

“I’m not a nationalist but...”

On mobilisation and identity formation of the Scottish independence movement

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Abstract

This study examines the mobilisation and identity formation of the Scottish independence movement post-referendum. By analysing arguments, emotions and actions in support for independence, I aim to discuss how the movement make use of cultural perspectives on history for continuous mobilisation. The study focuses on the members of the umbrella organisation of *Yes Scotland*, which is a diverse network of activist and party-political groups. To understand the movement, I have made use of a political and active approach such as participating in meetings and at demonstrations. Importantly, while I acknowledge how the Scottish independence movement navigates within a discourse of nationalism because of its nationalist character, I argue that the movement mainly make use of an alternative ideology. This ideology is tied to historical narratives which are remade in present forms and take several expressions. For instance, I claim that this ideology generates the practice of international solidarity as well as a specific identity which is constructed and reproduced for one specific political project: to achieve Scottish independence. This thesis is a contribution to the study of social movements, as well as it provides understanding of reasoning beyond and within nationalism.

Keywords: Scottish independence movement, social movements, nationalism, identity, historicity and solidarity.

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	6
Aims and Research Questions	9
The Scottish Independence Movement: Post-Referendum	10
Outline	14
2. The Minutiae	16
Methodological Considerations.....	16
Approaching the field: as a political engagement	16
Following the movement	19
Theoretical Considerations	21
Theoretical overview on social movements	22
Theoretical framework	24
Setting the Scene of Scottish Independence.....	28
A historical contextualisation	28
3. Going Beyond Nationalism.....	31
“It Was Not a Nationalist Vote, but a Leftist Vote!”	32
Opposing Nationalism Within Nationalism	37
Conclusion.....	40
4. An Anti-Nationalist National identity.....	41
Oppositional Identities	42
Subordinated Scottishness.....	47
Conclusion.....	51
5. “This Could Be Us”	53
Instrumental Acts of Solidarity	54
Recasting the Empire	59
Conclusion.....	65
6. Concluding Remarks.....	66
References.....	70

1. Introduction

One of the saddest things I've seen after the independence referendum, it was a homeless guy in Glasgow, he looked like the most guys you see sitting in the street, and a wee sign sat next to him, that said: "Scotland's future in Scotland's hands", it was a wee baby's hand holding a big guys hand. It was the saddest things I've ever seen. The homeless guy sitting beside it, looking depressed. I couldn't believe this, we had the chance to improve these people's lives! We had a chance to stop this gross inequality and stop this imperialistic power over our country. To see that guy just perpetuate it, and he was just sitting there with his head down, and that's the poster guy for "Scotland's future in Scotland's hands".¹

In the late evening of 18th September 2014, close to half of the population in Scotland were met with disappointing news. The result of the referendum on Scottish independence was finalised, and the vote ended in favour of a No-vote, meaning that Scotland would remain part of Britain. I arrived in Scotland post-referendum, three years later. However, I arrived in a country still combating a fundamentally dividing issue, with a leadership advocating Scottish independence and a small opposing majority defending British unity. The tensions were visible even though time had passed and no second referendum was in sight. Already the morning after my arrival I was encountered with signs in the streets calling out for an independent Scotland. This thesis examines the continuous mobilisation of Scottish independence in the aftermath of the decided outcome. The study focuses on the actors in the umbrella organisation of *Yes Scotland*, which is a collective of different interest groups² with one specific goal: to achieve Scottish independence.

My study is situated in several cities in Scotland, however, mainly in Glasgow. Since Glasgow is a city where the independence movement had the utmost active approach before the referendum and amongst the highest percentage of independence voters. It is also a city where a lot of the tensions between the independence voters and the Unionists were visible. For instance, the day after the referendum a crowd gathered in George Square to mourn the outcome of the vote when they suddenly were joined by Unionists, who were waving flags with Union

¹ Quote from an interview with Logan, who will be introduced more in length later in the thesis.

² I will present the different groups in the last section of this chapter.

Jack and chanting “Rule Britannia”. The two groups started to scream insults to each other and the situation became too unsettled for the police to handle. While the police tried to calm the Unionists, the pro-independence voters dispersed from the area (*The Independent* 2014).

The Scottish independence movement is a question of nations. To use the definition of Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Scotland is to be considered a “proto-nation”, i.e. a nation “without a state” (2010: 19). The citizens of Scotland in search for independence consist of a large heterogeneous group in terms of class and education and, importantly, have a leadership who argues for the nation’s right to self-determination. Furthermore, Eriksen claims that, in similarity with ethnicity based movements, struggles of proto-nations are intertwined in issues concerning distribution of power and construction of meaning (2010: 20).

I follow Allaine Cerwonka and Liisa Malkki (2007), Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1997^a), et al., in not regarding the nation as a stable unit. Thus, the nation as such, is not analysed as an analytic whole (Cerwonka & Malkki 2007: 75), but rather regarded as a site of competing identities. Clearly, in the case of proto-nations this is at its most visible, since it illustrates how within one and the same nation there are diverging groups with fundamentally contradicting views on what that nation is and what it should be. The system of nation-states can be described, in the words of Malkki, as the “national order of things” (1997: 70), referring to how nations in themselves are considered to exist as natural entities. In other terms, the Scottish independence movement is an anti-nationalist movement since it disturbs the “national order of things” (Malkki 1997: 70). Thus, the Scottish independence movement disrupts the perception of nations as naturally existing, since the ultimate goal is to break up the British state. Paradoxically, for the same reason it also reinforces the ideological system of nation-states as territorially bounded places, since what they seek is to establish a nation-state.³ Nations however, as Benedict Anderson (1983) famously claimed, are *imagined*:

Finally, it [the nation] is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship (Anderson 1983: 7, emphasis in original).

³ Due to limited scope, this thesis will not deal with the anthropological discussion of space and place, however, since the thesis argues in the lines of not considering nations as places as natural entities, it is relevant. For further reading see e.g. Akhil & Gupta (1997^b), Setha Low (2016), and others.

Anderson goes on to critique the constant conceptualisation of nationalism as racist and patriotic, while, in his view, nationalism is equally as much a producer of cultural forms (ibid.: 141). This means that nationalism as a concept cannot be analysed as a disconnected holistic system in itself, but rather as part of a larger cultural context. As Bruce Kapferer writes: “The primordialism of the cultural in nationalism is the construction of nationalism itself and is not to be regarded as independent of nationalism” (2011: 1). Meaning that, nationalism is particular for specific settings. I argue in the lines of Anderson that the concept of nationalism has undergone something of a naturalisation. This is true to some extent in general discourse as well, due to the rise of far-right nationalist movements in Europe. Resulting in the actual meaning of nationalism, per se, to be of less importance. Before arriving in Scotland, I regarded nationalism in similar ways, i.e. to be about either ethnic unity or a protective stance toward the loss of national culture (see e.g. Hobsbawm 1990). However, as will be made visible in this thesis, this took an unexpected turn. It proved to be a much more complex issue.

There is a theoretical tradition of conceptualising intrastate movements of independence as nationalist movements (see e.g. Handler 1988, Heiberg 1989). Following this tradition, the Scottish independence movement could be described as a nationalist movement, in terms of their continuous search for a sovereign state. In public perception, people on the outs of the Scottish independence movement were also referring to the movement as a nationalist movement. As a Unionist⁴ voter told me: “Scottish nationalism, [being in favour of Scottish independence], is similar to right-wing nationalism. It is about the loss of culture and control”. The Unionist was clear in saying this, he was limiting the Scottish independence movement to be about identity-based issues, and therefore claiming it as an illegitimate movement, meaning that it is no better than the rise of the far-right movements in Europe.

Combining the theoretical tradition and public views, the Scottish independence movement is forced into nationalism. I argue that this has caused an inescapable discourse of nationalism that the independence movement must position itself in. To clarify, when writing about discourse, I do this in general terms, in what has been called “a *big D* approach” (Modan 2007: 274). Meaning that rather than studying linguistic structure, which characterises the *little d* approach, I regard discourse as a suitable term to understand social context. It pays attention to power relations as well as construction of meaning. Or in the words of Modan:

⁴ Unionist is the terminology used by both sides of the issue, describing a person that voted to remain in the UK.

What characterizes the *big D* approach is an interest in the ways that people represent the social world through discourse, and the ways that those representations rely on or construct certain ideologies (ibid., emphasis in original).

However, since *big D* discourse allows for linguistics interpretation, although not in structural terms, I also consider how: “any given utterance both gains its meaning from other utterances and from the social context, and it also shapes the meaning of other utterances and of the social context” (Modan 2007: 6). The title of this thesis refers to the several claims made by activists in the movement, it illustrates how they were constantly positioning themselves within the discourse of nationalism. “I’m not a nationalist but...” as a statement of arguing against nationalism within nationalism.

I argue in this thesis that there are claims beyond nationalism that are fundamental to understand why the Scottish independence movement exist and how it is mobilised. I claim that ordering Scottish independence solely in the concept of nationalism is to simplify a much more complex order. The conceptualisation or totalisation of nationalism as separate from the larger context fails to problematise issues that are less about national identity and strictly nationalist sentiments than about political issues. Importantly, as will be made visible in this thesis, Scottish independence is argued from a Left political perspective and therefore at odds with right-wing politics.

Aims and Research Questions

The aim of my master thesis is to investigate the practices, expressions and identification processes of the Scottish independence movement. Through an analysis of arguments, emotions, narratives and actions concerning the support for independence, I inquire into how the movement constructs and reproduce specific forms of identities, and how these identities are shaped to achieve a specific political project within an inescapable discourse of nationalism.

