

Europa and the Unicorn

European and Scottish National Identity in Scotland, 2007-2018

Bjaerni Henderson



Word Count – 14,970 words

January 3rd 2019

Master of Arts International Relations, European Union Studies

Supervisor: Dr. Maxine David

Leiden University

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I wish to thank my wife Jetske, to whom this thesis is dedicated. Without her support and beautiful cover art, none of this would have been possible.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Maxine David for her invaluable guidance and support throughout the thesis writing project during my time at Leiden University.

I also wish to thank Dr. Brian Shaev for guiding me towards some key literature for this thesis and for the many lively and spirited discussions we have shared over the past year.

I also owe a debt of thanks to Dr. Tomasz Kamusella. His posing of the question ‘*Do you speak any Scottish languages?*’ many years ago started my journey down this path of which this thesis is but the latest step.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents, Ian and Wendy, for their continued support for which I am always grateful.

Bjaerni Henderson

January 3rd 2019

Oegstgeest

List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
SNP	Scottish National Party
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UKIP	United Kingdom Independence Party

Chapter 1: Introduction

“*What is the process for removing our EU citizenship? Voting yes. #scotdecides*” (Better Together, 2014). Now, over four years after the 2014 Scottish independence referendum resulted in a vote against independence, the irony of this statement by Better Together is undoubtedly clear¹. On June 23rd, the United Kingdom (UK) voted on whether to leave or remain a member state of the European Union (EU)². Despite the Scottish electorate overwhelmingly voting to remain (62%), the overall UK result was to leave the EU (BBC News, 2016). Although the Scottish electorate voted to remain in the UK and subsequently the EU, this threat of the loss of EU citizenship, and its implications, is now a looming reality for the people of Scotland.

Although Brexit will have a tremendous impact in Scotland, it also has significant repercussions internationally, most importantly for the EU. The UK result in favour of Brexit has emboldened many eurosceptic, nationalist politicians across the EU. Marine Le Pen in France and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands have called for similar referendums to combat what they perceive as the EU’s “*corrosive impact on sovereignty and national identity*” (McGowan & Phinnemore, 2017, p. 95). The EU, as an organisation, is struggling against such nationalist parties, particularly those in control of national governments, with notable conflicts between the EU and the nationalist governments in Poland, over the independence of Poland’s judiciary, and Hungary, over the EU’s policy towards migration (Byrne, Peel, & Buck, 2018). Indeed, this conflict between the EU and such nationalist parties cuts deep as some of these parties, such as the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), oppose not only particular policy areas but the wider European project itself (Schweiger, 2017, p. 204). A growing dissatisfaction and disconnection with the EU by its citizenry, who perceive the EU as “*part of the problem rather than the solution*”, was identified by Hobolt as one of the most serious challenges facing the EU (Hobolt, 2016, p. 1260). Indeed, eurosceptic parties have enjoyed relative electoral success recently with examples including the Northern League in Italy, the anti-immigration and anti-Islam Alternative for Germany, and, perhaps the most successful of

¹ Better Together was the principal campaign advocating a ‘No’ vote during the 2014 Scottish independence referendum.

² The 2016 referendum on the UK’s membership of the EU will henceforth be referred to as the ‘Brexit’ referendum.

these, UKIP (Schweiger, 2017, p. 204). Against this backdrop of Brexit and growing nationalist ire towards the EU, it is curious to observe that Scotland, which was ardently in favour of remaining in the EU, has been governed by the Scottish National Party (SNP), ostensibly another nationalist government, for over a decade. In contrast to the aforementioned eurosceptic parties, the SNP, in their capacity as the Scottish Government, are supportive of the EU and actively campaign for Scotland to have a close relationship with the EU. What is more, a pro-EU stance is widely echoed amongst “*the new pro-independence websites that sprang up during and after the [2014 Scottish independence] referendum*” (Geoghegan, 2017, p. 253). Hence, pro-EU sentiments are being widely promoted within several sectors of Scottish society.

The topic of European identity in Scotland is an important topic for further study because the EU is facing a growing challenge in the face of nationalist parties which are openly hostile to the European project. Indeed, despite provisions ensuring that “*Europe’s cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced*” are enshrined in article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, Christian Schweiger has argued that European identity in the EU “*has remained profoundly underdeveloped*” (Schweiger, 2017, p. 190). This is reflected in relatively low public opinion towards the EU: only 43% of surveyed EU citizens have a “*positive image*” of the EU based upon the most recent Eurobarometer figures (Eurobarometer, 2018, p. 8)³. While the EU struggles with a “*lack of social legitimacy*” in many states, the relatively high Scottish vote in favour of EU membership suggests that this may not be the case in Scotland (Schweiger, 2017, p. 192). Scotland therefore presents a stark contrast to these other European cases and thus is a pertinent topic for the study of the promotion of European identity in the EU.

This thesis analyses this phenomenon in Scotland by utilising the following research question; ‘*How has a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity been promoted since 2007?*’ In order to address this question, two main groups of actors⁴ shall be analysed: the SNP in their capacity as the Scottish Government and the pro-independence, online Scottish media in Scotland. This thesis analyses how these groups of actors have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national

³ These are the most recent figures (November 2018) available at the time of writing (January 2019).

⁴ This is not to say that the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media are monolithic entities. It is recognised that there are a multitude of different voices and opinions within both groups.

identity in Scotland over the last decade. This thesis does not have the aim of determining the effectiveness of this promotion on the Scottish public nor does it have the aim of determining precisely why these actors seek to promote such an identity. This is not to diminish the importance of these questions, important though they are, but these issues fall outside the scope of this thesis.

This thesis first presents a critical review of the existing academic literature on this topic in order to demonstrate the current state of the literature and to establish the analytical framework for this thesis. Subsequently the methodology that was employed during the research process shall be explained before presenting and analysing the findings of this research. These findings are divided over two chapters: the first chapter focussing on the Scottish Government and the second chapter focussing on the role played by the pro-independence online Scottish media.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Prior to analysing how a pro-EU, European-Scottish national identity has been promoted in Scotland over the last decade, it is first prudent to examine the relevant academic literature that already exists in the field in order to properly contextualise the topic and to establish the analytical framework used in this thesis. Furthermore, it is important to firmly establish the key concepts that shall be discussed henceforth. This review of the academic literature shall therefore be separated into three sections focussing on, respectively, the academic literature on national identity, European identity, and national identity in Scotland.

Academic Literature on National Identity

As the topic of national identity is rooted in nationalism, an overview of the literature regarding nationalism is a logical starting point. Much of the basis for modern academic literature regarding nationalism comes from the 1980s with prominent scholars such as Miroslav Hroch, Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson (Anderson, 1983, p. xii). The theoretical basis for this thesis is rooted in Benedict Anderson's concept of the 'imagined community'. Anderson defines a nation as "*an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign*" (Anderson, 1983, p. 6). He chooses to use "*imagined*" to indicate that most members of the nation will never come into contact with one another, therefore the fraternity between members of the nation is a social construct (Anderson, 1983). Anderson specifically distinguishes his definition from that of Gellner who perceives a more active role in nation building. Gellner perceives the formation of nations as the "*crystallization of new units...using as their raw material the cultural, historical and other inheritances from the pre-nationalist world*" (Gellner, 1983, p. 48). These two understandings of a nation are not inherently at odds with each other: the formation, or imagination, of a nation in the minds of its participants often involves both contemporary and historical factors. Hroch's definition "*of the nation as a constituent of social reality of historical origin*" succinctly addresses this duality of the nation and further asserts the "*dynamic*" nature of nations, identifying the fact that nations can indeed change and develop over time (Hroch, 1985, p. 3). Therefore, while Anderson's 'imagined community' is a key concept in our understanding of the nation, one would be amiss to disregard the use of historical ideas and concepts in the development of nations and their "*dynamic*" nature as identified by Gellner and Hroch.

This 'imagined community' is not without critics who question the inclusive nature of Anderson's definition. Anthony Marx argues that such an inclusive definition of a nation belies the historical reality of the exclusionary qualities of nationalism, "*nationalism is often exclusive, with such exclusion emerging in fits and starts but encouraged or enforced to serve the explicit requirements for solidifying core loyalty to the nation*" (Marx, 2003, p. 21). Marx's criticism is an important and valid point: one need only consider the history of the genocides committed against, amongst others, the Jews, the Roma and the Sinti by the ethno-nationalist state of Nazi Germany to see that there can of course be horrific consequences to the exclusionary qualities which can be attributed to nationalism. Anderson, for his part, is more interested in the "*fraternity*", this "*comradeship*" willing "*to die for such limited imaginings*", brought about by nationalism rather than the exclusionary nature that Marx identifies and only addresses this question by arguing that nations are "*limited*" to certain boundaries, specifically to a given population (Anderson, 1983, p. 7). Anderson, therefore, does not argue as effectively as he might have in regards to membership of a nation: how one can be included or excluded from a given nation.

