 novel

12 A phrase I heard from the lips of the late John Stott, who attributed it to 'a Puritan divine'; I have not been able to trace the source

13 Ellul:1970

14 Sanneh 1989:30

15 Walls:1996

16 Hughes:2001

17 Sanneh 1989:31

18 The key reference here is to Benedict Andersons influential text *Imagined Communities* :1991

19 Bauckham 1993:159. I want to make an explicit connection here between the uses Anderson and Bauckham make of the concept of imagination; recalling also the importance of this term for William Cavanaugh in his exciting book *Theopolitical Imagination*. Cavanaugh :2002

20 Hauerwas 1999: 141; see also the remarkable introductory essay by Sam Wells in *Speaking the Truth – Preaching in a Pluralistic Culture*, Abingdon, Nashville, 2008; in which he offers a critical grand narrative of US history

21 Hauerwas 1999:147 – he refers particularly here to the work of Michel Foucault but also cites the classic work of Edward Said on orientalism and in his 2001 Gifford Lectures *With The Grain of the Universe*, he cites Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* :2000

22 The reference to England here reflects the subject of this article. Scotland was of course deeply implicated in the Slave Trade and both shared in this British project as well as undertaking confessional and education work specific to its own historical involvement. See the important work of Church of Scotland minister Iain Whyte:2006

23 And needless to say, the same applies to Scotland

24 My vote is for the Moderator to do the coronation next time round – it's clearly our turn! The ABC can present the bible. And we'll do it in Cardiff

25 The question of how Roman Catholics and other faith traditions should be involved would remain

26 View summaries of and links to this research at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/08091838/2>

27 Glasman et al:2011,

28 Hearns: 2006

29 Hearns 2006, 166

30 This term was first used in the 1968 book *The Claim of Scotland* written by leading Kantian scholar H.J. Paton