By looking beyond the conceptualisation of nationalism, but at the same time not ignoring it, I wish to illustrate that the Scottish independence movement is a reflection on the workings of cultural perceptions of history. Since nationalism has become a contested issue in relation to the Scottish independence movement, I need to pay attention to it. Because of how nationalism has come to encapsulate the movement, and the theoretical and public discourse at large, I

make an effort to position the independence movement in relation to nationalism. Therefore, I also acknowledge how nationalism is part of a wider cultural context.

This thesis is a contribution to the anthropological study of social movements. In general, this study provides an understanding of how social movements may illustrate the workings of culture and how the same enables continuous mobilisation. More specifically, this study illustrates the unexpected nature of seemingly nationalist movements. In the following, I will define and clarify my field of research by introducing the groups that figure in this thesis.

The Scottish Independence Movement: Post-Referendum

The independence movement of today, post-referendum, contain both political parties and activist groups. I will in this section focus on the groups that are represented in this thesis. The political parties discussed here and in the thesis, are the *Scottish National Party*, the *Scottish Green Party*, the *Scottish Socialist Party*, the *Socialist Party Scotland* and *Respect Independence Socialism Environmentalism*. While the activist groups represented are: *Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International Scotland*, *Radical Independence Campaign*, *Women for Independence*, *Assemblea Nacional Catalana Scotland/Alba* and *Bridges for Indy*. In order to position the groups, I have chosen to present official statements from the parties' publications and the groups Facebooks pages as well as statements made by individuals. These perspectives might, because of differences in official politics and individual interpretations, therefore diverge from assertions made from the informants later on in the thesis.

The *Scottish National Party* (SNP) is the leading party of Scotland, with 62 seats in the Scottish Parliament. Thus, the leader of the SNP, Nicola Sturgeon, is also the First Minister of Scotland. Scotland did not have a government until the *Scotland Act 1998*, and therefore, the parties who solely belong to Scottish politics have a rather short history. However, the SNP claim to have been propagating for Scottish independence since the early 1930s but in other forms than the current one, e.g. in Westminster⁵. The SNP is still actively seeking Scottish home rule: "We want a fair society where no-one is left behind. And our vision is of Scotland as an independent country – equal to the very best" (SNP n.d.). The SNP describe themselves as "a left of centre, social democratic and progressive party".

⁵ Throughout the thesis is "Westminster" used as a metonym for the UK parliament.

In similarity with the SNP, the *Scottish Green party* (The Greens), also have seats in Holyrood⁶. In the year 2018 they have 6 Members of Scottish Parliament (MSP). The Greens are in opposition to the SNP, although they often vote for SNP policies. The Greens collaborate with several parties, if there is sufficient consensus. Both parties agree on the issue of independence, and if there would be another referendum in the future the Greens would with most certainty support the SNP. However, in contrast with the SNP, the Greens do not put independence first on the agenda:

The party supports independence and campaigned for it in the 2014 referendum, but there is a significant minority within the party opposed to it, and there is no pressure on them to change or conceal their view, [...] the environment and social justice issues are more central than independence to the party's identity (interview, Nick Gotts).

Thus, Nick Gotts, a member of the Scottish Greens argued that independence is a way to achieve political change, however, independence in itself does not solve specific issues. The same cautious stance on independence can be found within the two smaller parties: the *Scottish Socialist Party* (SSP) and the *Socialist Party Scotland* (SPS).

The SSP act under the slogan: "For an independent socialist Scotland". The SSP was founded in 1999 and had their biggest success so far in the Holyrood election of 2003. They themselves regard this to be a reaction against the British involvement in the Iraq war (SSP n.d.), where the SSP were in direct opposition against British involvement. Today, the support for SSP has declined which have moved their activism from Holyrood to the streets. They are engaged in organising public meetings on burning issues, such as "Fuel Power", which refers to the expensive heating in Scotland, and so on. In similarity, the *Socialist Party Scotland* (SPS) are engaged in much the same activities, which might be explained by the fact that, the SSP and the SPS were previously a joint organisation under the name of the *Scottish Socialist Alliance*. However, several differences in form of organizational structures and the sex scandal involving the former leader of the SSP Tommy Sheridan⁷, made the parties go separate ways. Fundamentally, they still share the same political views, they both support socialist policies

⁶ Throughout the thesis is "Holyrood" used as a metonym for the Scottish parliament.

⁷ I will not discuss the scandal in any length in this text, because of limited space, but more information can be accessed here: <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/sex-scandal-former-msp-tommy-3670244>.

that stem from a Trotskyist theoretical perspective. Another Trotskyist socialist group active in the Scottish independent movement, is the much smaller, *Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International Scotland* (WIRFIS). However, rather than being engaged in party politics, they set out to educate and organize workers internationally and nationally. These three groups, together with the Greens and SNP, are not created only to campaign for independence, but are groups that have made independence part of their policies.

After a couple of weeks in Scotland I was told that leading up to the referendum, several groups were created only to campaign for Scottish independence. Between the distinction of one issue groups and political parties, is the electoral alliance *Respect Independence Socialism Environmentalism* (RISE) situated. RISE was created in 2015, after the referendum, and they refer to themselves as an alliance of the left. They aim to “put one foot in the parliament, and a thousand on the streets” (RISE n.d.). RISE is a collaboration of people from different positions but with similar fundamental Left perspective. Born out of the negative electoral outcome, RISE is actively trying to put independence on the agenda again. Leading up to the referendum another alliance was created, the *Radical Independence Campaign* (RIC). Separating RIC from RISE, is the context in which they were created. RIC was created with the aim to make the independence movement a leftist movement and made it their ultimate goal to reach the otherwise politically passive working-class. RIC encourages them to vote because “another Scotland is possible”. Both RIC and RISE are still active post-referendum. They strive to bring politics closer to the people by holding public meetings and cultural events in order to raise awareness of Scottish independence. At the time of my fieldwork they were active in educating the public about independence, and in supporting certain demonstrations.

Other groups created in the run up to the referendum, did also still engage in pro-independence activities. They even had events and meetings, although much of the engagement had at the time of my fieldwork dislodged to Facebook and other social media channels. I found there to be groups for various specific interest, such as *Pensioners for Independence*, *Veterans for Independence*, *Bikers for Independence* and *Women for Independence*. Some of the groups made international solidarity their main issue, to support other struggles for independence in order to raise awareness of their own struggle. I participated in events held by *Assemblea Nacional Catalana, Scotland/Alba* (ANCS) and *Bridges for Indy*⁸. The latter is an activist group

⁸ “Indy” is a recurrent abbreviation for independence.

that describes itself as “a grassroots organisation with a strong desire to promote and achieve Scottish independence through bridge activism” (Bridges for Indy n.d.). Bridge activism refers to hanging Saltires⁹, or other flags that symbolise struggles for independence on bridges all over Scotland. The turmoil in Catalonia happened shortly before I arrived in Scotland and the situation was still uncertain. Both the ANCS and *Bridges for Indy* organised manifestations in the streets of Scotland to raise awareness of the unjust treatment of Catalonia, this proved also to be an important practice for mobilising the Scottish independence movement¹⁰.

Even if all the groups above share the overarching aim of independence, they do this from different points of view. This is especially obvious since several groups use their explicit position as a way to mobilise specific people. However, they all campaigned under the umbrella organisation: *Yes Scotland*, which is an organisation created to gather different interest groups under one name. As in the time of the referendum, the independence movement exist within a complex political climate. Independence is not a clear-cut issue dividing left-wing or right-wing politics. The opposing movement, the *Better Together* campaign used the slogan *Not Thanks*. Within this movement one can find parties on the Left, such as the *Scottish Labour Party*, the sub-national part of the UK party, the *Socialist Equality Party* and the *Communist Party*. However, most of the opponents, arguing for continued British unity, comes from right-wing politics, amongst these you find *Conservative and Unionist Party* (the Tories), the *Scottish Unionist Party* and the *Liberal Democrats*. Far-right parties, such as *UK Independence Party* (UKIP) are also against Scottish independence, but were refused to campaign with *Better Together*, since they are not a Scottish party. Thus, like *Yes Scotland*, *Better Together* is a diverse group that has come together under the issue of Scottish independence despite otherwise diverging politics.

⁹ Saltire is the name for the Scottish flag.

¹⁰ This will be discussed in chapter 5.

Outline

This thesis contains six main chapters. In the first chapter, “Introduction”, I define the study and situate it within the larger context of Scottish independence. Here are also research questions, aims and the contemporary field of the Scottish independence movement introduced. I explain how the movement is complex and diverse in terms of how the actors relate to each other.

In the second chapter “The Minutiae”, I start off by discussing the specifics of my fieldwork methods. A part of the chapter is dedicated to the method of *militant ethnography* (Juris 2007, Scheper-Hughes 1995) since my fieldwork consisted of activist participation. Furthermore, I carry out a discussion of emic and etic concepts, anonymity and other ethical issues, as well as my overall methodological approach. From this, I move on to delineate my theoretical considerations throughout the thesis, where I clarify how I position the usage of identity and culture throughout the thesis. I also provide a theoretical overview of the study of social movements. Additionally, I discuss my key concepts that are used to analyse the empirical material throughout the thesis. Lastly, a historical background is placed at the end of this chapter and ahead of the first research chapter, to enable the possibility of remembering specific narratives and practices throughout the thesis. Thus, this is a conscious decision since I claim that the cultural perspectives on history is of importance when discussing the mobilisation of the Scottish independence movement.