The theory of civic, or liberal, nationalism tries to address the aforementioned question arising from this conflict over membership of a nation. Yael Tamir writes of her perspective of liberal nationalism, as she refers to it, describing this ideology as a combination of liberalism and nationalism. In particular, she identified that it draws "*from liberalism a commitment to personal autonomy and individual rights, and from nationalism an appreciation of the importance of membership in human communities ... national communities in particular*" (Tamir, 1993, p. 35). This concept is furthered by Anna Stilz who argues that civic nationalism does not rely on "*commonalities of language or culture*" but rather on "*the part of citizens to uphold their political institutions, and to accept the liberal principles on which they are based*" (Stilz, 2009, p. 257). Tamir and Stilz argue here that membership of a nation is based upon certain principles, namely liberalism, and upon loyalty to a particular national community, more based upon the institutions of a nation than its ethnolinguistic qualities. In short, as Nelly Bekus summarises, civic nationalism is "*nationhood in terms of citizenship and political participation*" and not ethnic "*lineage*" (Bekus, 2010, p. 28). While Tamir and Stilz's civic nationalism posits that membership of a nation is based more upon political ideology than ethnolinguistic qualities, thus making membership of a nation accessible for those not born into them, this principle is challenged by Will Kymlicka who considers this notion of civic

nationalism based on shared liberal principles and respect for political institutions in the context of Québec⁵. Kymlicka points out that many nations share liberal values but that has not resulted in national minorities abandoning their national movements. Rather, Kymlicka argues that a “*shared political identity*” is most important for civic nationalism; “*who they want to share a country with ... who they identify with, who they feel solidarity with*” (Kymlicka, 2001, pp. 261-262). Michael Keating concurs by arguing that “*civic nationalism is based upon territorially defined community*” with “*a structured set of political and social interactions guided by common values and a sense of common identity*” (Keating, 2001, p. 6). Lior Erez is particularly critical of civic nationalism with a focus on the perceived inconsistency liberal nationalists have in regards to citizens with multiple national identities within a given state. Erez cites the recent example of the conflict between the Netherlands and Turkey, over Turkish Government ministers campaigning in the Netherlands, arguing that, from a liberal nationalist perspective, a multicultural state such as the Netherlands “*may recognise the distinct ethnic identity of Turkish immigrants, but not their national identity*” (Erez, 2018, p. 13). Ultimately, Kymlicka and Keating argue that membership of a nation goes deeper than just identification with certain institutions and liberal ideology: there is still, at its heart, this ‘imagined community’ wherein there is a community with a shared identity. Keating makes the point that the conceptualisation of ‘ethnic’ or ‘civic’ nationalisms are, in the end, “*ideal types...abstractions*” (Keating, 2001, p. 8). Moreover, Keating asserts that “[A]ny given movement may contain both civic and ethnic elements in its origins and use both types of appeal in its doctrine” (Keating, 2001, p. 8). Hence, this research into European Scottish national identity takes into account that the division between ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ nationalisms, and conceptualisations of national identity, may not always be clear-cut.

The media is afforded a prominent role in many studies of nationalism as the advent of the printing press allowed for a “*communications revolution*” by providing “*the means of literary and news production, distributions and consumptions*” (Delanty & O'Mahony, 2002, p. 32). Benedict Anderson explicitly linked this to increased literacy and the decline of Latin in favour of vernacular languages. Anderson argues that this ‘print capitalism’ connected readers to others in their language community thus a broader community was “*connected through print,*

⁵ The predominantly French-speaking province of Québec has twice held referendums seeking independence from Canada. For a more extensive background on the history and politics of nationalism in Québec, see (Graefe, 2015), (Keating, 2001).

formed, ... the embryo of the nationally imagined community” (Anderson, 1983, p. 44). Smith notes that this process is ongoing as “*new systems of mass communications ... are also encouraging much smaller social and political groups and ethnic and linguistic communities to create and sustain their own dense social and cultural networks*” (Smith, 1995, p. 17). Although Smith wrote before the advent of the mass adoption of the internet⁶, his hypotheses regarding the fragmentation and intensification of these social and cultural networks bears some likeness to contemporary research. Robert Saunders acknowledges Anderson’s perspective on ‘print capitalism’ and argues that the advent of the internet has “*radically altered the media environment for the creation and maintenance of national identity*” (Saunders, 2011, p. 3). The ability for smaller national and ethnic groups to maintain close contact in their own languages across time and space outwith the direct control of “*ideals of the elites who spoke for the “nation”*” is of tremendous value for the development of their social and political groups (Saunders, 2011, p. 3). Indeed, Tomasz Kamusella portrays the internet as something of an extension of the ‘imagined community’ as small, geographically dispersed ethnolinguistic groups “*may feasibly meet and embark on collaborative projects over the Internet*” (Kamusella, 2015, p. 78). Saunders and Kamusella echo Smith’s argument that these smaller groups would form tight-knit networks and, through these networks, encourage and promote their sense of national identity. While the internet may not be the precise mode of communication imagined by Anderson, it is undoubtedly the evolution of, or perhaps even successor to, his conceptualisation of ‘print capitalism’.

This section has provided an overview of the academic literature on national identity in general. Although much of the academic discussion of national identity is rooted in the idea of the ‘imagined community’, there is a diversity of opinion on the basis of national identity, whether it is rooted in ethnic and cultural roots or rooted in civic values. This dichotomy between cultural and civic conceptualisations is an important debate within the academic literature on European identity, to be discussed in the next section, and, furthermore, forms the basis for the analytical framework of this thesis.

⁶ In 1995, only a scant 0.77% of the world’s population were active internet users in comparison to 45.79% in 2016 (The World Bank, 2018). As access to the internet grows, so does the internet’s capability as a forum for mass communication of identity and ideas through the connection between members of national communities.

Academic Literature on European Identity

The topic of European identity, especially within the EU, is a salient subject amongst many scholars. One reason that European identity is researched by scholars of the EU is because it is argued that the perceived democratic deficit of the EU can be linked to its lack of a demos (Innerarity, 2014, p. 1). Demos can be defined as, “*a group of people, the majority of whom feel sufficiently connected to each other to voluntarily commit to a democratic discourse and to a related decision-making process*” (Cederman, 2001, p. 144). Herrmann and Brewer apply this logic to the EU, arguing that “*if within the population there is no sense of community*” then political leaders cannot draw on “*shared feelings of loyalty and obligation*” to promote the legitimacy of the political project and institutions (Herrmann & Brewer, 2004, p. 4). Jürgen Habermas provides a link between the concept of civic nationalism and European identity by arguing that in order for a European political identity to be realised, there must be a division between the demos and the ethnos, historical identity based on ethno-nationalism, founded on liberal values (Habermas, 1990, p. 152) (Müller, 2007, p. 31). Such a division between demos and ethnos would, at least according to Habermas, Tamir, and Stiliz, constitute a form of civic nationalism in the EU. However, if we recall Kymlicka’s discussion of civic nationalism in Québec, supranational liberal EU institutions would not and do not necessarily result in a pro-EU, European identity.

Michael Bruter makes the distinction between two conceptualisations of European identity, civic and cultural, wherein civic identity refers to European institutions, principally the EU and its institutions, and cultural identity refers to the “*European shared culture, values, and heritage*” (Bruter, 2005, p. 102). Bruter argues that European identity can therefore be understood either through the connection to European institutions, based upon the French Enlightenment and Habermasian perception of institutions as creators of citizenship, or through a common cultural identity, rooted more in the historical and ethno-nationalist understanding of the nation (Bruter, 2005, p. 11). This is a vital distinction to make as there are different conceptualisations of European identity and these can affect national engagement with the EU. Bruter’s research has demonstrated that, for instance, the UK relates more to the cultural conceptualisation of European identity than the civic aspect, which he attributes to the lower degree to which the UK is involved in European integration (Bruter, 2005, p. 114). Bruter’s dichotomy between ‘cultural’ and ‘civic’ conceptualisations of European identity will form the

analytical basis of this thesis in order to analyse how a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity has been promoted in Scotland.

Although it is not the focus of this thesis, the academic study of Euroscepticism also addresses the role of European identity, including the rejection of EU's symbols and European identity or an outright rejection of Europe "*as a historical and cultural entity*" (Leconte, 2010, pp. 52-53, 61)⁷. Indeed, the study of Euroscepticism reveals why it has been so difficult to form a European demos as popular engagement with the EU has, in some quarters, lacked behind elite political engagement (Smith, 1995, p. 127). To emphasise this point, Smith bluntly poses the question of "*who will die for Europe?*" (Smith, 1995, p. 139). While military sacrifice for a nation is less prominent in 2019, the question of how deeply felt the connection between Europe, the EU, and the European population is perhaps more salient than ever as the EU is undergoing a "*deepened*" legitimacy crisis (Schweiger, 2017, p. 206).

The layering of multiple identities is also a topic of discussion by academics of European identity. Herrmann and Brewer discuss three main configurations of identity; "*nested ... or Russian Matruska dolls*", "*cross-cutting*" or "*separate*" (Herrmann & Brewer, 2004, p. 4). These configurations are repeated through much of the literature as they are useful for perceiving the interactions between different levels of identity, particularly in the European context. Fligstein discusses the interplay between European and national identities and notes that, for the vast majority of people, national identities are either dominant or European identity is "*nested in national and regional identities*" (Fligstein, 2008, p. 137). Irneusz Karolewski concurs with Fligstein by arguing that, due to the "*cultural diversity*" of the EU, it is unlikely that European identity will supplant "*other attachments, particularly the national ones*" (Karolewski, 2010, p. 62). Indeed, Karolewski notes that "*identity is not a zero-sum game*" and that European identity "*may very well coexist with strong regional and national identities*" (Karolewski, 2010, p. 63). Herein we can perceive the "*Matruska dolls*" concept put forward by Herrmann and Brewer: an individual can, in theory, comfortably accommodate multiple identities on various levels. This is a key concept utilised in this thesis as it seeks to explain how a pro-EU, European identity is complementary to a Scottish national identity.

⁷ For an overview of these different 'varieties' of Euroscepticism, see (Leconte, 2010).

As this thesis examines the role played by symbols in promoting a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity, by way of semiotics, it is important to consider the academic debate on symbols and their role in national identity within the European context. Anthony Smith, in a critical analysis of the development of the EU, raises the point of the importance of “*common [European] myths and symbols*” (Smith, 1995, p. 133). Annie Jourdan argues for the importance of symbols in identity construction as symbols are “*invested with their own significance*” and play an important role in “*grouping individuals around a common focus of identification*” as they ultimately “*form part of the national myth and ritual*” (Jourdan, 2007, pp. 435-437). Jourdan highlights the symbolic importance of national flags, but other prominent symbols of national and European identity can include national animals and national days⁸ amongst others.

At the advent of the European Union, Peter Odermatt argued that “*symbols must perforce play an extremely important role in this process: symbols which would enable every European to conceive of his or her identity within new parameters*” (Odermatt, 1991, p. 235). Smith is sceptical of the commonality of European myths and symbols as he rightly argues that most potential sources of European myths and symbols are not universal across Europe: Greco-Roman heritage excludes Northern Europe and the “*predominance of Western Europe*” excludes the heritage of Central and Eastern Europe (Smith, 1995, pp. 133-138). Irneusz Karolewski and Andrzej Suszycki further this discussion, with more contemporary examples, by arguing that the EU, by way of symbols such as the Euro currency and the EU flag, “*manipulates cultural symbols to construct European mass identity*” (Karolewski & Suszycki, *The Nation and Nationalism in Europe: An Introduction*, 2011, p. 188). While Smith is correct to address the lack of universality of certain aspects of European identity, Jourdan succinctly argues that the use of symbols is fundamental in the construction of a common identity and this is demonstrated, in the EU context, by Karolewski and Suszycki.

