

**SQUARING THE CIRCLES:
DEMONSTRATING AND EXPLAINING THE
POLITICAL 'NON-ALIGNMENT' OF
SCOTTISH NATIONAL IDENTITY**

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While discussion and introspection about national identity has arguably been a consistent feature of life in Scotland for quite some time, it has been given added impetus by the recent restoration of the Scottish Parliament. Consequently, it seems that barely a week goes by without academics, journalists, commentators, or authors adding to the debate about Scottish national identity. Given the large part that Scotland's political structure, and the political values and behaviour of its electorate, have had to play in Scottish distinctiveness, especially - though not exclusively - in recent years, it is perhaps unsurprising that this primarily political development should have had such a substantial effect. However, while we can certainly see the political as a major influence upon national identity in Scotland, this is not to say that for individual Scots conceptions of national identity are largely determined by political beliefs. The relationship between national identity and political attributes among the Scottish electorate is characterised by a complexity that has been insufficiently explored or ignored completely. This article therefore seeks to unravel this complexity - to an extent at least - by examining this relationship in some detail.

In doing so, we will base this investigation upon one particular means of exploring Scottish national identity: the so-called 'Moreno' question, named after the Spanish academic who pioneered its use within a Scottish context in

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the mid-1980s (see Moreno 1986 and 1988)¹. This means of approaching national identity in a fundamentally quantitative fashion is most usefully applied in places such as those Moreno himself studied - Scotland and Catalonia - which are 'national regions' within larger states to which they cede at least some of their political autonomy, and which also represent rivals for people's 'national' loyalty. This condition shapes the way the Moreno question is asked. Respondents are not required to participate in a zero-sum exercise where they must choose one identity over another, but can potentially express the dual nature of national identity by expressing the latter in a comparative rather than categorical manner. In Scotland, this means survey participants can opt for one (or none) of the following:

- Scottish not British
- More Scottish than British
- Equally Scottish and British
- More British than Scottish
- British not Scottish

This approach is particularly helpful because it can be seen to measure the degree of Scottish national identity, not merely its presence or absence. Further, although it undoubtedly has its limitations (see McCrone 1998a, p.7; Brown et al 1998, p.209) it also has the virtues of consistency and continuity: we can analyse how the responses to the same or very similar questions fluctuate over time or between different groups of people, and therefore how national identity relates to other statuses and opinions. This article aims to use Moreno-type data to explore the relationship between national identity and political attributes among the Scottish electorate. While the Moreno question has been used in Scotland on at least fifteen occasions since 1986, our focus here is on more formal election studies, rather than opinion polls. We will therefore draw upon data from three surveys: the Scottish Election Surveys of 1992 and 1997 and the Scottish Referendum Survey of 1997. Our first task is simply to record how participants in each of these surveys responded to the Moreno question: these figures are recorded in table 1.

The first thing to notice about these figures is that the vast majority of people are willing to offer an answer, and of those who do an overwhelming majority at the very least place Scottishness on an equal footing with Britishness when

¹ *In fact, this technique had already been used much earlier in Spain, as part of a mass survey conducted by Richard Gunther and others during April and May 1979 (see Gunther et al 1986, pp.244, 317, and 444).*

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thinking about their national identity. Only very small minorities fall into the 'More British than Scottish' or exclusively British categories, and the majority of responses are therefore divided between the first three columns of the table. The exclusively Scottish category - 'Scottish not British' - is the most subject to change: it is noticeable that the proportion so responding is much higher in the referendum survey than in the two election surveys. This may be the result of a 'contextual' effect noted by a number of authors with regard to the Moreno question, the most common argument being that surveys conducted against the background of a UK General Election are likely to encourage a comparatively high level of British identification, the obverse of which is a comparative downplaying of Scottish national identity (McCrone 1998a, p.10; Bennie et al 1997, p.133; McCrone 1997, p.157; Brand et al 1993, p.147; for the referendum's effect upon the forefronting of Scottishness, see McCrone 1998a, p.28).

Table 1
'Moreno' National Identity in Scotland 1992 and 1997

% (by row)	Scottish not British	More Scottish than British	Equally Scottish and British	More British than Scottish	British not Scottish	Don't Know/ None	N
1992 SES	19	40	33	3	3	1	957
1997 SES	23	38	27	4	4	4	882
1997 SRS	32	32	28	3	3	2	676

source: Scottish Election Surveys; 1997 Scottish Referendum Survey

The 'More Scottish than British' category is the modal response in each of the three surveys (jointly in the referendum survey), and when we combine both categories in which Scottishness is prioritised we find that they account for the majority (59%-64%) of respondents. These findings appear to indicate that Scots have a strong sense of their national identity, and that most are usually disposed to prioritise their Scottishness over their Britishness. However, it should also be noted that between a quarter and a third describe themselves as 'Equally Scottish and British', suggesting a strong sense of dual

identity in Scotland. Indeed, the three 'dual' categories combined account for a clear majority of responses in each of the three surveys.

