

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910817837003321
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Titolo	British identities before nationalism : ethnicity and nationhood in the Atlantic world, 1600-1800 // Colin Kidd
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge [England] ; ; New York, : Cambridge University Press, 1999
ISBN	1-107-11514-0 0-511-00140-1 1-280-15347-4 0-511-11696-9 0-511-14964-6 0-511-32450-2 0-511-49586-2 0-511-05075-5
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (viii, 302 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	305.8/00941/09032
Soggetti	National characteristics, British - History Group identity - Great Britain - History Constitutional history - Great Britain Ethnic groups - Great Britain - History Nationalism - Great Britain - History Ethnicity - Great Britain - History Mythology, Celtic - Great Britain Celts - Great Britain Mythology, British Great Britain Ethnic relations History 17th century Great Britain Ethnic relations History 18th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	; 1. Introduction -- ; 2. Prologue: the Mosaic foundations of early modern European identity -- ; 3. Ethnic theology and British identities -- ; 4. Whose ancient constitution? Ethnicity and the English past, 1600-1800 -- ; 5. Britons, Saxons and the Anglican quest for

legitimacy -- ; 6. The Gaelic dilemma in early modern Scottish political culture -- ; 7. The weave of Irish identities, 1600-1790 -- ; 8. Constructing the pre-romantic Celt -- ; 9. Mapping a Gothic Europe -- ; 10. The varieties of Gothicism in the British Atlantic world, 1689-1800 -- ; 11. Conclusion.

Sommario/riassunto

Inspired by debates among political scientists over the strength and depth of the pre-modern roots of nationalism, this study attempts to gauge the status of ethnic identities in an era whose dominant loyalties and modes of political argument were confessional, institutional and juridical. Colin Kidd's point of departure is the widely shared orthodox belief that the whole world had been peopled by the offspring of Noah. In addition, Kidd probes inconsistencies in national myths of origin and ancient constitutional claims, and considers points of contact which existed in the early modern era between ethnic identities which are now viewed as antithetical, including those of Celts and Saxons. He also argues that Gothicism qualified the notorious Francophobia of eighteenth-century Britons. A wide-ranging example of the new British history, this study draws upon evidence from England, Scotland, Ireland and America, while remaining alert to European comparisons and influences.