Chapter three, “Going Beyond Nationalism”, deals with how the Scottish independence movement argues against nationalism as a way to establish a diverging ideology, as well as it is a practice of categorial diversion. I lay forward how the Scottish independence movement perceive the concept of nationalism in two contradictory ways, firstly, nationalism in Scotland opposes Scottish independence and secondly, Scottish nationalism is above British nationalism. This is compared with the use of Kapferer’s (2011) analysis of Australian egalitarianism and discussed through a moral dimension.

Chapter four, “An Anti-Nationalist Nationalist identity”, is devoted to illustrating how identities are constructed in and through the Scottish independence movement. I continue the discussion in the previous chapter concerning how the Scottish independence movement differentiate themselves from Britishness. In this chapter I discuss *historicity* in extension,

since historical recasting makes for important insights to the construction of the specific Scottishness of the Scottish independence movement.

Chapter five, “This Could Be Us”, opens with a vignette from one of the many Catalanian demonstrations I attended during fieldwork. In this chapter I deal with how the Scottish independence movement practice solidarity, and how this practice is a way to establish their own agenda. I argue that other struggles of independence are instrumental in constructing the identity of Scottish independence movement. Importantly, I return to the historical connections in identity formation of Scottishness when discussing the effects of British imperialism on identity as well as on mobilisation of the movement.

In chapter six, “Concluding Remarks”, I discuss and summarise the analysis made in previous chapters. I bring together points that are made throughout the thesis to clarify and argue for how the Scottish independence movement mobilise and how identities are constructed within the movement. Finally, I will open up and lay forward further research possibilities.

2. The Minutiae

In this chapter, I will discuss the specifics of my research. First, I discuss how I approached the Scottish independence movement as a field with all the methodological considerations that were necessary. Thereafter, I will present the theoretical field of social movements and introduce the key-concepts that are used in this thesis. Lastly, I will provide a historical background, meant to complement the mapping of actors in the previous chapter.

Methodological Considerations

Approaching the field: as a political engagement

I want to ask what anthropology might become if it existed on two fronts: as a field of knowledge (as a “discipline”) and as a field of action, a force field, or a site of struggle. Anthropological writing can be a site of resistance [...]. We can be anthropologists, comrades and *companheiras* (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 419-420, emphasis in original).

What Nancy Scheper-Hughes asks for is a *militant anthropology*, thus, an anthropology that moves away from a research position of a “spectator” towards a “witnessing anthropology” (1995: 414, 419). By this, Scheper-Hughes means that anthropology has a political responsibility in not only describing events, but rather, taking a stand and actively engage in the predicaments of the field. To fight injustices as an Academic endeavour. Not only do I agree with how anthropology as knowledge producers have both the possibility and the obligation in actively aiming to make change, i.e. being the *companheira* (ibid.: 411), but also, I believe that extended limitlessness in ethnographic participation permits more understanding.

Jeffery S. Juris (2007) argues that militant ethnography refers to a political engaged research with the possibility for the anthropologist to maintain what Scheper-Hughes calls for, and importantly “generates better interpretations and analyses” (Juris 2007: 165-166). Through practicing activist research, Juris and Alex Khasnabish (2013) claims that, the anthropologist is engaged in a creative process of theorising. Furthermore, since social-movements are self-reflexive, referring to how they are engaged in knowledge production for and by themselves,

carrying out research within social movements allows for collaboration between subject and researcher (ibid.: 24). Hence, through this the division between the researcher and the subject becomes blurred, creating a coaction of embodied knowledge. Juris goes as far as to say that “counter-summit protests generate powerful feelings, including terror, fear, panic, solidarity, and joy. To fully grasp such dynamics, one has to actually *live* the emotions associated with mass direct actions” (2008: 64, my emphasis).

I followed this approach when studying the Scottish independence movement. This developed into my tactic since I found myself more often getting involved beyond the traditional role of a researcher. My informants frequently asked me to distribute leaflets or hold signs for whatever they were protesting at that given time. As well as engaging in debates concerning issues of socialism and international solidarity. Furthermore, I participated in embodied presence, applauding and chanting at demonstrations. My own political opinions often converged with theirs, as a socialist I found myself getting involved and support their struggle for independence. Initially, this was not my intention since my preconceptions on nationalism made me believe that the Scottish independence movement was at odds with my ideological beliefs. As the research proceeded I found this to not be the case. Through the method of militant ethnography, I argue that instead of illegitimizing the research, my political engagement has brought forth a more in-depth analysis. I used participant observation as my principal method throughout the fieldwork. I participated in e.g. branch meetings of political parties, demonstrations, party political street stalls, movie-screenings and public meetings held by activist groups. Besides these formal settings, I also engaged in more informal gatherings such as Christmas parties and “hanging out” with my informants in bars and student unions setting out to *live* like the activists in the Scottish independence movement. However, militant ethnographical research is not without its complexities.

Juris and Khanabish argues that political engaged research often is caught in-between activist and academic spaces (2013: 27). For example, it is difficult to balance your role as a researcher since the possibility of disagreeing with a course of action is more limited than for other activists. Showing disagreement can interrupt continuous research, on the other hand, not interfering makes for the same problematic that militant ethnography is supposed to tend to, that is, carrying out engaged research. However, these challenges, like any methodological considerations in ethnographic fieldwork, need to be met with a reflexive stance. According to Charlotte Aull Davies, reflexivity “refers to the ways in which the products of research are

affected by the personnel and process of doing research” (2008: 4). She goes on to say that “these effects are to be found in all phases of the research process from initial selection of topic to final reporting of results” (ibid.), and the ethnographer must practice reflexivity. For me, I was constantly dealing with how the activist within the Scottish independence movement seemed to be cautious in what they were saying in my presence. Clearly, the activists perceived my outside perspective as somewhat harmful, if I were to misinterpret them. What I take from this, is that the stakes are too high *not* to be cautious. It also illustrates the self-reflexivity of the Scottish independence movement, how they actively produce and distribute knowledge in order to maintain a wanted position.

Moreover, when studying social movements, it is important to acknowledge emic concepts. Since emic concepts are expressions used within the social movement to describe one particular phenomena (Salman & Assies 2017: 59). During my fieldwork, and to some extent in this thesis, I have made use of emic expressions as points of analysis. The Scottish language (see chapter 4) and, how the activists in the movement made use of the language proved to be an important factor in how they mobilise. I have therefore chosen to write certain words in the emic spelling, e.g. “gonnae” [going to], to illustrate the recurrent theme of stressing certain cultural expressions. Additionally, I followed my informants in using the concept of *identity*, because I believe that, as Ton Salman and Willem Assies argue, “the wording of the people, the emic dimension has disappeared” (ibid.), to some extent in social science. Because of the anthropological proximity to the subject of research which is even more enhanced with militant ethnography as a discipline, anthropology can enforce the importance of groups own stories and categories. However, to analyse and communicate the subject’s perceptions, etic concepts are of great value. I therefore use *identity* in two ways, both ethnographically and theoretically. I recognise the contested nature of the concept identity which I will discuss under the subheading “Theoretical Considerations”.

As mentioned, my fieldwork was for the most part situated in Glasgow, however, at several occasions I travelled to other places in Scotland, following the movement. To study several groups at several sites can be described as “multi-sited ethnography” (Marcus 1995). I will discuss this method and further methodological concerns in the next section.

Following the movement

Multi-sited ethnography, according to George E. Marcus, “moves out from single sites and local situations of conventional ethnographic research designs to examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time-space” (1995: 96). Marcus argues for multi-sited fieldwork to study how world-systems, such as capitalism, travels through different sites. In my fieldwork I have used an adapted version of multi-sitedness in three ways. Firstly, in the traditional sense where I have followed the independence movement in physically different sites. Secondly, I have treated the nation, following recent scholars in social science (e.g. Cerwonka & Malkki 2007), as a site, comprising of several different competing identities separately situated. Even though I did not study a traditionally transnational issue, I chose this method to enable research of the diverse nature of the Scottish independence movement. Thirdly, what additionally made my fieldwork multi-sited is that I did online-observations (see e.g. Wittel 2000).

I used Facebook where I observed how people discussed in groups, what my informants shared and how they expressed themselves online. Because *Yes Scotland* to some extent was in a standstill, or rather, because there were fewer events than before to gather around, they used internet to spread information between themselves. When doing fieldwork online, there is always the ethical issue concerning what is to be considered public or private (Davies 2008: 166). Even though the information on forums is publicly accessible, people might think of it as private. I tried to deal with this by the practice of transparency. At times when this was not possible, I considering my own position by being reflexive about how I analysed the information. However, as mentioned above, my fieldwork was mainly executed through participant observation at *lived* events.

Beside the informal interviews during participant observation, I conducted several semi-structured interviews i.e. scheduled interviews with open-ended questions and themes that invites the informant to answer in an unrestricted way (Davies 2008: 106). In this thesis the groups and political parties are referred to by their real names. Individuals, on the other hand, have been anonymised¹¹ to protect their integrity (ibid.: 61). Individuals, who spoke officially

¹¹ I have therefore also chosen not to show participants faces in photos. All the photos in the thesis are taken by myself. I recognise the pitfalls of the risk of othering when using photography. Cerwonka and Malkki claim that photography could be part in the “production of spectacles of otherness – whether spatial, social or temporal

and are public figures are mentioned by their real names since, as Davies (2008) claims, “the research sometimes necessitates that respondents be identified in terms of their public position [...]” (ibid.: 60).