While table 1 is useful in demonstrating how Scottish people as a whole view their national identity, our principal objective here is to investigate how this conception might vary with political attributes. In fact, a number of authors have explored the relationship between political factors and national identity in Scotland within the context of the two election surveys under consideration in this article. Their principal conclusions are as follows. Firstly, in terms of vote, Conservative support is particularly low, and SNP support comparatively high, amongst those who prioritise their Scottishness while, conversely, Conservative supporters are over-represented among those who would prioritise their Britishness or at least place it on an equal footing with the Scottish element of their identity. A fuller example of the relationship between vote and national identity is illustrated in table 2¹. Secondly, looking at preferences for Scotland's constitutional future, 'Scottish identifiers' are more likely to favour independence and devolution than are 'British identifiers' (Bennie et al 1997, pp.139-40; Brand et al 1994, p.618; Brand et al 1993, pp.150, 153; Brown et al 1999, pp.64-67; 1998, pp.210-11).

While evidence such as this therefore suggests a strong relationship between national identity and political factors, there are also some aspects of the data that could perhaps be considered more anomalous. The two clearest examples are as follows. Firstly, a majority (or, in the case of the Referendum Survey, a large minority) of SNP voters continue to allow at least some room for a British element in their identity, and indeed a significant number place this element on an equal footing with their Scottishness. Secondly, although the Conservative Party has (at least in the years to which our data relate) been the quintessential party of the Union, and opposed to any change in Scotland's constitutional status, this does not mean that its supporters see Scottishness as the inferior aspect of their identity. On the contrary, although they are mostly likely to claim a balanced dual identity, Conservative voters are also much

¹ *Figures based on the 1992 SES show a broadly similar pattern. In the 1997 Referendum Survey, however, a notable change is the considerable rise in the number of SNP supporters claiming an exclusively Scottish identity (57%). This seems like another good example of the contextual effect on responses to the Moreno question discussed earlier. However, we should also note that in the case of the referendum survey **intended** rather than **actual** vote is recorded, and the variable of principal interest in this survey is **referendum** vote rather than political party. We should be aware of the effect this might have in any subsequent analysis of the referendum data.*

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more likely to prioritise Scottishness than they are Britishness. Findings such as these are indicative of a need for further investigation of the relationship between national identity and political attributes in Scotland, and this will be our task in the majority of this article. However, to prepare the ground for this endeavour, we will firstly conduct a further review of how other authors have related politics to national identity.

Table 2
National Identity and Vote in Scotland 1997

% (by row)	Scottish not British	More Scottish than British	Equally Scottish and British	More British than Scottish	British not Scottish	N
SNP	34	44	16	2	2	132
Labour	24	41	26	4	3	357
Liberal Democrat	15	41	26	7	6	87
Conservative	10	23	47	7	6	100

source: Scottish Election Survey

Responses to the Moreno question can certainly be considered key markers of national identity in Scotland. Although it would be overly simplistic to question the Scottishness of those who respond to this question by either prioritising their Britishness, or at least placing it on a par with the Scottish dimension of their identity, it seems reasonable to argue that those who see themselves as exclusively Scottish or more Scottish than British are demonstrating a strong Scottish national identity. But what should we consider to be the other key indicators of this national identity? Given Gellner's oft-cited opening statement in his **Nations and Nationalism** that 'Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle' (Gellner 1983, p.1), two powerful candidates for such a designation would surely be an allegiance

to the Scottish National Party and support for Scottish independence. Indeed, given the former's overt support for the latter, conventional wisdom would suggest that SNP voters and supporters of independence are broadly the same constituency. Further, if we consider Brown et al's observation that 'all the most influential writers about nationalism, despite the great differences among their interpretations, attach some importance to national identity as an explanation of why people support or oppose self government' (1999, p.125), then it also seems reasonable to assume that the SNP/independence constituency will also be those who express a strong sense of Scottish identity. This also seems to be the conclusion that Moreno and Arriba arrive at with regard to the relationship between national identity and politics in Catalonia: 'In an extreme case, complete absence of one of the two elements of dual identity would lead to a socio-political fracture in the pluriethnic state, and demands for self-government would probably take the form of self-determination. In other words, when citizens in a sub-state community identify themselves in an exclusive manner, the institutional outcome of such antagonism will also tend to be exclusive' (Moreno and Arriba 1996, p.81).

