

Is the English Lion Going to Roar?

*A Study of a Modern English National
Identity in the Wake of Devolution*

by Mattias Solbakken



A Thesis presented to the
Department of Literature, Area Studies and European
Languages, Faculty of Humanities
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the MA Degree in English

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

Spring 2013

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Supervisor: Atle L. Wold

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Trykk: Reprosentralen, Universitetet i Oslo

IV

Abstract

This thesis examines if there has been developed a modern English national identity in the wake of devolution in the UK in 1999. The thesis creates a set of attributes which are credited the concept 'modern national identity' before these attributes are checked against the contemporary Englishness and challenged by three possible obstacles to a modern English national identity, namely: The West Lothian question, regional and local identities, and multiculturalism. The thesis has demonstrated how the English people consider their own situation in the Union in the wake of devolution. The English people want a solution to the West Lothian question but are divided on how this could be achieved, even though there is a majority which is satisfied with the current system as long as bills only affecting England are decided by English MPs only. There has not been a sudden political rush due to the devolution, but the English people have expressed their growing Englishness in more banal ways, such as the increasing use of the flag of St. George during sports events. Multiculturalism has become a key aspect of the modern English national identity and with the increasing globalisation it seems to be an aspect which will continue to be so. The regional and local identities seem to not be in opposition to a common modern national identity, but the county of Cornwall is a clear exception where there is a small but loud chorus which wants constitutional change for Cornwall.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost the greatest of thanks to my supervisor Dr. Atle L. Wold whose support, constructive feedbacks and inspiring comments were of the uttermost importance when the time seemed to run out and I had my back against the wall. I am also in gratitude to Emeritus Professor Christopher G.A. Bryant for providing me with valuable insight and data on London identities and the situation in Cornwall.

Thanks should also be handed to Bjørn and Tiril for, on a very short deadline, proofreading my thesis and providing me with valuable last minute changes.

I also wish to thank my friends and fellow students who have provided me with necessary breaks, support and good moments throughout the years.

Last, but not least, I would thank my family for support, in every way they have provided it, during this rollercoaster of a study.

Mattias Solbakken, Oslo, May 2013

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In 1997 the Labour government of Tony Blair won the election with the promise, among other things, to create devolved institutions in Scotland. Due to the increase in focus and development of national identities within Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland there has been a transfer of powers from the UK parliament in London to the assemblies in Cardiff and Belfast, and to the parliament in Edinburgh since 1999, raising the autonomy of the smaller nations of the United Kingdom. The powers gained by the smaller nations have varied, depending on their administrative and historical differences, as e.g. Scotland has always had their own legal system. That which did not occur was devolution of powers to England, which is still entirely run by the UK government.

There are several contemporary views of England in the wake of devolution, among them that England has no national identity of her own has frequently been made and because of this the English do not need a parliament of their own to voice their opinions, that England need their own parliament to not lag behind, that England should be governed by regional assemblies in order to compensate for its size and the different identities of the regions, that England is governed by Scots, Welsh and Northern Irish, that England has been politically alienated, that the English people do not care whether or not which way they are governed, that the English do not have a national identity due to the Empire, that England is Britain, and many, many more. What the debate seems to be centred around is whether or not there is a national identity in England after devolution, or even after the Empire. With these views in mind, my thesis question is:

“To what degree has there been a development of a modern English national identity in the wake of devolution in 1999, and which attributes does it contain?”.

Englishness: A Contemporary Debate

There has been an on-going debate regarding English national identity, and whether or not it exists. Commentators have had several different approaches to the debate, often by addressing English history and the English role in the British Empire, or by looking at contemporary data from surveys, in their search to determine if there exists an English national identity today. The current debate about Englishness also has several branches: the urban multiculturalism vs. the rural homogenisation, the West Lothian question which is up for debate both in the House of Commons and in the media, if British and English is the same thing or if English is

something which belongs to the past, debates about regional governance or identity, debate on what it really means to be English, etcetera. The focus of this thesis is on the period after 1999 and devolution in order to examine the possible effects of it, especially since England was the nation left without a governing institution of its own. Instead of debating identity, multiculturalism, the West Lothian question and regionalism apart I will try to examine them as a whole as they are all affecting the contemporary Englishness. It is the *modern* national identity which is in focus and the discussion on what this constitutes have thus been emphasised in this thesis.

Apart from my main thesis question, there are a range of sub-questions I will examine throughout the thesis as they are elements which will affect the thesis question and follow naturally after the main question. Important questions to ask are: what criteria need to be fulfilled in order to have a modern national identity? Does an identity need to be prominent at all times in order to be a part of an individual or community? What stance should the English take when it comes to the rest of the UK and the continent? Has there been an English identity during the British Empire? Has there been an English backlash after devolution? Or a sudden increase of Englishness? And how has this been expressed? Has there been an abandonment of the British identity by the English? Are the identities concentric, or mutually exclusive? Are there any real obstacles to a common Englishness? Are the regional identities and differences too strong for a collective national identity? Does English equal white? How do multiculturalism and the aftermath of Empire affect contemporary Englishness? All of these issues will be discussed throughout the thesis in order to understand the main thesis question.

Structure

After this introduction, the thesis begins with chapter two, which examines what we mean with a modern national identity and if Englishness fits this description. The chapter plays a central role for the rest of the thesis as I analyse the nature of English identity and what promotes it. As the topic of identity and national identity is rather wide and there exist a plethora of works on the topics I have chosen two which are the most relevant works for my investigation. The first is Anthony D. Smith's *National Identity* since Smith's work frequents in the debates regarding English national identity and he is considered to be one of the most important contemporary scholars on nationalism. The second work is Maria Montserrat Guibernau's *The Identity of Nations* which is chosen due to its approach to multiculturalism and regionalism in national identities, and that Guibernau has been one of Smith's critics,

which would add to my argument regarding a modern national identity. Throughout the first part of chapter two I will create a set of attributes which will constitute what criteria needs to be filled in order to have a modern national identity, based on the thoughts of Smith and Guibernau. The second part of chapter two will debate whether or not Englishness fits these criteria. I will first examine the English identity since the start of the English empire in the 17th century, as nations in the modern sense did not exist before the latter half of the 18th century. The main sources are Linda Colley and Krishan Kumar, in order to determine if an English identity has been strong and prominent in former times. I will then examine data from General Household Surveys and British Social Attitudes Surveys, which are conducted by the UK Data Service, from 1999 up till the most recently available data, to investigate if there has been an emergence of a national identity in England since devolution, and contrasting it with the other national identities in order to see if they stand out in any sort. I will further investigate if English and British identities have been conflated due to Empire, before I will discuss the four models of England by Christopher G.A. Bryant which tries to review different sorts of English people which exist in contemporary England.

Chapter three will discuss to what degree there have been forces working against a collective modern English national identity. The first part will focus on the West Lothian question and if there is a need for constitutional reform in order to develop a national identity, and if there is an answer to the question. Four main proposals regarding the question is discussed and analysed in turn: English votes on English laws, revert back to the pre-devolution agreement, a devolved English parliament, and devolving powers to the English regions. The second part of chapter three discusses if regional and/or county identities is the real obstacle. There is a general discussion, but also in-depth analysis of the North-East region, London, and the county Cornwall, as these function as extremes in their own way. The extremes are important to study as they may function as obstacles in a larger degree than in less extreme regions, and are thus interesting in the context of whether or not the regions of England work for or against a collective modern English national identity. The North-East for being the most homogenous part of England, London for being the most ethnically diverse, and Cornwall for campaigning for a Cornish assembly similar to the one in Cardiff, and a wish to become a nation on its own. The general discussion will address the differences between the regions when it comes to multiculturalism, before we take the whole of England under the scope. The third part of chapter three will further address the issue of multiculturalism both in the regions and in the whole of England, and examine the current views of this phenomenon.

Chapter four, the concluding chapter, will summarise the main findings which have been presented in the thesis, conclude on the basis of these and introduce some thoughts about the future of Englishness.

Sources and Methods

The method chosen in this thesis has been mainly quantitative when it came to sociological patterns, opinions and attitudes among the British people, as these may show patterns in the population, while qualitative data has been used in order to balance this and to supplement the quantitative data. In the first part of chapter two there are only qualitative data, as defining criteria regarding modern national identity needed a solid base in existing national identity theory. In this thesis my primary sources will be surveys which either assess the whole of Britain or England only. The surveys are either conducted as phone interviews only, face-to-face interviews and self-completion questionnaires, face-to-face interviews only, or survey forms only, conducted by the UK Data Service. Even though large sums of data is collected through interviews, it is important to note that the questions were to the point and mainly focused on a degree of agreement of statements or short answers which then was used in forms. This is a method in order to collect large sums of data in which we are able to systematise as the same questions are given to all respondents, who have a limited set of options which they can answer. These data will then be mostly quantitative since it is not in-depth interviews, but rather short questionnaire interviews done in a large scale in order to collect an image of the totality of the population.

There are certain things one has to bear in mind when using such material. Much of the data in the surveys are based upon questions or statements regarding identity or opinions about issues, which may change over time. Opinions are affected by context and recent events or phenomena, and identities are of a fluid and dynamic nature (Guibernau, 2007, p. 11) and may be expressed or held differently due to context (e.g. in sports you may be proud of the region when the local team wins, but proud of the nation when the national team wins). Several identities may be held at the same time and may work in different ways, and the labels which are given within these surveys may mean something completely different between two people of different areas or walks of life. In some of the surveys it is also important to note the number of respondents within groups, as the votes of few respondents may suddenly influence the percentages in a larger degree than if there were many respondents. Even though there are limitations with surveys of large groups they are also

invaluable when it comes to painting a picture of current situations or opinions for the government and to examine consistency/inconsistency, and as the surveys used in this thesis are either conducted by the government or for the government they will have to suffice.

Especially works by Krishan Kumar, Professor at the University of Virginia with special interest in empires and national identity, Arthur Aughey, Professor of politics at the University of Ulster and a frequent debater on the topics of devolution and Englishness, and Christopher G.A. Bryant, Emeritus Professor in sociology at the University of Salford and a frequent debater on the subject of Englishness, has been used throughout the thesis as these have been contributors to the debate about Englishness for a long time, and also have some rivalling views in the debate. Some of the qualitative sources used might be politically biased, as with the Campaign for English Parliament, and must be regarded as such a political source. Different commentators have also used the same polls and data to underline and build their arguments with some variations, but they, for the most part, comply with what the data shows.

This mixed method of both quantitative data through polls and qualitative data from different literary sources, as explained above, will most likely have covered possible gaps which the different methods, if used alone, may suffer from. The insight from both these types of data will show to what degree a modern English national identity may have developed through the last fourteen years after devolution settlement for the smaller nations in the UK, and explain which criteria are characteristic for this contemporary Englishness.

Chapter 2: Englishness

What is a modern national identity, and to what degree does Englishness fit in this view?

This chapter will explore what is meant by a modern national identity and how Englishness fit into this contemporary view. There have been debates on whether or not the English have a true national identity, or if they have to develop one due to devolution. Devolution granted executive powers to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, gave them some self-government apart from Westminster, and some commentators have argued that due to this constitutional reform the national identity within these countries has risen. England is still entirely run by the UK parliament, and a question that has been debated is does this affect the national identity of the people? Is the English identity lost due to a denial of an identity apart during Empire? What promotes an English identity? I will begin with a discussion of two views of national identity which are the most central to my thesis and try to develop a concept of what a 'modern national identity' really is, and then distinguish if this applies to England.

A Modern National Identity

In his book named *National Identity* Anthony D. Smith discusses the different values that a community with a common national identity should/usually consists of. Smith presents two ways of thinking of the nation: the Western, or 'civic', model of a nation, and the non-Western (a conception of nation which, most notably, sprang up in Eastern Europe and Asia), or 'ethnic', model of a nation. One of the main differences between these models is that in the Western model a person has to belong to a nation but can decided which nation he/she wants to belong to, while in the non-Western model a person belongs to a nation on the basis of birth and native culture. While the Western model allows a person to change his/hers identity to the nation he/she feels belonging, the non-Western model claims that a citizen born within the nation may never have another national identity, regardless if the person still lives in the nation or not. To the non-Western model "[a] nation [...] was first and foremost a community of common descent" (Smith, 1991, p. 11).

The traditional Western model relies on the historic territory. A territory which is perceived to be the 'cradle' of their civilisation and in which the 'people' feel they belong. This 'cradle' or 'homeland' has to have roots in the history of the people to the extent that the land and the people "have exerted mutual, and beneficial, influence of several generations. The homeland becomes a repository of historic memories and associations," (Smith, 1991, p.

9) and the place where their myths have taken place. 'Nation' is also tied to the concept of an imagined political community where, in the Western model, the people are equal before the law, share the same civic culture and common values, or ideology (Smith, 1991. pp. 9-11). The non-Western model relies more on the presumed descent and genealogical ties than a common, historic, territory. That the community as a whole shares the same common ancestors, and genealogy plays an important part. Smith describes this form of nation model as one that share the same vernacular language, customs and traditions, and a model where leaders can appeal to the 'will of the people' in order to unite the community. In the non-Western model the "popular mobilization [...] plays an important moral and rhetorical, if not an actual, role in the ethnic conception" (Smith, 1991, p. 12).

Smith further notes that all forms of nationalism contain to a smaller or larger degree both the civic and ethnic elements, and whether it is the civic and territorial or the ethnic and vernacular that are emphasized varies a lot. He also brings forth evidence that even though these are rival views of national identity, there are some common ground between them when it comes to what constitutes a nation "as opposed to any other kind of collective, cultural identity" (Smith, 1991, pp. 12-14). In table 1 we may see what Smith defines as the fundamental features for a national identity, regardless of the

1 Fundamental Features for a National Identity

1. an historic territory, or homeland
2. common myths and historical memories
3. a common, mass public culture
4. common legal rights and duties for all members
5. a common economy with territorial mobility for members

Smith, 1991, p. 14

degree of ethnic or civic elements. Although this shows how abstract and complex a national identity may be, it also allows us to separate the nation from the state, according to Smith. He defines the nation as a cultural and a political bond that unites the political community that share a common culture and that 'arose from the same cradle', while the state is exclusively tied to public institutions within a given territory. While he admits that there is an overlap between the concepts, especially since they both have reference to "an historic territory", and also because (as in England and Britain's case) "their appeal to the sovereignty of the people" (Smith, 1991, pp. 14-15). But, he claims that states have to legitimize their power over the nation both in national terms and popular terms in order to keep their role (Smith, 1991, p. 15). Britain as a state would not exist if it were not for the will of the people of the nations England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (predominantly the former), as the focus of

the different nations are quite different than the state, at least when it comes to identity and roles for the people.