My material from fieldwork is multifaceted as a result of its multi-sitedness and complexity. It contains images, linguistic expressions, historical accounts, physical signs in the streets, conveyed and felt emotions, quotations and scribbled down notes from events and meetings, which come together to describe narratives that mobilise the Scottish independence movement. I follow the argument made by Liisa Malkki (1995), namely that simply collecting “scattered short quotations” makes it difficult to find a representational voice of the collective. Importantly, this has to do with representation of the informants in texts where Malkki claims that anthropologists to a large extent have kept silent in how they edit texts and the outcome of that editing. (1995: 56-57) Therefore, I have to the best of my ability tried to illustrate several events, interviews, places and that will bring forth a more in-depth understanding of the Scottish independence movement.

Initially, I was met with the challenge of deciding what groups to bring into the study, I started out by sending requests on Facebook already before I left for Scotland. The groups visibility on social and traditional media came therefore to sway my participation from the beginning. Well in Scotland, it became a sort of ‘snowball’ effect, where I found more and smaller groups. However, as Davies claims, “they [researchers] are often as much selected by their informants as the reverse” (2008: 89), choosing informants is thus not without its constraints. It depends on access to certain groups and fields as much as the reflexive stance towards the informants. The Glasgow south branch of the *Scottish Socialist Party* (SSP) came to serve as my “key informants” (Davies 2008: 89), within the bigger group of the SSP, during fieldwork. They offered me to participate in many activities such as meetings every other week, street-stalls and on demonstrations. Several of the members also took part in longer interviews. The *Scottish Socialist Party* (SSP) were also welcoming me to meetings both with their student branch as well as their main Glasgow branch, where they often discussed international issues. Being able to access the day-to-day activities of the parties, when they are planning their next events and discussing burning issues, have made me understand their aspirations to a greater extent.

otherness” (2007: 68). Referring to how informants are made through what we, as the observers, see, instead of what they are. I have, to the best of my abilities, tried to avoid this.

Halfway through my fieldwork, I realised that my study to a large extent lacked female interlocutors. I already had a diverse group in terms of age, class and level of education because I made it a priority to invoke several diverging groups in the study, but apart from the handful of active women in *Radical Independence Campaign* there were seldom any women present at the meetings of other groups. I was often the only woman in the room. I did not believe this to be an accurate reflection of the independence movement, the fact that the first minister of Scotland is a woman indicated that my suspicion was right. Thus, I started the search for groups where women had a more central role. One of the first groups I got in contact with was the *Women for Independence*, they told me that they had put their engagement on hold for the time being, awaiting to campaign for a second referendum. They provided me with some email contact at least, but my search continued. Finally, I was accepted into a female and non-binary separatist group called the *Glasgow Feminist Collective*. As a result, the number of women became almost equivalent to the amount of men in my study. I found my own position as a woman often to be of help, for example getting access to a separatist group because of my gender. At two occasions, however, I found myself being questioned. But I believe that this had more to do with my position as a novice-researcher than a woman. Since they questioned my knowledge and understanding of the issue.

Hence, my study is a diverse collage of collected pieces, both lived and told experiences by the members of the Scottish independence movement who are a highly heterogenous group. My own participation is also present in the result, the shared emotions and feelings of solidarity makes for the groundwork of the analysis. I will discuss how these methodological undertakings have taken theoretical forms in the next section.

Theoretical Considerations

In this section I will delineate and discuss key theoretical concepts that are used in this thesis. I will discuss the field of social movements in anthropology, through this I position the thesis theoretically. Additionally, other concepts of less centrality will be used and discussed throughout the thesis such as *code for conduct* and *locality* (Handler 1988), *imagineering of*

resistance (Routledge 1997), *habitus* and *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1999), *home places* (bell hooks 1990), *negative historicity* (Tambar 2016) and *moral aspirations* (Jasper 1999).

First, I need to define how I make use of two contested concepts that figure in this thesis, namely *identity* and *culture*. Because of their problematic character¹² I have made certain considerations in relation to the concepts. Identity is partly used because of the emic status of the concept¹³, and additionally because of the applicability of the concept. However, when looking at how the Scottish independence movement construct and reproduce certain identities, I do this in line with how Lilith Mahmud make use of identity:

My goal is not to offer an illusory conquest of a fleeting identity category but rather to recognize that the experiential reality of such a category, in its rhetorical and material consequences, is itself the product of a discursive reification (2014: 15).

Thus, in this thesis is identity treated as a specific category for one specific political project, as well as how the meaning of this identity is constructed within the discourse of nationalism. Furthermore, the usage of culture in this thesis also occur. Although, in similarity with identity, my intention is not to treat culture as an “analytical whole” (Gupta & Fergusson 1997^a) neither is it to perceive the ability of culture to “provide an adequate guide for living” (Kuper 1999: 247). I do, however, believe that the concept remains important when studying social movements, which I will discuss below.

Theoretical overview on social movements

The sociologist Alain Touraine (1985) argues that the study of social movements often has been reduced to be the matter of one specific conflict. However, as Touraine exemplifies, when studying post-colonial societies, it is difficult to look at issues concerning class without

¹² The problematics I refer to is how *culture* and *identity* as theoretical concepts are perceived and discussed in contemporary anthropology. The concept of culture has undergone scrutiny due to its encompassing, holistic and stable connotations. The anthology *Writing Culture* (1986), edited by James Clifford and George E. Marcus, inspired a debate on the dilemma of ethnographic methods and culture. In *Writing Culture*, it becomes clear that the conceptualisation of culture is always at risk of evading the particular and therefore using culture as a flattening concept. Culture is also doomed somewhat obsolete through the increasing interconnectedness of the world. Many anthropologists argue that the usage of culture continues to separate the world into disconnected cultural wholes (e.g. Appadurai 1996, Hannerz 1996, Rabinow 2011), even though not all propose to exclude culture completely. The concept identity has also been criticised, where identity is seen to replace the concept of culture but is argued to share the problematics of culture (Rabinow & Marcus 2008).

¹³ See discussion on emic and ethic concepts in chapter 2.

accounting for imperialist forces (1985: 759). Thus, conflicts seldom occur separate from other issues. Arturo Escobar (1992) follows this notion and calls for an anthropological study of social movements. He claims that anthropology need to pay more attention to practices of social movements since anthropological inquires can provide understanding of how social movements are connected to the socio-political life. As Escobar poses it: “[S]ocial movements cannot be understood independently of culture” (1992: 405). Escobar provides possible reasons for why social movements has suffered from “invisibility” in anthropology. One reason derives from how anthropology has *not* concerned itself with strictly socio-political issues. However, Escobar argues that social movements should be seen as “*cultural* struggles in a fundamental sense” (1992: 412, my emphasis). By this he means that social movements are “struggles over meanings as much as over socio-economic conditions” (ibid.). Thus, Escobar refers to how social movements are cultural and therefore necessarily anthropological:

Social movements, in sum, bring about new social practices which operate in part through the constitution of spaces for the creation of meaning. To the extent that they are inevitably concerned with matters of economic and social transformation, they link together economic, social and political problematics within an overarching cultural field. [...] moreover, social movements might be a particularly suitable arena in which to explore these interrelations (1992: 408).

Robert Gibb (2001), also recognises the lack of anthropological work on social movements and believes that this to a large extent is due to the functionalist tradition of abstracting politics from culture. That is, anthropology of politics has to completion excluded the cultural dimension in politics. Because social movements are both cultural and political in nature, the lack of political anthropology has caused social movement to not get enough attention (Gibb 2001: 7). This article was written close to twenty years ago, and the article by Escobar close to thirty, since then, the field of social movements has received increased anthropological interest, which the anthology *Social movements: an anthropological reader* (2005) edited by June Nash is an indication of (see also e.g. Graeber 2009; Juris 2008^a; Canessa 2014). Nash writes that all the authors in the anthology “have achieved the holistic analysis of social movements that is the hallmark of anthropological studies” (2005: 22). Meaning that, in similarity with the arguments by Gibb and Escobar, social movements are not isolated entities. Rather, social movements exist and operate within complex intersections of socio-political issues such as race, class, ethnicity and gender. Therefore, they often concerns distribution of resources.

Following this, Salman and Assies (2017) claim that the anthropological contribution to social movements lays in the fact that:

Culture accompanies the whole course of the life of social movements, and enables to link the different ‘episodes’ to features of the surrounding society, where specific culturally embedded arrangements suggest and incite specific forms of bringing about the movement (2017: 63).

Salman and Assies recognise that culture is not easily defined and while they argue against the perception of culture as enclosed systems, they claim that the study of social movements illustrate how culture is precisely not that. Instead, “[c]ulture is plural, contested, and fragmented – as is any society” (Salman & Assies 2017: 63). I follow the contemporary perception on social movements, and will therefore make an effort to illustrate how the Scottish independence movement moves within an intersection of cultural, social and political issues. My overall focus is on cultural perceptions on history as the making of both the context they move in, how the movement is mobilised and what is constructed by the movement. For this purpose, I have chosen to use the concept *mythico-history* (Malkki 1995). In what follows I will discuss mythico-history together with remaining key concepts: *historicity*, *emotions* and *solidarity*.

Theoretical framework

In *Purity and Exile* (1995), Liisa Malkki discuss the making and remaking of the past into identities of the present. In her work on Hutu refugees in Tanzania, Malkki inquires how history is presented in order to understand how the Hutu was constructed and produced as a collective identity (1995: 244). Malkki argues:

The Hutu history, however, went far beyond merely recording events. It represented, not only a description of the past, nor even merely an evaluation of the past, but a subversive recasting and reinterpretation of it in fundamentally moral terms. In this sense, it cannot be accurately described as either history or myth. It was what can be called *mythico-history* (1995: 54, emphasis in original).

