

6 Coupling the political and national collectives

Parliament as a national symbol

In 1997, Scottish politicians were tasked with defining the cultural component of the Scottish national collective by creating a national symbol from scratch. In a referendum on 11 September 1997, a majority of 74 % of the Scottish population voted in favour of a Scottish Parliament. This election promise by Tony Blair's Labour government was preceded by the referendum held in 1979. Although a majority of 51.6 % voted in favour of the Scottish Assembly at the time, this majority fell short of the pre-determined quorum of 40 % of the population.

However, the Parliament, decided on in 1997 and opening in May 1999, was able to meet temporarily in the General Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland. It was clear from the outset that this could not be a permanent solution. The UK Government therefore commissioned Scotland's most senior politician, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Donald Dewar, to find a venue for the Scottish Parliament. It was to be a new building in Edinburgh. However, what should it look like, and how should politicians decide on the cultural component of the nation?

I answer these questions by the expectations that underpinned the decisions concerning the design of the Scottish Parliament. Planning began in 1997, and the building was completed in autumn 2004, three years too late and nine times more expensive. Completion was planned for autumn 2001 but only took place in October 2004. In 1997, construction costs in the range of GBP 35–40 million were planned for the new building and set at GBP 40 million in the White Paper (see Fraser 2004: 23–26). The new building actually cost GBP 414.4 million.

This resulted in the Holyrood enquiry. It was led by Lord Fraser. The enquiry provides original data for the following sociological study. In terms of time, I will concentrate on the early planning phase. I begin with the initial correspondence, meetings, inspections and tenders for the planning of the Parliament, which took place in the spring of 1997, and progress to the final decision on the design of the Chamber, taken in September 1999.

The following pages explain the key expectations for the design of the Scottish Parliament. The building was planned as a “symbol” of Scottish “society”, as SNP MP Michael Matheson puts it (Scottish Parliament 1999b). To this end, “decision[s]

about what will probably be one of the most important buildings to be constructed in Scotland for 300 years” had to be made, according to the then Minister Henry McLeish. Dewar was looking for a building emphasising the expansion of national self-determination: “to symbolise the new approach” (quoted in Fraser 2004: 4.3).

What is also interesting about this case is that these decisions could not be postponed. Although the move took place three years too late (2004 instead of 2001), decisions had to be made about the design of this national symbol if Parliament was to have its own building.

In order to analyse the formation of this national symbol, the Chapter is divided into three sections. Firstly, it is shown that the nation itself wanted to determine its symbol and how attempts were made to ensure this self-determination. The second section explains how this orientation manifests itself in the design of the building. Decisions and expectations regarding the design are also at the centre of the final section. Here, however, the focus is on reconstructing the decision-making process concerning the design of the plenary Chamber.

6.1 Planning a national symbol: It takes a team

At the outset of planning this Scottish Parliament building, there was a debate about what it should represent. How to create a building uniting the population for generations by a national symbol? The importance of this interpretation of the Parliament Building as a symbol of the Scottish nation is reflected in the first meeting to produce the Building User Brief (Scottish Parliament 1998). This blueprint was later used for the tendering process. It was subsequently further concretised. Among other things, the following ten “keywords” were agreed at the first meeting, which were to guide the design:

Symbolism – importance of
 Efficient and effective conduct of business
 Dignified/Gravitas/not somber
 Modern
 Scottish
 Egalitarian/for the people
 Openness/Accessibility
 Quality/Fit for purpose/not lavish/Durable/Functional
 “Made in Scotland” (from girders!)
 “Scotland in Europe” (all keywords based on Doig 1997: SF/7/8)

There are no explicit references to Scotland’s national cultural component in seven of these keywords (symbolism, modern, egalitarian etc.). These keywords emphasise

expectations that apply to every nation-state and that stem from the universalism of the political function system.

However, three keywords explicitly refer to Scotland. The first is “Scottish”, referring to the expectation that the nation, the people who identify with it as a national collective, and the state can be addressed by a name (Scottish nation, Scot or Scot and Scotland): “The name of the State, by which it is to be known formally, is Scotland” (Scottish Government 2014: 29).

The other two keywords directly linking the building with Scotland are “Made in Scotland’ (from girders!)” and “Scotland in Europe”.

The first keyword in particular stands out in the expectations for the design of the building: “Made in Scotland’ (from girders!)”. This keyword guides the choices to find an architecture, and it also structures the artistic design of the building. Behind the keyword is the primacy of the political, territorial demarcated collective in defining what can still be considered a national culture. The political collective of inclusion pre-structures the possibilities of the national collective. As a national symbol, the Parliament must be able to integrate the people who live in Scotland as a nation.

The very choice of the tendering process is instructive in recognising this focus on national inclusion. The tendering process was an attempt to create conditions for the Parliament to be designed in a self-determined and gradual way. A competitive interview process was chosen to gain the external expertise required for the construction. The purpose of the “competitive interview” procedure is not to find a ready-made design for the building in question, but to find experts who can be temporarily deployed as service providers and colleagues in order to fulfil the tendered task step by step together.

The task formulated in the tender was to design the building of the Scottish Parliament jointly and to realise the construction project with a budget of around GBP 50 million from July 1999 to June 2001. Professionals in architecture, structural engineering and building services engineering were sought. The tender text states: “The services required are the provision of architectural, structural and services engineering design. (A Quantity Surveyor will be appointed separately.)” (Grice 1998a). Together with those responsible for Scottish politics, this team was to design the Parliament. A team was to be created.

However, why was this procedure chosen? There were two primary considerations. The design of the symbolic building should not be rushed. It was important to allow the necessary foreign and architectural expertise against the background of national self-determination. As the future symbol of the nation, the design of the building was ultimately to remain “in the hands of the client”. This was the judgement of John Gibbons, the lead architect of the Scottish Office commissioned by the British Government to build the building (Gibbons 1998: §6).

I illustrate this below by discussing the choice of this tendering procedure. In the beginning, Dewar, who was in charge of the construction then, held out the prospect

of a typical competition procedure to find a design. In the first press release, Dewar announced an international “design competition” that would enable “architects in Scotland and further afield” to submit designs for a Scottish Parliament in order to find a design that met the “demands of a modern democracy” (Dewar 1997).

However, this press release of 16 July 1997 was followed a few days later by a frequently quoted letter from Sebastian Tombs, Secretary of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS). In his letter to the chief architect of the Scottish Office, John Gibbons, Tombs writes of the “great danger in taking a competition too far”. A majority should not decide on the architecture, but the architecture of the Scottish Parliament should emerge through numerous small and collegial consultations.

Tombs recommends that, under the current circumstances, it would be better to concretise the design of the Scottish Parliament step by step in consultation between clients and service providers (“designers”) than to invite tenders for finished design-concepts: “[T]he best buildings derive from strong positive working relationships between clients and designers where the brief is hammered out and honed down in considerable detail prior to design work being taken too far.” (Tombs 1997)

In this context, Tombs turns to politics. Because “the nature of the client” raises the question of who can represent the “client’s interests”. In addition to the “judges” and a board, Tombs proposes “public consultation”, which must take place “prior to the jury’s [final] deliberations”.