A national identity fulfils a number of roles in the lives of both the individual and the group, and Smith divides these roles into 'internal' and 'external' dimensions in the way they affect the 'people's' life. At the group, or community, level the functions are territorial, economic, and political. The territorial aspect Smith defines as the social space in which the participants of the society work and live. This is also defined as the 'cradle' or 'homeland' where the myths of the nation have taken place and where their 'sacred centers' are located. The economic aspect is linked to the territorial one in the sense that it is the resources of the 'homeland' and its work power, "as well as the allocation of resources between members of the homeland" (Smith, 1991, p. 16). The political aspect is to select political personnel which will rule the 'homeland' in a way which represents the will of the nation and which is in line with the customs and ideals of the people they represent. The political function of national identities is also to uphold the legal rights of its citizens and duties of the nation's political institutions. Smith further notes that: "The appeal to national identity has become the main legitimation for social order and solidarity today" (Smith, 1991, p. 16).

Furthermore, a national identity also fulfils internal functions for the people of a nation, and Smith defines these as: socialisation, social bond, and defining and locating individual selves. The socialisation part is achieved in the modern states today through a "compulsory, standardized, public mass education system" (Smith, 1991, p. 16), or easier described as school curricula. This form for mass education is in order to teach the citizens of the nation the values that make them special, their unique history, and their system of government, all in order to increase the devotion to the nation and to create a homogeneous culture in which the nation can rely on. Weber adds to this by stating that modernists emphasize this "active construction of nationhood" since this is both the cultural and political basis for citizens in order to gain membership to modern states. They have to learn that they are members of a modern state, and what that means. (Weber 1976, in Fenton, 2007, p. 323)

The next aspect is connected to what Smith refers to as 'social bonds', and can be easily connected with the former. This internal dimension is connected to the feeling of a cultural common ground and common identity, which is called upon to create a social bond between the individual and the class/community in which he/she attends. This is done through collective symbols as flags, coins, the national anthem, ceremonies, or in England's case: St George's cross, the Pound, "Jerusalem" (although not an official national anthem), and Boxing day. All these symbols strengthen the view of the nation as something that can

overcome any hardship and connect the individual with the community. The final aspect is more personal than the two former. The aspect of defining and locating individual selves is the part of the national identity which gives the individual a real sense of who he/she is in the global perspective. By the shared common culture in which the individual takes part in every day, we are more likely to know “who we are” as we know what kind of distinct culture we take part in and what its collective personality is. (Smith, 1991, pp. 16-17)

It is this part of individual sense of belonging that has intrigued other writers as well. McCrone (2002, pp. 307-308, in Fenton, 2007, p. 325) argues that the individual sense of national identity is not set in stone and unchanging, but constantly negotiated during the individual’s life. The national identity of individuals may change over time depending on the individual’s experiences of the nation through different events or contexts, e.g. St. George’s Day or a local cricket match. Though, McCrone modifies this argument by claiming that a national identity may of course be stable for long periods of time, and can sometimes appear very salient. Kristin Flood Strøm (2011, p. 6) agrees with McCrone and Smith that a national identity is not a fixed characteristic with a stable unchanging core which will always be unchanging, but that identities in general are developed over time and are influenced by several factors. She also underlines that especially during the development of group identities (such as a national identity) the social and political situations surrounding the community is of great importance.

What McCrone describes as a very salient national identity may be linked to the public response to what Fenton (2007, pp. 326-327) describes as “highly visible events”. He refers to certain sporting events, the death of leaders or royalty, war, elections etcetera, that may trigger a sense of national feeling. This form for visible event is what Arthur Aughey describes in his first chapter of the book *The Politics of Englishness*, when he addresses the “new ‘soccer fan Republic of St George’”, when England hosted the UEFA Euro 1996 tournament and went to the semi-finals only to lose at the penalty shootout, when people joined in the streets with the Cross of St George hanging from every shopkeepers window, from every car and “the English had come out of the national closet and declared a patriotic love that could now speak its name” (2007, pp. 1-4). This was also repeated during the UEFA Euro 2004 tournament, when England came through the group stage to lose to Portugal (host country) on penalty shootout in the quarter-finals. The death of Diana, Princess of Wales, also brought the public to its feet in 1997 in order to mourn her death, as the death of the popular royal figure unleashed great emotion. One the one hand, it seems to me that great tragedy or the possibility for great triumph in different sorts of events is what engage the English and

fuel their national feeling, and surface their national identity to become highly salient. Guibernau (2007, pp. 18-19) underlines the importance of shared memories of situations of victory, hope, sorrow and loss as these feelings strengthen the national identity. In everyday life, on the other hand, the English may be described in the words of George Orwell: “In England all the boasting and flag-wagging, the ‘Rule Britannia’ stuff, is done by small minorities. The patriotism of the common people is not vocal or even conscious” (Orwell, 1941).

McCrone further argues that the national identity of an individual may also become salient in situations where they live outside their original area, e.g. living outside one’s country of birth, living in a different region from where one was born, or living in border regions (McCrone, in Fenton, 2007, pp. 326-7). As individuals travel or go abroad we tend to bring with us elements of who we are in order to feel ‘at home’ in our new location. The memory of the local, regional, or national is something we tend to hold on to, and exhibit in various ways. To continue with the example of football: when travelling abroad during the UEFA Euro tournament or the World Cup and visiting almost any country, you will most likely see flags from every nation that has qualified for the tournament hanging from windows, on cars, in shops, or on different types of clothing. This form for ‘banal nationalism’ (term derived from Michael Billig’s book *Banal Nationalism*) exceeds the everyday use of the flag which, apparently from the text of Orwell and Aughey, is used in order to show a sense of national pride and to let people identify themselves with their country.

The *Ethnie* and the Modern Approach

Smith discussed the difference between the ‘civic’ Western model, and the ‘ethnic’ non-Western model, of national identity. He takes the discussion further and describes a concept he calls ‘ethnic communities’. These communities are not to be mistaken for race, but are to be understood as a community with a shared historical culture and common identity (Smith, 1991, pp. 20-21). In table 2 we may see six main attributes which Smith has listed for an ethnic community (or *ethnie*). According to Smith it is not necessary that the

2 Attributes for an Ethnic Community

1. a collective proper name
2. a myth of common ancestry
3. shared historical memories
4. one or more differentiating elements of common culture
5. an association with a specific ‘homeland’
6. a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population

Smith, 1991, p. 21

whole of the population share these traits, as long as they have a firm grip in a small segment of the community. As with expressions of national identity these attributes may vary from being intense and salient at times, and some of them more than others. The higher percentage of the community that share these attributes the closer the community is to becoming the ideal form for ethnic community (Smith, 1991, p. 21).

So why is this *ethnie* so important in the modern sense of national identity? It shares similar traits of both the ‘civic’ and ‘ethnic’ model presented earlier, but according to Smith, most modern nations have roots in this *ethnie*. These historical roots would have attracted people to feel loyalty, attraction and a connection to this ‘collective proper name’, and specific area referred to as ‘homeland’, for centuries before the current modern states was formed, or was considered nations (Smith, 1991, in Fenton, p. 323). The view of nationalists, and some observers of nationalism, is that nations are considered “*natural* communities”, which gives them the historic roots to command loyalty from its citizens through the symbol of ‘homeland’ and socialization (or ‘social bonds’) (Fenton, 2007, p. 322).

Guibernau’s Concept of National Identity

The defining criteria regarding identity according to Maria Montserrat Guibernau is that there is a “continuity over time and differentiation from others” (2007, p. 10), and according to her these two attributes are fundamental elements also when it comes to the formation of a national identity. The aspect of continuity is similar to the shared historical memories described by Smith, that the citizens of a nation conceive it as being something that has lasted for a long time and that will continue in the future. Guibernau explains that this continuity leads members of the society to unite around a common meaning, which separates these ‘insiders’ from the ‘others’. The differentiation part mirrors two of Smith’s fundamental features for national identity, namely “a common, mass public culture” and “an historic territory, or homeland” (1991, p. 14), and two of the attributes of the *ethnie*: “one or more differentiating elements of common culture” and “an association with a specific ‘homeland’” (1991, p. 21). The differentiation is a way of forming a distinct community in which there is a shared culture, icons and traditions, which is united and attached to a limited area. Guibernau explains that these two main criteria leads to a distinction between those who are a part of the community, “insiders”, and those who do not belong, often referred to as: “‘strangers’, ‘the rest’, ‘the different’, and sometimes, ‘the enemy’” (2007, p. 10).

According to Guibernau, a national identity is a collective sentiment based upon the notion that belonging to the same nation and sharing a high degree of the same attributes as others within this nation makes it different from other nations. She further explains that a “national identity is a modern phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature” (Guibernau, 2007, p. 11). The dynamic nature of national identity may refer to that mentioned by Fenton, that the sentiment towards a nation may be stable for long periods of time, but can become salient and highly visible during times and events that provoke strong emotions. It may also be linked to that the idea of forming a nation may be constant for long periods of time, while these events, attributes, and the culture in which this is based may vary during this period. The specific national identity of a people is defined by the nature of the different attributes (common culture, language, location of territory, history, etcetera) and to what degree they are expressed. Guibernau (2007, p. 11) explains that in the contemporary world national identity is usually attributed to those who belong to nation-states, but also emphasizes that there are people who have distinct national identities that belongs to nations without states. She mentions, among others, Quebec and Scotland, but as I would argue, England is also a likely candidate in this category due to the Empire. As Guibernau explains, these nations use memories from a past when the nation was either “independent, endured oppression, or *attained international leadership*” (2007, p. 11, my italics) in order to strengthen the common identity of its people. The two former are hard to adapt to the English, but the latter is a possibility.

As Smith, Guibernau implies that a national identity has five dimensions, which according to her are: the psychological, the cultural, the territorial, the historical, and the political dimension (2007, p. 11). The psychological dimension is about the “felt” closeness between individuals that belong to the nation. That the nation is considered “the fully extended family” (Connor, in Guibernau, 2007, p. 12), and is the largest entity in which an individual may feel kinship and loyalty. The psychological dimension also embraces the mythical origin of a people, and the sense of unique descent. For the psychological dimension of Guibernau the factual history does not matter, since the history of a pure and unique descent is often not factual. It is the “sentient or felt history” that does matter for the national identity, when it comes to the psychological dimension (2007, p. 12). It is this dimension that binds people together through a myth of a common ancestor. This myth upholds a feeling of belonging within a nation and to create a bond between its members.

The cultural dimension is connected to the shared culture of the members of a nation. This shared culture comprises everything from customs, beliefs and values to language and

practices. It is the cultural dimension that creates what separates this particular community with its inhabitants from others; at least, it lets its nationals imagine their community as distinct. That people within the same community have the same shared culture also strengthens their bonds of solidarity towards one another. Individuals who socialise within this distinct culture are more likely to internalize the common culture of the nation, making it a part of themselves (Guibernau, 2007, p. 13). The greatest part of the cultural dimension is the use of language, as this is often unique to the distinct nation. At least, it used to be. The European languages with most native speakers, Spanish, Portuguese, English, German and French, are in a rare position as some of their former colonies have adopted their language. In these cases it may not be the vernacular language which is considered the most important in order to distinguish a community from another, but the dialect one chooses to use. Even though, as Guibernau says: “Two people who do not understand each other cannot be said to share a national identity” (2007, p. 14), but these cases show that people who do understand each other, or speak different variations of the same language, do not need to share a national identity.

The territorial dimension is similar to Smith’s “historical homeland”, but there is a greater focus on the contemporary. Guibernau describes the shift that came when people, who were used to small territories and their role within that territory, were required to conceive the whole nation as their home, in contrast to their village or county (2007, pp. 21-22). She claims, and I concur, that even though there has been massive globalisation and an increasing cosmopolitanism during the latter half of the twentieth century and the twenty-first century, the attachments we have to the local and national is still extremely strong. She explains this by claiming that globalisation and cosmopolitanism is primarily a phenomenon that belongs to the elite, and thus this pattern will continue in the future (Guibernau, 2007, p. 22). That the phenomenon of globalisation and cosmopolitanisation primarily belongs to the elite seems valid when it comes to travelling and exploring different cultures up close, but as the Internet is available to most people in the western world I would argue that parts of the globalisation is available to those who would take part in it. It is important to note, nevertheless what class one belongs to, that people tend to feel more strongly towards things that occur within their region, city, or local village (ibid.)

The historical dimension is similar to Smiths’, the notion of a historical homeland. It is the nation’s, selective, use of history that can provide its members with transcendental moments in the life of the community. These selective memories and moments may increase the national feeling and self-esteem of its members, and can make them ready to rally around

a flag if the nation needs it (Guibernau, 2007, p. 20). The political dimension is similar to one of Smith's attributes: "common legal rights and duties for all members" (1991, p. 14), but makes a point between nation-states and stateless-nations. Guibernau explains that the political dimension of the national identity "derives from its relation with the modern nation-state" (2007, p. 23). It has been the nation-state's highest goal to pursue a homogenisation of culture and language within its borders in a, normally, diverse population. It was usually done by internalising the culture and language of the dominant community within the nation, and forming the others in that picture (ibid.). Today, we can understand the political dimension, both in nation-states and stateless-nations, as the dimension that tries to construct a homogenous society and uses devices such as a national education system as well as the national media in order to achieve that goal (Guibernau, 2007, p. 24).

The Individual in the Modern National Identity

Guibernau warns us of a recent concern regarding individuality in the nations, especially now as the emergence of the modern societies has taken a great foothold in the Western nations. Her focus is that it is the differentiation of labour that has become a concern for the community. She claims that the sense of the individual slowly solidified itself during the late Middle Ages and continued to grow until the nineteenth century, but as the new social arrangements and events of the twentieth century came the individual's role was left up in the air. As everyone wanted to become something unique, it became a growing feeling of different peoples to, both as individuals and communities, become 'different'. (2007, p. 9)

According to Fenton, modern nationalisms require that there is a certain degree of individualism in a national identity. He and Calhoun (1997, p. 125, in Fenton, 2007, p. 324) underlines that the identity of the individual has a special place in the modern nations. Calhoun claims that "[...] the modern discourse of national identity is closely linked to the idea of the individual" (1997, p. 125, in Fenton, 2007, p. 324). He supports his argument with the notion that a national identity has priority over any other collective identity that we as humans may have, when it comes to constructing a personal identity. He explains further that the individual does not require family, the local community, his/hers region or class in order to belong, and be a citizen, of the nation (Calhoun, 1997, pp. 46, 125, in Fenton, 2007, p. 324). He gains support from the conclusion of Greenfeld and Chirot, which claim that in the contemporary modern world the national identity has the role as the "fundamental identity". According to them, this "fundamental identity" is conceived as the very essence of the

individual in the modern society, and all other identities are to be considered secondary to this identity (Greenfeld and Chirot, 1994, p. 79, in Fenton, 2007, p. 324). They further argue that the emotional connection between a national identity and the individual is not dependent on the “culture and ethnicity”, as argued in the attributes of Smith and Guibernau, but that the modern nation-state “makes a direct appeal to the individual, in an individualistic society” (Greenfeld and Chirot 1994, p. 126, in Fenton, 2007, p. 324).