Malkki regards history, not as solely objective facts, but rather as a practice to make sense of the present. The result of this is *mythico-history*: a specific history, for one specific group. In the mythico-history are relationships and identities categorically ordered through the “regimes of truth” that are in motion (Malkki 1995: 104). Hence, Malkki refers here to the Foucauldian

concept of truth, how truth is always constructed by the discourse that surrounds it. Following this, mythico-history is not to be regarded as a degradation of historical accounts:

But what made the refugees' narrative mythical, in the anthropological sense, was not its truth or falsity, but the fact that it was concerned with *order* in a fundamental, cosmological sense. That is the key. It was concerned with the ordering and reordering of social and political categories, with the defining of self in distinction to other, with good and evil (1995: 55, emphasis in original).

Hence, deeming historical accounts as either true or false is not of importance, instead, it is how people make use of history to order the world in good/bad and moral/immoral that illustrates the making and remaking of a collective identity. How certain historical claims are chosen before others constructs a mythico-history that enables one group to be the subject of their own history and, therefore, construct difference in regard to other groups. Malkki investigates how categories are produced and manifested in mythico-history. Thus, Malkki claims that, "historical narratives comprised a set of moral and cosmological ordering stories: stories which classify the world according to certain principles, thereby simultaneously creating it" (1995: 54).

I follow Malkki in not regarding historical narratives and claims made by the Scottish independence movement as either faulty or untrue, instead, I look at why and how specific history is argued by the Scottish independence movement. I have chosen the concept mythico-history because it refers to how one specific group construct separation from other groups. As mentioned in the introduction, I perceive the nation as a set of several competing identities, and thus, with several competing mythico-history. I am therefore not claiming that the mythico-history of the Scottish independence movement is identical to rest of the Scottish population, on the contrary, the mythico-history of those in wanting independence, as I argue, is distinct for that specific cause. Furthermore, as is stated by Malkki (1995: 56), mythico-history is constructed by and related to *historicity*.

Several theorists within a multiple of disciplines have made use of historicity. According to Charles Stewart (2016), the *historical* concept historicity and the *philosophical* concept historicity are fundamentally different, the former refers to the separation of "fact from fiction" whereas the latter refers to the historical context of the development of practices and concepts (2016: 80). Furthermore, Stewart claims that, in anthropology the concept of historicity has

been managed in both traditions, but in three strands: “[H]istorical factuality, cultural perspectives on the past, and a circular hermeneutic relation between past and present” (2016: 89). With mythico-history in mind, this study follows both the second and the third strand. The second perspective since mythico-history does not relate history to facts but rather to context. More importantly, Stewart claims¹⁴, “[h]istoricity interweaves not only the present and the past, but also the future” (2016: 82). Invoking this, I manage historicity mainly in the third strand. That is the conceptualisation of historicity, not as a verifiable past, but rather how history within specific contexts are remade and reused in order to make sense of the present and as a way to establish hope for the future. Hence, historicity can be perceived to have a central role in the mobilisation of social movements.

[...] the fact that these [political and cultural] identities are constructed through processes of articulation that start out of submerged networks of meanings, proceed through cultural innovation in the domain of everyday life, and may result in visible and sizable forms of collective action for the control of historicity” (Escobar 1992: 420).

What Arturo Escobar (1992) refers to is how social movements engage in protecting their right to historicity, i.e. the right to a defining historical past. Escobar exemplifies with how movements in Latin America argue against the “transformation of modernity” with the feeling that their cultural identities are threatened (1992: 420). As stated, historicity links past, present and future, where the future ultimately is perceived as an improvement of the present (Stewart 2016: 82, 85). Social movements often construct a collective identity through historicity which enables mobilisation away from feelings of present threat toward future hope. Emotions are, therefore, important factors in order to analyse historicity. Emotions have an essential part of this study because of three main interrelated reasons, which all agree with my main theoretical approaches:

Firstly, Stewart claims that certain present events can ignite feelings of the past (2016: 88). Thus, people are reminded of episodes of the past, either imagined or lived, through the emotions of present day experiences. Furthermore, these emotions can be activated within different spatial terms (*ibid.*), meaning that, emotional outburst can be an indication of how people situate themselves through selective narratives. Emotions, thus, follows historicity since people react to specific historical narratives. Secondly, I agree with Jeff Goodwin, James M.

¹⁴ With reference to Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney (1990).

Jasper and Francesca Polletta in that we need to study emotions, also, because it enables “thicker” descriptions (2004: 425). In similarity with Escobar, when he claims that culture follows the whole course of social movements, Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta argues that: “[b]ecause emotion, like culture generally, is a dimension of all social action, attending to emotions will illuminate more clearly all of the key issues that have exercised scholars of movements” (ibid.). Thirdly, since solidarity and emotions are deeply connected. Jeffrey S. Juris (2008^b) argues that solidarity is enhanced through displays and feelings of strong emotions. Juris exemplifies in his work on counter-summit movements of how mass-direct actions construct affective ties that enables solidarity between different temporal, spatial and social dimensions (2008^b: 63). Hence, emotions are not only theoretically important to understand the workings of historicity of social movements, but also methodological tools in understanding the specific culture of a social movement and finally, necessary to understand how solidarity is manifested. I argue that solidarity proved to be important for the Scottish independence movement, however, in a further dimension than the emotional aspect.

In the comprehensive book *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism* (2012), David Featherstone claims that solidarity is a fundamental practice of the Left and he goes on to define solidarity as “a relation forged through political struggle which seeks to challenge forms of oppression” (2012: 5). I partly agree with this approach, although, I regard this definition to be insufficient. In addition to Featherstone, I believe that solidarity is produced in order to understand your own movement. Sven-Eric Liedman (1999: 91) writes that because of its emotional character, solidarity have often been regarded as separated from intellectuality, as a strictly empathetic endeavour over social and political identification. Instead, and I agree, Liedman claims that solidarity is a practice of the intellect because it challenges us, as humans, to construct and order who belongs to which group. He strongly suggests that solidarity is a practice toward groups that share similar traits, which ultimately reinforces your own group identity, as is indicated by the title: *To see oneself in others, on solidarity*¹⁵ (1999).

In the empirical chapters, all of the above discussed concepts are used in order to grasp the complexities of the Scottish independence movement. Since the study concerns cultural perceptions of history, I will followingly present a brief historical introduction.

¹⁵ My translation of the original title: *Att se sig själv i andra, om solidaritet*

Setting the Scene of Scottish Independence

A historical contextualisation

The history of Scotland as a nation is long, too long to receive full attention in this thesis. However, I will in what follows delineate five important events leading up to the referendum of 2014: firstly, some abstracts of Scottish revolts against England; secondly, the collision between England and Scotland; thirdly, the socialist onset in Scotland; fourthly, the rise of Thatcherism; and finally, the outcome of the referendum in 1997. The purpose of this is to provide a historical context to the contemporary Scottish independence movement and to illustrate the historical claims later on in the thesis.

By Oppression's woes and pains!
 By your sons in servile chains!
 We will drain our dearest veins,
 But they shall be free!
 Robert Burns 1759 – 1796 (1983)

The relationship between England and Scotland is coloured by war and religious differences and has taken many turns. As early as 1296 Scotland was occupied by the English king Edward I, the revolt against this started already the year after by the Scottish sir William Wallace, who became almost a martyr symbolising Scottish independence. After all, a treaty between England and Scotland was established by paying a large sum of money to the English state, making Scotland an independent country. This was followed by several other disputes between Scotland and England. There was a failed attempt of unionising Scotland and England in 1603, and it was not successful until a century later.

In the early 18th century began the still visible collision of the Scottish and English political system. However, no more than a quarter of the Scottish population wanted the treaty that would end Scottish political independence giving England the right of taxation. The Scots who did not comply, were punished by English authorities with violent measures. At this time, Scottish cultural expressions, such as kilts, bagpipes and the Gaelic language, were banned, with the threat of death or imprisonment. This was an attempt to eradicate the Celtic way of life. The persecution continued with enforced eviction in the countryside, mainly in the

Highlands, where people were forced into the cities in order to fill the growing need of manpower caused by the Industrial Revolution or shipped away to the colonies of the Empire. Even though Scotland produced some of the most important thinkers of the 18th century, e.g. David Hume and Adam Smith, many Scotsmen denounced their Scottish nationality and identity and left Scotland. Scottish identity became a contested field, where literary initiatives tried to restore the tainted image of the Scot¹⁶ (Somerset Fry 1982: 79, 164, 189-199).

There were talk of devolution¹⁷ of Scotland before World War I, but because of the war the nationalist agenda was put on hold. In 1918, a socialist tradition started to grow in Scotland, with one of the front figures John Maclean, who was appointed to lead the Soviet consul in Scotland by Lenin (Harvie 1998: 24). Maclean, with others, spoke of Scottish independence as a means to create a socialist state. Thus, creating a nationalist radical leftist movement (Gall 2005: 139-140). The worker's movement, often named "Red Clydeside"¹⁸, first became active during Maclean's days 1910 –1924, and once again between 1970 – 1980. Gregor Gall claims that the history of socialism has guided Scottish politics of today: "The result was a fusion of radical and social democratic politics with national identity and nationalism in a renewed and stronger way" (2005: 139). When Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979, a new interest in trade unions was ignited, because it was seen as the most effective way in opposing government. The Tory government, with Thatcher as prime minister, made many unwelcomed changes to the Scottish economy and industries. Many people lost their jobs which caused strikes, upheavals and general dissatisfaction with the English rule.