This section has laid out the basis of the framework for analysing the promotion of European identity in Scotland. Bruter’s dichotomy between the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ encapsulates the dichotomy between the two principal conceptualisations of European identity, based respectively upon the EU or European heritage and values. In the final section of this chapter, the academic literature on national identity in Scotland is analysed.

⁸ For further discussion of national days as symbols of national identity, see (Fuller, 2004).

Academic Literature on National Identity in Scotland

The previous two sections analysed the current academic literature on national identity and European identity. Within the academic literature on national identity in Scotland, the principal focus is mostly on Scottish national identity with relatively little attention to paid to European identity in Scotland. Many of academic studies of national identity in Scotland exhibit somewhat teleological tendencies and are intrinsically linked to key events in Scottish history, such as the first Scottish devolution referendum in 1979⁹. There is a trend amongst much of the literature regarding Scotland in that lengthier academic works are lacking in their coverage of the contemporary situation in Scotland as they have sought to create over-arching histories of Scotland rather than focussing on the rapidly changing political and social landscape of Scotland¹⁰. Indeed, many academic studies of national identity in Scotland are more historical in nature with volumes such as “*Image and Identity*” purposefully electing to avoid discussing developments in the 20th century and beyond (Brown, Lynch, & Finlay, 1998, p. 3).

Murray Leith and Daniel Soule bridge the gap between the over-arching histories of Scotland with contemporary analyses by focussing on modern Scottish national identity. They use qualitative methods to contrast the political discourse on national identity with that of the “*masses*” (Leith & Soule, 2012, p. 153). They perceive two contrasting conceptualisations of Scottish national identity; a more inclusive, civic nationalist one promoted by the SNP and another more exclusive, “*non-civic*” national identity found amongst the “*masses*” which is based upon “*ethnic, historical and cultural*” aspects of identity (Leith & Soule, 2012, pp. 152-153). The co-existence of these twin “*ethnic and civil elements*” was theorised by Keating and indeed the more ethno-nationalist aspects are employed, as argued by Leith and Soule, in order to “*ground policy within a discourse of belonging*” (Keating, 2001, p. 8) (Leith & Soule, 2012, p. 153). Recently, Stephen Reicher and Nick Hopkins have argued that the disconnect between SNP and ‘mass’ understanding of Scottish national identity described by Leith and Soule still exists, but that the SNP have “*worked hard to fashion*” an inclusive, rather than exclusive, conceptualisation of Scottish national identity (Reicher & Hopkins, 2017, p. 280). Although

⁹ For examples, see (Harvie, 1977), (Nairn, 1977).

¹⁰ For examples, see (Devine, 2000), (Lynch, 1992), (Magnusson, 2000).

this thesis focusses on how a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity has been promoted in Scotland and, therefore, does not seek to analyse how effective this promotion has been, it is ultimately important to bear this question in mind in the context of future academic research into the promotion of European identity in Scotland.

The European aspect of Scottish national identity is, thus far, understudied within the academic literature. What little attention is paid to the pro-EU, European attitude of the SNP focusses more on the political and policy ramifications linked to possible post-independence EU membership with Michael Keating commenting that, for the SNP, Europe was for many years “*not a defining feature*” (Keating, 2017, p. 313). What is more curious is Gerard Delanty’s suggestion that the “*pro-European inclination*” of “*Scottish civil nationalism ... might be attributed to hostility to English nationalism*” (Delanty, 2018, p. 198). Although there is academic consensus that there exists a pro-EU, European identity within Scotland, there is, therefore, a gap in the academic literature in regards to how this has been promoted. While the conceptualisation of Scottish national identity is relatively well-researched, by for instance Leith and Soule, the same cannot be said for this pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. This thesis will therefore fill this gap in the academic literature by analysing how this identity has been promoted in Scotland between 2007 and 2018.

Despite the growing importance of online and social media, the “*new systems of mass communications*” theorised by Smith, academic discussion of the role of the media in Scotland remains principally focussed on traditional media (Smith, 1995, p. 17)¹¹. The main exception is Margot Buchanan who, in her analysis of the role played by social media during the 2014 Independence referendum, elaborates further on this evolved ‘print capitalism’ that was discussed earlier. Buchanan succinctly charts the online expansion of the independence debate, both in favour and against, from 2012 until approximately the end of 2014 (Buchanan, 2016). Importantly, Buchanan describes the plethora of different media outlets and popular movements that emerged across a variety of online platforms, acknowledging the dual importance of both traditional websites and of social media (Buchanan, 2016). This thesis will help to fill this gap in the academic literature in regards to the role of online media in Scotland, in particular in regards to its role in promoting a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity.

¹¹ For discussions of the role of the press and broadcasting in Scotland, see (Geoghegan, 2017), (Silver, 2017).

This chapter has identified and critically analysed the existing academic literature on national identity and how it relates to European and Scottish national identity. While there is a large body of academic literature on the topics of national identity and European identity in general, the relationship between European identity and Scottish national identity is, thus far, understudied. The interplay between European and Scottish identity, akin to the ‘nested’ configuration discussed by Herrmann and Brewer, deserves further academic study. Furthermore, the role played by the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media in promoting a pro-EU, European-Scottish national identity is an untapped avenue of research in the field of European identity. Hence, this thesis shall make an addition to the academic literature by contributing a focussed analysis of how a pro-EU, European-Scottish national identity has been promoted in Scotland. The following chapter elaborates on the methodology employed in this thesis in order to address this research question.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The prior chapter demonstrated that, while there is significant academic literature related to national identity and specifically European identity, there is indeed a gap in the academic literature in regards to the construction of a pro-EU, European-Scottish national identity in Scotland over the past decade. This thesis addresses this gap in the literature by analysing the way in which the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. The methodological approach to this thesis is laid out in this chapter, focussing on the reasoning behind the theoretical approach, research methods and the selection of sources.

Theoretical Approach

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the theoretical basis for this research is rooted in Benedict Anderson's 'imagined community'. Anderson's constructivist understanding of a nation as "*an imagined political community*" or, to put it succinctly, as a social construct, is the theoretical bedrock of this research (Anderson, 1983, p. 6). This constructivist understanding therefore holds that nations and national identities are constructed by actors within a given society: van Meurs et al. summarise this concept by arguing that "*the perception and framing of political reality by leaders and opinion makers, is therefore crucial*" (van Meurs, et al., 2018, p. 242). Furthermore, this emphasises the need to examine the construction of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity from the perspective of these two groups in society, the political "*leaders*" and "*opinion makers*", therefore informing the decision taken to analyse the two groups of actors in this study: the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media (van Meurs, et al., 2018, p. 242). Furthermore, Smith's discussion of the importance of the "*new systems of mass communications*", particularly as a new formulation of Anderson's 'print capitalism', has informed the decision to focus on online sources in the analysis of the pro-independence media in Scotland (Smith, 1995, p. 17).

Michael Bruter's distinction between the 'civic' and 'cultural' aspects of European identity forms the theoretical basis for addressing the question of '*How has a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity been promoted in Scotland since 2007?*'. Bruter discerns between a 'civic' European identity, based upon institutions, and a 'cultural' European identity, based

upon “*European shared culture, values, and heritage*” (Bruter, 2005, pp. 11, 102). By utilising these two constructions of European identity, this study shall be able to determine the extent to which the two actors construct a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity based on either a connection to the EU or to a common European heritage and culture. Indeed, such a theoretical grounding also recalls Keating’s argument that a national “*movement may contain both civic and ethnic elements ... in its doctrine*” (Keating, 2001, p. 8). As the theoretical approach has now been established, the methods through which this research is conducted shall now be elaborated upon.

Research Design & Methods

In this section, the research design, including the time period and actors to be analysed, will first be explained before elaborating upon the research methods employed during the research process. In order to answer the research question, the time period, 2007-2018, has been selected as this corresponds to the period in which the nationalist, pro-EU SNP have been in government in Scotland. This period has been characterised by an increased focus on the EU and European identity in Scotland, particularly in regards to the 2014 Scottish independence and 2016 Brexit referendums. What is more, two principal groups of actors are analysed: the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media. This enables an in-depth analysis of the two groups of actors which operate as “*leaders*” and “*opinion makers*” in society, thereby allowing for a deeper understanding of the way in which two important groups of actors construct and promote a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity (van Meurs, et al., 2018, p. 242). As both ‘actors’ actually encompass relatively broad groups, it is prudent to clarify which specific ‘actors’ are being analysed.

In researching the SNP in their capacity as the Scottish Government, principal focus has been paid specifically to the First Minister, the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism, and External Affairs¹² in addition to the Scottish Government’s social media presence (Facebook and Twitter). These actors have been selected as they specifically focus on issues regarding the EU and culture. The pro-independence online Scottish media has been selected as online media is recognised as an “*effective tool for political activism*” (David, 2016). Indeed, as Sebastián Valenzuela argued, the question is not “*whether*” online media influences political activities

¹² This office also includes the responsibility for Scottish Government-EU relations.

but “*how and under what conditions*” (Valenzuela, 2013, p. 921). The selection of which pro-independence online Scottish media outlets to include was initially based upon Buchanan’s analysis hence the inclusion of the two websites Buchanan identified, *Wings Over Scotland* and *Bella Caledonia*, for inclusion in the research for this thesis (Buchanan, 2016, pp. 71, 75). In addition to these two websites, the further review of social media also led to the inclusion of the website *Evil Dr. Aye* as its web-comics are very frequently posted to the Scotland subreddit on the website *Reddit*¹³. This online media is the epitome of Smith’s “*social and political groups*” which have created their “*own dense social and cultural networks*” by means of “*new systems of mass communications*” (Smith, 1995, p. 17). As the pro-independence online Scottish media has received only minimal academic attention, this thesis, therefore, represents the opportunity to analyse this new form of Anderson’s ‘print capitalism’ within the Scottish context thus filling an existing gap within the academic literature.

Whereas with traditional media, such as newspapers, it is more simple to establish media outlets with a large readership, it can be more complex when dealing with sources with a purely online presence as it can be difficult to either establish the readership of a website or the origin of the traffic to this website. Furthermore, if a media outlet only receives a handful of views a day, it is prudent to question whether it is noteworthy enough to be considered. To address this issue, the selection of sources has taken into consideration the online impact of these media outlets, particularly their popularity over various social media platforms. To this end, an online media outlet was only considered for inclusion and study if it had a minimum of 1,000 ‘likes’ or ‘followers’ respectively on either Facebook or Twitter: the three aforementioned media outlets met these criteria for inclusion.