One can understand the argument of Calhoun that feelings towards a nation with its history and culture may stir up some great emotions, but to claim that the nation has top priority in forming the identity of individuals seems to be a bit of a stretch. If we interpret the territorial dimension of both Smith and Guibernau’s views of national identity, we need to consider that even though people in modern nations now consider the whole nation as their home, in opposition to former times when your town was your only home, the individual tends to feel more intensely about their region, county or town than the whole country (Guibernau, 2007, p. 22). Even though you are proud of the nation as a whole, the locality in you will tend to be more attached to the first place regarded as ‘home’, the local community.

The development of an individual seems to me to first take place within the family, and then in the local community. The development of an individual identity takes place before one regards oneself as a part of a nation, or understands the concept of the nation, as the “compulsory, standardized, public mass education system” described by Smith first enter life after a few years. The individual will by then have learnt part of their role, at least when it comes to the family. It is within the inner family that one learns about the cultural code of the society, the first contact with the nation’s language, and rules of the community and nation. As we grow up, we tend to follow the rules and norms that are bestowed upon us by our family throughout our childhood years. Even though those things we learn from our family is something that usually coincide with the nation’s way of life, it is the family that define us in the first moments, and throughout, of our life, which makes it difficult for me to accept the full idea of Calhoun, Greenfeld and Chirot.

When it comes to Guibernau’s concern for differentiation of labour I understand this as a concern for how certain ‘service sector’ roles have to be taken on by a great deal of individuals while those who could afford higher levels of the education system gets the higher ranking jobs. In accordance to one of Smiths main attributes to a national identity: “a common economy with *territorial mobility for members*” (1991, p. 14, my italics), and one of the attributes of the *ethnie*: “*a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population*” (1991, p. 21, my italics), there is no factor saying that it should be a high social mobility, only

territorial. As the society relies on that the best qualified individual gets the better job, the social mobility cannot be absolute. The 'social bond' that Smith has referred to though, is in order to make the upper levels of society have solidarity for the lower levels, and that a sense of common cultural ideology goes both ways. It should be said that in opposition to the life centuries ago, when you became a blacksmith just because your father was a blacksmith, society has changed, and there has become a higher level of social mobility that can be credited the modern nation.

Attributes of a Modern National Identity

Based on the identity theories of Smith, Guibernau, Calhoun, Fenton, Greenfeld and Chirot I have made five distinct attributes of what a modern national identity needs to fulfil. This has most of its base in the *ethnie*, being that this is not necessary for the whole nation to share these traits as long as there have a firm grip in a small segment of the community, described by Smith, but also the individual aspect as well.

There should be a common culture in which the community can recognize each other and separate this community from others. This common culture may evolve over time as a nation may incorporate several different ethnicities and their culture. There should be an association with a 'homeland' or 'cradle', a shared myth of common ancestry and, at least sentient or 'felt', historical memories about the nation. A modern national identity appeals to the individual since the individual may act on its own, but other identities, as roles in the family and close community, are also of great relevance to the individual. The individual should feel belonging to the community and values the citizenship with legal rights that it gives him/her, with the territorial and social mobility it may lead to. The modern national identity needs not be expressed at all given times, and are most likely to become visible and salient during times of national sorrow, triumph or oppression. It may also be expressed in banal ways, and is not limited to nation-states. The modern national identity is "a phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature" (Guibernau, 2007, p. 11). It may be very stable for long periods of time, but it may also change as the individual is not forced to keep the same national identity. With this in mind, I will explore if the English has such a modern national identity.

English Identity Through History

When you come back to England from any foreign country, you have immediately the sensation of breathing a different air. Even in the first few minutes dozens of small things conspire to give you this feeling. The beer is bitterer, the coins are heavier, the grass is greener, the advertisements are more blatant. The crowds in the big towns, with their mild knobby faces, their bad teeth and gentle manners, are different from a European crowd. Then the vastness of England swallows you up, and you lose for a while your feeling that the whole nation has a single identifiable character. Are there really such things as nations? Are we not forty-six million individuals, all different? And the diversity of it, the chaos!

George Orwell, 1941

According to Linda Colley, an expert on Britain since 1700, in her well acknowledged book *Britons: Forging the Nation* (released in 1996), and Jeremy Black, a British historian, in his *History of the British Isles* (2003, p. 158), they argue that a common British identity was formed due to the common religion on the isles (Protestantism), the war with an 'Other' (France) and the benefits the Empire provided. But, an argument in the Colley thesis and by Black is that alongside this common British identity, identities in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales were developed.

At this point I disagree with Colley and Black. I would argue that Scotland, Ireland and Wales developed their identities alongside the British identity, but that the English, in the beginning, chose to downplay their identity in order to avoid offending the other nations in the Union. The English dominance in the Union has always been massive, both in terms of numbers and in political power, and in order to keep the 'junior partners' satisfied the Union had to be viewed as a joint enterprise, not something that was controlled solely by the English. As Curtice and Heath argue, Britishness came to include Englishness, while for the other nations of the union Britishness was seen as more of an 'overlay'. The consequences of this is still visible today, as the English are more likely to consider themselves British than the citizens of the other nations within the Union are (2000, p. 158, in Bryant 2003, p. 394). Bryant (2003, p. 394) has argued that the Scots, Welsh and Northern Irish as 'junior partners' have led to the development of identities in contradistinction to the English, due to the English dominance within the Union. Guibernau argues that an identity may be developed due to oppression (2007, p. 11). Whether this 'oppression' is from within or from the outside is not questioned, but as these smaller nations may have felt that their culture or nation was under the threat of an English dominance, and these identities may have developed to avoid total submission or Anglicization.

There are a few points one need to take into account if one follows this train of thought. First, it is difficult to imagine how people may have felt from 1707, or from 1282 in the case of Wales, as a national identity usually has a mass appeal and/or is well ingrained in the upper, ruling, class of the nation. The ruling class was a part of the venture of the British

Empire, but since the nation is defined by its people it is not absurd to think that the identities in these nations may have gained support both ways, both top-down and bottom-up. A special note should be added to Scotland, as Black (2003, p. 158) points out, as the Scots played a large role when it came to expanding and maintaining the Empire and was indeed a valuable asset to the British Empire. Second, the identities that developed in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are most likely to be considered cultural identities, and not as much identities closely tied to form of government or nations as such. And third, I do not regard this ‘oppression’ as any form for imperial oppression where a nation dominate and subsume another nation or nations, but rather an ‘oppression’ of institutions and a felt ‘oppression’, as the English needed the other nations to be a part of the Empire.

I follow the thought presented by Krishan Kumar (2006, pp. 430-434) about the idea of a ‘inner’ and ‘outer’, or ‘first’ and ‘second’ English empire, in contradistinction to what is normally called Great Britain and the British Empire. The ‘inner empire’ came to be during 1707 (England, Wales, and Scotland) and 1784 (Ireland) and the ‘outer empire’ is what most people today recognize as the British Empire. The term, the ‘British Empire’ seems to be an appropriate one as it was the term British that was sported during the era of the Empire, but, as Kumar points out, it was mainly English culture (the English language, English common law, English parliamentarism, the idea of English liberties) that was exported throughout the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ empire. The argument of Kumar also considers that the English were not only imperialists to gain territory, wealth and colonies, but also that they had a higher goal, a civilizing mission, which came to transcend the normal sentiments of nationalism which started to stir at the latter half of the 18th century. The collective ideas of Catholicism, war with France (‘Othering’) and benefits from Empire which was used to gain enthusiasm around the ‘inner empire’ and, in the beginning, ‘outer empire’ came to be replaced, or further developed in the case of the latter point to this higher purpose: spreading the English (“British”) cultural heritage. Because of this higher mission, and in order not to offend any of the ‘junior’ partners, the English may have curbed their own nationalism and gone to great lengths in order to deny that they had one during the existence of the British Empire (Kumar, 2006, pp. 433-434).

Richard Weight has argued that during the last two centuries there has been a mutual entanglement of British culture and English identity, and since the English dominated the British Empire few people thought it mattered if they referred to the nation as ‘Britain’ or ‘England’ (in Perryman, 2009, p. 224). Perryman further adds to this argument that: “Yet this model of Britishness was designed to be sufficiently capacious for Scottish, Welsh, and for a

while Irish, identities to be played in favour of greater Britain, which the latter sometimes confusingly being named England” (Perryman, 2009, p. 224). These commentators have argued that England and Britain have become nearly the same thing in the hearts and minds of the English people as England has appeared as the dominant part in the British Empire, and now in the British state. As the upper levels of society had their eyes on building a global empire, it did not matter what the masses thought, as long as the thoughts were not dangerous to the Empire. According to Robert Colls, the development of Welsh, Scots, and Irish identities became a form for cultural regionalism, while England did the same thing, but the ruling class created the cultural identity without the people. Colls argues that the elite produced an official English identity which centred around the works of Shakespeare, the royalty and bits and pieces of the pastoral land and other shiny symbols, but that this Englishness became an identity without the people. This was an identity limited to the upper levels of society due to the symbols that were not available, or not in line with the ideas, to the common man. This Englishness lacked bottom and could not be compared to the identities that was formed in the smaller nations (Colls, 2011, p. 582). For the English, and by this I mean the ruling class, it was the functioning of the institutions of the state that was the most important, not a mass identity limited, and accepted, by the entire English population.

The triumph of Empire and the spreading of English liberties put a damper on any political demands that may have grown out of a cultural nationalism, or through the words of Bryant: “What need had the English of an English state when they were the core of the United Kingdom and thus of the British Empire?” (2003, p. 397). Ben Wellings (2002, in Bryant, 2003, p. 397) added to this argument that there was no need for an English uprising or English state as long as the British state spread and was “seen as the protector of English liberties”. As the English liberties and the qualities of the English spread through all the corners of the Empire, these qualities were applied by several groups within the colonies. From Canadians to South Africans, and Indians to Americans, and not restricted to white groups, Englishness became something people from all walks of life could apply to their to-be-nations. During the nineteenth century it became clear, in retrospect, that Englishness was not an identity of the English living in England, but rather an ‘diasporic identity’ which crossed geographical barriers and could insert any English, or citizen of the British (‘outer’ English) Empire. Englishness became something ‘empty’, something that lacked ‘cultural essence’ since the English people, the English language and the English liberties became spread all across the globe (Young, 2008, p. 236, in Kumar 2010, pp. 469-470; Young, in Perryman, 2009, p. 138). The result of this was that there was never developed a national identity similar to its

continental neighbours as the national sentiments began to stir and develop during the latter half of the 18th century and in the 19th century (Kumar, 2010, p. 470). The effect the Empire had on the English is still with us today and may be the reason why the attachment to Britain is stronger in England than in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Since British and English have been entangled in the way that English culture became British culture and that the British state is the state of England (but to a lesser degree in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland especially after devolution in 1999) the development of the this culture and the majority political opinion has to a lesser/no degree been in opposition to the English state of mind. The English language has never been threatened during the British state, as the Welsh language has been, and the politics from Whitehall and 10 Downing Street has never offended the majority of the English public, but has been in opposition to the Welsh and Scottish majority during the Conservative governments between 1979 and 1997, and especially in the Thatcher period (Bryant, 2003, p. 398).

As shown above, the English has suppressed their own identity in order to not offend the other partners in the Empire, and thus there has not been an English national identity since the formation of the modern nation states. Maybe more pressing, there has been further development of Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish national identities which led to devolution in 1999. As Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland gained political powers as a result of devolution, commentators has been waiting for the English lion to roar, and a demand for devolution of powers to England as well; but, as Perryman puts it: “One of the peculiarities of Englishness is this denial of a national culture” (2009, p. 19).

Do the Polls do them Justice?

Although the English have been associated with Lions for centuries, through the Royal Arms of England, it is John Curtice and Anthony Heath that has been given credit of coining the term: “Is the English Lion about to Roar?”, the name of their article regarding a possible change in the English national identity after devolution (2000). There have been many commentators who have speculated how and when an English backlash after devolution would occur. According to the above-mentioned Curtice and Heath, this could take two forms: first, what they call a ‘me too’ backlash, that the English would have the same devolution as their counterparts in Scotland, in order to develop a stronger attachment to Englishness rather than Britishness. Second, that the ‘privileges’ granted to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales should be withdrawn, since Britain should be one country and

ruled as such, not an union between four nations with different governments. Between these two forms of backlash the former is seen as the most dangerous one, because if England decides to “let the union go” Britain would lose its most important contributor, especially since Britain is governed from Whitehall in England. If the latter would be the case of the backlash there would, most likely, have unleashed a reaction from the other nations of the Union which could also be a potential breaking point to the Union. (Curtice and Heath, 2000, p. 156)

In order to determine whether or not there has been such an English backlash, and what kind of form/degree it has taken I will examine different state-wide surveys, with a special focus on a potential upsurge of English identity, or if people are still committed to the British state, or is generally unaffected by devolution as a whole. The surveys I have chosen to examine in detail goes out to Britain as a whole, as it is interesting to compare the growth/decline/stay still between the nations. The next two tables are created out of data from these surveys.

The first survey is the General Household Survey (GHS). The GHS is a continuous national survey which survey people in private households and covers a range of core topics, among them national identity. The table presented here contains the available data for a variant of the ‘Moreno question’, or combinations of national identity. The respondents have answered in which of the following identities they consider their national identity to be. One thing that should be noted is the surveys that took part in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 as there has been a huge rise in people who do not answer this part of the survey (the ‘Not Available’ parametre is 21,90% and 21% respectively), which would affect the percentages of the other categories in this part of the survey. In order to compensate for this anomaly I will see these two surveys in comparison to each other, and the other three surveys in comparison to each other.

As we can see out of the GHS table ranging from 2001 and up until 2006, the percentages in the different categories of identity seem to vary very little. If the backlash were a major phenomenon one would suspect to see a rise in the percentage covering ‘English only’, if we follow the train of thought in the ‘me too’ backlash described by Curtice and Heath. What is interesting is that there seems to be no rise nor fall in any of the identities. According to these surveys, devolution has not brought people in Wales and Scotland closer to their identities, nor has it led to people abandoning the collective British identity. The English identity has been stable at 37,6%, 36,8% and 37,9% in 2006, 2002-2003, and in 2001-

2002 respectively, and in the anomaly cases of 2004-2005 and 2003-2004 they were 29% and 29,2% respectively, and even though the number of respondents change these percentages have been very stable. According to these surveys, it seems that the national identities of the nations of Britain have not been affected by devolution that occurred in 1999. But, since the GHS lack numbers from before 2001 and after 2006 I have used another set of surveys in order to examine these results further.