Indeed, a number of academic analysts have been similarly explicit in making such an assumption about the link between national identity and political behaviour in Scotland. Penrose, for example, states that 'the formal expression of a belief in Scottish distinctiveness is manifested in political activism or voting behaviour', and goes on to argue that 'one of the most tangible indications of the continuing construction of a Scottish nation is the continued existence of the Scottish National Party. The very presence of a political party whose *raison d'être* is the achievement of independence for a Scottish nation indicates that substantial numbers of people are satisfied that such a nation exists, or that it should exist' (Penrose 1993, p.42). Similarly, in their exploration of national identity among Edinburgh schoolchildren, Carrington and Short conclude that 'the findings might have been very different had the research been undertaken in a variety of settings, especially in areas such as the Scottish Highlands where SNP support tends to be more firmly entrenched' (Carrington and Short 1996, p.221). While this acknowledgement assumes a link between national identity and support for the SNP, these authors go on to develop this observation in terms that are more directly related to the Moreno question with their claim that the SNP's 'politicisation of the young' may be responsible for a tendency among their young respondents 'not just to insist on their Scottish identity but to attach more importance to it than to their British identity' (Carrington and Short 1996, p.222). The implication of arguments such as these is as follows: those who strongly assert their Scottish identity in response to survey questions will also be very likely to be supporters of the SNP and independence; in other

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words, these three indicators of Scottish nationalism/national identity should be strongly aligned.

However, unlike Penrose and Carrington and Short, some of the aforementioned authors who have analysed the relationship between national identity, vote, and support for independence within a survey context tend to be more sensitive to the fact that this relationship is far from straightforward, and recognise its complexity (see McCrone 1998a, pp.10-11 and 1998b, p.149; Brown et al 1998, p.210). Hence there is a need to explore the influence of political factors upon Scottish national identity in more detail. In order to test the 'alignment thesis' proposed above, and to build on the possible problems with this thesis that are raised by the work of McCrone, Brown et al and others, we will return to our original three surveys. This time, as well as analysing vote (actual or intended) and national identity on the Moreno scale, we will introduce the third variable of preferred constitutional option for the future governance of Scotland. Because we can identify all the individual cases from these surveys we are able to explore the ways in which responses to these three questions relate to each other.

Figures 1-3 use a Venn diagram approach to illustrate graphically this relationship in the three surveys. The circles representing respondents who saw themselves as exclusively Scottish, and those who felt they were more Scottish than British, are of course distinct from each other: one cannot opt for both categories (at least not in the same survey). While it is important to note their relative sizes, what is interesting is the ways in which the circles representing support for the SNP and for Scottish independence overlap with the two categories of national identity. Even the most cursory glance at the three diagrams reveals that the assumption that our proposed three markers of Scottishness will be closely aligned is in fact fundamentally flawed. While the circles certainly intersect and overlap, they do so in quite interesting and sometimes surprising ways, in that the extent to which they do not overlap is much greater than we might think. This, however, is only a general picture. What we must now do is discuss each of these figures in more detail, at the same time considering how the three surveys compare with each other.

Figure 1 indicates that, out of a total sample of 957, 184 respondents (19%) saw themselves as Scottish not British, and 384 (40%) as more Scottish than British. 190 (20%) reported that they voted SNP at the General Election¹, and

¹ This figure rises to 24% when those who did not vote or refused to disclose their vote are excluded from the analysis.

218 (23%) supported independence¹. Let us begin by considering those respondents who fell into the 'strongly Scottish' categories in all three questions. Of those who saw themselves as Scottish not British, only 47 also supported independence and had voted SNP in the election. In other words, if we are to consider these people as 'aligned' Scots, then they account for less than 5% of the sample. Similarly, only 46 of those who saw themselves as more Scottish than British also supported independence and had voted SNP. This confirms the weakness of any 'alignment' thesis: less than 10% of the sample in this survey prioritised their Scottishness and combined this sentiment with support for an independent Scotland and the political party that is the chief proponent of this form of constitutional settlement.

Further, if we consider only those who felt Scottish not British, then even if we supplement our 47 'aligned' Scots with those in this category who also supported one but not both of the SNP (22 cases) and independence (32) then we are still left with some fairly remarkable food for thought. Out of a total of 184 of these 'exclusive' Scots, 83 (45%) do not support an independent Scotland and do not report having voted SNP at the General Election. Of those who felt themselves to be more Scottish than British, an even higher proportion (252 cases, 66%) do not fall into the SNP or independence categories. If we consider both the 'Moreno' circles represented in Figure 2 together, we find that a clear majority (59%) of those who prioritise their Scottishness do not support independence or the SNP.

Clearly these figures raise quite fundamental questions about the relationship between Scottish nationality as expressed as a facet of individual identity, and what could reasonably be thought to be the most likely political expressions of this identity. However, even if we consider the relationship between these two political dimensions, the results are quite startling. As noted earlier, it is a common - and apparently quite reasonable - assumption that the constituencies representing SNP voters and supporters of Scottish independence will be broadly similar. Consider, for example, Penrose's assertion that 'to the SNP *and its supporters*, the idea that a Scottish nation can be best served as part of the Union is tantamount to a *betrayal* of that Scottish nation' (Penrose 1993, p.43, emphases added). The figures represented by figure 1, however, call this assumption into question. Of the 190 SNP voters in the sample, 82 (43%) do not support independence in any form as their preferred constitutional option. Seven of these individuals did

¹ This figure combines those who supported independence from both the remainder of the UK and the European Community (54 cases) with those who favoured independence within the EC (164 cases).