Furthermore, with online sources it is important to consider their audience. Conventional wisdom would dictate that online sources favour younger audiences but Buchanan disputes this in the Scottish case, arguing that “*their comprehensive use by those in older demographics has grown steadily*” (Buchanan, 2016, p. 77). Scottish Government data shows that, in 2016, 82% of households had access to the internet and that 84% of adults living in Scotland used the internet for work or personal use (Scottish Government, 2017, p. 119). The only age bracket without a majority of internet users consists of those aged 75 or above, of whom only 33% are

¹³ Reddit is a social media website organised into specialised forums, called subreddits, to which users can subscribe. The Scotland subreddit has in excess of 62,774 subscribers as of January 3rd 2019.

active internet users (Scottish Government, 2017, p. 127). Those aged 75 or above represent approximately 8% of the Scottish population per the latest figures (National Records of Scotland, 2018, p. 2). As such, while there are demonstrably many older people active online in Scotland, it is difficult to determine which media outlets they primarily access. As this thesis is not focussed on the issue of media consumption and age in Scotland, this is a gap in the academic literature that ought to be addressed by a future study.

As this research is interested in how the pro-EU, European Scottish national identity is promoted, a qualitative research method is most appropriate. Qualitative studies allow for a deeper focus on words and ideas wherein the “*stress is on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants*” (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). The research method of discourse analysis, noted by van Meurs et al. as one of the “*typical tools of constructivist research*”, is the principal method employed in this thesis (van Meurs, et al., 2018, p. 242). Discourse analysis was formulated by Michel Foucault who focussed upon “*the power*” of discourse “*to say something other than what it actually says*” thus linking the symbolic signifier, whether a written phrase or symbol, to the signified concept, the meaning or concept which is indicated by the signifier (Foucault, 1967, p. 134). Discourse analysis, therefore, seeks to unveil the power and concepts behind words and symbols. In this way, discourse analysis seeks to understand the deeper meanings which are signified by the statements or symbols employed by actors in society.

Within the context of this research, the method of critical discourse analysis shall be employed to analyse the way in which the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity by utilising language and symbols to construct this identity. Due to the constructivist nature of critical discourse analysis, which places an “*emphasis*” on “*the versions of reality*” promoted by social actors, it is a method by which one can develop further insight into and analyse the constructed national identities which these groups of actors seek to promote (Bryman, 2012, p. 529). By using critical discourse analysis, one can analyse the way in which discourse is “*socially constitutive as well as socially shaped*”, how discourse forms and is shaped by ideas, events, and social structures (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). Critical discourse analysis is therefore an appropriate method for studying issues of identity as identity “*comes into being as a result of being verbalized, as a discursive hinge between the developing, changing subject and its diverse changing experiences*” (Leerssen, 2007, p. 339). Furthermore, semiotics will also play

a role when considering how this identity is formed through the use of symbols, particularly symbols used to represent the idea of a nation including national animals, languages, national days, and flags. Semiotics is complementary to discourse analysis as it also seeks to analyse the deeper meaning behind the signifiers (Bryman, 2012, p. 559). In this regard, semiotics is a prudent research method as it allows for the researcher to analyse the deeper intrinsic meaning behind the symbols which are employed by the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media (Jourdan, 2007, p. 435).

As the theoretical and methodological foundations for this thesis have now been established, it is necessary to comment upon the way in which the primary sources have been selected.

Selection of Sources

The selection of sources for the thesis is of vital importance and, therefore, it is prudent to explain the reasoning and justification behind the selection of the sources related to these two groups of actors.

Scottish Government sources were limited to the actors mentioned in the above section in addition to SNP manifestos for Scottish Parliamentary elections, as they, in principle, represent the intentions and beliefs of the party which is now in government. The access to Scottish Government material is relatively simple as the Scottish Government maintains both a detailed website and an active presence on most social media platforms. It is therefore straightforward to find materials published by the Scottish Government related to Europe and the EU via the search function on their website. In terms of selecting the sources, keywords such as ‘Europe’, ‘EU’, and ‘Brexit’ were employed. In addition to this, the Scottish Government website maintains a specialised topic page on Brexit which provides for easier access to 79 Governmental publications related to Brexit and Scotland’s relations with the EU. This number includes two of the key sources analysed: “*Scotland: A European Nation*” and First Minister Nicola Sturgeon’s speech the day after the 2016 Brexit referendum. The Scottish Government’s social media presence, while easily accessible, prove more difficult to search through. Facebook’s search function, in particular, is not conducive to the same degree of structured searching and required more intensive manual searching. Although the Scottish Government’s social media did reveal some important primary source material, particularly relating to Europe

Day, the vast majority of source material was not relevant to the topic as the Scottish Government publishes on a wide variety of topics related to their activities. What is more, past SNP political manifestos were not openly advertised on the SNP website but are, fortunately, archived on other websites thus allowing their inclusion.

The selection of pro-independence online media sources follows the method outlined above, ensuring that all outlets analysed had a sufficiently broad readership to be considered. Although this pro-independence media is principally online, thus ensuring that the collection of data is relatively straightforward, it presents other challenges for this research. Anthony Smith's hypothesis regarding the "new systems of mass communications" did not fully account for the reality of how different these new systems would become (Smith, 1995, p. 17). Indeed, Gerry Hassan notes that the "traditional models" of the Scottish "public sphere" are transforming, the media included (Hassan, 2014, p. 205). As such, it became apparent over the course of data collection that the function of the aforementioned websites resulted in varying degrees of results in regards to the volume of primary sources related to the research question. While *Bella Caledonia* and *Evil Dr. Aye*, online magazine and web comic websites respectively, offered numerous potential primary sources for inclusion, *Wings Over Scotland*, which operates more as a fact checking website against perceived inaccuracies in the Scottish and British media, did not (Buchanan, 2016, p. 76). *Bella Caledonia's* website has content tags which highlight certain articles on certain topics, allowing for the swift collection and review of a relatively large number of primary sources, in the form of articles, related to identity (193), Europe and the EU (89), and Brexit (166). *Evil Dr. Aye* also has tags related to the characters featured in the web-comics, such as the 'Naughty Unicorn', but a more intensive review of the 200 web-comics on the website was required due to the reliance on semiotics to analyse the content of the web-comics. Hence, the analytical chapter on the pro-independence online Scottish media analyses only primary sources from *Bella Caledonia* and *Evil Dr. Aye*.

Finally, regarding the language of sources, it is important to consider the limitations of the researcher in the selection of sources. In the context of Scotland, the vast majority of primary and secondary sources are in the English language. A developing trend amongst the pro-independence online media has seen the increasing inclusion of Scottish language sources:

sources in either the Scots or Gaelic languages¹⁴. *Bella Caledonia*, in particular, has dedicated Gaelic and Scots language sections but they do not represent a large percentage of their total article corpus: Gaelic and Scots sources together represent approximately 2.5% of *Bella Caledonia*'s total article library over the last ten years¹⁵. *Bella Caledonia* is the only analysed source which extensively includes Scots and Gaelic language sources, notwithstanding short phrases or words, as most sources, including the Scottish Government, principally publish in English. Due to the cultural and educational background of the author, only the Scots language sources shall be considered in conjunction with the English language sources.

This chapter has, therefore, laid out the theoretical and methodological basis for this thesis and has justified the selection of sources to be utilised for this piece of research. In the following chapter, the way in which the Scottish Government has promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity shall be analysed.

¹⁴ Scots and Gaelic are two unrelated languages. While Scots is a West Germanic language, Gaelic is a Celtic language. For a more extensive background on the linguistic heritage of Scotland, see (Chhim & Bélanger, 2017), (Kay, 2006) .

¹⁵ There are approximately 120 Scots and Gaelic language articles out of approximately 5000 total articles.

Chapter 4: The Scottish Government and European Scottish National Identity

Following the framework laid out in the previous chapter, this chapter analyses how a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity has been promoted in Scotland between 2007 and 2018 by the Scottish Government. It analyses the way in which the SNP, in their capacity as the Scottish Government, have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity by utilising Bruter's distinction between 'civic' and 'cultural' European identities (Bruter, 2005, pp. 11-13). Prior to delving into the analysis, it is prudent to provide some context to the SNP and their time in government.

Approximately three centuries after the dissolution and adjournment of the Scottish Parliament as a result of the Act of Union in 1707, the Scottish Parliament was reconvened in Edinburgh on May 12th 1999 following the second Scottish devolution referendum in 1997 (Magnusson, 2000, p. 692). The SNP entered into government in Scotland for the first time in 2007, forming a minority government (Hassan, 2017, p. 352). The SNP have remained in their role as the Scottish Government since by subsequently winning an outright majority in the 2011 Scottish Parliamentary elections and forming another minority government after the 2016 elections. The SNP's approach towards the European Communities and later the EU has changed over time, from a more eurosceptic position in the 1970s to an increasingly pro-European position since the late 1980s characterised by the "*Independence in Europe*" policy position (Lynch, 1992, p. 449) (Geddes, 2013, p. 213). This profound change in SNP policy on Europe, from opposing UK membership in the 1975 European Communities referendum to supporting EU membership for an independent Scotland, can still be observed in the period analysed in this thesis (Keating, 2017, p. 305). The SNP campaigned in favour of EU membership for an independent Scotland in the 2014 Scottish Independence referendum campaign and subsequently campaigned in favour of Scotland, and the UK as a whole, remaining a member of the EU in the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign. This chapter focusses on the Scottish Government's promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity during their ongoing period in government. Although the primary focus in this chapter is on the period since the 2016 Brexit referendum, the earlier period shall first be analysed.