3 General Household Survey 2001-2006

	2006		2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003		2001-2002	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not Available	65	30	4290	21	5354	21,9	64	0,3	80	0,4
English Only	8625	37,6	5929	29	7140	29,2	7409	36,8	8029	37,9
Scottish Only	1467	6,4	1163	5,7	1211	4,9	1199	6	1390	6,6
Welsh Only	761	3,3	516	2,5	674	2,8	629	3,1	635	3
Irish Only	139	0,6	152	0,7	173	0,7	159	0,8	185	0,9
British Only	6763	29,5	4750	23,3	5469	22,3	6079	30,2	6707	31,7
Other only	966	4,2	765	3,7	917	3,7	784	3,9	843	4
British and English'	3140	13,7	2241	11	2780	11,4	3018	15	2521	11,9
British and Scottish	331	1,4	210	1	294	1,2	248	1,2	270	1,3
British and Welsh	166	0,7	104	0,5	146	0,6	182	0,9	175	0,8
British and Irish	42	0,2	24	0,1	31	0,1	36	0,2	40	0,2
British and other	168	0,7	83	0,4	77	0,3	104	0,6	93	0,4
Other combinations	291	1,3	194	1	223	0,9	238	1,2	212	1
Valid responses	22924		20421		24489		20149		21180	
Missing responses	0		0		0		0		0	

Sources: General Household Surveys 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2006

The second table shows the results from the British Social Attitudes Surveys (BSA) from 1999 up until 2011. Unlike the GHS these surveys have a lot fewer respondents, but still sufficient to represent the overall population of the British Isles. One thing to bear in mind though is that since there are fewer respondents there will naturally be more variation in the percentages since a single answer to the survey gains more weight when there are fewer respondents, and may explain the greater variation in percentages in the BSA polls. BSA is “designed to produce annual measures of attitudinal movements which will complement large-scale government surveys” (UK Data Service). One of its main purposes is to monitor patterns of continuity and change, and in this regard is very applicable to the area in which I examine. This survey also covers the whole of Britain, but in this case the identities are exclusive, and the respondents were asked questions similar to: ‘which nationality best describes <respondent>?’.

What is more apparent in this table is that the results from the BSAs shows a pattern of peaks and valleys, showing decrease and increase, but never a stable increase or decrease over time. What one should notice though is that the category 'British' is at an all-time high in 2010, while 'English' is at an all-time low in the same year and the following change in 2011 with the sudden rise in 'English' and sudden drop in 'British' (close to an all-time low) but since the data for the 2012 and 2013 BSAs is not available, it is difficult to comment upon whether this is a phenomenon or anomaly which one should regard with interest, or if it follows the general pattern of peaks and valleys. The average percentage score for the category 'English' is on 35,825%, with an approximately 5,6% in either direction to the 'extremes' among these surveys, which still makes this a fairly stable identity in regard of the survey results, but still there is no sign of a backlash for the English, and still not a rising feeling of national identity among the smaller nations. It is important to note that I do not regard the 2003 data as valid due to the sudden drop on almost every account, but not a rise in either, and it is an anomaly which I cannot explain.

Perryman has argued that there exists evidence of an increased awareness of Englishness due to the debates on devolution, and, in some places, the debates have fuelled a greater sense of identification with Englishness. He also says that pollsters in this era have observed an increase of Englishmen who identify themselves as English as a result of devolution, but that a majority of them are comfortable to keep both English and British as their identities (2009, p. 225). This is in line with my findings in the GHS and BSA surveys since devolution, but also, and as Perryman points out, these results should be comforting for those who feared a rise of English nationalism and "act as a brake" for those who hoped for it (ibid.), the English 'backlash' seems inflated.

4 British Social Attitudes Survey 1999-2011

Identity / %	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
British	40,6	49	43,6	41,4	45,5	36,3	44,4	46,5	19,3	46,3	40,3	43,1	40,9
English	38,7	30,2	36,2	37,4	34,3	41,4	34,9	32,3	17,1	32,9	37,2	35,5	38,9
European	2,8	2,4	3	2,7	2,7	2,7	2,2	2,4	1,4	2,1	3	2,6	3,1
Irish	0,8	1	0,8	0,9	0,9	1,2	1	1	0,4	1,1	1	1,3	1
N.Irish	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,2
Scottish	6,6	7,6	7,5	7,6	7,6	8	8,5	9,1	4,4	8,5	9	8,9	8,2
Ulster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0,1	N/A	N/A
Welsh	3,4	4	3,6	3,5	3,2	4,1	3,3	4,2	1,5	4,2	4,3	4,1	3,2
Other	2,6	2,3	2,2	2,9	2,3	2,5	2,5	2	0,9	2,4	1,9	2,2	1,7
None	1	1	0,5	0,8	0,9	1	0,6	0,4	0,1	0	0,8	0,6	0,6
Don't know	0,7	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,4	0,2	0,2	0,2
Refusal	0,8	0,6	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,3	0,8	0,4	0,6	0,4	1,1
Valid responses	3311	3297	3421	4486	4124	4290	4268	3199	4432	3435	3287	3426	3143
Missing responses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Sources: British Social Attitudes Surveys 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

According to Rosie and Bond there are similar surveys in the intervening decade that agree with the results presented here. That the introduction, and continuation, of devolution has not stirred the English in wanting a distinctive English national identity, nor has this asymmetry of governance in the different British nations created a common lust for a devolved parliament for the English (2008, in Bond, Jeffery and Rosie, 2010, p. 464). But, as Tilley and Heath (2007, pp. 674-675, in Kumar, 2010, p. 475) has discovered is that over the last two decades there has been a decline of 'British national pride', especially evident among the younger part of the population. As our survey data from the GHS and BSA surveys does not link the age and answer of the respondent it makes it difficult to verify the results of Tilley and Heath. But, if their research is a general phenomenon, I foresee a potential for a breakup of the Union, and a stronger sense of national identity among the different nations as 'the old guard' dies out.

There are some things that need to be pointed out when using social surveys as the BSA and GHS, or any other material based upon surveys like these. As Guibernau (2007, p. 11) says: a modern national identity is "a phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature". As with my attributes to a modern national identity, it needs not be expressed at all given times and may change due to several events or the context a person finds oneself at the given time. If, for instance, a respondent just saw a football match where England beat France, he is more likely to consider himself proud English than European. Context is also very important since people within the British Isles may carry several identities at once: regional, local, national, and social identities intertwined, and whether these are concentric or exclusive. These surveys also have no indicator what their national identity labels may be understood as. An English hooligan may understand national identity different than a peer at the House of Lords, even though none of them are wrong.

Despite these limitations and problems that can be understood as a natural part of social surveys, I would agree with Rosie and Bond (2008, p. 55) that the surveys provide us with valuable and consistent data that is difficult to come across otherwise, and that it could be used in order to understand the stability, or instability, of national identities in the UK.

Conflated Identities, Englishness out of Britishness

Where does Britain end and England begin?

(Bragg, 2008, p. 86, in Kumar, 2010, p. 469)

From the surveys we can see that there are still a great number of inhabitants of the British Isles hold British as their identity or consider their identity to be ‘British and <nation>’, but, Britain is not a nation but a state transcending the nations within and is responsible for citizenship and the rights and welfare for its citizens. Although, through history the concept of England and Britain may have been conflated to the degree that Britain was, and is, seen as a nation, or gained a supra-national identity function for its inhabitants that would not associate with England due to the identity of their own nation (Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland). The English who could not sport their national identity in order to maintain the Empire, or, especially during and after Empire, the immigrants who could not fit themselves in the ‘white’ identities of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and saw British as a more open symbol in which they could identify. Since there is a possible disentanglement of Britain and England in the near future due to devolution, although not visible in the polls, there is a potential of releasing “the term British from state to nation” (Perryman, 2009, p. 74), and thus creating a national identity in which those who do not associate with the nations within the current United Kingdom could use as a rallying point.

“‘What is Britishness?’ asked the Welsh leader, Gwynfor Evans of Plaid Cymru, rhetorically in 1981. ‘The first thing to realise is that it is another word for Englishness . . . Britishness is Englishness’ (in Pittock 1999, p. 104, in Kumar, 2010, pp. 474-475). Even though Evans claimed this in 1981 it still has a foothold in parts of the population of the British Isles. Historically, we have seen that England has dominated the Isles with its institutions, language, culture and law, both in the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ Empire. We have also examined how the smaller nations of Britain have formed their identities in contradistinction to the English, but in what way have the English developed an identity which is peculiar to themselves apart from the others? At least during the Empire it seems to have been suppressed, which may have led to a confusion regarding identity for the English people. As Kumar (2010, pp. 474-475) describes, this confusion of English and British have been of historical advantage to the English as it has been easier to gain the support of their neighbours when it came to the Empire, but in the modern world where these neighbours have an expressed and peculiar identity apart from the British, the English seem to lack a clear definition of the English nation and the English way. The friend from the past, “the all-

embracing cloak of Britishness” (ibid.), is a potential foe of the future. If the English would like to define themselves like the others nations after Empire, they might need to define themselves apart from Britishness.

As Goodhart (2008, p.3, in Kumar, 2010, p. 477) underlines is that even though Britain was, to a large degree, made by the English, the English failed/did not define their role in the enterprise. He claim that England has let herself become a part of Britain culturally and politically, and “to this day has only minimal political/institutional identity”. The point Goodhart makes is well documented in the institutions and sights one can experience in e.g. London: it is the British Museum, the National Gallery, British Library, UK Supreme Court, etcetera. As institutions have developed, or persisted, through the Empire, they have automatically become British and also taken on the same role for England. As Perryman (2009, p. 50) argues, what could have been seen as traits of the English character and English identity seems to have been lured into what is today known as Britishness, which could make a cultural and constitutional disentanglement of the English from the British a difficult task.

There exists two theories, or general conceptions, why the English have lost their icons to British culture: First, there are those who believe that the English have been left without their own distinct identity, icons and institutions because they have problems disengaging from Britishness, and second, there are those who believe that the English institutions and icons have become so available and shared through their role in the British culture that they have become invisible or ‘banal’ (Aughey, 2007, pp. 199-200). The first theory has its foothold in research that show us that the English people struggle to distinguish English from British due to England’s role in the Empire, and that the English people have no problem in holding both identities at the same time. This theory is based upon data from surveys, and the available stereotypes of the people in England having trouble to distinguish if they are British or English. (Condor, 2010, pp. 527-528; Perryman, 2009, p. 223)

The second theory has its roots in authors as Bond, Jeffery and Rosie (2010, p. 463) which claim that: “Strikingly, we find ourselves in a historic moment when the English [...] have a clear conception about the distinction between England and Britain, Britishness and Englishness”. It may be because of the growing use of English symbols, like the Cross of St George which is now not only limited to the right wing extremes, since the introduction of the devolution programme (Perryman, 2009, p. 223). But, in this regard, has there been a marked increase in the use of these symbols just because of devolution or are there other factors that needs to be examined? And, is the sudden use really that sudden? Or is it just because of the

high media focus on Englishness that commentators have opened their eyes for this wider usage of English symbols? Ben Wellings does not share the same enthusiasm as Bond, Jeffery and Rosie on this matter, but he thinks that Euro scepticism is a way in which English nationalism may blossom, as this is a profoundly English idea, and the popular appeal may be enough to gather England (in Bond, Jeffery and Rosie, 2010, p. 463).

One thing is for certain, commentators in the later years have begun to notice an increasing use of the Cross of St George during sports events. As Aughey notes: “Extracting the Cross of St George from the Union flag – in the *carnevalesque* of sporting emotion – has become a statement of national pride” (2007, p. 205). He further states that this pride can be everything from ‘banal’ (with harmless sporting of the St George’s Cross) to threatening to loyal or destructive, but it is the nature of this pride that it is important to note. “[...] this populism, having become autonomous in the way it has, has remained recognisably English” (ibid.). The mass appearance of St George’s cross during sports events such as football matches is a relatively new phenomenon, but commentators have asked themselves if ‘ninety-minute nationalism’ (Weight, 2003, p. 712; Abell et al 2007; Perryman 200b, in Kumar, 2010, p. 477) is real nationalism? It is more uncertain when research indicates that young adults in Britain, who may be confused of the rising differentiation of Britishness and Englishness, “are overwhelmingly indifferent to the whole concept of national identity outside the arena of competitive sport” (Perryman, 2009, p. 147). The identity of a person does not need to be salient at all times, as I have discussed earlier, but if it is limited to the duration of a game of sports it is not something upon which one can build a modern national identity. It is important to note that if the identity is there, but for the most time under the surface, it is still an identity (Smith, 1991, p. 21). The fluid and dynamic nature of a modern national identity is, as said, most visible during events that brings forth great emotion, but may be lurking under the surface at all times. As Aughey argues, there may be a reason why these sporting events are those which show the greatest display of ‘banal’ nationalism, with the waving of the English flag; these events are also one of the most international venues, who have managed to include popular culture most efficiently and have gained commercial success (2007, p. 204).

On the one hand, the problems the English people have in separating their identity from the British one has proven to be frustrating for those who want to create a distinctive English nationalism, or the smaller nations and migrants who associate Britishness with imperialism. On the other hand, there are some who see this as a positive advantage as they consider this type of Englishness as more open and welcome than a racialised and ethnicised

Englishness (Kumar, 2010, p. 479). There is a view of pastoral England which loves the countryside, and has a “distrust of intellectuals” (Kumar, 2010, p. 481) – but this view is considered nostalgic and to only have roots in the middle and upper-class. An excluding view like this repel many groups from all walks of life and therefore is more likely to cause a reactionary nationalism than a national identity. Kumar argues that even though the English have to rethink who they want to be, they have to do this with Britain as “Englishness and Britishness are joined to each other as limbs to the body” (Kumar, 2010, p. 481). At the current state it is hard to argue against Kumar, but as devolution further develops it is possible to see a downfall of Britain, and where will England stand then? What kind of identity should the English embrace? Bryant may have the answer.

Bryant’s Four Englands

Bryant presents us with a model which contains four different Englands, each with their light and dark sides. All of them are widely recognised, but none of them have absolute appeal. These four Englands are named: Anglo-British England, Little England, English England, and Cosmopolitan England. The reason why Bryant presents us with this model is, among other things, that the English has trouble defining who they are because there is more than one possibility to engage it (Bryant, 2003, pp. 393-394).