The “better contact with the public, for information”, according to Dewar, is one of the reasons why he now speaks out against the search for a design and in favour of the search for a team. Exhibitions should provide the public with “opportunities for comment on options, but with no power to decide outcomes.” (Dewar et al. 1998: §1b, §8)

As with the national anthem, Scottish politicians have also spoken out in favour of leaving the design of the national symbols to the people who identify with Scotland. Under no circumstances should the design of the Parliament be left to the vote of the political collective alone, whether as elected representatives or in the form of a referendum. This illustrates the division between the political collective, which comprises the people living in Scotland at any given time, and the national cultural collective, understood as a nation of will.

On the one hand, the Scottish nation of will has been included by “two lay people”. To this end, journalist Kirsty Wark and architecture professor Andy MacMillan were appointed to the jury (Grice 1998c: §13-§16).

The public should also have the opportunity to comment. The project portfolios of the five finalists selected by the jury from the 70 applications received were exhibited in seven cities in Scotland (in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness, Dumfries und Selkirk, see Grice 1998d: §7.2). On the first page of the folder, the company or joint venture introduced itself; on the following pages, considerations and initial drafts of the Scottish Parliament were outlined.

Visitors to the exhibition could indicate which of the five finalists they favoured on the “comments sheet[s]” on display. A total of 4,675 comments were received. These were quantitatively analysed for the jury in order to assess the public’s preferences. For this purpose, the number of positive comments counted per finalist was compared with the number of negative comments favouring this (Doig 1998: 165, 2003: §170-§179). This yielded the following result:

Table 6: Results on the public comments on the finalists

Finalists	Positive comments	Negative comments
Rafael Vinoly (New York) and Reiach & Hall (Edinburgh)	39 %	10 %
Enric Miralles Benedetta Tagliabue (EMBT Barcelona) and RMJM (Edinburgh)	23 %	24 %
Richard Meier (New York) and Keppie Design (Glasgow)	11 %	12 %
Glass Murray (Glasgow) and Denton Corker Marshall International (Melbourne)	13 %	21 %
Michael Wilford (London)	13 %	33 %

The “Public Information/Consultation Exercise” evaluation showed that the public preferred Rafael Vinoly and Reiach & Hall. It can also be seen that the London-based office of Michael Wilford received mainly negative comments. However, the jury chose someone else as the winner. Following an intervention by MacMillan, the professor of architecture representing the public, the jury shortlisted the application of Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue (EMBT). However, this office did not fulfil some of the selection criteria required at the time (in addition to insurance-related aspects, the willingness to work was questioned). This was the project manager’s assessment, William Armstrong, who later resigned: “With Miralles’s other commitments, devoting 21 hours a week to this project was totally inadequate. [...] I just could not imagine that somebody who had scored 44th out of 70 could suddenly come forward as a contender. [...] [H]e did not have the resources to do the job.” (Armstrong 2003: §601-§671)

Similarly, jury member Joan O’Connor emphasises Miralles idiosyncrasies in her testimony but sees them as a controllable and promising risk:

“Miralles’s presentation and concept were unquestionably head and shoulders above the others and by consensus he came out on top. In deciding on EMBT/RMJM, we were alert to an element of risk arising from the personality of Enric

Miralles and the working methods of the design studio. [...] My note [...] records the panel asking itself whether Miralles was 'controllable'. As per my note, we all identified this as a significant risk but a risk that was worth taking." (O'Connor 2003: §9, §15)

The senior representative of the Scottish Office (project sponsor of the Holyrood Building Steering Group), Barbara Doig, also were aware of the risk and summarised:

"Enric Miralles was a particular type of architect, and we needed to manage and to be able to respond to that. [...] We certainly were considering all sorts of ways of supporting the design team to be able to form a relationship; to be able to make it productive; to be able to tap into what Miralles could bring to this building, and we did." (Doig 2003: §304-§316)

The jury decided in favour of Miralles' office, which entered into a joint venture with RMJM. In addition to how the client successfully involves the national-cultural collective based on will, Tombs emphasises politics for procedural reasons in his letter. He argues against Dewar's intended international tender: "On the political front, the UIA [International Union of Architects] only recognises national bodies, and that would imply a London-based organisation being the principal agent in administering such a competition." (Tombs 1997).

In contrast, the tendering rules of the European Union offer the advantage of insisting on the participation of a company based in Scotland, provided that "national security, [...] serious economic disadvantage [...], or [...] cultural and artistic reasons" are invoked (Tombs 1997). The European tendering procedure was also chosen, and RMJM, an Edinburgh-based company, was involved, whose contributions lay primarily in the realisation rather than the design of the construction project.

The subsequent minutes of the meeting show that Dewar heeded Tombs' advice. Dewar changed course from looking for a design to looking for a team. A member of the administration at the time recalls Dewar as "captain of the ship. We absolutely realised that the devolution project, in political terms, was clearly his." (Alistair Brown quoted in Fraser 2004: 3.41)

In the meetings held at the beginning of January 1998 on the construction of the Parliament, these references were repeatedly made because the primary aim was to design a building that would become a symbol of the Scottish nation.

In addition, those involved at the time referred to the Architectural Competitions Manual (McGhie/Girling 1996) to weigh up the various options for the tendering process. According to this handbook, the tendering of an object ('design competition') gives rise to expectations of eccentric architecture: "Many leading architects have made their names through design competitions." (McGhie/Girling 1996:

7) In contrast, searching for the inclusion of professionals through competitive interviews is more effective. Although these interviews generate less “public interest”, and the architectural excellence of new talent is not to be expected, they are cheaper and faster. In addition, this process enables more coordination between clients and architects to concretise the design, if necessary, gradually. Competitive interviews “make possible a close working relationship between client and architect; they allow the brief to develop; and, if necessary, they can accommodate step-by-step public consultation. All these things are difficult to achieve in design competitions.” (McGhie/Girling 1996: 29)

This explanation was taken up by the chief architect of the Scottish Office, John Gibbons, in a letter to Dewar’s then Under-Secretary, Henry McLeish, as follows:

“The advantages of the competitive selection process, intended to find a designer rather than a design, are that it is quicker and cheaper than a classic design competition and that it allows a creative dialogue to take place between architect and client at a much earlier stage in the process. This method is also less likely to be subjected to external influence as the selection process is more clearly in the hands of the client.” (Gibbons 1998: §6)

Once again, the choice of this tendering procedure is justified by the possibilities of self-determination of the client, i.e. the Scottish nation. What is sought is not architecture that stands out worldwide but a building with “more of a Scottish than an international flavour”, as Gibbons continues in his letter:

“to find a designer would make for an altogether narrower exercise. There would probably be more of a Scottish than an international flavour. A greater degree of ministerial/departmental control would be retained [...]. [...] the architectural community might criticise this approach as lacking in imagination and vision, and significantly reducing the weight given to aesthetic considerations in the design of the new Parliament.” (Gibbons 1998: §15-16)

In the “exploratory meeting” that Dewar convened a few days later, on 14 January 1998, he informed those present that he was looking for a “prestigious project” but not “heroics”. Andrew Wright (representative of the Lord Cameron Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland) also called for “a need to stop architects going too far” (both quoted in Dewar et al. 1998: §11, §14).