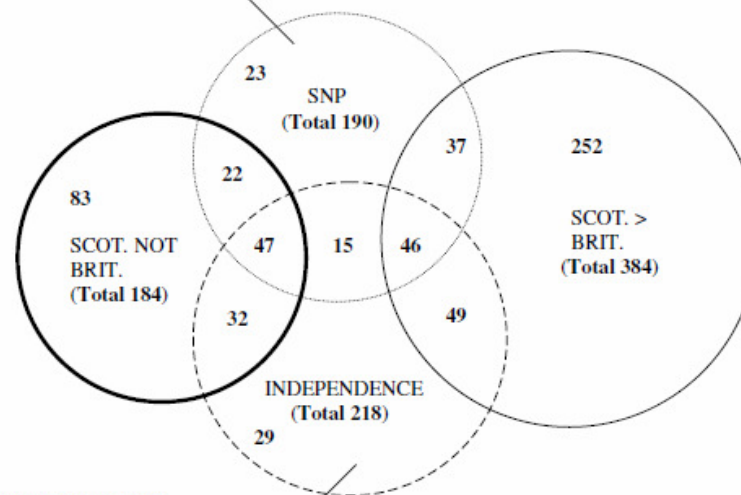
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not favour any change in Scotland's position within, or in relation to, the UK, and 23 neither supported independence nor prioritised their Scottishness over Britishness. However, a much more significant minority would seem to be the 73 SNP voters who supported some form of devolved government in Scotland but stopped short of endorsing independence. Turning now to supporters of independence who did not vote SNP at the election, the results are equally revealing. Surprisingly, more than half of all supporters of

Figure 1
National identity, vote, and preferred constitutional option

Circles Key:
 — National Identity (Scottish not British)
 — National Identity (More Scottish than British)
 Voted SNP in General Election
 - - - - Supports Scottish Independence

82 (43%) of those who voted SNP did not support independence. Of these, 73 supported devolution and 7 no change.



Total Sample 957

110 (50%) of those who supported independence did not vote SNP. Of these, 27 did not vote, 60 voted Labour, 9 Conservative and 9 Liberal Democrat.

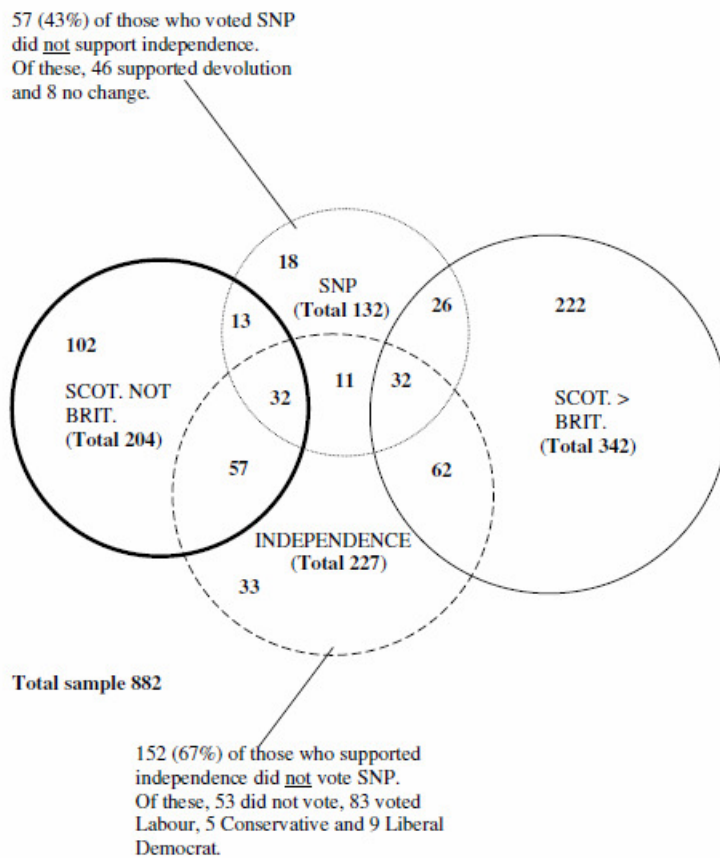
source: 1992 Scottish Election Survey;; all figures represent number of cases.