The first referendum of devolved powers to Scotland, since the treaty of 1707, was held in 1979. The vote was in majority of the Yes-side but was deemed a failed vote since it did not fill the requirements of 40% of the electorate votes. However, the second referendum of 1997 was once again a strong Yes and resulted in the *Scotland Act 1998*. The act established the right to a Scottish government with powers to legislation on certain issues. These issues are referred to as "devolved matters", which are described to concern the "day-to-day life in Scotland" (The Scottish Parliament n.d.), e.g. housing, tourism development and social services. Other issues,

¹⁶ See also discussion on Scottish Highland culture in *The invention of tradition* (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992).

¹⁷ Devolution is a term that describes decentralisation of power, it essentially means that *certain* authority is distributed to a smaller region within a larger state.

¹⁸ The "Red Clydeside" movement, got its name from the river Clyde that runs through Glasgow and more urban areas. On the banks of the river Clyde where many of the factories that proved central for the strikes were situated.

e.g. immigration, defence and nuclear energy, are referred to as “reserved matters” and are still in the hands of the UK Parliament. The UK Parliament is, however, still reserved the right to make laws on devolved matters.

In the run up to the independence referendum in 18th of September 2014, Scotland was promised more devolved powers by the former English prime minister David Cameron. With the condition that they voted No, thus, if they voted to stay in the UK (British Broadcast Corporation [BBC] 2014). The referendum of 2014, ended with an even outcome, but a No-vote nonetheless, with 45% Yes and 55% No (BBC n.d.). In the light of this more powers were devolved to Scotland, such as the ability to set rates of income taxes (*Scotland Act 2016*: 13). After the Scottish independence referendum, another defining referendum was held, that of Brexit. Scotland voted in majority to remain in the EU, but the overall vote ended in favour of leaving the EU. Thus, this has to some extent made the questions of Scottish independence more urgent, the hope of being able to vote for EU membership once again. The Scottish independence movement of today is diverse and involves several different actors and groups from a wide political spectrum. Therefore, it is not possible to claim that the independence movement have a general opinion towards the EU, however, there is a majority of pro-independence voters who voted to remain in the EU. This might seem contradictory – voting to leave one union and voting to remain in another – and was problematised by several informants:

It’s not a contradiction. Leaving the UK gets us away from the Tories [the *Conservative and Unionist Party*]. Remaining in the EU gets us away from the Tories. It’s as simple as that (interview, SNP voter).

Thus, within this quote there is the contested issue of nationalism. It is a nationalist move to want to leave the UK, on the other hand, it is an anti-nationalist action to remain in the EU. This sets the scene for the first empirical chapter of this thesis where I will focus the discussion on the issue of nationalism.

3. Going Beyond Nationalism

In the Townhead Village Hall, in the middle of a low-key residential area, two professors from Belgium in collaboration with *Workers International to Rebuild the Fourth International Scotland* (WIRFIS) carried out a talk on socialism and the national question. The aim of the talk was to illustrate differences and similarities between Belgium, Spain and Scotland. Three countries that all have intrastate movements of independence. The participants at the meeting consisted of what I had come to recognise as the typical arrangement, a little more than a handful white men from various groups on the Left. The man who represented WIRFIS asked everyone to introduce themselves and explain the extent of their political engagement. Most claimed to be active in political parties, while others said to mainly support independence and that they have not been active since the referendum. Soon after the professor started the presentation about Belgium, he critiqued the Flemish movement in Belgium for being neo-liberal, capitalist and right-wing nationalist. The Catalonian movement in Spain, was critiqued for the same reasons, however unlike the Flemish by the professor's opinion, Catalonia should have the right to self-determination. This was met with consent by the participants. The professor enforced his argument by referring to the oppression of Catalonian culture that followed Franco's dictatorship. Later, when it came to the question and answer part of the evening, a man from the *Scottish Socialist Party* (SSP) took the floor:

The issue of language and culture is bigger in Catalonia and Belgium than in Scotland and across the UK. In Scotland it's the financial and natural resources that are the issues. All the money goes to London. Nationalism or nationality is just in people's head. Scottish nationalism is actually about British nationalism, about a unified state, the unified UK. Independence define Scottish politics.

Throughout the talk, Scotland was used as a contrasting example to the other movements. The man representing WIRFIS continued in the same manner:

The prime motivation for Scottish independence is not kilts and bagpipes. There are elements of that, but it's rather that the Tories lead the country, and the people of Scotland have nothing to say about Scotland.

At the meeting they were critiquing nationalism. In this context, nationalism was portrayed as based on cultural preservation and capitalism. In the background there is also a notion of Scottish economy as less capitalistic than English economy. More upfront is the perception that

Scottish nationalism is not about Scottish independence. But rather, Scottish nationalism were claimed to be the same as British nationalism, which in turn is about enforcing the UK. I will, in this chapter, deal with this somewhat contractionary claim, in the wider context of the differences between Scottish, English and British nationalism both in academia as well as for my informants. I will illustrate that there seems to be two differing, but related, ways of perceiving Scottish nationalism. Before this I will discuss how the Scottish independence movement deal with, or rather oppose, nationalist ideology. Following Bruce Kapferer (2011), I stress the particular in nationalism. Kapferer's work on Australian egalitarian nationalism in opposition to the British colonial rule, has helped me to conceptualise a nationalist movement beyond nationalism. Furthermore, I will discuss reasoning for independence, through *moral emotions* (Goodwin, Jasper, Polletta 2004) and *moral aspirations* (Jasper 1999).

“It Was Not a Nationalist Vote, but a Leftist Vote!”

Remember, [...] supporting Scottish independence doesn't make you a nationalist, it makes you a democrat! (Colin Fox 2016).¹⁹

On my way to the *Radical Independence Campaign* (RIC) meeting in Edinburgh, I sat on the Intercity train trying to memorise as much as I could from an article that Ellie, one of the activists in RIC, emailed me the day before. It was an extract from their blog, telling the story of the time of the referendum and the role of RIC, written by one of the members who also attended the meeting that same night. A quote in the article caught my interest: “Where the SNP [*Scottish National Party*] is Scottish *nationalist*, RIC is Scottish *internationalist*” (Armstrong 2015, my emphasis). The blogpost stated that the SNP is too inward looking while RIC from the start have placed the independence campaign on a global level, the fight for Scottish independence is portrayed as a fight for global justice and democracy.

When I finally got to the Saint Augustine United Church, I was greeted by Ellie. She expressed excitement that I was interested in the independence movement and claimed that they used to get a lot of international attention but since the vote was finalised the interest had stagnated. I

¹⁹ The national co-spokesperson for the *Scottish Socialist Party*.

helped Ellie put the kettle on for tea and carry cups and biscuits down to the meeting room. The meeting ended up being a group interview unlike other meetings I have attended before where it was often more about participating within the limitations of how the meetings were carried out.

After a short round of presentation, I realised that RIC represented a good part of the Left. This became an opportunity to investigate the combined leftist mobilisation of the independence movement. I started out by asking the group the same question as I asked during my interviews: why independence? The answers I got had the same underlying meaning, namely that: independence is the only way to break up the British state, and with that to break away from imperialism, capitalism and to create radical political change. Harris, one of the leaders of a community of Leftist activist under the name of *Revolutionary Socialism in the 21st Century*, argued that: “It [the independence referendum] was not a nationalist vote, but a leftist vote”. Others concurred, and Ellie followed:

There is and has been a nationalist strand in independence, but, not mainly. A referendum was coming, we as the Left did not want it to be a nationalist movement. But rather about: what kind of Scotland do we want?

The answer to that question was something they all seemed to agree on, an independent *socialist* Scotland. The RIC-members were actively arguing against nationalism but saw the independence movement as an entry to create another, better, society. Archie a member of *Scottish Labour*, a party who for the most part oppose Scottish independence, claimed that: “I wouldn’t be interested in independence, if independence would mean neoliberalism”. This was followed by sounds of approval around the room. Hence, independence appeared to be conditional, if not, independence would equal nationalism. Jean, another female member of RIC, along with Ellie, discussed the issue of Trident, the British nuclear programme located on Scottish grounds, and the feeling of powerlessness that surrounded the issue.

Jean: We have no control over it [Trident]!

Ellie: They drive nuclear waste and weapons through our towns, passing primary schools, passing children.

Jean continued and told everyone about the time she confronted a SNP member on his views on Trident at the independence conference. By mocking his voice, Jean said: “It’s a question

of ownership”, which everyone laughed at, and with a smirk she looked to the others: “That is the sound of a traditional nationalist, like a Tory”. While the discussion was kept casual with laughter and jokes, I picked up an undertone of gravity, they expressed fear and unease over several issues. There is no referendum for independence in the near future, however, all the subjects touched upon things that exist today. So even though they were looking back to establish why the independence movement was vital, it has not changed. Trident, the political turmoil, the power of Westminster, are still real.

In RIC’s perspective, being Left is at odds with being nationalist, instead nationalism is considered to belong to capitalism. The issue of nationalism can therefore be read as an issue of morality, it fundamentally contradicts their Left political ideology (Jasper 1999: 111). These *moral emotions* are according to Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta (2004) products of how people in general, and people of social movements specifically, comprehend their place in the world. Moral emotions are “tied to cognition, and narratives and discourse prove central in creating and reinforcing them” (ibid.: 422-423). Importantly, expressions of moral emotions are enacted when the political ideology of a person is ‘shocked’ which often is connected to experiences of threat (Jasper 1999: 140).