The Scottish Government and European Scottish Identity Prior to the Brexit Referendum

In the period analysed prior to the Brexit referendum, between the SNP forming a minority government in 2007 and the referendum itself, allusions to a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity by the Scottish Government are conspicuous by their absence. The majority of the Scottish Government's discourse on Europe is focussed on the EU and its policies, either in terms of contemporary Scottish Government engagement or their proposed engagement with the EU after independence. The SNP's manifesto for the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2011 exclusively focusses on Scottish engagement with EU policies, such as the welcoming of the EU's "*1+2 language model*" for modern language learning in schools or calls for "*radical reform*" of the Common Fisheries Policy, with no overt attention paid to European identity (Scottish National Party, 2011, pp. 24, 39). Furthermore, the Scottish Government's 2013 white paper "*Scotland's Future*", which laid out their vision for an independent Scottish state, discusses the EU at length but exclusively in regards to the importance of EU membership for a prospective independent Scotland (Scottish Government, 2013). Indeed, in this period before the 2016 Brexit referendum, European identity is not at the forefront of the Scottish Government's discourse. This might be explained by the focus on the issue of independence, which became increasingly achievable after the 2011 Scottish Parliamentary elections and the 2012 Edinburgh Agreement¹⁶.

This lesser focus on European identity did not radically change after the 2014 Scottish independence referendum and, even in the period immediately prior to the 2016 Brexit referendum, overt references to European identity are relatively scant. For instance, in their manifesto for the Scottish Parliamentary elections which took place seven weeks prior to the Brexit referendum, the SNP asserted that "*Scotland's place in Europe matters to us as a nation and being part of a wider European family of nations has brought us benefits*" (Scottish National Party, 2016, p. 41). This highlights the previously implicit relationship between the EU and European Scottish national identity as perceived by the Scottish Government. In this argument that Europe and European identity are of great importance to Scotland, the Scottish

¹⁶ The Edinburgh Agreement was the political agreement between the Scottish and British Governments regarding the "*framework and principles of the [2014 Scottish] independence referendum*" (Hassan, 2017, p.357).

Government directly relates this European Scottish national identity to the EU, employing both ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity. However, the ‘cultural’ aspect, particularly in regards to locating Scotland in Europe based on familial ties, is utilised in order to further justify the ‘civic’ European identity and the aforementioned “*benefits*” of the EU which the Scottish Government was primarily focussed on in this period (Scottish National Party, 2016, p. 41).

Therefore, in the period prior to the Brexit referendum, the European aspect of Scottish national identity was more implicitly than explicitly promoted by the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government’s primary focus was on the benefits of EU membership for Scotland, whether as part of the UK or as an independent state. Although this, as shall be demonstrated, is an ongoing aspect of the Scottish Government’s discourse on Europe, the promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity became increasingly apparent after the Brexit referendum.

The Immediate Aftermath of the Brexit Referendum

On June 24th 2016, the morning after the Brexit referendum, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon delivered a speech in Edinburgh in response to the outcome of the referendum and its political ramifications for Scotland in particular. Setting aside her comments related to the major political ramifications of the result, Sturgeon’s direct comments to the “*citizens of other EU countries living here in Scotland*” are particularly interesting in regards to the promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity (Sturgeon, First Minister - EU Referendum result, 2016). Sturgeon asserted to these citizens of other EU states that “*you remain welcome here, Scotland is your home and your contribution is valued*” (Sturgeon, 2016). Rather than perhaps directly tying the result into the institutions of the EU, Sturgeon draws the citizens into a shared sense of community and a shared sense of belonging to Scotland. This inclusive understanding of nationhood resonates with the concept of civic nationalism wherein nationhood is understood “*in terms of citizenship and political participation*” rather than ethnic origin (Bekus, 2010, p. 28). This is a ‘civic’ identity wherein membership and belonging is not limited to those of a particular ethnic or national identity. This concept can be seen to be utilised by the Scottish Government when references are made to “*the people of Scotland*”, implying a broader, more inclusive conceptualisation of Scottish national identity: particularly as it relates

to European Scottish national identity (Scottish Government, 2016b, p. 16). This formulation of “*the people of Scotland*” is particularly striking when one compares Nicola Sturgeon’s discourse to that of British Prime Minister Theresa May. May speaks of “*the British people*”, a far less inclusive audience than that of Sturgeon, and that Britain is a country “*built on the bonds of family, community, citizenship*” (May, 2017) (May, 2016). While May’s discourse indicates that her intended audience are exclusively British citizens, therefore excluding citizens of other EU member states, Sturgeon does not make this distinction. Membership of “*the people of Scotland*” is thereby imagined as extending to all people living in Scotland regardless of national identity, citizenship, or ethnicity: the “*people of Scotland*” are not just those born in Scotland, but those who have chosen to live in Scotland. This is a key aspect of the way in which the Scottish Government have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity: it has been promoted as an inclusive identity which is based upon the ‘civic’ aspect of identity rather than purely on the more ethno-nationalist ‘cultural’ aspect found in the discourse of Theresa May.

What is more, the mise-en-scène of the room in which Nicola Sturgeon gave her speech plays a role in promoting a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. The placement of both a Scottish and European flag on either side of the lectern, as shown in figure 1 of the appendix, makes a clear statement of Scotland’s position vis-à-vis the EU. Flags, as one of the most recognisable symbols representing states and national identities, are often utilised to signal identification with and belonging to particular ideals and social groupings (Schatz & Lavine, 2007, p. 332). The European flag is widely utilised by EU institutions, appearing for instance on the Euro banknotes, and can also be utilised as a way to promote pro-EU ideals and a sense of European identity amongst the peoples of Europe: consider, for instance, the Euromaidan protestors of Ukraine who dually carried Ukrainian and European flags while seeking closer association with the EU (Theise, 2018). The placement of a European flag on an equal level with the Scottish flag plays the role of a signifier: it signifies the relationship between Scotland and the EU as an organisation, but it also signifies the European identity of Scotland. Rather than simply standing between Scottish saltires, Sturgeon signalled a duality that exists within Scotland encompassing both Scottish and European aspects to Scottish national identity. This recalls Hermann and Brewer’s conceptualisation of the “*nested*” or “*Matruska dolls*” wherein the two aspects of national identity are complementary and not mutually exclusive (Herrmann & Brewer, 2004, p. 4). The Scottish Government therefore promote the European and the

Scottish identities as two complementary aspects of a larger European Scottish national identity.

Furthermore, the placement of the European flag also signifies the EU and serves to reinforce Scotland's connection to the EU and its institutions, particularly in light of the results of the referendum which had resulted in a strong showing in Scotland in favour of remaining within the EU. While the European flag can signify certain European values, as discussed above within the context of Ukraine, it also directly signifies the EU itself and the connection that states and individuals have with the EU. As opposed to Bruter's 'cultural' conceptualisation of European identity, there is here a direct link to the EU, thus subtly signifying the importance of the EU to the European Scottish national identity. From this perspective, there is therefore a clear link to Bruter's 'civic' conceptualisation of European identity as the Scottish Government is promoting a European Scottish national identity rooted in the EU.

“Scotland: A European Nation”

On November 21st 2016, the Scottish Government published “*Scotland: A European Nation*”. This document blends the aforementioned 'civic' aspects of European Scottish national identity with an explicit focus on Scotland's 'cultural' European heritage, seeking to locate Scotland firmly within Europe, perhaps even implicitly locating Scotland more as part of Europe than the UK. To recall, Bruter's 'cultural' conceptualisation refers to “*European shared culture, values, and heritage*” thus emphasising the historical cultural aspects of national identity (Bruter, 2005, p. 102). In this document, the Scottish Government emphasise several historical factors which have served to develop this 'cultural' European identity with a particular focus on migration, both from and to Scotland. There is reference to Scotland's European cultural heritage, such as the arrival of Christianity in Scotland from Ireland in the 6th century, and also a particular focus on shared values, with a focus on the Scottish Enlightenment¹⁷ and the

¹⁷ The Scottish Enlightenment has been described as “*extraordinary outburst of intellectual activity which took place in Scotland in the eighteenth century*” when Scotland achieved “*an international reputation for wide-ranging intellectual inquiry*” in fields such as philosophy, law, and medicine (Magnusson, 2000, p.641) (Devine, 2000, p.65).

influence of Scottish thinkers such as David Hume and Adam Smith¹⁸ (Scottish Government, 2016b, p. 9). Furthermore, there are concrete references made to specific historical cultural, strategic and business exchanges between Scotland and the rest of Europe: the Scottish Government specifically mentions the historical Scottish exchanges with Dutch universities¹⁹, Polish mercantile communities, and the historic ‘*Auld Alliance*’ with France²⁰ (Scottish Government, 2016b, p. 9). Taken at face value, we can see here that the European Scottish national identity is being promoted as a ‘cultural’ European identity by highlighting the distinct role that Scotland has played in European history and the common European culture, values, and heritage that Scotland shares with the rest of Europe.

If taken merely at face value, this document would appear to be promoting the contemporary European Scottish national identity as the result of historical factors and does not address the importance of the EU to this identity. Upon further analysis of the document, it becomes apparent that this ‘cultural’ conceptualisation of European identity is actually being utilised by the Scottish Government in order to facilitate the argument for a ‘civic’ European identity. Indeed, the Scottish Government categorically states that “*this outward-looking, European heritage continues to this day in our cultural, economic, intellectual and political engagements*” (Scottish Government, 2016b, p. 10). Taking the named example of Scottish participation in Dutch universities, the Scottish Government goes on to implicitly link this historical phenomenon to the contemporary EU policy of the Erasmus+ programme (Scottish Government, 2016b, p. 10). In this way, the Scottish Government is promoting a ‘civic’ pro-EU, European Scottish national identity which derives its foundations from the historical experiences of Scotland. This recalls the argument made by Keating that “[A]ny given movement may contain both civic and ethnic elements in its origins and use both types of appeal

¹⁸ Devine describes Hume, who inspired the work of Immanuel Kant, as “*the greatest philosopher in the English language*” while Smith is “*recognized as the major influence in the development of economics*” (Devine, 2000, p.65).

¹⁹ Devine notes that “*Scotland had always formed an integral part of the European community of scholars since medieval times*”, citing the fact that 18 rectors of the University of Paris prior to the Reformation “*were Scots*” (Devine, 2000, p.71).

²⁰ The *Auld Alliance* (Old Alliance) was an alliance between the Kingdoms of France and Scotland in the Middle Ages which still occupies a certain position within the Scottish historical and cultural memory (Lynch, 1992, p.117).

in its doctrine” (Keating, 2001, p. 8). In the Scottish case, however, the two conceptualisations of European identity are so closely intertwined so as to be, at times, indistinguishable. Rather than, as Keating suggests, utilising both conceptualisations separately, the Scottish Government’s discourse fuses the historical ‘cultural’ aspects with the ‘civic’. As such, the neat division between ‘cultural’ and ‘civic’ European identity is not always so clear-cut in the Scottish case.