These reflections on the choice of process reveal a recurring expectation that the nation itself should decide on its symbol. The design of the Scottish Parliament should be based on the national performance roles. The will of the people, who identify as Scottish, is indirectly included through representatives and the public. At least the culture of the Scottish nation is created by the people who identify with it.

6.2 The nation: designed and engraved

What should the Parliament symbolise? Looking at the concrete design of the building, especially the accentuated visible parts of the building complex, one expectation stands out. The design should symbolise the unity of the Scottish people as a nation. The people living in Scotland should be integrated into the nation with this building. I show this in two steps. Firstly, I will outline what convinced the jury about the tender winner's project portfolio and how this conviction was realised.

6.2.1 Designing the nation with the people

Let us start with the project portfolio of the "partnership" EMBT & RMJM, which was selected by the jury from 70 applications for the design. The two companies are introduced on the first page of the project folder. There are explanations of the companies, photos of projects that have already been completed but may be important for the design of the Scottish Parliament and the division of tasks is indicated. The architectural design is mainly the responsibility of the Catalan firm Enric Miralles Benedetta Tagliabue (EMBT), which presents itself as an "international architecture studio". At the same time, the subsequent realisation is being managed by the Edinburgh-based firm RMJM. Looking back, Benedetta Tagliabue describes her joint studio with Enric Miralles and the priority of this studio for the entire building project as follows:

"Enric Miralles and myself we were a couple sharing life and work. This is a situation becoming more and more common in the architectural and artistic scenario. [...] Our involvement with the academy and architectural school was very important, being the studio not only a business world but also a continuation of the act of learning. [...] Our division of tasks though was not radically defined [...] The main idea of this type of architectural office is to provide a project to the client following carefully EVERY PHASE of the project, breaking the general erroneous idea that an architect can give a sort of preliminary sketch that then can later be developed by some general 'technicians'." (Tagliabue 2004: 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 5.1)

What is striking about the project folder is the orientation towards Scotland as "your place", as Miralles expresses it, with his signature "Enric" on the first page (EMBT&RMJM 1998: 1). The title of the second page emphasises this attitude and formulates a claim that encompasses all regions of Scotland: "THE PARLIAMENT SITS IN THE LAND ... SCOTLAND IS A LAND ... IT IS NOT A SERIES OF CITIES. The Parliament should be able to reflect the land which it represents." (EMBT&RMJM 1998: 2)

Not only is the Scottish central belt to be included by the parliament but every province and locality, however remote, is to be taken into account. This is also linked to a guiding principle of this design that was later taken up by the jury:

“THE PARLIAMENT SITS IN THE LAND, because it belongs to the Scottish Land This is our goal. Since the beginning we worked with the intuition that individual identification with land carries collective consciousness and sentiments.” (EMBT&RMJM 1998: 2)

On the next page, this guiding principle is concretised under the title “THE PEOPLE[]THE PARLIAMENT SIT IN THE LAND. THE PARLIAMANT IS A FRAGMENT OF A LARGE GATHERING SITUATION”. This reference to the people is maintained throughout the draft. It makes it clear that the Parliament intends to create a symbol of the nation that brings these people together: “[T]he act of sitting together in the land” (EMBT&RMJM 1998: 4). In contrast to Holyrood Palace, which is “a building *situated on the landscape*”, the Scottish Parliament would sit in the land: “the new Scottish Parliament would *sit within the land*”. (EMBT&RMJM 1998: 3)¹

These voluntaristic (“Mental Place”, “act of sitting together”) and residential (“within the land”, “Gathering”) interpretations of the Scottish nation convinced the jury. That the Parliament “sits in the land because it belongs in the land” was the recurring reason why the jury decided in favour of this design (see Fraser 2004: §4.41). Similarly, Dewar explained to the other members of the Scottish Parliament: “The way in which the project grows out of the landscape is attractive. [...] I was much taken by the piece of script on the first panel, which said that Parliament was a mental place.” (Scottish Parliament 1999b)

Similarly, other MPs emphasised that the new building would be a symbol for the next hundred years or more and, therefore, had to have access for everyone “at its heart”.²

We can see from these discussions how important considerations of inclusion of the whole population living in Scotland were in planning the building. The na-

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- 1 “The PARLIAMENT building should come out of a clear and strong statement ... in a way independent of site and circumstances ... Any strong statement should carry political implications”, it is said. “Citizens sitting, resting, thinking ... but in a SIMILAR place and position as members of Parliament.” (EMBT&RMJM, 1998, p. 3)
 - 2 See Cathie Craigie (Labour): “The parliamentary complex has been designed with access at its heart, not as an afterthought and not as something that can be adapted at a later date, but as a building that will hold no barriers. [...] The proposals before us would have Scotland leading the world, with a Parliament building that had open access for all people.” Similarly, Michael Matheson (SNP): “The Parliament should be built to ensure that, during the next 200 years, every member of our society, no matter that they have a disability, can access the building and every part of the building.” (Scottish Parliament 1999b)

tional cultural component of the Scottish nation and the collective associated with it should be pre-structured by the politically inclusive people living in Scotland. The Parliament must emphasise the sense of connection, but it must also consider the people who live in Scotland.

6.2.2 Engraving the nation: National artefacts

How was this expectation of national integration, i.e. expressions such as “sit within the land” or “‘Made in Scotland’ (from the girders!)”, realised? National artefacts were created. The building has several places intended to represent Scotland as a nation. To this end, natural materials from Scotland combine semantic definitions of meaning to create national artefacts.

The first version of the Building User Brief from November 1998 already states that local materials should be favoured for the construction and design of the Parliament:

“The following criteria must be adopted by the design team; the use of low maintenance materials; maximise the use of daylight and natural ventilation; avoid over complicated design features or systems which are expensive to operate and maintain and costly to replace. [...] Where they meet the above criteria preference should be given to indigenous materials used, quarried or grown in Scotland. Brick is considered to be an unsuitable material for the external cladding of this building.” (Armstrong 1998b: §7.4.4, §7.4.7)

To create unity, indigenous materials were deliberately used (cf. an MSP emphasising the “role of indigenous companies and the use of indigenous resources” on the “most prestigious ‘front of house’ parts”, see, Scottish Parliament 2001). Materials originating from Scotland have been placed in highly visible parts of the building, some of them tagged with their place of origin.

One striking example is the Canongate Wall. This 39-metre-long and 6-metre-high Canongate Wall stretches along the main thoroughfare of Parliament. Viewed from the main thoroughfare, the Canongate Wall looks like a girder on which the Scottish Parliament stands.

However, it is not only this perspective that shows the territorial closure of the nation expressed by the keyword “‘Made in Scotland’ (from the girders!)”. A closer look also reveals the expression of this expectation.