First out is Anglo-British England. In Bryant’s view the Anglo-British are those of the population who either does not know or does not care about the difference between being English or being British. These are those who do not notice when people say British when they mean English, or if an institution or person who is connected to England performs a British function. According to Bryant, these are people who acknowledge the contributions that the Irish, Scots and Welsh, as well as other immigrants from the empire, have done for England, and that they have played a part to create England. They also recognise that Empire, and Britain, have been a major contributors to the England that exists today. (Bryant, 2003, p. 396)

The concept of ‘little England’ or ‘little Englanders’ date back to 1884 and 1895 respectively. These are the people who, according to Bryant, do not want England to be a part of international ventures (e.g. empire) and is inward looking. The people who hold this view believe that international ventures could “compromise Britain’s sovereignty and do not serve her interests” (Bryant, 2003, p. 400). Although ‘Little England’ has had negative connotations, there are still people who show support for this kind of identity. Because, there

has always been people who are considered 'Little Englanders' as long as there have been people in England who have looked outside their borders for power, territory or adventure, e.g. imperialists. Because of this, 'little Englanders' may be considered suspicious of foreigners and hostile towards immigrants (and are considered to be racist by some) and "smugly self-regarding" (Bryant, 2003, p. 400). On the pro side 'little Englanders' may have the qualities of humanity and humbleness, in contradistinction to the imperialistic attitude that 'we know better than them', they may have the attitude: "who are we to tell others?" (ibid.). In the contemporary world, 'little Englanders' are characterised by being sceptics towards English participation in the European Union.

Due to the foreign engagements of the English (Empire, Europe and Britain) in both peacetime and wartime there have always been those who dwell on what is quintessentially English, these are the people who value and hold the 'English England' view. Where others look abroad and towards the future, English England tend to look for what is peculiarly English and to cherish the past. But, even though English England looks towards the past its continuity is also marked by the ideas of new generations, as the past is an ever changing idea so are the influx of ideas that influence the idea of past England. (Bryant, 2003, pp. 394-395; 406)

The final one can be considered a modern, contemporary and outward looking England, but which is also proud of past achievements and history. Cosmopolitan England, in contradistinction to the two latter, looks towards Europe, the Commonwealth and the rest of the world. This type of England is more open to influxes of people from the Commonwealth and elsewhere, and is open to diversity of people and cultures, and consider these as an enrichment of the English culture. And, in line with Britain which has allowed dual citizenships for a longer period of time, Cosmopolitan England does not expect citizens to only hold loyalties towards England. One major blow towards the idea of Cosmopolitan England is that the different regions of England have an uneven degree of cosmopolitanism. The North-East and the Greater London area do not contain the same train of thought or degree of multiculturalism which may lead to problems when it comes to this version of England. (Bryant, 2003, pp. 393-395; 407)

The observations of Bryant present us with four very different national identities instead of a single common English national identity. His observations support that national identities are not static, but can change from time to time depending on social situation, mood, upcoming or near past events, and a range of other factors. Bryant himself leans towards the

Cosmopolitan view to become the new England, but, as argued above, considers the regions to be one of the problems when it comes to creating a collective representation of England. As the devolution will develop there will most likely become an increase in the search of Englishness, and as long as these searches are sophisticated they are “less likely [...] to prompt claims for ethnic purity or cultural exclusiveness” (Bryant, 2003, p. 409) but will come closer to the thought of Cosmopolitan England.

Chapter 3: Obstacles to Englishness

What are the real obstacles to a sound Englishness? Is it the English regional identities, should we blame multiculturalism, or is it the lack of an English parliament?

There are many ways to view Englishness and many opinions on how it should develop in the future. Three of the main issues that appear in debates about Englishness are the West Lothian question, regional identities and multiculturalism. It has been argued that the English cannot develop an identity as long as there is asymmetrical devolution, as they are without an English parliament, and as there is no answer to the West Lothian question. Other commentators have argued that the reason why there is no strong sense of national identity is because the regional and local identities in England are strong. Arguments have also been presented that since England have had large waves of immigrants during and after the Empire, it is difficult to pinpoint what is truly English and uniting among the people living in England. Through this chapter I will try to explore and discuss these three ‘obstacles’ to Englishness.

The West Lothian Question

In 1977 Tam Dalyell, then member of Parliament representing the West Lothian constituency in Scotland, raised a question in the House of Commons:

For how long will English constituencies and English honourable Members tolerate . . . at least 119 Honourable Members from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland exercising an important and probably often decisive, effect on English politics while they themselves have no say in the same matters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland?

(House of Commons Debates, 14 November 1977, cols 122-3, in Aughey and Berberich, 2011, p. 183)

This question was later been dubbed “The West Lothian question” by Enoch Powell, former MP for the Ulster Unionist. The question raised by Tam Dalyell in the Commons is far from an unproblematic one and far from a new one either. The question was a core problem as far back as the Home Rule debates in the nineteenth century. It also emerged briefly during the 1964-66 Parliament. Today, there has still been no answer to the question, and so it still troubles parts of the House of Commons. (Aughey and Berberich, 2011, pp. 183-184)

The ‘West Lothian question’ (in the later years it has been dubbed ‘English votes for English laws’, ‘The English Question’ or ‘England-in-Britain question’) refers to the asymmetry of that Welsh, Northern Irish and Scottish MPs can vote on English matters, while the same MPs cannot vote on matters which are now devolved to the assemblies or parliament in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. For the English it seems strange that people who are

elected for constituencies in other nations than England can affect the outcome of laws which applies for England only. The question has a tendency to come up “if non-English MPs become UK ministers and push through controversial England-only measures, even as their devolved government rejects them” (Guardian, 17 January 2012), or if a non-English becomes Prime Minister.

People have been asking if there is any answer to the question. William Gladstone and his contemporaries in the Victorian Era experienced that they did not have one, and so far in modern times there has been four main proposals for a solution, neither which seem viable (Aughey and Berberich, 2011, p. 186). Lord Irvine, when Lord Chancellor, stated that the best way to deal with the West Lothian question was not to ask it, in effect to ignore the problem (in *The Economist*, 8 July, 2006, p. 36, in Aughey and Berberich, 2011, p. 186), but as devolution develops it seems to be vital for the English to ask the question in order to not lag behind the other nations. The four main proposals are: First, different varieties of English votes on English laws, second, revert back to the pre-devolution agreement, third, establish a devolved English parliament and a British federal state, and fourth, devolve powers to the English regions.

The first solution is a form of in-and-out votes, where the country the bill is affecting decide who can vote on the matter, or a modification of the current procedure at Westminster. There has been offered two ways on how to do this. The first is to let only English MPs vote on English laws, while everyone can vote on matters concerning the whole of Britain, the other way is to let committees consisting solely of English MPs handle Bills regarding England. While all English MPs have to agree on the details, all MPs of the Parliament can vote on the second and third reading of the bill (Aughey and Berberich, 2011, pp. 186-187). This solution might solve the problem of non-English MPs voting on England-only matters, but might cause other problems

The first possible problem is that it may limit the party in government, as a government enjoying a majority on UK issues might lose that majority on England-only issues, and thus “threaten the integrity of the UK” (Aughey and Berberich, 2011, p. 187). The second problem is that by creating an in-and-out system would create two different kinds of MPs: those who can vote on all issues, those who can vote on UK issues only, or only vote on the second and third reading of a bill. Since there is a constitutional convention that all MPs and their votes are equal, an in-and-out system would compromise that equality. This is a current problem as MPs from constituencies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can vote

on English issues which is a devolved matter in their respective country. The third problem is that in many cases issues that may be considered as England-only may affect the other nations as well. Who will decide whether or not a case is in all possible manners and outcomes an England-only issue? Is it so that an English MP close to the Scottish or Welsh border cares a greater deal about a London issue than a parliamentary neighbour on the other side of the border? As devolution came about to, among other things, compensate for the English dominance within the Union, a possible current outcome is that it is creating resentment among the English people. The resentment may occur as the English people are not allowed to run matters in their own country as the other nations of the Union have been granted due to devolution. (Aughey and Berberich, 2011, pp. 187-188; *The Independent*, 4 July 2006)

The second proposal to a solution about the West Lothian question is to revert back to the pre-devolution agreement, where Westminster controls all matters of the UK. The reason behind this proposal seems to have its roots in that the “devolution settlement of 1997 was particularly galling to the English” (Kumar, 2010, p. 477). While the Scots got their parliament restored and Wales and Northern Ireland now got their assemblies, England lacked the institutions it needed to manage its own affairs apart from the UK. To restore the previous system where all matters regarding the different nations were decided by Whitehall, would right this wrong, and in turn would solve the problems regarding whether matters are UK or English-only and create all MPs equal within the House. While this proposal solves the problems within the House of Commons, it does not seem like a viable option. First of all, why would the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish want a solution like that when they finally has got what they have been longing for since the Home Rule debates of the nineteenth century and the following devolution debates through the twentieth century? Second, part of the point of devolution was to compensate for the dominance the English have within the Union, which makes it irreversible. And third, you will still have the problem that Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish make decision regarding 85 per cent of the UK population which is not from their constituencies. While it may seem like an easy option for those who are nostalgic, no one would propose and gain support for such a proposal as the devolution is moving forward and turning back does not seem like a viable option, especially with the emerging Scottish independence referendum in 2014.

The third proposal seeks to fix the asymmetrical devolution by offering to create an English parliament, and thus a British federal state. It is “[a] small but loud chorus of opinion” that support this solution and argues that the inequities of asymmetrical devolution will only

be resolved if England gets a devolved (executive) parliament which can govern the largest nation within the Union (Perryman, 2009, p. 234). This proposal has been especially voiced by the Campaign for an English Parliament (CEP).

The main problem with this solution is that since England would be so dominant in the British federal state, both in numbers and in the sheer weight of English business it would create another kind of imbalance. It is hard to find any democratic state that has successfully managed to give an overwhelming majority a separate form for governing themselves, as Hazell argues: “No federation can operate successfully where one of the units is so dominant” (2006c, p. 42, in Aughey, 2007, p. 197; Perryman 2009, p. 234)). Still, the chair of CEP Eddie Bone argues that

“We need to have the strength of character to keep looking at ourselves, to sort the devolutionary English mess into some sort of order. Political leaders need to shake off British imperialism and they need to rekindle confidence in representing England's future. Campaigners for an English parliament understand that there are a number of devolution options up for consideration. [...] The prospect of Scotland possibly dissolving the Union has heightened the need to find a workable solution; not just for the North of England but for ALL of England.”

(Guardian, 29 November 2012)

The CEP consider themselves as open-minded as they represent all people of England, no matter how they identify themselves or their ethnicity, as long as they are legally living in England and are paying taxes to the UK, and their hopes is that an English parliament would let England recognise herself politically and constitutionally. The CEP claim that this would in turn inspire people to identify with England and create an inclusive, civic sense of national identity and bring the country together, in other arenas besides sports. There has been argued that the interests of the English people have been overlooked as they were not allowed a referendum on constitutional change as in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and that the current system was imposed upon them. (Aughey, 2007, p. 196; CEP)

The message from the CEP seems to be that they want an English parliament within a federate form of the UK, but the ultimate result of the campaign may result in English independence (Aughey, 2007, p. 197). If the CEP creates enough support and issue constitutional change and, in the making, the Union does break up, England will then be able to manage its own affairs. With 85 per cent of the population, the greater deal of the industry and ending subsidies to the other nations through the Barnett Formula, England would be safe (Aughey, 2007, p. 196). Although the CEP does not intend to break-up the Union, they and their supporters must accept the possibility of that occurring (Aughey, 2007, p. 197). While on the one hand the predominance and sheer size of England-in-Britain would let England

live on even if Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland decided to break away from the Union, this has also been a weakness for those campaigning for an English parliament. Because of the dominance of England in the Union it has been easy for the English people to ignore the anomalies of devolution, since they do not seem important or significant “in the wider scheme of English matters” (Aughey, 2007, pp. 197-198). The impression of the argument of an English parliament has thus been one of national equanimity, and as argued by John Curtice’s analysis of a certain set of opinion poll data: “[That] England has yet to embrace with much enthusiasm any form of change to the way that it is governed” (2006a, p. 138, in Aughey, 2007, p. 198). This may be because there is not a powerful political vehicle which champion English nationalism. The CEP and, in some degree, the Conservatives, could have been this vehicle, but since the CEP is still in small numbers and the Conservatives may be concerned about pushing away potential voters in the other nations or English voters which do not want to follow a party which is nationalistic, this is currently not enough. There is also a “muted desire for such a movement among broader English opinion” (Bond, Jeffery and Rosie, 2010, p. 466) which also is an obvious obstacle in order to implement any radical constitutional change which may lead to an English parliament.

Susan Condor, professor of social psychology at Cardiff University who has been investigating English national identity and been part of the debate since the early 1990s, sees this through another set of eyes which challenged the view of Aughey and Curtice. According to her, it is not due to a lack of English identity or a failure to recognise the potential political significance that the English did not accept the asymmetric devolution. Rather, the English “were inclined to publicly acquiesce with the new political status quo precisely because they regarded it as normatively incumbent upon themselves, as members of the English majority, to do so”, that it was a morally right action (Condor, 2010, p. 541). They considered it their duty as the largest group of the UK to let the other nations gain devolved governments. This may be because the English people wanted to remove themselves from the view of England as imperialists and let the smaller nations gain more autonomy, or they may have considered the current system as unjust since the matters of the constituencies in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland may have ‘drowned’ in the overarching British and dominant English matters. As England is by far the largest partner in the enterprise the public opinion may, according to Condor’s arguments, consider Westminster as an English parliament as well as an UK parliament as most bills regarding the UK, in which the English people constitute 85 per cent, affect them. We are then forced to insert the question of “whether or not England is on the

way to becoming a political community in its own right” (Perryman, 2009, p. 235) even though they do not have or, according to the former commentators, want an English executive parliament.