James Jasper (1999) claims that there are six categories of *moral aspirations* that can be shocked and ignite protest. These categories are economic security, ontological security, professional ethics, community allegiances, religious beliefs and, as mentioned, political ideologies. In the Scottish independence movement are moral aspirations of the categories ontological security and political ideologies most visibly recurrent. The former refers to the belief that the physical surrounding is safe and “trustworthy” whereas the latter refers to politically based beliefs of acts, practices and institutions (1999: 140). Their beliefs of safe surroundings, i.e. ontological security, and their politically directed beliefs on what is right or wrong with the combined hope of being able to enact these beliefs, i.e. political ideologies, are equally under threat within the issue of Trident. The threat of damages caused by nuclear waste, the capitalist motivations behind having a nuclear programme and the inabilities of affecting it causes the outburst of moral emotions. Hence, Trident symbolise two threats to their moral aspirations, and therefore two reasons for mobilising protest beyond nationalist claims within a nationalist discourse. Since they are unable to affect this policy in the current state of Westminster rule.

The shunning of the terminology of nationalism was, thus, recurring during the time of my fieldwork. In interviews, in meetings and at demonstrations, nationalism was often managed by contestation. As well, it seemed like the activists, during interviews, suspected that I would interpret the independence movement as a nationalist movement, and that they therefore chose to fend off any such claims before I brought it up. At demonstrations, they were constantly trying to control how the movement was perceived by the spectators, therefore, I will discuss this in the fifth chapter of the thesis.

At my first meeting with the *Socialist Party Scotland* (SPS), the chairman Matt claimed that: “It is important to delineate between us and the nationalists. We want a global movement, a movement of all working-class but without capital movement”. Beside referring to their pro-independence position, it also refers to the anti-EU perspective that the SPS hold. They were constantly critiquing the *Scottish Socialist Party* (SSP) for going along with anti-socialist, or SNP, politics in order to achieve support for independence, such as the SSP pro-EU stance. The SPS argued that the EU is a capitalist “boys-club”, and that Scotland should not compromise its “own politics” to achieve independence. Matt clarifies: “their [SSP] slogan is an ‘independent socialist Scotland’, while our slogan is a ‘socialist independent Scotland’, do you see the difference?”. He referred to how the SSP puts independence in the forefront, while the SPS puts socialism first. Which clearly illustrates how nationalism was contested both internally, within the movement, and externally, how the movement wished to be perceived. This perception of the SPS, is however, not agreed upon by the SSP. Many people within the SSP stressed how independence is a means to an end, and therefore not an end in itself. In similarity then with the SPS and RIC, independence is the possibility to enact change.

We have to change the foundation of the system, away from the private property, property of the few. That can't be achieved within the contains of the UK. The phrasing is that there's no Westminster road to socialism. It's true! We can't expect it to happen, we have to make it happen ourselves, and in Scotland we make that happen through independence. But only if it's in service of our radical transformation of how our society is run (Interview, SSP member).

Since Scottish independence is argued as not just *a* possibility, but as the *only* possibility, to create “radical political change”, there seems to be a collective understanding of Scottish politics as more prone to socialism than English politics. Which is more explicitly expressed by Matt when referring to Scottish politics as something in opposition to English politics. The statement “own politics” symbolises how Scotland is perceived to have a separate political

ideology. As Kapferer (2011: 211) argues: “No tradition is constructed or invented and discontinuous with history”. Kapferer refers to how the “ontology of tradition” in nationalism is shaped from history. More specifically, the rationale of nationalism “is contained in their respective cosmologies, in the myths, legends and other traditions to which these nationalisms accord value” (ibid.: 6). Furthermore, Kapferer refers to the unifying ability of the ideology of nationalism:

Different interpretations within reality and indeed competing ideologies can be contained within a single ontological scheme. The feature of nationalism as a dominant ideology is that it can bring a particular ontology and its reasoning into central place. In this situation an ideology of nationalism, through the ontology inscribed in the traditions presented for worship, can unify diverse contexts of meaning in time and space (2011: 212).

Kapferer (2011) stresses the particularities of nationalism and argues that scholars often believe nationalism to be constructed from the same material and cultural forms. Kapferer opposes this by illustrating the historical importance of Sinhalese nationalism versus Australian nationalism, and how their connection to British colonialism have taken similar, yet not identical, manifestations. Australian nationalism has developed egalitarian traits in immediate opposition against the English system which is perceived to be highly hierarchical. In line with Kapferer, I argue that the construction of a socialist ideology of the Scottish independence movement follows particular historical claims. Making their nationalism one of socialist ideology.

Thus, even though the Scottish independence movement is mainly made up from different directions of the Left. They all argue along the lines of one specific tradition. In similarity with Australian egalitarianism, the arguments are in opposition against the British (or English) capitalist ideology. Importantly, the Scottish independence movement argue against nationalism, however, they do this within the discourse of nationalism. There is no escaping the fact that what they seek is to establish a nation-state. By looking at arguments against nationalism and expressions of *moral emotions* (Goodwin, Jasper, Polletta 2004) it illustrates the Scottish anti-nationalist nationalist ideology. Furthermore, there is a paradox here, the activists were often claiming to be leftist and therefore not nationalist, however, at the same time a claim was being made that Scottish nationalism is more leftist than other forms of nationalism. To discuss this argument and illustrate how the movement act within the discourse

of nationalism, I will look at the differences between Scottish nationalism, English nationalism and British nationalism in the next section.

Opposing Nationalism Within Nationalism

English nationalism, I think is very much like the Union flag, it's about white dominance, like 'are you one of us or are you other'. If you're other you're not welcome, it's about delusion of English culture, rather than thinking 'you know what, things change, things develop'. White British culture, such as it is, is still so dominant that overall, we're not at risk of losing it, but it's nice to enrich it with other influences (interview, Allison).

John Curtice and Anthony Heath (2009) claim that Britishness and Englishness previously referred to similar identities, that one can adhere to the first as much as the other. However, because of changes in the British demographic and growing nationalist tendencies in Scotland and Wales, the identities have come to carry different connotations. Where British nationalism is synonymous with unionism and multiculturalism. It refers to the celebration of diversity within the UK, and therefore, British nationalism exist in all countries of the UK and, no matter where you were born either inside or outside of the UK, it is still possible to call yourself British. English nationalism, on the other hand, have been developed in opposition, and have therefore become a highly ethnicity-based identity (2009: 42). The interlocutors in this study, however, still used the concepts interchangeably. Most of them ascribed both British nationalism and English nationalism to England. Henceforth, I will therefore use the term of British nationalism²⁰. As Allison, who is pro-independence²⁰ and a member of the *Glasgow Feminist Collective*, claimed, the usage of the Union flag symbolises a hegemonic discourse both in cultural and racial terms.

Gavin, a member of the SPS student branch claimed, what can be perceived as a contradictory claim, that he complied to the independence movement in order to not be on the side of nationalists. He was undecided or even opposed Scottish independence before he recognised that people who were pro-independence were people who shared the same political views as him. Whereas the other side consisted of "the conservatives and UKIP [*United Kingdom Independence Party*], and you even had the BNP [*British National Party*] and the far-right in

²⁰ See discussion on emic and etic concepts in chapter 2.

Scotland”. Gavin, thus, claimed that this helped him make his mind up, “seeing who was on the two sides is mainly what swung it for me”. Hence, in Gavin’s view, actors who opposed Scottish independence were groups who complied to right-wing politics. As has been discussed, actors of the Scottish independence movement for the most part often argued that being nationalist is at odds with their reasons for independence. However, I soon came to understand that several people argued that Scottish nationalism, when referring to nationalist sentiments of Scotland as an independent country, hold more admirable traits than British nationalism in their perceptions. Traits that carry “moral legitimacy” (Goodwin, Jasper & Polletta 2004: 422). Which Logan, a young newly recruited SSP-member clearly expressed:

(Logan): I would much rather be a Scottish nationalist than a British nationalist. But I can still see faults in every aspect of nationalism, because again, you know, you’re born where you’re born, you are who you are and that’s that.

(Me): Why would you rather call yourself a Scottish nationalist?

(Logan): Basically, for the fact that British nationalism has always been seen as this kind of UKIP, right-wing agenda, which has always been seen as kind of anti-immigrant. The problem of right-wing in this country is that they advocate this British unity, like we fought Nazi Germany, but they’re pretty hypocrites though, when they discriminate against folk from other countries.

However, Logan claimed that he “grew out of nationalism”, and therefore left the SNP to join the SSP. During our interview, he constantly argued that politics is more important than national sentiments. Even so, Logan claimed that he much rather identifies himself as a Scottish nationalist because of what is perceived to follow Scottish nationalism. The presumed multicultural dimension in Britishness does not seem to be recognised by the people who oppose the British identity, rather, British nationalism is often portrayed to carry racism and right-wing politics.

It’s [Scottish nationalism] not about, where you’re born, it’s not about what colour of the skin you have, is not about if you’re an immigrant. It’s about whoever lives in Scotland is prioritized, as compared to a white British person. For example, a British nationalist might discriminate against you, if you lived here because you’re from another country. But with Scottish nationalism, if you lived here they would still prioritize you, because you live here, you work here, you pay taxes, they see you as one of them (interview, Logan).

What Logan expresses is referred to as “civic” nationalism, i.e. nationalism that is less about ethnicity and more about equality and individual rights. This view of Scottish nationalism is shared by both scholars (e.g. Barker 2015) and activists in the independence movement:

Nationalism has taken a different meaning in Scotland. So, it's about education, and nice things really, as opposed to "them and us". It [nationalism] is not really thought of as against England so much as pro-Scotland. I don't know if that really make sense, but it does for us (interview, Mason SNP voter).