What is more, near the end of the document there appears a graphic, as shown in figure 2 of the appendix, of the European flag superimposed over a map of Western Europe wherein Scotland represents one of the twelve yellow stars. The symbolic importance of the European flag has already been discussed in this chapter, but this graphic is particularly interesting and thus warrants further analysis. As mentioned previously, the European flag is a signifier which signifies the EU and particular European values. In this graphic, however, it also serves to differentiate Scotland from the rest of the UK and therefore to further promote the idea of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. From a constructivist perspective, this suggests an attempt to distinguish Scotland and Scotland’s identity from the rest of the UK by explicitly linking Scotland to the EU and to this broader ‘civic’ European identity. As questions regarding motive behind such decisions are outwith the remit of this thesis, further analysis shall be left to future researchers, but this graphic quite starkly comments on how the relationship between Scottish and European national identity is being conceptualised by the Scottish Government. If we were to return to Hermann and Brewer’s “*Matruska dolls*” metaphor, the suggestion here would be that the Scottish Matruska doll would be nested within a European or EU Matruska doll, crucially without the involvement of a British Matruska doll (Herrmann & Brewer, 2004, p. 4).

In “*Scotland: A European Nation*”, the Scottish Government has sought to promote a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity by utilising both the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ aspects of identity. Moreover, Scotland’s ‘cultural’ European identity is used as the foundations to construct a ‘civic’ pro-EU, European Scottish national identity to the point at which the division between the two conceptualisations is hardly discernable. This grounding of “*policy within a discourse of belonging*” by employing more aspects of ‘cultural’ identity was identified by Leith and Soule in reference to the SNP’s approach to Scottish national identity (Leith & Soule, 2012, p. 153). It is interesting, therefore, to notice that the SNP is extending

this pre-existing approach to national identity to their promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity.

Europe Day

Linda Fuller noted that “*national days encourage ... image making*” and constitute what Eric Hobsbawm referred to as “*invented traditions*” (Fuller, 2004, p. 3) (Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 1). National Days are an infrequent but active form of identity construction, as opposed to some more commonplace or “*background*” symbols such as flags, which are actively celebrated and thus, according to Michael Geisler, “*cannot be entirely ‘overlooked’*” by the citizens (Hayday & Blake, 2016, p. 5) (Geisler, 2009, p. 17). In Scotland there have been, traditionally, three national days: Burns’ Night, St. Andrew’s Day, and Hogmanay²¹. The relevance and importance of these days is of both academic and political discussion, with the fusion of “*culture and politics*” reflecting a “*nation-building strategy which has constitutional and party political overtones*” (McCrone, 2009, p. 38). In 2018, the Scottish Government marked a further national day: Europe Day²², a curious development considering it has been commemorated by the EU since 1985 (Manners, 2011, p. 257). In its Facebook post on Europe Day, the Scottish Government utilises the hashtag ‘*#ThankEU*’ in order to focus on the EU specifically. Furthermore, the Scottish Government uses several graphics in order to highlight the benefits of the EU for Scotland, particularly socially (Scottish Government, 2018). Although ostensibly an EU national day, the Scottish Government has utilised the dramatic landscape of *An Stòrr* on the Isle of Skye, as shown in figure 3 of the appendix, contextualising and locating this European national day within a more recognisable part of Scotland. Landscapes may also serve as important symbols of national identity: Alasdair Gray writes that “*landscape is what defines the most lasting nations*” (Gray, 1997, p. 1). Rather than a less

²¹ Burns’ Night (January 25th) celebrates Robert “Rabbie” Burns, the National Makar (Poet) of Scotland; St. Andrew’s Day (November 30th) celebrates St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland; Hogmanay (December 31st) is the tradition Scottish celebration of the last day of the year which includes the singing of Burns’ *Auld Lang Syne*, the Scots language poem which has also become widely adopted outwith Scotland.

²² Europe Day is celebrated on May 8th in order to commemorate the Schuman declaration and its role in establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, the forerunner to the EU (Manners, 2011, p. 257).

familiar image of the city of Brussels or of an EU institution building, *An Stòrr* is a more recognisable Scottish landmark thus the Scottish Government lends ‘cultural’ legitimacy to the development of a ‘civic’ European Scottish national identity. Once again, the divisions between ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity become difficult to discern as they are so closely linked together by the Scottish Government.

In the Europe Day graphics, much as in “*Scotland: A European Nation*”, the Scottish Government ties this European Scottish national identity to several important EU policies, such as Erasmus+, thus reinforcing this ‘civic’ conceptualisation of European identity. Rather than focussing on a common cultural heritage, the implicit message is focussed on the contemporary social and economic impact of the EU on Scotland. In this way, the European Scottish national identity is promoted as being more dynamic as it is evolving through the continued interaction between the existing Scottish population and other EU nationals in Scotland. Indeed, this interaction is underscored by the graphic on marriages in Scotland, as shown in figure 4 of the appendix, which welcomingly notes that there is an increasing number of international marriages taking place in Scotland. This demonstrates the Scottish Government’s support for and celebration of the formation of new international families in Scotland, consisting of both Scottish and European identities. This underscores the inclusivity of the “*people of Scotland*” as a community living in Scotland, consisting of multiple ethnicities, nationalities, and identities. Compare this with the discourse of the British Government: Theresa May’s derision of “*citizens of nowhere*”, an overtly ethno-nationalist statement which excludes those with “*multiple nationalities, or identities*” in favour of, presumably, “*the British people*” (May, 2016) (Bearak, 2016, para. 3). Indeed, the Scottish Government’s outward support for this fusion of families, and therefore of identities, is a profoundly powerful message. This civic nationalist understanding of a nation, summarised by Bekus as “*nationhood in terms of citizenship and political participation*” (Bekus, 2010, p. 28), in the context of Scotland contrasts with Marx’s more exclusionary understanding of the nation, which is more akin to May’s understanding of “*the British people*”. The Scottish Government here promote an inclusive European Scottish national identity and even celebrate the expansion of new international families by welcoming them into the broader understanding of the “*people of Scotland*”.

Matthew Hayday and Raymond Blake argue that national days reveal the “*who, the what, the why, and the how related to the construction [and] portrayal*” of national identities (Hayday &

Blake, 2016, p. 5). The Scottish Government's approach to Europe Day reveals how they conceive of and promote a European Scottish national identity. It reveals that it is a 'civic' identity which is rooted in the EU, its institutions, and its policies which allow for the mingling of people from both Scotland and other EU countries. The Scottish Government strongly promote the development of this 'civic' identity rooted in the EU, but we can still perceive aspects of 'cultural' identity within this discourse thus signifying the connection between the European and the Scottish aspects of this identity. Indeed, these conceptualisations are oftentimes so intertwined within the Scottish Government's discourse so as to be difficult to separate. The Scottish Government's approach to Europe Day therefore reveals the deeper conceptualisation of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity but it is quite curious that 2018 was the first year in which the Scottish Government widely promoted Europe Day on social media. It remains to be seen, therefore, if Europe Day will continue to be promoted by the Scottish Government in years to come as one of the national days of Scotland: this might indicate the depth of commitment to the promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity in the post-Brexit era.

Preliminary Conclusions

The Scottish Government, therefore, have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity which, to an extent, fuses the 'civic' and 'cultural' conceptualisations of European identity. While Keating asserted that "[A]ny given movement may contain both civic and ethnic elements in its origins and use both types of appeal in its doctrine" (Keating, 2001, p. 8), it is more nuanced than this in the case of the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government promote 'cultural' aspects of European Scottish national identity in order to root the 'civic' identity within the broader 'cultural' historical experiences of Scotland. What is more, the EU plays a central role in the Scottish Government's promotion of European Scottish national identity through identification with EU symbols, such as the EU flag and Europe Day, and the values that they represent. Rather than code-switching between 'civic' and 'cultural' conceptualisations, the Scottish Government discourse often blends the two together. This close connection between 'civic' and 'cultural' conceptualisations of national identity in the Scottish context was identified by Leith and Soule who argued that the SNP promote both conceptualisations of national identity when promoting a Scottish national identity (Leith & Soule, 2012, pp. 152-153). It is perhaps therefore unsurprising that the Scottish Government

employ a similar approach when promoting a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. The following chapter analyses the pro-independence online Scottish media to determine whether their promotion of European identity differs from that of the Scottish Government.

Chapter 5: The Pro-Independence Online Scottish Media and European Scottish National Identity

Turning now from the Scottish Government to the pro-independence online Scottish media, the role of this new form of media in the promoting a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity will now be analysed. Indeed, Yury Ershov comments that “[R]apid changes in communication technologies during recent decades have sharpened the question of mass media’s role in shaping and maintaining national identity” (Ershov, 2015, p. 206). As noted above, this thesis fills an existing gap in the academic literature by analysing how this new form of media promotes European identity in Scotland. This chapter analyses the way in which the pro-independence online Scottish media outlets *Bella Caledonia* and *Evil Dr. Aye* have promoted a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity in Scotland since 2007.

Bella Caledonia

Buchanan identified the prevalent use of the image of *Bella Caledonia*²³ on social media during the 2014 Scottish independence referendum campaign and also the pro-independence online Scottish media outlet of the same name which had been in operation since 2007 (Buchanan, 2016, p. 71) (*Bella Caledonia*, n.d.). As *Bella Caledonia* operates in the format of an online magazine, it publishes on a variety of topics related to Scotland from various authors derived from diverse backgrounds including academia, politics, and the arts. This section examines three articles from *Bella Caledonia* in order to analyse how a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity is promoted.