The fourth and final solution to the West Lothian question is to devolve powers down to the English regions. As an English parliament could destabilise the Union due to the sheer numbers of the English in the Union, powers devolved down to the English regions might not destabilise the Union as the English people, and their interest, would then be more evenly spread out. The problem with this solution is that Labour tried to implement it soon after they implemented the devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament and Welsh and Northern Irish assemblies, and, in retrospect, failed to do so. Powers to the English regions started with the establishment of the Government Offices in nine English regions by the Conservative government in 1994. The Labour government decided to expand upon this structure and created the Regional Development Agencies (RDA's) and Regional Assemblies which in turn were to support regional development. In order to test if regional devolution had support in the English population there was to be a test in three northern regions, namely the North-East, the North-West, and Yorkshire and Humber. The Labour government then feared that the latter two lacked support for the proposal and only conducted a referendum in the region where they considered the local identity to be sufficient “to support a directly elected assembly” (Aughey, 2007, p. 157). The regional devolution seemed half-hearted as a referendum was only held in one region, the North-East, in 2004 and thus came to a halt when approximately 78 per cent of those who voted, voted against regional devolution. (Jeffery, 2009, p. 6; Bratberg, 2011, p. 7)

The proposal for elected Assemblies in the different English regions was then put to rest, but Labour under Gordon Brown still wanted to create a stronger regional level of government. They created regional ministers who were to be the territorial representation, by the pattern that existed in the secretaries of Scotland and Wales. The regional ministers were to be the regions channel to London and to be their voice in the centralized system at Westminster. According to Bratberg, this system worked quite well, but was still abolished, like the RDA's and Regional Assemblies when the coalition government took office. Thus the regional institutions were scrapped and the current system does not represent the regions apart from those MPs elected from the constituencies. (Bratberg, 2011, p. 7)

So why did this proposal fail? First of all, it may have been seen as odd that while the smaller nations acquired parliaments and assemblies with devolved powers why would

England only get devolved power to the regions? As voiced by the CEP: If the nation was “the appropriate unit” instead of the regions in the other nations, why should England get regional assemblies instead of an English parliament? (Aughey, 2007, p. 147) The justification used by the government for devolution for the regions within England instead of devolution of powers to the nation was that they expected that “it *could*, not *would*, ‘promote the social, cultural and civic development of the English regions’ (Aughey, 2007, p. 152; Bond and McCrone, 2004, p. 2-4, in Aughey 2007, p. 152). While the Scottish and Welsh devolved Parliament and Assembly, respectively, reflected a unique national identity apart from the other nations, the idea for England was that the RDA’s would “help to forge complementary social, cultural and civic identities” (Aughey, 2007, p. 152). Some have also argued that the Government’s attempt to create regionalism was a way to deny the English nation its legitimacy. Although this seems to be a response which can be seen argued to be Conservative, or a response one could imagine a member from the CEP would utter. Even though, the argument is why would you create a collection of regions when the nation has not allowed itself to become a nation again after three centuries of Union? (Aughey, 2007, p. 191)

Second, the role of the RDA’s, which took an intermediate status, may have been seen as neither a local government in which the English people would get elected ministers whom know their issues nor a national government in which they are familiar with, Whitehall or alternatively a new English parliament. This may have led to a lack of understanding why these regional assemblies and agencies were developed, and which the local population could not identify with as these regional institutions were ‘in between’ known structures (Aughey 2007, p. 148). It is also argued that the defeat of regional assemblies have led people in England to think about a more traditional solution to the problem, the option to “revitalizing the tradition of local government” (Aughey, 2007, p. 158), and thus a possible strengthening of the local institutions and local identity.

This leads us to the third reason why regional devolution was a proposal by Labour that failed, and why there might be little chance of it coming about in the future. While there are feelings towards the option of counties and local government, the UK government created the regional boundaries based on “the huge constituencies used for elections to the European Parliament elections” (Redwood, 2009, p. 5). That the Labour government tried to create artificial regions with devolved elected assemblies seems not to have disguised the fact that they had created an asymmetrical devolution. The argument of John Redwood, an English Conservative Party politician, is that the English people did not only oppose that Scottish,

Welsh and Northern Irish MPs can vote on English-only matters, but also the Labour government ‘s dubiousness whether or not England was a nation in its own right (Redwood, 2009, p. 5).

Devolution in the UK granting Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland some autonomy has increased the calls for an English parliament, and the promotion of Englishness and English national identity (Kumar, 2010, p. 469). By looking at BSA’s ranging from 2000 until 2010 we can also see a development of the social attitudes of English respondents when it comes to the West Lothian question:

5 Attitudes towards the 'West Lothian' question, 2000-10

Table 7 Attitudes towards the ‘West Lothian’ question, 2000-10

	2000	2001	2003	2007	2010
	%	%	%	%	%
Now that Scotland has its own parliament, Scottish MPs should no longer be allowed to vote in the UK House of Commons on laws that only affect England.					
Strongly agree	18	19	22	25	31
Agree	45	38	38	36	35
Neither agree nor disagree	19	18	18	17	17
Disagree	8	12	10	9	6
Strongly disagree	1	2	1	1	1
<i>Base</i>	<i>1695</i>	<i>2341</i>	<i>1530</i>	<i>739</i>	<i>773</i>

Source: British Social Attitudes (respondents based in England only) (not asked 2011)

(Ormston, 28 February 2012,p. 9)

Since 2000 there has been a decrease in people who sit on the fence in this matter and those who disagree with the suggestion that Scottish MPs should no longer be allowed to vote on English-only issues. There has also been a decrease in people who ‘agree’ with this notion, but this is levelled up by the increase in those who ‘strongly agree’. If we lock those two categories together we see a slight increase in those who agree to some degree with the notion (from 63% to 66%), but the increase in the category ‘strongly agree’ could be characterised as a stronger expression than ‘agree’. The decrease in the base also adds to the problem on how to interpret the data, but all in all it seems to be an increasing part of the English population which want a change of the system in the UK House of Commons as approximately one third ‘strongly agree’ on the subject while another third ‘agree’ on this matter.

Is it the West Lothian question and therefore the current system of government that is keeping the English from developing a modern English national identity? While there seems to be no majority for a constitutional change in the English population there is also disgruntlement with the current system. A quarter thinks that England should be run by its

own Parliament with law-making powers (an increase from 18 per cent up to 25 per cent since the introduction of devolution towards 2011), approximately a tenth thinks that regional assemblies is the right approach (a decrease of 3 per cent since 1999, but more importantly a decrease of 14 per cent in the period 2003-2011. More importantly because 2003 was the year before the failed referendum in the North-East region). Even though there has been a decrease of 6 per cent of those who think that England should be governed as it is now, they still constitute over half of the respondents. It is important to note, however, that this needs to be seen in comparison with the other table from NatCen about the West Lothian question, as these are not mutually exclusive. From the data it seem as if people of England still want to be governed by the UK parliament, but also want a solution to the West Lothian question.

6 Attitudes Towards how England should be Governed, 1999-2011

Table 8 Attitudes towards how England should be governed, 1999–2011

With all the changes going on in the way different parts of Great Britain are run, which of the following do you think would be best for England?	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
England governed as it is now, with laws made by the UK parliament	62	54	57	56	50	53	54	54	57	51	49	53	56
Each region of England to have its own assembly that runs services like health*	15	18	23	20	26	21	20	18	14	15	15	13	12
England as whole to have its own new parliament with law-making powers	18	19	16	17	18	21	18	21	17	26	29	23	25
<i>Base</i>	<i>2718</i>	<i>1928</i>	<i>2761</i>	<i>2897</i>	<i>3709</i>	<i>2684</i>	<i>1794</i>	<i>928</i>	<i>859</i>	<i>982</i>	<i>980</i>	<i>913</i>	<i>967</i>

* In 2004–6 the second option read “that makes decisions about the region’s economy, planning and housing”. The 2003 survey carried both versions of this option and demonstrated that the difference of wording did not make a material difference to the pattern of response. The figures quoted for 2003 are those for the two versions combined.

Source: British Social Attitudes (respondents living in England only)

(Ormston, 28 February 2012,p. 10)

Even though it seems to be a relative political quiescence in the English public, apart from the debate in the media, it is important to not draw conclusions based on “a rather dubious form of syllogistic reasoning”, that strong nationalisms are often visible through strong political action, English nationalism has a relative political quiescence, thus the English people does not have a strong nationalism (Condor, 2010, p. 528). Political action may be seen as a national identity that is emerging, and emerging national identities may lead to political action (e.g. Scotland and devolution), but low political action or political inaction does not necessarily mean an absence of national identity (ibid.), it just may take other forms of expression. If the English are currently satisfied with the way they are governed, maybe political action is not their vehicle for expressing national identity, but may show itself in more banal ways.

Regional and County Identities, A Hindrance for Englishness?

In political terms, as we have seen with the abolishment of the attempt of regional governance and the polls studied above, English regionalism is ‘the dog that never barked’ (expressed by Christopher Harvie in 1991). Still, commentators have argued that even though political devolution does not seem to be for the regions, regional loyalties and identification could still be strong enough for its inhabitants to associate with the region or county rather than identifying with a common Englishness (Bryant, 2003, p. 394; Bryant, 2006, p. 209). As Guibernau has argued, we feel more intensely about events that occur in our own region, county, city or village, than we do for national events, and that even though we are moving towards a globalised world the local attachments will remain strong (2007, p. 22). There have also been arguments that in the same manner Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have used England as their ‘other’ in order to develop their identities, so has regions and counties in England used the remote ‘official’ England, or regions that are far apart, as their ‘other’. The argument is that the North-East region has established itself as a counterpoint to the ‘official’ English as they have a strong regional identity and is located on the Scottish border, the North versus the South has also been the argument for many debates regarding identity even though they have more in common than they would care to admit (Aughey, 2007, p. 145; Perryman, 2009, p. 50). The other regions/counties that are frequently mentioned in the debate regarding local identities are Cornwall, as they are fighting for Cornish independence and/or a Cornish regional assembly, while London is different from the other regions both in inhabitants and

culture. It seems that these three areas need further examination in order to confirm or reject the notion that the regional identities are an obstacle for a collective Englishness.

The North-East Region

The North-East region was the hope of the Labour government when they tried to create regional governance in England. The reason why the North-East was chosen, in addition to what was previously mentioned, is that the region was seen as one with a strong local identity. The North-East got the regional boundaries which make the region less artificial than others, as they got Scotland in the north, the North Sea in the east, the Pennines in the west, and Cleveland Hills in the south. Geographically it is also very remote in perspective to London and is “England beyond Yorkshire, a county with a strong identity of its own” (Bryant, 2006, p. 217). Newcastle is then also considered as a natural capital of the region. Historically the strong identity of the region is ascribed to the legacy of Northumbria (the mediaeval kingdom of the Angles). According to Tomaney and Ward (2000, p. 477, in Bryant, 2006, p. 217) the North-East was semi-detached from the rest of England until 1603 when the English and Scottish crown merged, and that “it may be more accurate to think of the North-East as a “British” region, whose final incorporation into the English polity occurred alongside the formation of British identity”. If this is the view one holds then the North-East has been developing their identity as a separate identity apart from both the British and the English during the Empire as well, which indeed would make it a strong and historic identity.

The region has had a strong economy with the chemical industry as the last heavy industry that is still flourishing, but it is currently the poorest region in England. The region also has a strong cultural identity, which in the past revolved around the Labour movement and Methodism, but is currently revolving around the different dialects of the area (with Geordie as the most known) and the passion for football with its local derbies: Tees-Wear derby (Middlesbrough vs. Sunderland), Tyne-Tees derby (Newcastle United vs. Middlesbrough), and Tyne-Wear derby (Newcastle United vs. Sunderland). And, last but not least, the population within the North-East is the most ethnically homogenous in England since 96,4 per cent (2001 census) are white British. Joyce Quin, former Labour MP for Gateshead East, argues that for many Geordies like her the regional identity connected to the North-East is stronger than the English national identity. She further adds that the regional culture, which consists of folksong tradition and the Northumbrian bagpipes, let the people of

the North-East region connect with both Scotland and England. (Quin, 1993, p. 22; Bryant, 2006, pp. 217-218).

If we follow the attributes of a modern national identity in order to legitimize the identity of the North-East we start by agreeing that there is a common culture in which the community can recognize each other. The problem is that a large part of this common culture belongs to the common English and/or British cultures. The individual may feel belonging to this community, but it is not the North-East region which grants the individual with its rights as a citizen, that still belongs to the state of Britain. What the North-East does have is a 'cradle' with the legacy of Northumbria, and the culture is expressed through the local derbies between the three most successful football teams in the region, the bagpipes and the folksong tradition. The large degree of homogenisation of the population within the region may also function as a way for them to consider themselves as a strong community with a strong regional identity. The problem with stating that the North-East has an identity which may disrupt the sense of Englishness is that without interviewing every inhabitant of the region it is difficult to pinpoint whether or not the views of Joyce Quin is universal, and if we were to conduct these interviews, how to do it? Since the identity of man may change due to context and/or events occurring and thus change over time, when should one conduct these interviews? Would the voice of the people be affected if they were interviewed during a Tyne-Wear derby? Or would it be fairer to do it during a Football World Cup where England has qualified? Or should one have done it during the London Olympics 2012 where Team GB represented the whole of Britain? I will return to the issue of contesting identities of the North-East region and England after the discussion of London and Cornwall.

London

London is unique in the setting of England by its immense size and diversity in population. While there are many large cities within England, as Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield etcetera, London is considered to be the only world city within Britain. The population in London alone is three times that of the next conurbation, and is by the Mayor of London (in 2004) claimed to be the most culturally diverse city on the planet (although this title is hard to prove and would gain a strong contest from New York). London is a city of extremes with the richest and some of the poorest inhabitants of England within its borders, and the City of London is governed through its elected lord mayor and the Greater London Authority (GLA). London is a place all Britons know and is marked as a place different from

the rest of England. One problem when it comes to the identity of London is its boundaries. As the suburbs around the city stretch outside the GLA's authority and that most of south-east England is considered its commuting area, it may be difficult to decide who is a Londoner. For what is really considered London? Is it the City of London, or Inner London? Is it to be considered the whole Outer London or Greater London? Or is it the London Boroughs of the City of Westminster, the London metropolitan area, London in the discourses of academics, London as a city-region in official terms or is it London as a planning region? There are many ways to regard London and to decide who is a Londoner, but one thing commentators do not ask is how the people of these various Londons identify with the area. (Bryant, 2006, pp. 221-224)

How people from London identify with the area and if this identification can be in opposition to a common modern English national identity might be explored in an Ipsos MORI poll called: "What is a Londoner?". This poll examines how people identify with London, satisfaction with the respondents local area, things that make the respondents proud or what they dislike about London etcetera, divided into four categories, namely: 'Living in London', 'Sense of Belonging', 'Being a Londoner', and 'Activities in London'. The results are based on data gathered from 1221 interviews conduct over phone in the time period 17th-24th March 2004 of people living within the boundaries of Greater London and those living outside London and inside the M25 motorway (Ipsos Mori, 14 April 2004). It is important to note that since there are smaller selections of interviews of those who live on the borders of London, a single answer here may affect the percentages in a larger degree the answers of those who live inside London. In this part we will focus on four of these results.

The first statement was: "London is a place I identify with . . ." (Q8b, Ipsos MORI, 14 April 2004). Out of all respondents there were 75 per cent who either said that they did 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree' with the statement, while if we look at the two different groups of respondents we got some marked differences. People who live within London tend to agree more strongly with the statement regarding identification (40 per cent versus 37, and 36 versus 29 per cent, respectively). On the other end of the scale we see the results of this as people who live on the borders rather than in London have a larger percentage of those who disagree (16 per cent versus 8, and 9 per cent as opposed to 5). If we examine these results we may conclude that people who live within the borders of London tend to identify with the City (3 in 4) while those who live on the borders of London also seems to identify with the city, but this is more ambiguous as there are larger percentages that tend to disagree with this

identification (approximately 1 in 4 amongst those on the borders, while approximately 1 in 10 of those within London).