There are many national artefacts on the Canongate Wall. Four segments can be distinguished here. On the left, towards the entrance to Parliament, there is a relief of Edinburgh's Old Town. This national artefact comes from a sketch made by Enric Miralles from the view of his hotel room. It shows, among other things, Edinburgh Castle, which has been fought over many times over the centuries. To the right of

this, ten different horizontal strips of granite, basalt and sandstone have been incorporated and staged: “[A] remarkable variety of different kinds of sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks, reflecting Scotland’s long and complicated geological history.” (Lothian and Borders GeoConversation 2011: 2).

Thirdly, there are four vertical strips of dolerite. Like brackets, these dolerite strips reach over the beams or strip foundations on which the Parliament is founded. The viewer’s attention is also explicitly drawn to this dolerite stone (from the Greek: deceptive), as the following is engraved in large letters on the pavement in front of this spot: “DOLERITE AN IGNEOUS ROCK FROM CALDERCRUIX THAT COOLED FROM MOLTEN MAGMA AROUND 300 MILLION YEARS AGO etc.” (Lothian and Borders GeoConversation 2011: 3).

What can be meant by this as a national artefact? First, reference is made here again to the nation’s residential demarcation. Moreover, an inclusion imperative for every person living in Scotland is to be interpreted. Whether the two supporting girders continue to hold the Parliament depends on very old but deceptive brackets (dolerite). However, if the brackets are unreliable—perhaps the brackets of law, custom, history or nature—vigilance and participation are called for. This interpretation is suggested if you follow the pavement and walk towards the Canongate Wall.

If you follow this path, gradually moving away from the entrance of Parliament, you will notice two things: Firstly, the deceptive bracket (dolerite strip) soon encompasses only the lower bar, leaving the upper bar, but on which Parliament also stands, to its own devices. Secondly, you finally arrive in front of memorial plaques made of stone with short texts engraved on them (see Scottish Parliament, 2018). Four further stone plaques supplemented these original 24 stone plaques to mark the tenth anniversary of the Parliament. Scottish newspapers called on the public to submit suggestions for the texts on the new stone tablets. Bookshops and libraries put out postcards for the Scottish public to send their suggestions to the jury:

“We are asking people to nominate a well-loved or significant piece of writing that is relevant for Scotland, perhaps something that expresses how they feel about Scotland, what it means to be Scottish, or hopes for the future.” (The Scotsman 2009)

People who identify with Scotland were asked to describe their nation, regardless of whether they live in Scotland or not. Only two of the four new stone tablets have been engraved so far.

Figure 16: The numbering shows the places of origin of the 28 stone slabs on the Canongate Wall of the Scottish Parliament (this graphic is taken from *Lothian and Borders GeoConversation* 2011: 2)



Sociologically, these 26 engraved stone tablets are particularly interesting. Here, we learn what Scotland as a national collective claims to be worth preserving. These tablets show, how inclusive or exclusive this national community is set to be. A particular type of semantics is engraved in these stone tablets. Comparable to a millennial disc or the stone engravings in Cixin Liu’s science fiction of *The Three-Body Problem* trilogy, these texts should be stored for generations. They are chiselled in stone so that they will last for millennia.³

3 Explicitly preserved semantics, which is available as a repertoire of topics for “quickly comprehensible inclusion in concrete communicative processes”, are to be distinguished from other

Before we look at the semantics of these national artefacts, it is important to note the natural carrier material of these texts. These dispositives are engraved on 28 stone slabs (two of them without engraving), which come from very scattered locations in Scotland (see the numbering in the following diagram), demanding the residential-territorial closure of the national collective. In other words, the material by which the volitional nation, which is not confined to residence in Scotland, describes itself is delimited by the territory of the political collective based on political inclusion in Scotland (not necessarily in the UK).

What is the significance of the political collective demarcated by Scottish territory in these engraved texts? The texts point beyond the residential demarcation of the political inclusion collective and express attachment to Scotland as a nation. Implicitly or explicitly, these texts link the Scottish nation to the primacy of individual self-determination, suggesting democratic nationalism. For example, we read this quote from Hamish Henderson:

So, cam' all ye at hame wi' freedom/Never heed whit the hoodies croak for doom/
In your hoose a' the bairns o' Adam/Can find breid, barley bree an' painted room."
(Henderson 2000[1960])

It comes from Henderson's song *The Freedom Come-All-Ye*, written in the spring of 1960. The first verses of the third stanza are quoted. In the preceding verses, the old world is described as a world of exploitation. In contrast, the verses of the third stanza quoted at the Canongate Wall describe the new world as a peaceful world. The new world emphasises peace and equality between people. It enables individual self-determination. With this diagnosis, already in the first stanza ("Roch the wind [...] Blaws the clouds"), Henderson's song picks up on Harold Macmillan's 'Wind of Change' speeches in Accra in January and Cape Town in February.⁴

Henderson dedicated *The Freedom Come-All-Ye* to Nelson Mandela, who was awarded the Freedom of the City by the city of Glasgow during South African

semantics as well as from the generic concept of culture: "We call this repertoire of topics culture and, if it is preserved specifically for communication purposes, semantics. Serious semantics worth preserving is therefore a part of culture, namely that which is handed down to us by the history of concepts and ideas." (Luhmann 1984: 224 translated by the author)

- 4 In these speeches, Macmillan (implicitly) speaks out against apartheid and calls on those present to stand up for "a society which respects the rights of individuals" so that this society becomes the singular world society through prestige and emulation rather than dominance and fear: "[We] must recognise that in this shrinking world in which we live to-day the *internal policies of one nation may have effects outside it*. [...] We may sometimes be tempted to say to each other 'mind your own business', but in these days I would myself expand the old saying so that it runs: 'mind your own business *but* mind how it affects my business, too.'" (Cabinet Office 1960: 155-156)

apartheid (Bort 2013). Scotland still honours the song as an “International Anthem” (Peattie 2002). In his speech at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Billy Connolly recalled *The Freedom Come-All-Ye* as follows: “Equality is for all of us, Freedom is for all of us”, and even though Henderson had written the song in Scottish, “these words [...] are just for everyone.” (Commonwealth Games 2014: 2:14 h)

Connolly’s speech is followed by a performance by the South African singer Pumeza, who, like Mandela, is Xhosa.⁵ In addition to the global expectations of the welfare state (finding bread) and human rights (hospitality), two national characteristics are emphasised in the quotation posted on the Canongate Wall: language (Scottish) and whisky (barley bree).⁶

Another example of individual self-determination explicitly referring to Scotland as a territory through the stones used is the quote by George Campbell Hay from *The Four Winds of Scotland*, carved in both Gaelic and English: “It is Scotland, Highland and Lowland that is laughter and warmth and life for me.” (Scottish Parliament 2018)

The final verse of this quote by MacDiarmid, which is inscribed on the Canongate Wall, also links individual self-determination with Scotland as a national collective defined by a shared history: “The rose of all the world is not for me/I want for my part/Only the little white rose of Scotland/That smells sharp and sweet and breaks the heart.” (Scottish Parliament 2018)

The following two quotes read very similarly but emphasise the use of individual labour: “*Work* as if you live in the early days of a better nation” is a quote paraphrased by Alasdair Gray from the poet Dennis Lee, who was working in Edinburgh at the time (Scottish Parliament 2018). Every person is addressed to make the still young nation with its freedom of action (work) an ever-improving nation.