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Figure 2
National identity, vote, and preferred constitutional option

Circles Key:

- National Identity (Scottish not British)
- National Identity (More Scottish than British)
- Voted SNP in General Election
- Supports Scottish Independence

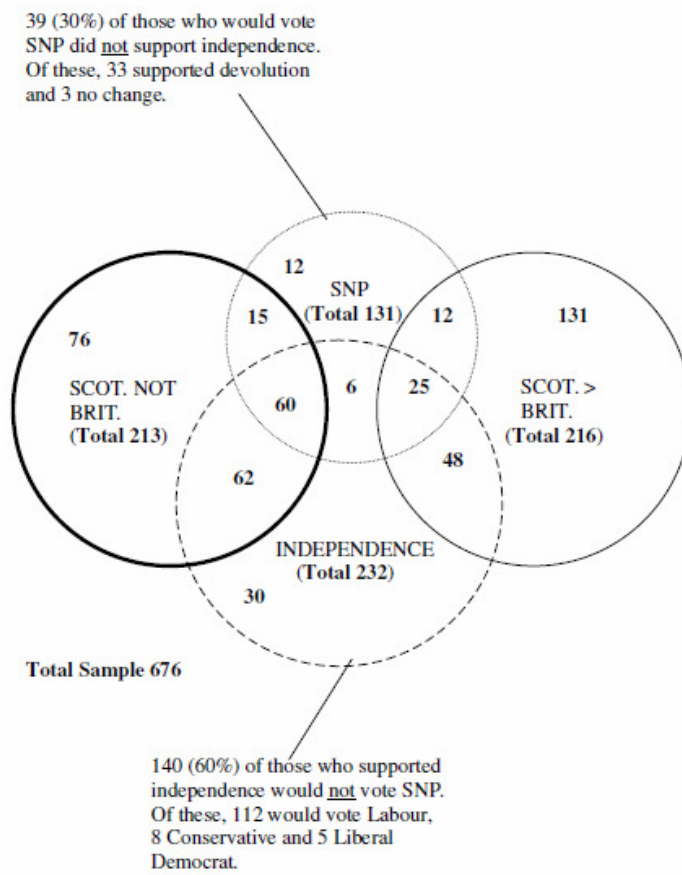


source: 1992 Scottish Election Survey; all figures represent number of cases.

Figure 3
National identity, vote, and preferred constitutional option

Circles Key:

- National Identity (Scottish not British)
- National Identity (More Scottish than British)
- Voted SNP in General Election
- Supports Scottish Independence



source: 1992 Scottish Election Survey;; all figures represent number of cases.

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independence (110 cases) fell into this category, and of these 110 the majority (60 cases or 55%) are Labour voters.

The above therefore suggests the presence of two interesting groups within the Scottish public which, when taken together, appear to undermine the conventional wisdom with regard to the political dimension of Scottishness: SNP supporters who do not favour political independence, and Labour voters who do. However, we must also be aware that voting behaviour need not be a straightforward indicator of political allegiance (Brown et al 1999, pp.48-49). Perhaps at least some of the lack of match between vote and constitutional preference can be explained through the phenomenon of 'tactical voting'? If this were to be the case we would find that substantial numbers of SNP and Labour voters were not really supporters of these parties. One way to check this is to ask not just how people voted, but which party they identify most closely with. This question was asked in this survey, so it was possible to repeat the calculations expressed in figure 1 using party identification rather than vote¹. In most respects, the effects this has are negligible: the proportion of SNP supporters who do not support independence rises from 43% to 45%, and those supporting independence but not the SNP rises from 50% to 53%. Note that the direction of change is different to that which tactical voting would produce. The most significant change is that an even larger proportion of those who support independence but not the SNP are Labour supporters when identification rather than vote is used - 67% compared to 55%.

The above evidence therefore suggests a genuine and perhaps surprising lack of alignment between Scottish identity as expressed through the Moreno question, and through what are commonly thought to be the clearest political manifestations of this identity: support for Scottish independence and the SNP. We will now conduct a similar analysis of the figures relating to the 1997 Scottish Election Survey and Scottish Referendum Survey to assess the extent to which these findings can be replicated.

Figure 2 shows that, out of a total sample of 882, 204 respondents (23%) saw themselves as Scottish not British, and 342 (39%) as more British than

¹ *In order to measure party identification, respondents were asked 'Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Labour, SNP etc.'. Those answering 'none' or 'don't know' were then asked if they thought of themselves as a 'little closer' to one party than the others.*

Scottish. 132 (15%) reported that they voted SNP at the General Election¹, and 227 (26%) supported independence². With regard to the interaction of these four categories, the broad pattern is similar to that described in relation to the 1992 SES. 'Aligned' Scots are again a small minority - in fact even smaller than in 1992. Only 32 of those who saw their national identity as exclusively Scottish, and also 32 of those who felt more Scottish than British, also both supported independence and reported having voted SNP. These two groups combined therefore account for only 7% of the sample.

This time, an even larger proportion of 'exclusive' Scots than in 1992 support neither independence or the SNP: 102 respondents (exactly half) fall into this category. Of the 'more Scottish than British' group, an almost identical proportion to the 1992 sample - 65% - are excluded from the other circles. Taking all those who prioritise their Scottishness, an identical proportion to 1992 - 59% - support neither independence nor the SNP.