7 London is a Place I Identify with...

Q8b I am now going to read out some statements. I would like you to tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of them. London is a place I identify with...	All %	London %	Borders %
Strongly agree	40	40	37
Tend to agree	35	36	29
Neither agree nor disagree	9	9	8
Tend to disagree	8	8	16
Strongly disagree	6	5	9
Don't know	2	2	1
Base	1221	1017	204

(Ipsos MORI, 14 April 2004)

There is a tendency that people who live within London tend to identify more with the city than those on the borders even though these numbers are high as well. A reason for the high percentage of those living outside the borders may be because they either work in London or identify London as the capital of England. But, identifying with something is not necessarily the same as regarding it as a part of your identity. If we then look at question 11 in which the respondent were asked “Which one of these, do you think best describes you?”, with the options ‘A Londoner’, ‘English’, ‘A British citizen’, ‘A European’, ‘None of these’, and ‘Don't know’ (Ipsos MORI, 14 April 2004), we may see comparable trends from the last results and these. While overall there are a high percentage of people who consider themselves Londoners there is a marked difference between those living within London and those on the borders. As the overall response is 30 per cent towards a Londoner identity, there are only 15 per cent of those on the borders who considers this; while 31 per cent of those who reside in London think that the Londoner identity describes them. A result that may support the argument of the London Mayor, that London is the most multicultural city in the world, is that there are a greater percentage of people who identify with London and/or Britain than with England within the borders of London (31 per cent, 31 per cent, and 21 per cent respectively), while those who live on the borders regarding ‘English’ as a more suited category than both ‘A Londoner’ and ‘A British citizen’ (42 per cent, 15 per cent, and 29 per cent respectively). While people from England tend to regard themselves as English, immigrants are more likely to adopt the identification with Britain (which I will return to later) or even as Londoners.

8 Which one of These Best Describes You

Q11 Which one of these, do you think best describes you?	All %	London %	Borders %
A Londoner	30	31	15
English	23	21	42
A British citizen	31	31	29
A European	10	10	9
None of these	6	6	5
Don't know	*	*	0
Base	1221	1017	204

(Ipsos MORI, 14 April 2004)

The people of London seems to have created an identity in which they hold more dear than their English one, and also hold an identity as British citizens which are greater than the English one, while people on the borders of London seem to be more homogeneous in their choice. It is important to note, however, that people were allowed to have multiple responses on this question and may have considered themselves 'A Londoner' and 'A British citizen' which may have raised the number of these categories within London, and it makes it difficult, if not impossible, to figure out if being a Londoner takes precedence of being English or not.

Those who were interviewed were also asked to answer the statement: "Some people say that people in London have a different outlook to people in the rest of the country. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?" (Q13, Ipsos MORI, 14 April 2004), and could answer in the categories: 'Strongly agree', 'Tend to agree', 'Neither agree nor disagree', 'Tend to disagree', 'Strongly disagree', and 'Don't know'. What is surprising about the results is that they are very similar on all accounts. In the category 'Strongly agree' the overall result was 38 per cent, those within London were 38 per cent, and those on the borders had 40 per cent who agreed with the statement. In the category 'Tend to agree' it was 34 per cent in all the groups, while in the other categories there were also little fluctuations in the percentages (only 1 per cent either way). Both those who reside inside the boundaries of London and those on the borders tend to agree that Londoners have a different outlook to people in the rest of the country (approximately 7 in 10), and this may contribute to the identity of Londoners as it could be regarded as a rallying point.

The final statement we should examine is the one regarding way of government for London. The statement was "London, like Scotland and Wales, should have greater control over its affairs" (Q15a, Ipsos MORI, 14 April 2004), and the categories in which one could answer were the same as in Q13 above. In the category of those who 'strongly agree' the

combined total were 42 per cent, but, of the residents in London there were 43 per cent who opted for this category while only 33 per cent of those on the borders saw it the same way. In all three groups there were 29 per cent who 'Tend to agree' to the statement, but those in the borders of London had a higher percentage when it came to those who 'Tend to disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' (16 per cent as opposed to 9, and 9 per cent as opposed to 4, respectively). It seems like the residents of London are more eager to have a system of government in which they have greater control over their own affairs, while those who do not reside in London are more likely to disagree with that notion. With 7 in 10 of those who reside in London that agree with the statement in a stronger or milder manner and 6 in 10 of those of the borders (who may or may not be commuters), and with the other results in mind, it is likely that a great deal of Londoners see themselves as a community apart, and different, from the rest of England, which may work against a common modern English national identity.

Cornwall or Kernow

The last area which will be addressed is Cornwall (or Kernow in Cornish). What is special about Cornwall, when compared with the other two areas which I have addressed, is that there has been a significant support for a special constitutional status for the county since the Mebyon Kernow (The Party of Cornwall) grew from a cultural movement into a political party in the 1960s, and that those who support this notion claim that Cornwall is not a part of England (Bryant, 2006, p. 226). Historically Cornwall has considered itself separate from England as late as 1855 as the Duchy of Cornwall, established 1337, acquired prerogatives to this claim (ibid, p. 227).

In 2000 a report was published by the Government Office of South-West that estimated that there were about 300 effective speakers of Cornish within Cornwall, and a further 750 who were learning the language through correspondence classes and adult education centres. The report also showed that teaching of the Cornish language occurred at twelve primary and four secondary schools. Road signs within Cornwall are also getting bilingual (with those in the Penwith district as a starting point), and the brown tourist road signs with the names of English Heritage sites no longer display the red English roses, but the black Cornish choughs due to a campaign of over painting in 2001 by Cornish nationalists. The Cornish have also adopted the flag of St Piran (a white cross on a black field) which is flown by the county council and is widely seen throughout Cornwall in shops, in cars and

elsewhere, and is thus used as a banal nationalism, everyday representations of a nation, or in this case: a county. The culture of the Cornish is increasingly getting more widespread and the revival of the Cornish language may be seen as a great contributor to just this. (Bryant, 2006, pp. 228-229)

Cornwall is the only one of these areas which fights for a constitutional status, and there is much dislike in Cornwall because of the hybrid 'Devon and Cornwall', with the centre for decision-making in Devon. The notion that Devon and Cornwall are equivalent is also an element that is a thorn in the side of the Cornish activists, as they claim that Cornwall is more than a county, a nation of its own. In order to achieve this, the Mebyon Kernow launched a petition for a referendum on a Cornish Assembly (similar to the one in Wales) on St Piran's Day, 5 March, 2000. The petition gained ground and gathered 50,000 votes (about 10 per cent of the electorate of Cornwall). But, when delivered to the 10 Downing Street in the mid-2001 the government decided to ignore it, thus denying the Cornish their referendum. In 2003, the Cornwall county councillors urged then Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott to hold a referendum with two questions: 1) to gauge opinion on a South-West assembly, 2) to gauge opinion on a Cornwall assembly. This move by the county councillors followed a telephone poll which was commissioned by the county council in six different Cornish districts and was performed by MORI, and showed that 72 per cent was in favour of holding a referendum on the issue of government. John Prescott stalled the issue, and claimed that it was only the current regions, within the government's current 9 regions setup, that could hold referendums on such issues. The South West did not get a referendum either, as the North-East was the only place where one was ever held. (Bryant, 2006, p. 229; BBC News, 11 December 2001; BBC News, 1 March 2003)

Cornwall is thus still included in the South-West region, as it has been denied a referendum and constitutional reform, and is too small to become a region in its own right due to the Caborn standard, set by the former Minister of the Regions and English Labour politician Richard Caborn. Even though many Cornish claim that Cornwall is a nation, Cornwall is still just a ceremonial county. It is said that many want Cornwall to be a nation, and even more would accept Cornwall to become a region in its own right with a regional assembly, either as a part of the government's regional setup or one similar to Wales. But, the regional setup has been abandoned by the UK government, and as the Cornish still has not been allowed to hold a referendum they are only a nation at heart, but a county in the framework of the government. (Bryant, 2006, p. 230)

Even though Cornish was not recognised as an ethnicity in terms in of the Council's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the Cornish gained a victory as the Cornish language was designated as an indigenous language by the Council of Europe's Charter on Regional and Minority languages in 2002. In the 2011 census 9,9 per cent of the respondents considered themselves Cornish only (an increase from 6,8 per cent in 2001), and a further 3,9 per cent considered themselves Cornish plus another identity ('Cornish and British only identity', and 'Cornish and at least one of English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish identities). This brings the total of persons with a sort of Cornish identity to 13,8 per cent (which constitute 73.220 of the respondents) (Cornwall Council, February 2013). The Cornish nationalists and Mebyon Kernow is now visible and vocal enough to increase the attention towards Cornish interests and the Cornish culture. (Bryant, 2006, pp. 229-230)

The three areas in which we have examined have a very different outlook when it comes to identity. The North-East seems to not want regional governance with ties connected to the UK Parliament, but has a proud history and common culture in which they identify. The nearness to Scotland and distance from London also seem to have played a part in how they defined themselves. Londoners seem to define themselves as something apart from the rest of England and the degree of multiculturalism that exist in the area play a part in the Londoners life. The difficult task about London is that there seems to be no extensive research regarding dual identities in the area. Are they concentric? Are they exclusive? Are they considered a supplement? And is 'Londoner' an identity, or just a common denominator of those who identify with the London area? Even though there is a voicing for a greater autonomy for London, it seems to be more about the question of taxes gathered in London is being used in other regions than a voiced identity and break from England. In Cornwall there seems to be more gathering around a true national identity than the other areas. They have got their own language which has had a revival, a flag of their own, a voiced and visible common culture, but their demands are rather high. It does not seem that approximately 14 per cent of the population would be enough to make 10 Downing Street consider them a nation in their own right, but the prospect seems to be greater in Cornwall than in all the other parts of England because of their location (on the very edge of the South West), their culture and their visibility within Cornwall.

Whether or not regional identities may be destroying or creating conflict regarding a national identity within England is a divisive issue among commentators. On the one hand,

there are commentators who believe that local allegiance within England rarely means identification with regions, and that this kind of identification supplements the national identity. On the other hand, we got those who believe that regional and local identities may displace Englishness entirely, or at least work as a monkey wrench in the works for the development of Englishness. According to Aughey (2007, p. 14) local allegiance may be deeply engrained in the minds of people, but this usually does not mean that they have a regional identity, even though it may be defined. The arguments that support the first notion are that since the region we live in is located within the territory of the nation it will always be ‘something of the nation’ and therefore a part of themselves (Guibernau, 2007, p. 22; Hale 2001, p. 190, in Aughey, 2007, pp. 144-145). The local identities may work as a ‘resource of identity’ for the national identity (Bond and McCrone, 2004, in Aughey 2007, p. 145), and as one study of the Cotswolds has revealed, is that the “area’s idea of itself has been affected by the idea of Englishness and vica versa” and this is because regional identities is a part of the national identity, and the national identity is a part of the regional identity (Brace, 1999, p. 503, in Aughey, 2007, p. 144). But, there are also commentators who believe that even though the culture between the different regions and counties are more similar than one would think, they are big enough to “stymie any attempt to come up with a convincing – let alone popular – kind of national narrative” (Perryman, 2009, p. 50). Especially Cornwall and the North-East are mentioned as regions where the local affection may rule out a common Englishness entirely (Hale, 2001, p. 190, in Aughey, 2007, pp. 144-145). Some goes as far as claiming that there are no distinctive local identities nor a national identity within England as it is still trying to find itself (Curtice, in Aughey, 2007, p. 198).

Multicultural Regions

Above we discussed three different areas with three different population compositions, with the degree of homogenisation and ethnic groups as the main factors. Contemporary England is seen as a multicultural society as different ethnic groups have been migrating to the UK, and especially England, since the times of the Empire. Even before there was a Union or an England, the area was invaded and occupied by several different peoples (Romans, Danish Vikings, Anglo-Saxons, Normans, etcetera), which from time to time lived as a patchwork of different ethnic communities until England was united. One can discuss whether or not England always has been a multicultural society or if it is just a modern phenomenon. The focus which is chosen is whether multiculturalism has impacts on a modern English

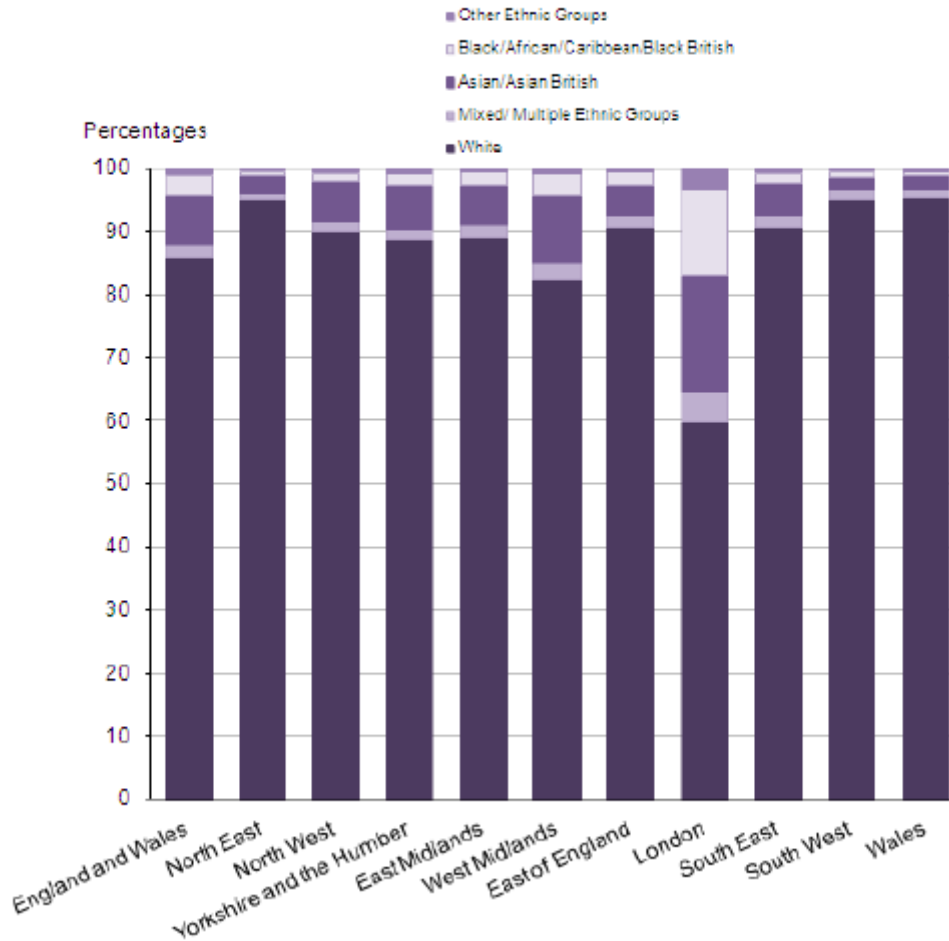
national identity. In order to do so, the regions will first be examined, before a discussion on multicultural England will follow.