The other quote on this comes from Sir Alexander Gray’s “Scotland”: “This is my country,/The land that begat me./These windy spaces/Are surely my own./And those who toil here/In the sweat of their faces/Are flesh of my flesh,/And bone of my bone.” (Scottish Parliament 2018)

5 Pumeza’s performance is praised by nationalist Alex Salmond (SNP) in his speech on the eve of the Scottish secession referendum (see minute 2 until 3 in WeeWildyCamper 2014).

6 Whisky is linked to Scotland as a nation with a quote from Edwin Morgan, who in turn refers to Robert Burns’ poem “Scotch Drink” (1785): “tell us about last night/well, we had a wee ferintosh and we lay on the quiraing. it was pure strontian!” Whisky (Ferintosh) and a unique landscape on Scotland’s west coast (Quiraing) as well as a village and/or the mineral discovered nearby (Strontian) and Scotland’s history are linked by this quote: The Jacobites destroyed the Ferintosh distillery, whose owner spoke out against the Jacobites. After the Glorious Revolution, Ferintosh whisky was the first to be exempted from taxes in 1690. Regarding the reintroduction of taxation in 1785, Burns’ poem reads: “Thee, Ferintosh! O sadly lost!/Scotland lament frae [from] coast to coast!” (see Rank 2010)

Coming from Scotland and considering the country as one's own or toiling away in Scotland (toil here, sweat) are synonymous with the cultural definition of the nation. A claimed dependence on this country unites both. Some see themselves as Scottish because they grew up there, but perhaps they now live entirely elsewhere. Others, who do not necessarily have to be from Scotland themselves, can make it their country through their own work. This also opens up the national-cultural collective to immigrants labelled as "New Scots".

Other stone tablets become national artefacts because they reveal two other languages associated with Scotland: Gaelic and Scots (rather than just English). Proverbs are used for this purpose. For example, one stone tablet bears the Gaelic proverb in the original and English translation: "[s]ay but little and say it well" and another stone tablet reads in Scots: "To promise is ae thing, to keep it is anither." In addition to the languages, the content of these stone tablets expresses a call for participation in this nation, as they demand comprehensible language and vigilance.

Many of these 26 stone tablets contain such calls for participation, often calls for political input and inclusion.⁷ This expectation is formulated as a self-regulation of political power on a stone from Glasgow. The poem quoted is a Song by George Macdonald. The quotation implies that the building is to be understood as the house of the Scottish nation. The metaphor of wandering, mutually loving ghosts expresses that this house is just as 'animated' and 'unified' as its nation: "Sweet ghosts in a loving band/Roam through the houses that stand –/For the builders are not gone." (Scottish Parliament 2018)

Finally, there is an interesting reference to religion. This is a quote that also emphasises individual self-determination and is found on one of the 24 original stone plaques: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. Psalm 19:14" (Scottish Parliament 2018).

7 Demanding active observation/evaluation of the performance side by the public, Andrew Carnegie is quoted on stone tablets with "[p]ut all your eggs into one basket – and then watch that basket," and the trade unionist Mary Brooksbank, who stood for activism, with "oh, dear me, the world's ill-divided,/them that work the hardest are aye wi' least provided". Another example of this is the quote from Sir Walter Scott's *Heart of Midlothian*: "When we had a king, and a chancellor, and parliament-men o' our ain, we could aye peeble them wi' stanes when they werena gude bairns – But naebody's nails can reach the length o' Lunnon [London]." Similarly, this now duplicated historical difference between the rulers/governed in London/Scotland (before/after the Union in 1707 and since 1707/since the regional parliament) is thematised in this quote from Andrew Fletcher: "(I knew a very wise man who believed that) if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation." (Scottish Parliament 2018)

So far, it is the only explicit quote from the Bible.⁸ It comes from the King James Bible. It is not quoted from the Geneva Bible, which is important for Scottish Calvinists. This is because Psalm 19:14 says “mine heart” (Geneva Bible 1599) instead of “my heart” as here engraved in the Scottish nation (King James Version 1611).

On the ‘house’ of the Scottish nation, we find national artefacts that fill the feeling of national togetherness with life against the background of individual self-determination. In part, these are individualistic dispositives of the nation because many quotations suggest that some people identify with Scotland as a nation. In addition, there is a call to contribute to the nation, and the nation is visibly associated not only with different languages (i.e. Gaelic, Scots and English) but also with the translation of the Bible originally written for the Anglican Church (King James Bible). The nation is entrusted with history (whisky, Wars of the Roses, Jacobites, Empire) and repeatedly with the assertion that each person decides for themselves, by choice or in their heart, whether they are Scottish.

The material emphasises the sharp inclusion/exclusion through the shared living space. However, the texts on this material complement this sharp territorial demarcation with a cultural opening of the nation as a nation of will. Two collectives emerge. The collective of the nation of will and the collective of political inclusion. Chiselled into the parliament is the attempt to build a bridge between the two collectives. Scotland’s national culture expands the repertoire of possibilities for stabilising the inherently unstable democracy. It is a factor, albeit latent and overlooked, mainly about “civic nationalism” in the progressive democratisation of this nation.

The progressive instability of a democracy that extends the right to vote is countered by national artefacts expanding the cultural inertia spectrum. The national artefacts contrast the residential demarcation of national inclusion with a cultural interpretation that allows belonging to this nation to be understood as individual self-determination (cf. Stichweh 1999: 462; cf. on “social system preaching” Campbell 1975: 1118).

6.3 Political tradition by and in action: Scottish politics

The plenary chamber of the Scottish Parliament is a place that is often shown on television and has a design that is atypical of British parliamentarianism. A semi-circular seating arrangement characterises it. In contrast, the opposite benches are in the foreground in the plenary chamber of the British House of Commons. The

8 The other quote borrowed from the Bible is referred to as a Gaelic proverb in Gaelic and Scots (“He who sowest best reapest best”), although the proximity to Galatians 6:7-8 is unmistakable.

government is not seated in the centre but opposite the opposition. Another striking feature of the Scottish chamber is the MPs' chairs, tables and lecterns. Although the British MPs also make their speeches standing up from their seats, they sit on benches with neither a table nor a lectern.

The following section reconstructs the decision-making process that led to the design of the Scottish plenary chamber. Two aspects become clear: firstly, it was by no means certain at the outset that the Scottish plenary chamber to be planned would ultimately be so different from the layout and design of the House of Commons. Secondly, it becomes clear how the deliberations on the chamber led to political decisions being elevated to the status of a national culture. The chamber was designed to symbolise national politics. It was intended to link Scotland's cultural distinctiveness with the collectively binding decision-making of politics. This links the national cultural collective with the collective of Scottish politics. This coupling of the two collectives is achieved by emphasising the manner in which political decisions are made in Scotland. A national tradition of the way "how we 'do' politics", as it is called in the song *Son I Voted Yes* by Stanley Odd, is arising. A Scottish tradition of politics is emerging that symbolises the political-cultural autonomy of this nation within the United Kingdom, as Her Majesty notes (Elizabeth II 2004).