Turning to the relationship between the two more overtly political categories once more, we find that of the 132 SNP voters, 57 (43%) do not support independence. This proportion is identical to that found in the 1992 survey, and as in 1992 the vast majority of these (46 of 57) support devolution. However, when we examine the number who profess support for independence but did not vote SNP, we find a substantial difference between the two surveys: fully 67% (compared to 50% in 1992) are in this category. However, the proportion of these who are Labour voters is identical - at 55% - to that in 1992.

We can draw a number of conclusions from these findings. Firstly, the proposition that those who identify as strongly Scottish on the Moreno scale are largely the same people who vote SNP and support Scottish independence is further undermined, and the idea that these categories might in fact be substantially disassociated from each other appears more robust. The presence of the two interesting political groups which were identified from the 1992 figures - devolution-friendly SNP voters and Labour-voting supporters of independence - also seems to be confirmed by this analysis of the 1997 SES. Indeed, if anything, the groups voting SNP and supporting independence seem to be sliding apart rather than moving together if we

¹ This figure rises to 19% when those who did not vote or refused to disclose their vote are excluded.

² This figure combines those who supported independence from both the remainder of the UK and the European Union (69 cases) with those who favoured independence within the EU (158).

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compare the 1992 and 1997 surveys. Are the extremely high proportion of non-SNP 'independistas' really not supporters of that party? To check this (lack of) relationship, party identification was again substituted for vote, and there was found to be a more substantial impact than was the case with the 1992 figures. While 43% of SNP voters did not support independence, this figure falls to 35% of those who identify with the SNP, and there is a similar fall in supporters of independence who do not identify with the SNP as a party from 67% to 58%¹. These changes may be the result of the more widely spread tactical voting which many political commentators claim took place in the 1997 General Election². However, after allowing for tactical voting by using the party identification variable, the total proportion of all those supporting the SNP and independence who do not fall into both categories is in fact virtually identical in both surveys at around 49%. In other words, rather than supporters of the SNP and independence representing essentially the same constituency, it seems that there is a fairly even balance between those who endorse both positions and those who support one but not the other.

Overall, then, the two surveys represented by figures 1 and 2 really are remarkably similar. However, it is important to bear in mind that they were both conducted as part of British general election surveys. As we have already seen, it appears as though the context of the research could be an important determinant of the way people choose to respond. It will therefore be a useful exercise to explore in what ways - if at all - the interaction among national identity, vote and constitutional preference changes within a different research context. We can now do this by analysing the results from a survey conducted around a distinctively Scottish occasion - the 1997 Scottish Referendum Survey.

Figure 3 shows that, out of a total sample of 676, 213 respondents (32%) saw themselves as Scottish not British, and an almost identical proportion felt more Scottish than British. On this occasion the SNP figure represents those who said they would vote for this party if there was a General Election the following day: 131(19%) said they would use their vote in such a way³. A

¹ *On this occasion, unlike 1992, there is little change in the proportion of the non-SNP supporters of independence who are Labour supporters when party identification rather than vote is used.*

² *Brown et al (1999, p.51) estimate the level of tactical voting in Scotland at the 1997 General Election to be around 15% of the electorate.*

³ *This figure rises to 22% when those who said they did not know, would not vote or refused to disclose their vote are excluded.*

total of 232 (34%) supported independence, again comprising those favouring independence both outside and within the EU. This figure is substantially higher than that found in either of the election surveys, and it may be that a 'Scottish effect' is at work once more, as it appeared to be with the Moreno question. The proportionately increased support for both an exclusively Scottish identity and independence, together with a fairly similar level of support for the SNP, results in a substantial increase in the number of 'aligned' Scots in this survey: 60 respondents (nearly 9% of the sample) come into this category, while the proportion of those with a more Scottish than British identity who also supported both the SNP and independence was about the same (around 4%) as in the 1997 election survey. While a substantial number of 'exclusive' Scots support neither the SNP nor independence, a significantly lower percentage than in the 1992 or 1997 election surveys come into this category (36% compared to 45% and 50% respectively), although the proportion of those who are more Scottish than British but support neither of the other options is, at 61%, still approaching the two-thirds found in the other two surveys. On this occasion, when exclusive Scots are combined with more Scottish than British, the proportion of all those prioritising their Scottishness who support neither the SNP nor independence is significantly lower than the 59% found in the two previous surveys. However, nearly half (48%) still come into this category.

Another substantial difference between the referendum survey and the two General Election surveys is the fall in the number of SNP voters who do not support independence: only 30% compared to the 43% found in both the other surveys. However, while this might suggest that the two categories might be moving into a closer alignment under the conditions of a specifically Scottish event such as the referendum, fully 60% of those who support independence again fail to give their backing to the SNP, and a vastly increased proportion of these (80% compared to 55% in both the election studies) support Labour. There can be no question of tactical voting on this occasion, and using party identification rather than intended vote does not alter the figures greatly. Remarkably, the total proportion of all those supporting the SNP and independence who do not fall into both categories is in fact virtually identical to both the other surveys: 50% as opposed to 49%.