As mentioned above, there are great differences between London and the rest of England when it comes to degree of ethnic minorities, and homogenisation, where the North-East and South-West regions have the greatest degree of homogenisation. In a document released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) called 'Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales 2011' we are presented with statistics and graphs which examine and reveal these differences (ONS, 11 December 2012). As we can see out of figure 3 in the report London is by far the most ethnically diverse region within England (40,2 per cent who did not consider themselves 'White'), with the West Midlands following far behind with a 17,4 per cent. The North-East and South-West has a 'White' ethnic group of 95,3 and 95,4 per cent respectively. Other than the North-East being farthest from London, there is no general pattern with proximity to the capital and degree of multiculturalism in the regions.

What should be noted is that even though the West Midlands is the region with the highest percentage of Asian/Asian British respondents, the report shows that Leicester, which is located in the East Midlands, is the city within England with the highest percentage of Indian ethnic groups (with 28,3 per cent) (ONS, 11 December 2012, p. 9). The highest percentage of the population with an English identity (on its own or combined with other) was located in the North-East region with 80,5 per cent, while the highest percentage of population with an British identity (on its own or in combination with others) was located in London, with 38,3 per cent. As the North-East is one of the most ethnically homogenous areas within England and London is one of the most ethnically diverse this can hardly be described as a surprise due to that immigrants, or people with foreign born parent(s), tend to opt for the British identity while English born people are more likely to opt for the English identity (ONS, 11 December 2012, p. 12)

Ethnicity across the English regions and Wales

Figure 3: Ethnic groups by English regions and Wales, 2011



9 Ethnicity Across the English Regions and Wales

(ONS, 11 December 2012, p. 7)

According to Bryant these distinctions we have seen between the regions are widening. The metropolitan areas are experiencing a growth in ethnic diversity and immigration while the more rural and ethnically homogenous areas are becoming increasingly ethnically homogenous (Bryant, 2003, p. 407). This leads to multiculturalism being a part of the everyday life of people living in London and other metropolitan areas, while people in Cornwall and Gateshead are less likely to feel this way. If this pattern is continuing on its path it is difficult to see how a civic and multicultural approach to a modern English national identity may gain grounds as there are large areas of the country in which multiculturalism are not something the population would identify as English. The uneven cosmopolitanisation of the regions with its implications have made it a difficult task to create a collective representation of England, and may continue to do so, unless there is an increasing civic

thought of English nationalism (Bryant, 2003, p. 409), and a decrease of those associating England with an ethnically homogenous nation.

Multicultural England

But that's the tasty thing about Englishness as its best, it's all mixed up with a myriad of influences that turn any search of purity of its essence into a futile and thankless task. How can post-war England be divorced from the influence of Americana? And inner-city England is irrevocably black, and in large parts of our urban nation increasingly Muslim too. We eat, dance, wear this nationhood of difference, or we retreat into the redoubt of wishing none of it had ever washed up on our shores.

(Perryman, 2009, p. 15)

This excerpt from one of Mark Perryman's books, the author of *Breaking up Britain: Four Nations after Union* and a frequent debater on the topic of England after Union, is in its own right summing up the debate regarding multiculturalism and England. On the one hand you got those who believe that the modern England consists of several ethnic minorities who contribute to the identity of England, while on the other side you got those who believe that English means 'white and born in England' and that the ethnic minorities are not a part of an Englishness they want to identify with. (Perryman, 2009, pp. 16-17)

Even though England is the most ethnically diverse country within the Union, the concept of Englishness has remained 'stubbornly white by association' according to Perryman (2009, p. 148). His argument is also voiced by others commentators that argue that Englishness and, by extensions but not as exclusively, Britishness have racial connotations (Bryant, 2003, p. 407), or as it says in Paul Gilroy's (1987) quip: "There ain't no black in the Union Jack" (Bryant, 2003, p. 408). Others have argued that the link between Englishness and whiteness has been broken, even though England is, and most likely will always be, predominantly white, it is not possible to imagine an England which is without Asian, African, Jamaican, and so on, peoples in it, as they have been integrated into the concept of Englishness (Young, in Perryman, 2009, pp. 16-17). Even though this is something that the radical right (e.g. English Defence League) would prefer not to be the case, it is the current reality of the situation in which most people in England will identify with, and which has "evolved into a key feature of modern Englishness" (Perryman, 2009, pp. 16-17). It is important to note, however, that this is because of the urban experience of multiculturalism and is more difficult to attribute to the rural parts of the country, thus it is fragile and has its limitations (ibid.).

As we have seen out of the GHS, BSA and ONS surveys there are many who consider themselves British among the English population. 'British' as a category is also very often

hyphenated with ethnic categories such as 'British-Asian' but it is rare to see categories such as 'English-Asian' in the polls. One reason for this may be because British mean something for the ethnic minorities which identify with it. This may be due to their families most likely moved to England as an effect of the British Empire, and that the Empire has allowed people to become British in very many different ways as this was more a state of mind and way of government rather than ethnicity. It is not said that these ethnic minorities does not identify with elements of England, or that they think about the differences between England or Britain, but they may consider the concept of being British as a more inclusive term, as the concept of Englishness has been seen as exclusive and white (Bryant 2003, p. 408). For these ethnic minorities it may have been seen as an advantage that England did not have a marked backlash consisting of racialised Englishness after devolution, as this opens for negotiation on the term Englishness and English identity. If the white English people had had a reaction to devolution in the form of a national cry for an identity, the issue of multiculturalism may have been viewed as an element which had to be removed in order to rapidly create an English identity. Instead the English stayed calm and has allowed different thoughts on the issue of what an English national identity really is, in which some commentators argue that it should include multiculturalism. As the far right still is a minor voice in the debate, it is important for any emergent English left to remove 'race' from the concept of Englishness and construct an Englishness which "has more to do with space than race" (Billy Bragg, in, Perryman, 2009, p. 29).

Some commentators look towards the arena of sports when they describe the success of multiculturalism in England. As the top football teams in Premier League and Championship traditionally had Scots, Welsh and Irish players as the only foreigners it has been a boom in players both from the Continent, others parts of the world, or born and bred in British multicultural families which are now cheered on week by week by their supporters (Bryant, 2003, p. 409). The English national football team has featured several Black English in their squads, which will play with the three lions on their chests, and Newcastle United (located in the most ethnically homogenous region in England) feature 32 players from a total of 13 countries in their first team, in which 10 are ethnically English and 4 out of these are Black English (Newcastle United F.C). The success of these Black English and others from ethnic minorities which excel at sports like football, cricket, rugby, etcetera are likely to ensure that the ethnic minority groups from which they stem may identify with England (Bryant, 2003, p. 408).

The increasing globalisation and, most likely, constitutional evolution within Britain will make their marks on Englishness. As the search for Englishness, or at least the debate, has been increased due to the devolution of powers it is most likely that those living in England will have to make a choice whether or not they want a civic and inclusive identity or an identity with ethnic purity and cultural exclusiveness. As the cosmopolitanism and globalism will increase there seems to be a time for the English to take an outward stance and embrace the multiculturalism. The cultural influence of multiculturalism has shown itself through music, food, sports and the debates of what is regarded as truly English, and claims for an ethnically pure England from those of the right wing seems to not gather any ground as there is a louder chorus for a more sophisticated search for an inclusive Englishness. Even though the uneven cosmopolitanisation and ethnic diversity within the different regions of England may prove to complicate the issue of a collective Englishness, Kumar argues that it would be a pity if the English people did not grab this opportunity as opposed to a “pursuit of a narrow and defensive nationalism”. (Kumar, 2010, p. 482; Bryant, 2003, p. 409)

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In this thesis I have examined contemporary England in search for an answer to the question: “to what degree has there been a development of a modern English national identity in the wake of devolution in 1999, and which characteristics one can attribute to it?”. The theories of Smith and Guibernau have been vital to this process, as it laid the groundwork for the rest of the text. The thesis has examined the contemporary English society, attitudes among its people, different views of English identity, and obstacles to a common English identity (the West Lothian question, multiculturalism and regionalism have been given a special notice).

A modern national identity is what Guibernau describes as “a phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature” (2007, p. 11), which may be stable for long periods of time but may also change within short periods both for individuals and communities. The association with a ‘homeland’, either historical or sentient, is also important for the population. Although the modern national identity is not necessarily visible and salient at all times, it is important that there is a common culture in which the community can recognise each other, and is something that distinguishes the community from other communities. The common culture within modern national identities may incorporate several different ethnicities and parts of other cultures, which are incorporated as the identity evolves and develops. The individual plays a vital role within the modern nation and thus it is important that the modern national identity appeals to the individual. Individuals are in constant development throughout their lives, and so may their identity develop as well. One may hold several identities at once, British, English, Mancunian and European may be identities of one person, and the sense of belonging would depend on the context. The modern national identity is not exclusive, but may contain several concentric identities, and it is not necessarily shown politically, but may be expressed in banal ways such as waving a flag during match day of a sports event. All of these attributes applies to the modern English national identity.

The focus on a modern English national identity since 1999 demanded a narrow path due to the limitations both in space and time. The historical aspect of English identity is not given the space it needs to be fully examined, but due to the thoughts of, especially, Kumar it was given some notice. The aspect which is important in this thesis is that the English regarded the Empire as a higher mission, and thus may have curbed their own nationalism, and even gone to lengths in order to deny that an English identity even existed. The concept of ‘nation’ is connected to the movements of the latter half of the 18th century, and thus

difficult to attribute to the English, as they were a major part of a collective British identity at the time. This brings us to the contemporary England where constitutional reform occurred in 1999, and thus was expected to unleash an English backlash, which seems to have been inflated. Different polls as the BSA and GHS provide us with data that do not show a steady rise in feelings towards a national identity, neither in England nor in the other nations, apart from a major rise in English identity and fall in British identity which occurred in the 2011 BSA data. Studies show that young adults in England lean towards an English identity rather than a British one, in the sense that they express an identity. This may show that those who associate with the Empire and Britishness will be fewer as the years go by, and those who associate with Englishness will increase, and thus develop the English identity.

The modern English national identity is an identity which has developed towards a more multicultural and globalised approach. What Bryant describes as ‘Cosmopolitan England’ seems to be fitting to the greater part of the English population, even though the three other variants described by Bryant are also widely recognised. The issue with separating themselves from Britain has given the English people time to form a new cultural and modern national identity which is more inclusive and which is not as connected to ‘white Anglicans’ as it has tended to in the past. The influxes of people from both the continent and the Commonwealth have done their role in shaping and enriching the English culture, which has made the modern English national identity more available to those who historically have associated themselves more with Britain than with England. This seems to be a vital step for the English people in order to not be left on the sidelines as the other nations of the UK are further developing as a part of devolution. Englishness should be more connected to space than to race (Billy Bragg, in Perryman, 2009, p. 29). It has also been noticed a rise in the use of the Cross of St George, especially during sports events, and that it no longer is only associated with the far right, but also with the general public. Since there seem to be no direct political action as a part of an emerging national identity, the use of flags may be part of what has been described as banal nationalism, and may be the vehicle the English people need to express their modern national identity.

As mentioned, low or no political action does not mean the absence of a national identity, as we see little political action in the polls regarding identity. Still, when it comes to political institutions there seems to be some sort of political activity. More than half of the respondents in a NatCen Social Research poll agreed that England should be run the way it is now (Rachel Ormston, 2012, p. 10), but, as interpreted from another poll from the same

survey, they want a solution to the West Lothian question (Rachel Ormston, 2012, p. 9). The English do not have a strong political thought on constitutional change, as long as matters which are England-only is decided by the English MPs only.

It is important to note however, as expressed in the thesis, that there are forces which pull in different directions than the view expressed above. The West Lothian question continues to be a divisive issue among the English people, as there still seems to be no real answer to it. Several commentators have argued that the regions may be halting a common identity among the English people as well. I would argue that in the case of the North-East region and London, as argued in the previous chapter, they do not interfere or obstruct a modern English national identity. The people of London do consider themselves as different from the rest of England, but this has a lot to do with the degree of multiculturalism within the city. The citizens of London also want greater autonomy, and since it is the only city of its scale in England it is bound to have some sort of different governance than the rest. Its sheer numbers is proof of that. But, there is no constitutional demand neither from the residents of London nor the inhabitants of the North-East. Their identities may function as something of the nation as they are still a part of England, and may function as ‘resource[s] of identity’ for the national identity (Bond and McCrone, 2004, in Aughey, 2007, p. 145), or that their identities supplement the modern national identity. London is a region which has not been examined thoroughly by commentators, and would need further study if one were to examine the concept of ‘Londoner’ as a separate or strong identity.

Cornwall is then again different. There is a voiced demand for constitutional reform where an assembly, similar to the one in Wales, is wanted by those who consider themselves Cornish. The Cornish culture is gaining momentum: they have become more visible in recent years due to multilingual signs, referendum request, and petitions sent to 10 Downing Street. Cornwall is the only region which I can see to be a possible impediment to the common modern English national identity. This is because a minority insist on being Cornish first and are fighting for their right to be regarded as a nation, or at least become a regional assembly in their own right (even though the area is not large enough and regional governance is abandoned).

Multiculturalism plays a central role in the modern English national identity as a result of the former Empire. Multiculturalism has grown stronger and is considered a part of Englishness by a majority of people within the last years (Perryman, 2009, p. 16-17), but the uneven cosmopolitanisation (Urban equals multicultural, rural equals homogenous white,

roughly) makes it difficult to make it a trait of England in a collective representation, according to some commentators. As I have argued, the modern English national identity is a multicultural identity which is predominantly white, but which is considered to be more civic than in previous years. The increasing multiculturalism since Empire might slowly lead to a civic thought of Englishness in the majority of the population (Bryant, 2003, p. 409), even in those areas which currently are not multicultural, and become a part of their local, and thus national, identity as well. Especially in the arena of sports multiculturalism has played a great role both in a way to achieve an identity and to express it. The concept of England without different ethnicities is a lost idea since multiculturalism has formed England in the modern world. The contemporary situation is something which a majority in England identify with and thus has become “a key feature of modern Englishness” (Perryman, 2009, pp. 16-17).

What should be noted for the future is that the world is not becoming any less globalised or any less multicultural. As England is a commercial hub with London as one of the three top financial centres in the world (with New York and Tokyo) I do not see a reverse in the current situation as described in this thesis, but rather an increase of foreign influences which may continue to form the fluid identity which is Englishness. The future of Englishness is tightly connected with the ability of the English people to incorporate new cultural influences into the modern English national identity, but at the same time remember what is truly English.

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