6.3.1 Westminster's majority-orientation

In order to show how a Scottish tradition of collectively binding decision-making could be invented, i.e. a distinct national-cultural tradition of politics, the starting point must be clarified. This is directly related. Therefore, the first step is to clarify what characterises the chamber of the House of Commons.

Initially planned in the 1830s and completed in 1852, the House of Commons building lasted until the Second World War. On the night of 10 May 1941, bombs again rained down from the skies of London, and in this bombing, known as The Blitz, the Nazis also reduced the House of Commons building to rubble. Two years later, there was a crucial debate. On 28 October 1943, Prime Minister Winston Churchill summoned MPs to the House of Commons Rebuilding Debate.

The arguments with which Churchill opened this debate and argued in favour of the exact reconstruction of the building, which dated back to the 1830s, not only convinced the MPs at the time but were also vital for the construction of the Scottish Chamber.

At the beginning of his speech, Churchill spoke of the Chamber of the House of Commons as a symbol of the British nation across the generations. The Chamber had attracted "the imagination and respect of the British nation," so it should be rebuilt as accurately as possible. Churchill emphasised two features of this Chamber that made it a national symbol and which should be preserved:

“The first is that its shape should be oblong and not semi-circular. Here is a very potent factor in our political life. The semi-circular assembly, which appeals to political theorists, enables every individual or every group to move round the centre, adopting various shades of pink according as the weather changes. I am a convinced supporter of the party system in preference to the group system. [...] The party system is much favoured by the oblong form of Chamber. It is easy for an individual to move through those insensible gradations from Left to Right but the act of crossing the Floor is one which requires serious consideration. I am well informed on this matter, for I have accomplished that difficult process, not only once but twice. Logic is a poor guide compared with custom. Logic which has created in so many countries semi-circular assemblies which have buildings which give to every Member, not only a seat to sit in but often a desk to write at, with a lid to bang, has proved fatal to Parliamentary Government as we know it here in its home and in the land of its birth.” (Hansard 1943: Col. 403f.)

At the heart of the British House of Commons should continue to be a democracy centred on controversy. A compromise between the government and opposition parties is not desirable. Churchill attributes the willingness to compromise to the group system. Logic is used to argue in favour of this group system, but not what is decisive for British parliamentarianism: culture (“custom”). The conflict-generating party system, which replaces compromise with the rare but radical decision to defect to the opposing party, is British.

In order to motivate those involved to continue arguing between the governing and opposition parties despite this predetermination, a design decision is essential. If possible, the plenary chamber should be small so that it appears overcrowded:

“The second characteristic of a Chamber formed on the lines of the House of Commons is that it should not be big enough to contain all its Members at once without over-crowding and that there should be no question of every Member having a separate seat reserved for him. [...] If the House is big enough to contain all its Members, nine-tenths of its Debates will be conducted in the depressing atmosphere of an almost empty or half-empty Chamber. The essence of good House of Commons speaking is the conversational style, the facility for quick, informal interruptions and interchanges. [...] But the conversational style requires a fairly small space, and there should be on great occasions a sense of crowd and urgency. There should be a sense of the importance of much that is said and a sense that great matters are being decided, there and then, by the House.” (Hansard 1943: Col. 404)

On the one hand, the crowded space is intended to fuel the conflict between the parties, as they cannot avoid each other. On the other hand, it emphasises the urgency of making decisions. For almost all topics discussed and decided in the House of

Commons, the aim is to give the impression to themselves and the audience that critical issues are at stake.

Even today, the elements of this chamber, i.e. facing benches without tables and lecterns, are almost unique in the world. This conclusion is to be drawn from the study of the 193 plenary halls of all states (as of 2016) carried out by the architecture firm XML Architecture Research Urbanism (see XML 2016). 18 of the 193 national plenary rooms have the opposite seating arrangement to the British House of Commons. Except for the Czech Republic, which sits in a chamber built in 1720, the other plenary chambers with facing seating arrangements are all former British colonies: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Jamaica, Canada, Namibia, St Kitts and Nevis, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Suriname, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Most of these states are small islands and/or very small states in terms of population.

However, of these 18 plenary chambers, only two have the same seating arrangement as the British House of Commons. These are the Chamber of Parliament in Zimbabwe, built in 1895, and the Chamber in Uganda, opened in 1962. Both have to face benches instead of chairs. Furthermore, the MPs in both chambers have no tables. In five other plenary chambers, MPs also have no tables: in Turkmenistan (built in 2002), Singapore (1999), Iraq (the 1980s), Micronesia (n/a) and the US House of Representatives (1850).

6.3.2 Scottish consensus-orientation

How did the special features of the House of Commons influence the planning of the Scottish Plenary Chamber? At first glance, the demarcation is striking. As early as 1995, the Scottish autonomy movement and the Constituent Assembly, in particular, stated that Scotland had “a way of politics that is radically different from the rituals of Westminster: more participative, more creative, less needlessly confrontational.” Scottish politics is expected to be consensus-orientated rather than conflict-orientated.⁹

9 The report of the Scottish Constitutional Convention concludes: “What this process has proven is that constructive consensus is achievable [...]. That lesson is immensely encouraging, not just for the project of designing a Scottish Parliament, but for the much more important question of how the Parliament will work once it is in place. [...] Every decision has been reached by agreement. None has been taken by majority vote. [...] The Scottish Constitutional Convention has tackled its work on a basis that is virtually unique in British politics. It can best be described as a resolute search for consensus. [...] From this process we have emerged with the powerful hope that the coming of a Scottish parliament will usher in a way of politics that is radically different from the rituals of Westminster: more participative, more creative, less needlessly confrontational.” (Scottish Constitutional Convention 1995)

A good ten years later, Patrick Harvie, who supported the SNP's minority government with his party (the Greens), recalled this. He contrasts "the widespread disillusionment with confrontational and negative politics [...] the spirit of the founding principles of the [Scottish] Parliament". Consensus orientation is the "founding principle" of the Scottish Parliament, and this is above party (Scottish Constitutional Convention 1995).¹⁰

The Scottish chamber (and Parliament) should therefore be characterised by what Churchill called the "group system" as opposed to the "party system" of the British national tradition of parliamentarianism and rejected by the latter. He was of the opinion that what mattered was a quick and informal exchange of arguments between the government and the opposition and not a search for common positions in order to reach a consensus or reach a compromise.

This tension between majority and consensus orientation, i.e. between conflict and compromise, can also be recognised in the decisions and expectations regarding the design of the Scottish chamber. On the one hand, they liked the atmosphere of Westminster. However, on the other hand, the typical confrontations between the government and the opposition should be avoided wherever possible.

This tension is already evident in the first meeting on the draft Building User Brief. The meeting takes place in June 1997. The design of the Scottish plenary chamber was discussed for the first time. The minutes of the meeting at the time contain entries such as "write" and "to circulate" under the heading "The Debating Chamber". Both are in contrast to Westminster. However, we also read this note implicitly orientated towards Westminster: "intimate style (not confrontational?)" (Doig 1997: SE/7/15).