At the surface, Neal Ascherson’s “*Scotland Continental*” promotes a European Scottish national identity firmly within the ‘cultural’ conceptualisation. Ascherson focusses almost exclusively on the historical cultural exchanges between Scotland and continental Europe by highlighting the extent to which Scottish literary works such as ‘*Ossian*’ were enjoyed as far

²³ *Bella Caledonia* is a character from Alasdair Gray’s 1992 novel, *Poor Things*. Her image in portrait “recalls the *Mona Lisa*, but the landscape in front of which she stands is recognisably Scottish, containing mountains and the Forth Rail Bridge” (Stirling, 2008, p.23). *Bella Caledonia*, the character, was intended “as a female personification of the Scottish nation, in the same tradition as *Britannia* or *France’s Marianne*” (Stirling, 2010, para. 1).

afield as the Russian Empire (Ascherson, 2016, para. 12). Ascherson also comments on European migration to Scotland, with a particular focus on the approximately 20,000 Polish soldiers stationed in Scotland at the end of the Second World War, linking this to the contemporary EU migration to Scotland, resulting in the Polish language being the third most spoken language in Scotland²⁴ (Dietkow, 2011, p. 186) (Ascherson, 2016, para. 13). While Ascherson describes European identity as “*shallow-rooted*”, insofar as there is a lack of public awareness, he contrasts this point by arguing that, due to Brexit, there are many “*Scots applying for Polish passports, usually on the grounds of a Polish grandfather*” (Ascherson, 2016, para. 14). Ascherson’s latter point somewhat disproves the former: the historical cultural connections between Scotland and Poland, which has resulted in international marriages and many subsequent Scottish-Polish people, has helped foster a European Scottish national identity. This identity is so deeply felt and threatened by Brexit that these grandchildren are now connecting more deeply with their European identity by assuming another EU citizenship. This idea is compounded by Anthony Barnett who, in his article “*Where we go from here?*”, describes Brexit as losing “*your right to be European*” (Barnett, 2016, para. 4). This fused connection between the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity is clearly seen here: there is, on one level, a European identity rooted in the mingling of cultures and peoples but this is also deeply intertwined with connections to the EU and European citizenship. In this context, the loss of EU citizenship is equivalent to losing one’s European identity thus further emphasising the close links between the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity promoted by *Bella Caledonia*.

As noted in the methodology chapter, *Bella Caledonia* is one of the few media outlets in Scotland to publish in the Scots language. Ashley Douglas’ article “*Scots: Oor European Leid*”²⁵ makes the case for the European heritage of the Scots language. Douglas locates Scots within the linguistic paradigm of Germanic languages, identifying many words with common roots shared between Scots and languages such as Dutch and Frisian (Douglas, 2016, para. 1). Using the example of Scots, Douglas argues for the importance of language in “*expressin identity an affinity wi ithers*”²⁶ (Douglas, 2016, para. 2). This is interesting as it simultaneously implies the importance of language for the expression of (national) identity but also the

²⁴ Behind only English and Scots.

²⁵ “*Scots: Our European Language*”.

²⁶ “expressing identity and affinity with others”.

capacity for language to be used as an inclusive measure. Scots, for Douglas, is both an aspect of Scottish national heritage and part of Scotland's European heritage and identity. Herein we can see Bruter's cultural conceptualisation of European identity as Scots is presented as part of a "European shared culture ... and heritage" (Bruter, 2005, p. 102).

Indeed, Douglas echoes the discourse of the Scottish Government by identifying the historical links between Scotland and continental Europe in the fields of trade, education, religion and "freenship an faimily links"²⁷ (Douglas, 2016, para. 3). While not as explicit as "Scotland: A European Nation" and the Europe Day graphics, this can be understood as an allusion towards the more 'civic' conceptualisation of European Scottish national identity. As made explicit in "Scotland: A European Nation", many of the historical links between Scotland and continental Europe are reimagined through the policies of the EU thus underlying the importance of the EU and its institutions to European Scottish national identity. Douglas is less explicit in linking the EU itself to her arguments, approaching the topics more from a historical and cultural angle, but this reinforces the argument that, particularly in the Scottish case, it is difficult to fully differentiate between the civic and cultural conceptualisations of European identity.

The discourse of *Bella Caledonia*, although varied due to the diverse backgrounds of its authors, echoes the fusion of the 'civic' and 'cultural' conceptualisations of European Scottish national identity also perceived in the discourse of the Scottish Government. *Evil Dr. Aye* shall now be analysed to determine if that outlet also follows this pattern.

Evil Dr. Aye

As Buchanan noted, the aftermath of the 2014 Scottish independence referendum saw a flurry of popular political engagement and involvement resulting in many new online media outlets beginning to appear (Buchanan, 2016, pp. 80-81). One such media outlet is the online web-comic *Evil Dr. Aye*. Although this media outlet's political cartoons principally address more domestic Scottish political and social issues, such as LGBT rights, climate change, and the constitutional relationship with the UK, *Evil Dr. Aye* also promotes a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. This section analyses five of these web-comics utilising semiotics and Bruter's conceptualisations of European identity.

²⁷ "friendship and family links".

As discussed in the methodology chapter, symbols are integral to semiotics and, as comics are a visual medium, symbols are a key way in which *Evil Dr. Aye* conveys messages and ideas related to a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. The ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ is one of the most prominent characters, and symbols, used in this web-comic: the use of a unicorn as a symbol is deeply interesting as the unicorn is the national animal of Scotland despite the fact that it is, of course, a mythical beast²⁸. The ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ is utilised as a symbol to represent Scotland but, in contrast to the heraldic unicorn which is commonly depicted as being constrained by chains, the ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ has broken chains thus subtly indicating that the idea of Scotland which it represents is that of an independent Scotland. What is more, the ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ represents a civic nationalist conceptualisation of an inclusive Scottish identity. This inclusive civic identity is conveyed in several web-comics, such as those shown in figures 5 and 6 of the appendix, by portraying the ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ promoting the LGBT community and multi-culturalism, thus serving to promote an inclusive, Scottish identity (Barratt, 2017a) (Barratt, 2017b).

It must also be noted that although this ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ is a signifier for the concept of an independent, civic nationalist Scotland, A.P. Barratt stresses in several web comics that this political ideology and conceptualisation of Scottish identity do not stem from an anti-English sentiment. Rather, in the web-comic “*Friendship*”, as shown in figure 7 of the appendix, the ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ is shown to be “*good friends*” with a lion, the national animal of England, despite the mythological animosity between the two beasts (Barratt, 2017d) (O’Neill, 2015, para. 3). This further hinders assertions by some academics, such as Delanty, that Scottish civic nationalism and “*pro-European inclinations ... can be attributed to hostility to English nationalism*” (Delanty, 2018, p. 198). The ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’, while rooted in an historic conceptualisation of Scottish nationhood, symbolises a particular civic nationalist conceptualisation of Scottish national identity which, as shall be demonstrated in the subsequent analysis, is connected to Scotland’s European identity. Hence, the use of the

²⁸ The unicorn has been utilised by Scottish royalty and has been the national animal of Scotland since approximately the 12th century. Unicorns represented “*the idea of nobility and purity*” but were also “*believed to be the natural enemy of the lion – a symbol that the English royals adopted around a hundred years before*” (O’Neill, 2015, paras. 3, 7). In contemporary Scotland, unicorns can be found principally in heraldry and in the architecture of historic buildings.

unicorn is a further example of the rooting of a ‘civic’ conceptualisation of identity within the symbolism of a ‘cultural’ conceptualisation of identity.

The web-comic “*What a Naughty EUicorn!*”, as shown in figure 8 of the appendix, places the ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ against the backdrop of the European flag (Barratt, 2018). The placement of this unicorn, symbolic of a civic nationalist conceptualisation of Scottish national identity, within the European flag therefore indicates that compatibility of the EU with this Scottish identity and suggests the importance of the EU to this Scottish identity. This is further emphasised by the caption which denotes the unicorn as a “*EUicorn*”: the portmanteau of unicorn and EU heavily implies that the EU is an integral part of this European Scottish national identity. The underlying symbolism of this web-comic suggests that the unicorn is content and at home within this European identity, thus there is no conflict between these two national symbols. Rather the Scottish unicorn and the EU flag are presented as complementary symbols of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity. The placement of a symbol representing Scottish identity within a symbol representing European identity further recalls the concept of nested identities, the “*Matruska*” dolls (Herrmann & Brewer, 2004, p. 4). This nesting within an EU symbol further emphasises the civic conceptualisation of European identity. The choice of the EU flag to represent the European identity demonstrates that the EU is an intrinsic part of this European Scottish national identity. Much like the Scottish Government, *Evil Dr. Aye* utilises ‘cultural’ symbols, in this case the unicorn, to locate and root this ‘civic’ conceptualisation of European Scottish national identity. Fundamentally, it is difficult to separate the cultural and civic aspects from one another. Rechristening the unicorn as an “*EUicorn*” demonstrates that the EU and this ‘civic’ conceptualisation of European identity is an intrinsic, fundamental part of Scottish European identity in the same way as the historical, ‘cultural’ national identity rooted in the symbolism of the unicorn.

Unlike the Scottish Government, *Evil Dr. Aye* connects this European Scottish national identity, based upon a ‘civic’ conceptualisation of European identity, to the independence movement of another European stateless nation²⁹, Catalonia. Shortly after the announcement of the independence referendum to be held in Catalonia on October 1st 2017, the web-comic

²⁹ The term ‘stateless nation’ is, in principle, a politically neutral term to denote a nation or a “*people who have lost or never acquired their sovereignty*” (Bodlore-Penlaez, 2011, p.6). The term itself was initially formulated in the context of the Scottish case (Lereuz, 1983).

“*Naughty Creatures*”, as shown in figure 9 of the appendix, was published. In this comic, the ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’ accompanies its Catalan counterpart, as represented by a Catalan donkey³⁰ (Barratt, 2017c). The placement of these two animals, symbolising two European nations, together as friends underscores the connection between this Scottish identity with other European national identities thus reflecting the notion put forward by the Scottish Government of Scotland being a part of a “*wider European family of nations*” (Scottish National Party, 2016, p. 41). The close friendship, indeed almost familial, relationship between the unicorn and the donkey underscores this concept of Scotland as part of the ‘family’ of European nations.

As noted above, this unicorn represents a civic nationalist conceptualisation of European Scottish national identity and the Catalan donkey, by extension, represents the Catalan counterpart to this identity. Although the connection between the unicorn and the donkey is on the level of the ideals of civic nationalism, as they are not necessarily connected by a shared Catalan-Scottish history or culture, this should be understood as a manifestation of the cultural conceptualisation of European identity. Recalling Bruter’s definition, cultural European identity consists of “*European shared culture, values, and heritage*” (Bruter, 2005, p. 102). In this regard, we can see that the unicorn does not always simply represent one conceptualisation of European identity. Indeed, while the web-comic “*What a Naughty EU Unicorn!*” fuses the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisation, “*Naughty Creatures*” is more representative of the ‘cultural’ conceptualisation of European identity.