This analysis of the referendum survey therefore provides a number of interesting contrasts to the 1992 and 1997 election surveys. In terms of the 'Moreno' question itself, the most notable difference - already explored - is the increased willingness to claim an exclusively Scottish identity. However, this is not the only respect in which Scottish identity appears to 'harden' in the referendum survey. Firstly, while there was little change in support for the SNP, there was a substantial increase in those supporting independence.

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Secondly, and as a combined result of the above developments, the percentage of 'aligned' Scots - those claiming an exclusive national identity whilst also supporting independence and the SNP - is also substantially higher (especially in relative terms). Thirdly, there was less evidence of a non-alignment of the categories in this study, with the proportions in at least some of the outlying or non-overlapping areas of the circles significantly smaller.

However, the above differences notwithstanding, the broad pattern represented in figure 3 is undoubtedly quite similar to that depicted in figures 1 and 2. While there are clear overlaps between the four categories, there is also a substantial number of respondents for whom they are quite distinct. Only a small minority combine a prioritised Scottishness with a support for both independence and the SNP, and the proportion of those who fall into one but not both of the latter two categories is - at around a half - the same as in the other surveys. While fewer people prioritise Scottishness but support neither of the other options, nearly half still fall into this category. This fact alone seems sufficient to confirm the substantial 'non-alignment' between Scottish national identity as a facet of individual identity, and the two political stances which conventional wisdom would suggest would be most closely associated with the strong assertion of such an identity. What we must now do is attempt to account for this apparent non-alignment.

ACCOUNTING FOR NON-ALIGNMENT

The first question to ask ourselves when trying to understand the data outlined above is this: in what sense do we need to explain why, for most of the Scottish public, a strongly held sense of Scottishness does not map onto a combined support for independence and the SNP, and indeed for many does not coincide with support for either? The answer to this question depends largely on the way in which we are to conceive of Scottish national identity, and indeed Scottish nationalism itself. As we have already seen, definitions of nationalism, and by implication national sentiment, often lay great store by the politically aspirant element: nationalism is strongly concerned with a desire to see the coincidence of national and political boundaries, to ensure one's nation is also a nation-state. That is why our original premise - that a strong sense of Scottishness as part of individual identity might be closely aligned with the most obvious political vehicles for realising Scottish nationhood - seemed a solid starting point.

However, if this is our conception of Scottish national identity, then the data represented in figures 1-3 are confusing indeed, because it is clear that even those with the clearest sense of their Scottishness are often reluctant to see

Scotland's political future as lying outwith the UK, or to support the major Scottish political party which endorses and purports to work for this constitutional vision: the Scottish National Party. Equally, significant minorities of those who appear to have a fairly strong sense of Britishness, or support parties committed to the perpetuation of political union, would rather see Scottish independence or at least see no anomaly in supporting a party which has this outcome as its principal goal. We must therefore build an alternative conception of nationalism and national identity in Scotland if we are to make sense of the empirical data, and this will involve the recognition of four key points.

Firstly, we must recognise that taking the above approach to Scottish national identity makes the mistake of conflating what has been described as 'upper case' and 'lower case' nationalism in Scotland (see Nairn 1995). To describe nationalists in Scotland solely as those who support independence and/or the SNP is adopting an excessively narrow and essentially misguided approach. Bennie et al, for example, point out that there is a need to distinguish between nationalism as a collective identity and nationalism as a political programme. Hence in Scotland one may feel 'culturally' Scottish, 'but this need have no political or constitutional implications' (Bennie et al 1997, p.131). Scottish nationalists, then, could equally be those who believe in Scotland's status as a nation and feel a strong sense of Scottishness, but do not necessarily support either of the two most obvious political manifestations of Scottish nationhood.

However, while we should recognise that nationalism in Scotland does not reside solely within the realm of the political, our second key point is that even the boundaries of political behaviour that could be defined as specifically Scottish are certainly not coterminous with support for the SNP or Scottish independence. As Keating states: 'nationalism in Scotland has never been the exclusive property of one party, though the SNP represents its clearest expression' (1996, p.180). A vote for the Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, or indeed the Conservatives should be seen as an act which is qualitatively different in Scotland from other parts of Britain, and this is reflected by the clear presence in the data we have analysed of supporters of ostensibly unionist parties who would like to see an independent Scotland. One reason for this is that the policies of these parties with regard to the constitution should not be interpreted or described as being polarised between 'unionism' and 'nationalism'. As Keating observes, devolution and independence - in the form of the reformist and separatist constitutional tendencies within Scottish nationalism - are not as easily distinguished as we might imagine: 'in practice, given the problematic nature of the British state, these strands have been hard to disentangle and Scottish nationalist discourse

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has always been ambiguous on the issue of separatism, or the various types of self-government falling short of it' (Keating 1996, p.184).