The orientation towards the British House of Commons is explicitly discussed in Dewar's "first reactions, and not decisions" in September 1997. As in Westminster, a tense "atmosphere" should be the norm in the Scottish chamber. For this reason, Dewar rejects desks at the MPs' seats:

10 Harvie "notes the words of Donald Dewar MSP, on being elected as Scotland's first First Minister, that 'Co-operation is always possible where there are common aims and values, even though there may be great and dividing differences in other areas'; further notes the words of Annabel Goldie MSP that Scotland 'wants posturing and petty playground antics to be left at the door', those of the First Minister that 'our overwhelming responsibility is to work together in the people's interest' and Nicol Stephen MSP's commitment to be 'constructive and positive', and urges all members to hold the Scottish Government to account but also to work constructively and positively wherever possible for the benefit of the people and the country in the spirit of the *founding principles of the Parliament*." (Harvie 2007: ; The reference to Dewar stands for the Labour Party, the recitation of Goldie for the Conservative Party, and Stephens for Liberal Democrats.)

“[Dewar] is not attracted to the idea of a desk per member, agreeing that this makes for a flat atmosphere. He thinks that the chamber should be on the small side, so that there is a sense of press and occasion for major statements and debates. He notes that the number of MSPs will decline”. (Thomson 1997: SE/7/98 §2.2)

Favouring a small chamber has less to do with the declining number of MPs. Indeed, in the 1990s, Scotland recorded a net increase in population for the first time in centuries (see National Records of Scotland 2016: 42). More plausibly, Dewar selectively echoes Churchill’s arguments outlined above. On the one hand, he recommended not adopting the layout of the British chamber and opting for a seating arrangement in the chamber that was somewhere between a “horseshoe to a circular layout” (Thomson 1997: SE/7/98 §2.1). On the other hand, the chamber should allow for Westminster’s heated atmosphere, which makes it likely that decisions will be taken through urgency (“a sense of press and occasion”).

A few months later, these distinctions are explicitly related to the British/European distinction. At that time, in February 1998, however, they were still clearly orientated towards Westminster. Again, the point is that the Westminster atmosphere is not to be dispensed with. This atmosphere is contrasted with the “good accessibility especially for disabled members and visitors” typical of the European Parliament:

“Secretary of State continues to be keen on something which is compact and will generate atmosphere – he was not attracted to European Parliament model but Secretary of State accepted the need for good accessibility especially for disabled members and visitors though he did not want this to dominate the whole design.” (Grice 1998b: SE/7/98 §3)

The first specification for the design of the Scottish plenary chamber can be found in the Building User Brief of November 1998, which was prepared for the tender and in which the plenary chamber is described as “the most important area of the Parliament building” (Armstrong 1998a: SE/7/415 §5.30.1). In explaining the plenary chamber, the departure from the British House of Commons model is recognisable. In the Scottish chamber, for example, individual and numbered seats will allocate each MP “an allocated space” (Armstrong 1998a: SE/7/416 §5.30.7). The seating arrangement is defined as a “horseshoe or semi-circular arrangement”: “The arrangement of the Members’ seating reflects the role of the Parliament. A horseshoe or semi-circular arrangement with the Presiding Officer at the focal point would appear to be the most appropriate.” (Armstrong 1998a: SE/7/416 §5.30.3)

This led to a dispute with the commissioned architecture studio EMTB. As the wife and co-owner of the studio recalls, Miralles wanted to push through a design

for the plenary hall that contradicted the “horseshoe or semi-circular arrangement” agreed in the Building User Brief:

“I think it was also a way to making an elongated chamber, to providing a totally different Parliament from the Westminster one. I think it was very much appreciated, because it was really the opposite of the Westminster way of debating. It was a flat room [...] which puts together the use of space inside a church and the use of the elongated Chamber” (Holyrood Inquiry 2004b: §486).

The then chairman of the responsible Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB), David Steel, refers in his testimony to the dispute over this “theatre seating”. A Scottish delegation was sent to discuss the options in June 1999. This delegation travelled to the Flemish Parliament and the Second Chamber of the Netherlands. The ‘European’ functioning of the Parliament was discussed, but the delegation was not convinced:

“The point of going to look at the Flanders Parliament was to see that in operation. [...] you see the Flanders Parliament, it is fairly typical of the standard European type of Parliament, where Members do not debate in the Chamber; they come out and speak from a podium at the front [...]. That is not what we had in the Scottish Parliament; it was not what was ordered from Mr Miralles, but that was what was in his thinking”. (Holyrood Inquiry 2004a: §359-364)

For the further concretisation of the Building User Brief, the architects were mainly inspired by other ‘European’ parliaments and, in particular, by the new parliament of Saxony in Dresden. This new building has also a circular seating arrangement in the plenary chamber: “If there was a building from which the original brief drew heavily, it was that building”. (Holyrood Inquiry 2004c: §195)

Accordingly, MPs should not speak from a podium or a stage. As in the British House of Commons plenary chamber, MPs should speak from where they sit.

The MPs then specified their expectations regarding the seating arrangement and angle of the plenary chamber. They reiterated their preference for a “hemi-circle shape [...] accompanied by suitable desking and seating”, as stated in the first building proposal, in order to stimulate a “more intimate atmosphere than in the Tweede-Kamer” in the Netherlands (Holyrood Project Team 1999: §5.1f.).

Miralles gave in and incorporated the “continuous curve as you were asking [for]” (Miralles 1999: RM/6/119). The elliptical form was finally adopted and, in a press release of 29 September 1999, was again only implicitly differentiated from the confrontational style in the House of Commons: “We feel that the [‘ellipse’] layout meets the objective of creating a non-confrontational chamber but maintaining sight lines to allow for constructive and lively debates.” (Scottish Parliament 1999c)

It was only later, with the completion of the building, that this elliptical seating arrangement of the chamber was labelled “un-British and ‘European’” (Ascherson 2014: 118) and linked to the semantics of “Scotland in Europe”.

For example, in her opening speech, the Queen ascribes a “European fashion” to the building due to the seating arrangement, which adds “distinctive Scottish values to the British democratic tradition” (Elizabeth II 2004; for academic studies on the issue, see Bulmer 2015; Cairney/Widfeldt 2015).

In political and cultural terms, the design of the chamber will make Scotland more distinguishable from the political culture of the UK. Compared to the UK, Scottish politics is particular in its way of collectively binding decision-making. It seeks consensus. In contrast, national politics is orientated towards majority decisions (see in particular Faux 1975; Thatcher 1980).

This is political-cultural factor, coupling Scotland’s political collective with the cultural collective of the Scottish nation by tradition. The consensus-orientated design of the chamber enables Scotland to present itself as a holistic nation (Stichweh 2000a: 60). Scotland’s political and national holism claims a tradition of non-majoritarian decision-making. In Scotland, the ideology of social democracy and the active search for compromise across party lines are more important than the radicalism of simple majorities. The Scottish national culture, cast in concrete and carved in stone and wood, allows the politically inclusive collective to present itself as a single entity with its own political tradition. It thus counteracts the growing demographic and democratic inequality with England by demanding Scottish autonomy within the United Kingdom or as an independent country with its own political tradition. Interestingly, this cultural tradition is based on the smallest element of politics: collectively binding decision-making.