Although somewhat conspicuous by its absence in “*Naughty Creatures*” web-comic, Barratt ties the role of the EU into this European Scottish identity in an earlier blog post. In “*La Saltire Estelada*”, Barratt proposes a hybrid Scottish-Catalan-EU flag, as shown in figure 10 of the appendix, which acknowledges the Scottish “*friendship*” with Catalonia as well as the Scottish “*wish*” for independence and EU membership (Barratt, 2016). This fusion of national symbols compounds this familial relationship with Catalonia but also puts the EU at the heart of this shared European Scottish national identity. The inclusion of an EU star underlines the

³⁰ Although an historic breed, the use of the Catalan donkey, ‘*ruc català*’, as a national symbol is a relatively new phenomenon which originated in 2003 as a “*counter-symbol*” against the Spanish Osborne bull (Humblebæk, 2010, pp. 193-194).

connection between the EU and this European Scottish national identity as it reveals the extent to which the EU is now a fundamental aspect of this identity.

Herein one can perceive the extent to which the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity are intertwined in the Scottish case. The unicorn is, at once, a symbol of both the historic nationhood of Scotland but also symbolic of the contemporary ‘civic’ pro-EU European Scottish identity promoted by the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media. In the case of Scotland, it is difficult to differentiate between the ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity as they are so inter-connected.

Preliminary Conclusions

As in the case of the Scottish Government, it is not simple to neatly categorise the pro-independence online Scottish media’s promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity as either ‘civic’ or ‘cultural’. Indeed, as Keating suggested, we can see the utilisation of both ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ conceptualisations of European identity at different points and in different circumstances. Moreover, it is oftentimes difficult to delineate between the two conceptualisations as they are so inextricably linked. The ‘*Naughty Unicorn*’, for instance, is a prime example of symbol which is steeped in cultural, historical meaning but which is actively engaged in the promotion of a civic European identity which is perhaps best represented by the “*EUnicorn*” web-comic. In the final chapter, the conclusions of this thesis will be outlined.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Within the academic literature on European identity, one may easily discern between the ‘civic’ and the ‘cultural’. They are neat divisions with which one may analyse and categorise political movements and discourse on European identity. In the Scottish case, these divisions are much more difficult to discern. Both the Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media employ aspects of ‘civic’ and ‘cultural’ European identity, as suggested by Keating, but they are very closely linked to one another to the point that they are fused into a singular conceptualisation. The ‘cultural’ historical experiences of Scottish students at Leiden University are, in the discourse of the Scottish Government, inextricably linked to the Erasmus+ programme. In the discourse of *Bella Caledonia*, European identity consists of both the historical experience of Poles in Scotland and their modern-day grandchildren’s sense of belonging to the EU by way of their newfound Polish citizenship. The Scottish Government and the pro-independence online Scottish media have promoted the EU as an integral part of European Scottish national identity. While the EU has struggled with “*social legitimacy*” in recent years, Scotland provides an example wherein the national government and sections of the media have actively promoted the merits of the EU and its importance to the European Scottish national identity (Schweiger, 2017, p. 192). What is more, the pro-EU European Scottish national identity promoted in Scotland is an inclusive identity rooted in the ideals of civic nationalism. The Scottish Government’s celebration of international EU marriages, the very fusing of European nations, underscores this inclusive, civic nationalist conceptualisation of European Scottish national identity. Ultimately, the “*people of Scotland*”, whom Nicola Sturgeon oft addresses, are understood to be those who have chosen to live and love in Scotland.

This thesis, as with all academic works, has not exhausted the potential avenues of research into this topic. Indeed, this thesis has revealed potential new areas of academic research. While this thesis has answered the question of how a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity has been promoted in Scotland, it is also important to consider the effectiveness of this promotion. In short, is the political and media discourse on European identity reflected in Scottish society at large? Leith and Soule’s research revealed contrasts between the SNP and the “*masses*” regarding the ‘civic’ conceptualisation of Scottish national identity (Leith & Soule, 2012, pp. 152-153). Future research might investigate whether this is also the case in the context of European identity in Scotland.

Future academic research might also consider the question of why a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity has been promoted. Considering Keating's comment that the EU was "*not a defining feature*" for many years for the SNP, it may be the case that Brexit has made the issue of the EU and European identity more salient, politically and socially, than it was previously (Keating, 2017, p. 313). This explanation may be supported by the evidence put forward by this thesis which has demonstrated that there was an increase in the amount of discourse on European identity after the 2016 Brexit referendum. What is more, further academic research might address the notion that anti-English sentiment, or "*hostility to English nationalism*", is an important motivation behind "*Scottish civil nationalism*" (Delanty, 2018, p. 198). This argument oftentimes appears unsubstantiated, particularly considering Nicola Sturgeon's "*open invitation*" to those in England and the rest of the UK to "*come to Scotland and be part of building a modern, progressive, outward-looking, compassionate country*" (Sturgeon, 2017). Further academic research would be required to test these hypotheses regarding the motivations behind the Scottish Government's promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity in Scotland.

As Scotland will, presumably, be leaving the EU on March 29th 2019, the EU will be losing a relatively pro-EU country, based upon the 2016 Brexit referendum result and the findings of this thesis. The future relationship between Scotland and the EU remains unclear. For this broader imagined European community to persevere after Brexit, there must be engagement from both Scotland and the EU. Considering the increase in the promotion of a pro-EU, European Scottish national identity in Scotland after the 2016 Brexit referendum, it would appear likely that this will continue after Brexit. However, it remains somewhat unclear how engaged the EU will be with Scotland after Brexit. On November 8th 2018, it was reported that the EU planned to close its offices in Edinburgh after Brexit, with the High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini stating that the EU will conduct future relations via London (Campbell, 2018, paras. 3, 9). This real and symbolic severing of ties hardly bodes well for close future Scottish-EU relations.

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Appendix



*Figure 1 - First Minister Nicola Sturgeon Delivering Speech at Bute House, June 24th 2016
(Scottish Government, 2016a).*



Figure 2- Scotland as a Star of the European Flag (Scottish Government, 2016b, p. 17)



Figure 3 - Europe Day Graphic from the Scottish Government, May 9th 2018 (Scottish Government, 2018)

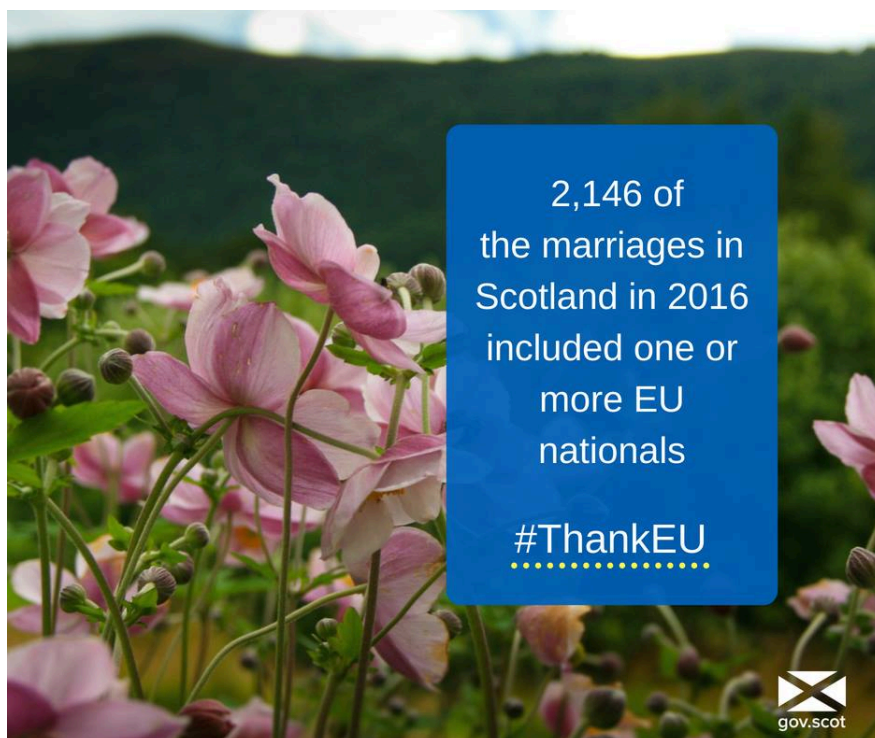


Figure 4- Europe Day Graphic from the Scottish Government, May 9th 2018 (Scottish Government, 2018)

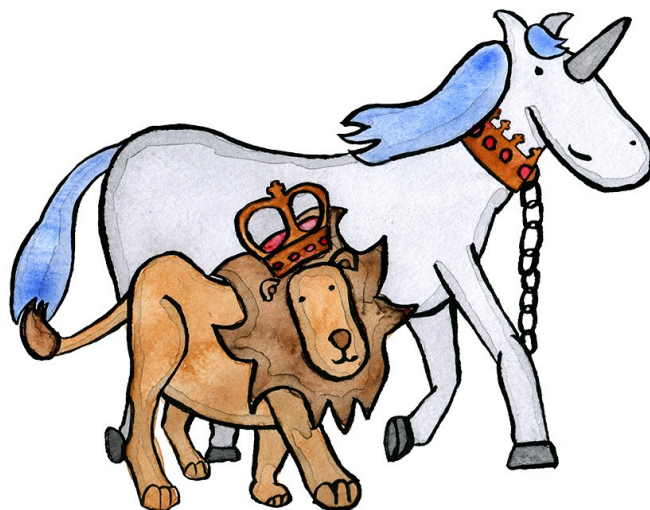


Figure 5 – 'Everyone', February 8th 2017 (Barratt, 2017a)



Figure 6 – 'Education', March 1st 2017 (Barratt, 2017b)

LOOK! THE UNICORN DOESN'T THINK
INDEPENDENCE ENDS FRIENDSHIP!



WHAT A NAUGHTY UNICORN!

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Figure 7 – 'Friendship'. November 24th 2017 (Barratt, 2017d)



WHAT A NAUGHTY EUNICORN!

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Figure 8- 'What a Naughty EUnicorn!', July 29th 2018 (Barratt, 2018)



QUINES CRIATURES TRAPELLES!
WHAT NAUGHTY CREATURES!

EvilDrEye.com

Figure 9 –Naughty Creatures!, September 11th 2017 (Barratt, 2017c)



Figure 10- La Saltire Estelada, July 5th 2016 (Barratt, 2016)