Indeed, even if we analyse the Scottish supporters of the one party whose constitutional stance can surely not be conceived as in any sense politically 'nationalist' - the Conservative Party - we find that, as in all of the political parties in Scotland, those prioritising Britishness rather than Scottishness are very much in the minority (Brown et al 1998, p.210). However, our third key point is that the tendency for even Conservative supporters to prioritise their Scottishness should not be so surprising when we consider the existence of a conservative tradition within Scottish nationalism or indeed a more 'large C' Conservative element evident in the support for home rule harboured by elements of the Scottish Conservative Party in the 1960s and 1980s (Keating 1996, p.182). Consider also a former Conservative Scottish Secretary's more recent assertion that 'we don't need a separate Scotland to prove that we are Scottish' (Ian Lang, cited in Penrose 1993, p.37). Indeed, the condition of holding a Scottish identity while at the same time being a supporter of the British political union is one with considerable pedigree (see McCrone 1999; for an extensive analysis of this 'unionist-nationalism' in the mid-nineteenth century, see Morton 1999).

The fourth and final step towards an understanding of the interaction between political and national identity in Scotland is a recognition of the powerful similarities between the SNP and the Scottish Labour Party. We have seen from the data that, despite the party leadership's vehement opposition to independence, a substantial minority of Labour supporters continue to favour this constitutional option. However, the similarities between Labour and the SNP are much broader than this. Firstly, both parties are courting voters with similar political values and attitudes (Brown et al 1999, p.49; McCrone 1998a, p.25; Brand et al 1994, pp.619, 629). They are, in the words of Brand et al, 'fishing in the same waters' (1994, p.626). This is primarily the result of the SNP's shift to the left and Labour's transformation from constitutional ambivalence to a more enthusiastically pro-nationalist stance (Keating 1996, pp.183-184). Indeed the latter, combined with their recent dominance of Scottish politics at all levels, means that we could see Labour as having an equal claim to be 'Scotland's party'. As McCrone has remarked, 'it was Labour rather than the SNP which inherited the nationalist mantle in the 1980s' (McCrone 1999). The similarity between the parties is further cemented by an apparent relationship between prioritised Scottish identity and more 'socialist' values (Brown et al 1999, pp.83-84). Given these similarities, then, the presence of the two key minorities identified in the analysis of figures 1-3 - SNP voters who favour devolution and Labour supporters who endorse independence - appears much less anomalous. Indeed, as Keating remarks,

given the larger absolute numbers of Labour voters in Scotland, most of those favouring independence tend to be Labour rather than SNP supporters¹.

The above four key points, together with the detailed empirical analysis we have conducted, therefore has both positive and negative implications for at least three of Scotland's four main political parties. For the SNP, a positive feature is that a majority of Scots prioritise Scottishness over Britishness. However, that such a large proportion of these people support neither them nor their principal policy clearly represents a problem for the SNP, as does the fact that those who vote for them cannot be assumed to support independence, and vice versa. It seems that the SNP must achieve a much more substantial alignment of our three variables if it is to become Scotland's leading party. For Labour, the extent of 'dual identity' among the electorate can be seen as support for their policy of increasing Scotland's autonomy while keeping the Union intact, but the fact that large numbers of their support reject any British element in their identity, and that a similarly substantial minority of Labour voters support independence, would appear to leave them vulnerable to a loss of support to the SNP if the political circumstances were right. Finally, the Tories can take heart that, for most people at least, prioritising Scottishness need not be synonymous with a desire to see the dissolution of the Union. However, the figures showing that relatively few of these people seem disposed to support them are consistent with the argument that a major reason for the poor performance of the Conservative Party in Scotland is its failure to appear sufficiently Scottish, and this therefore continues to represent a fundamental obstacle to any recovery north of the border.

Ultimately, then, this exercise has confirmed the need to adopt a broader conception of Scottish national identity. If this conception now seems excessively broad - suggesting that nearly everyone in Scotland can be considered a 'nationalist' - then we should be aware that, in a sense, this is exactly what the data are telling us! Rather than the non-alignment and diversity inherent in Scottish nationalism being evidence of essential weakness, we can see these features as indicators of breadth and strength. Scottish national identity is in rude health: the vast majority of all Scots - regardless of their political constituency - are unhesitating in the assertion of Scottish identity and tend overwhelmingly to prioritise the latter over any Britishness they feel. Our exploration of the relationship between responses

¹ *This is indeed true of respondents in both the election and referendum surveys of 1997, although not the 1992 SES, possibly due to the lower Labour vote at this election and the apparent underrepresentation of Labour voters in the sample.*

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to the Moreno question and attitudes toward independence and the SNP therefore highlights the fact that Scottish national identity is not something that can be straightforwardly defined or 'read off' from political attributes.

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