6.4 Conclusion: Sociocultural evolution of the Scottish Parliament

The Chapter shows what expectations guided the decisions that led to the construction of the permanent parliament building in the early planning phase from 1997 to 1999. These expectations shed light on the symbolic order of the Scottish nation.

The choice of the tendering process by competitive interview instead of ready-made design proposals once again reveals a voluntarism related to the nation. As with the anthem, the nation itself is to decide on the design of the parliament planned as a national symbol. Although a direct democratic procedure was not used for this, the population was represented by representatives (“two lay people”) in the decision-making body and could express its views during the planning phase through consultations.

This democratic process has resulted in a building complex in which particularly visible and staged artefacts emphasise the semantic ‘Made in Scotland’ (from gird-

ers!). In addition, national artefacts and dispositives are engraved on the stone slabs, which point towards as well as beyond the residential demarcation of the collective. They emphasise the history of the Scottish nation and individual self-determination. This attempts to create national symbols and carve them in stone that combine Scotland's historical and cultural identity with an openness to new ideas and an orientation towards the future. The national symbols bridge the Scottish population's political collective and the national cultural community.

The design of the Scottish "Debating Chamber" was important for the cultural component of the Scottish nation and politics. The decision favoured a 'European' variant of the consensus-oriented, semi-circular seating arrangement. In the Scottish plenary chamber, decisions are not made based on simple majorities but in the form of compromises. The debates and the design of the chamber reveal how a sense of national belonging was created. In contrast to the British national majoritarian-democracy, a tradition of collectively binding decision-making developed in Scotland, emphasising the political and cultural independence of Scotland within the United Kingdom. The sense of belonging to the Scottish nation is based on an independent political tradition of consensus-building with European features. Scotland's national sense of belonging is, as the case of the plenary chamber illustrates, based on the functional differentiation of world society. The Scottish nation is united by claiming a common political tradition of decision-making.

The plenary chamber brings together the Scottish collectives of politics and the nation under the aspect of the 'guiding values of the entire political culture' (Stollberg-Rilinger 2017: 31) and thus distinguishes it from the "theatre of dissent" of British parliamentarianism. To culturally ground the Scottish Home Rule movement, as MPs say on visits to other chamber halls, Scotland could not build a chamber as confrontational as Westminster's. The architecture of the chamber was chosen to suggest a somehow 'Scottish' decision-making programme, according to this Scottish MP:

"the way the Scottish Parliament operates, I think there are differences in style and attitude that are there [rather than Westminster] ... partly because there is a heightened sense of different nationality." (Leith/Soule 2011: 132 Interview 27)

In addition, demographics in terms of population density and psychology are also important in understanding the consensus-orientated style of politics in Scotland. A socio-psychological result should be mentioned here. Nowadays, the Scottish population seems to be more consensus-orientated than the rest of the population of Great Britain. A socio-psychological study at the local authority level in the UK between 2009 and 2011 concluded that a particular personality factor is very pronounced in the Scottish population. Of the five personality factors, Agreeableness

is the most prominent in Scotland compared to the other regions of Great Britain (Rentfrow/Jokela/Lamb 2015).

The strong expression of this personality factor can be read as an indicator of homogeneity and solidarity in Scotland. There is a noticeable correlation between Agreeableness and low population density. Agreeableness is much more pronounced in rural regions in Scotland than in the rest of Britain.

Scotland has the lowest population density compared to other regions of Britain (for the following data, see Office for National Statistics 2013). Between 1981 and 2010, Scotland's population density of 66 inhabitants per square kilometre was on a par with Mexico and Bulgaria (both 66) and one-sixth of England's (374 inhabitants per square kilometre). Against this demographic background, the consensus orientation in Scottish politics is likely to not exist in other regions of Britain. The differentiation of Scottish consensus democracy from the majority democracy of the state as a whole thus becomes another critical factor in explaining how Scotland's democratic nationalism has become likely in the early years of the 21st century.

Agreeableness may be an interpenetrating factor that makes the orientation towards consensus rather than conflict likely due to the complexity of psychological systems (Luhmann 1984: 290; with commitment, psychological personality factors become increasingly relevant for social systems see Klein 2020: 47f.; the associated "relying on inferences about dispositional traits" etc. instead of "actions and outcomes" is typical for "WEIRD people" notes Henrich 2020: 33).

Consensus is important for Scottish politics firstly because this personality factor is strong in Scotland and secondly because the population is socialised into it daily through Scotland's national politics. A large proportion of the Scottish population is politically engaged. This political engagement means that someone living in Scotland experiences themselves or others using the mechanisms of Scottish politics to achieve something of personal significance. The power and mechanisms of *Scottish politics* are adopted in many ways, as the table below shows.

In this table, I have mapped the access points—with most options being genuinely political like signing a petition—used by the Scottish population in recent years. The figures are taken from the representative population surveys of Scottish Social Attitudes conducted from 2004 to 2016. The population was asked to answer the following question: "In the last few years, have you ever done any of the things on this card as a way of registering what you personally thought about an issue?"¹¹ The answers are shown in the table above (based on Marcinkiewicz/Montagu/Reid 2016: 31; Marcinkiewicz et al. 2016: 52).

In most options listed in the table, a person living in Scotland uses politics to communicate what they think personally about an issue. Almost half of the popula-

11 The survey was conducted in 2004, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2015 and 2016. Until 2009, only "ever done" activities were asked about.

tion said they had signed a petition, as many as 1/5 of the population had contacted an MP (20 %), 1/4 had donated to a campaign/organisation (23 %) and/or visited the local authority to share their personal views (25 %). Politics is, therefore, very important for Scotland's social community to communicate personal value preferences. This is a distal reason why consensus—in the form of the “Debating Chamber”—is a powerful national symbol in the socio-cultural evolution of the Scottish autonomy movement.

Table 7: Social engagement in the Scottish population (2004–2016)

Social engagement in the Scottish population (2004–2016)	Arithmetic mean in % (multiple answers possible)
Formed a group of like-minded people	3.6
Actively took part in a campaign (e.g. leafleting, stuffing envelopes etc.)	6.6
Joined a political party (nur 2016)	7.0
Raised the issue in an organisation I already belong to	7.2
Joined an existing organisation	7.2
Contacted radio, TV or a newspaper	7.6
Contacted a government department directly	8.6
Gone on a protest or demonstration	8.8
Attended an event organised as part of a consultation exercise	8.8
Responded to a consultation document	10.6
Spoken to an influential person	13.0
Contacted an MP or MSP	20.2
Attended a public meeting	21.4
Given money to a campaign or organisation	23.0
Contacted my local Council	25.3
No, have not done any of these	33.4
Signed a petition (including online petitions)	44.8
Totals in per cent of responses (arithmetic mean)	257.1
Scottish Parliament turnout (county and regional vote, 2007, 2011, 2016)*	53.4
Voter turnout in the UK lower house election in Scotland (2005, 2010, 2015, 2017)	65.5
Participation in secession referendums (Scotland 2014, EU referendum 2016)	75.9
Totals in per cent of responses (arithmetic mean)	419