Scottish nationalism was most often seen as a practice of inclusion over exclusion. As Mason said, the distinction might not be clear to people on the outside of Scottish nationalism. In similar ways was shunning nationalism used to illustrate how the British nationalist movement is fundamentally different from that of the Scottish nationalist movement.

Scottish nationalism is less anti-immigrants than British nationalism. If you see people going around yelling stuff about immigrants, they probably would be waving British flags, rather than Scottish flags (interview, Gavin).

So far, the concept of Scottish nationalism has been dealt with in two contradictory ways; firstly, the paradox of being both Scottish nationalist and British nationalist i.e. UKIP, BNP or Tory, and secondly, Scottish civic nationalism in favour of independence. Importantly, we need to make a distinction between Scottish nationalism and nationalism *in* Scotland. The former signifies people in favour of Scottish independence, whereas the latter refers to the so-called "right-wing" nationalists in favour of British unity.

Yeah, I think in Scotland, nationalism is often represented as being, embarrassing, like the Mel Gibson nationalism, you know armies of folk wearing kilt and all that stuff. While there is an element of that, it's not a fair reflection of the majority. I think most people trying to describe a right-wing nationalism of Scotland, it just doesn't happen, it just doesn't really exist. I would say it's a very small niche (interview, Ron SSP member).

Liisa Malkki and Allaine Cerwonka (2007: 78) claims that "a negative relationship or a relationship in denial is still a relationship", and as Malkki has stated elsewhere, people have the ability to counteract categories (1995: 8). In *Purity and Exile* (1995), Malkki describes how Hutu refugees lived under categorisations that were not their own, but also that they could undermine those categories and make new ones. Thus, the construction of Scottish nationalism follows this logic. The complex relationship of nationalism and the Scottish independence movement is a product of a way of distinguishing themselves from "Britishness". As mentioned, the Scottish independence movement act under and within the concept of nationalism, but the way they have subverted this categorisation is a way of resisting

nationalism. The construction of the category of what one can call the “anti-nationalist” and the “civic nationalist”, enables a Leftist independence movement. Since they are forced to position themselves within the discourse of nationalism they need categories that deal with nationalism through a Left ideology. In the next section, I will conclude the points made in this chapter.

Conclusion

In the foregoing, I have illustrated three points: firstly, the Scottish independence movement is mobilised partly through *moral emotions* (Goodwin, James, Polletta 2004) and *moral aspirations* (Jasper 1999) which are constructed by movements Left ideology. The ideology is perceived to be part of general distinctly Scottish politics. Secondly, the Left ideology is tied to a specific construction of history, as the development of egalitarianism in Australia (Kapferer 2011) is the Left ideology of the Scottish independence movement constructed through certain historical particularities. The Left ideology is constructed in opposition to British right-wing nationalism. Thirdly, the complex relationship with nationalism is a way to construct difference in relation to British (and English) nationalism. Evidently, the subversion of nationalism, in opposing all forms of nationalism as well as constructing a civic form of nationalism, illuminates how the Scottish independence movement establish their own agenda within the inescapable discourse of nationalism.

The oppositional position to right-wing nationalism in the Scottish independence movement enables mobilisation that goes beyond nationalism, because, a negative relationship is also a relationship (Malkki & Cerwonka 2007). By establishing what the Scottish independence movement is not, it reinforces their position as an anti-nationalist nationalist movement. Social movements are engaged, in Arturo Escobar terms, “struggles over meaning” (1992: 412). Since independence is perceived as the only possibility to make way for a Left ideology, they need to confront nationalism and control how this is perceived. The practice of counteracting categorisation (Malkki 1995) is a way to control the terms on which they argue. However, the question remains, if the Scottish independence movement is not primarily constructing national identities, what identity is constructed for the political project of independence? In the following chapter, I will discuss how the Scottish independence movement construct a specific identity, that is, an anti-nationalist national identity.

4. An Anti-Nationalist National identity

It's SHITE being Scottish! We're the lowest of the low. The scum of the fucking Earth! The most wretched, miserable, servile, pathetic trash that was ever shat into civilization. Some hate the English. I don't. They're just wankers. We, on the other hand, are COLONISED by wankers. Can't even find a decent culture to be colonized BY. We're ruled by effete arseholes (*Trainspotting*, 1996).

In a late evening in a murky pub in the city centre of Glasgow, Ron and I started to discuss what makes a Scottish movie Scottish. He steered the conversation to the movie *Trainspotting* (1996), a movie that has been given a lot of attention from different people throughout the fieldwork. Ron who studied the subject of nationalism in media at Glasgow university, argued that *Trainspotting* is a good example of a Scottish movie. Not only does it take place in Scotland, the actors are from Scotland and therefore speak in Scots. The movie is also aimed towards a Scottish audience since it reflects the contemporary issues of the 1990s in the Scottish society. He analysed the differences of the first movie from the second *T2 - Trainspotting* (2017) and told me that the second movie reflects the changes of the Scottish society where the audience are supposed to react to the fact that the doctor is played by a black man who speaks in “heavy Scots”. Thus, Ron made a claim that the demographic in Scotland has changed and, more importantly, stated that the usage of Scots is significant in order to determine who is Scottish²¹. Within this claim, it is made visible that some form of national identity is in play, however, as will be illustrated in this chapter, the Scottish national identity within the Scottish independence movement is an anti-nationalist identity.

In the foregoing chapter, I discussed how oppositional nationalist ideologies enabled a Left ideology. In this chapter I will delineate what makes a Scottish person Scottish. More specifically, I will look closely on the identities of the Scottish independence movement, by asking: how do the actors in the Scottish independence movement define themselves as Scottish? As the overarching aim of the thesis, to illustrate how the Scottish independence movement shape specific identities, I use Malkki's (1995) concept *mythico-history* as well as *historicity* and the prolonging of this concept into *negative historicity* (Tambar 2016). The Scottish independence movement share fundamental similarities with the Québécois independence movement. They are both “proto-nations” (Hylland 2010: 19) trying to establish

²¹ I will dwell on this under the second subheading “Practicing Scottishness” within the frames of the concept *code for conduct* (Handler 1988).

sovereign states within a major state. I will therefore conceptualise arguments for independence through Richard Handler's (1988) framework for analysing the Québécois independence movement.

Oppositional Identities

Handler identifies two characteristics of Québécois nationalist ideology, *locality* and *code for conduct*²². Locality refers to attachment to specific territory, i.e. place of birth, whereas, code for conduct connotes a way of living, i.e. practicing Québécois culture: "To be Québécois is to act Québécois, and to act Québécois comes natural to those who are Québécois" (Handler 1988: 38). Thus, within this statement lies an essentialist explanation to what makes a Québécois enact certain cultural practices, i.e. rather than culture, nature is the prevailing factor for what makes a person Québécois. What makes a person Scottish, on the other hand, does not seem to be argued as dependent on place of birth or genetics.

People were kind of pointing out that this isn't about kind of race or heritage. It's about civic nationalism. If you live here, if you want to raise a family here, or you want to work here, or you want to study here, or whatever you want to do, but Scotland is your home. Then you should be part of that country, you should be part of the fabric of the country, you should be part of the society and part of its political decision-making process and your views should be represented and valued. In the kind of leftist echo chamber, that is the kind of prevailing view, and that's how I kind of see the Scottish identity. I don't think everyone sees it that way, I think we still have plenty of people, "like where're you from", and somebody would say "I'm from Partridge", they would be like "that's not what I meant, because you're not white". But I think the independence referendum, at least people on the Left, gave a chance to think of what Scottishness is and what it should be, and so we do have that idea (interview, Allison).

Allison argued that the idea of Scottishness has changed in relation to the independence movement. She believed that because of the movement, an overly idealistic image of inclusiveness in terms of who is perceived to belong to the Scottish identity exist within the Scottish Left. She admitted to the fact that some Scottish people still considered the Scottish demography being white. In the meantime, she made a claim for how the independence referendum, instead of causing increased right-wing nationalism, has opened the question of citizenship over heritage. The content of Scottishness is therefore not argued as a natural

²² Handler uses the concept of 'code for conduct' with reference to the definition by David Schneider (1968), and his work on American kinship.

essence but rather as a way becoming, or in the words of Malkki, “identity is always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorization by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, and so on” (1997: 71). Allison, with other voices in this thesis, spoke from a Left point of view. Thus, Allison refers to one specific identity that is argued for from one specific point of view – since the Scottish identity is, like any other identity (Gupta & Fergusson 1997^b: 13), not stable or “rooted”. The Left identity that is propagated by Allison is visible in the arguments that follows, and to a large extent in the arguments that already have been discussed.

People in Scotland, not even like working-class folks, they don’t care if you’re Polish or from Bangalore, we see people as human beings we don’t see people as being different, even if somebody is black or Muslim or whatever, we don’t care about that. What we care about in Scotland is if you’re a *good* person, that’s what matters the most. The problem with the approach down south, in England, you wouldn’t be accepted by anybody, even if they’re Polish, or born in England, that’s a problem. In Scotland we don’t recognise that (interview, Logan).

At odds with Québécois nationalist ideology, Logan claimed that the Scottish identity is less about heritage and skin colour than about being a “good person”. This claim, is an indication that Scottishness is an admirable trait. A person can, according to Logan, be considered Scottish, if that person is “good”. Hence, this evokes the issue of what is embodied in being “good” and therefore what is subscribed to the Scottish identity. Whenever this was discussed, it was almost always within the frame of how Scottishness is Left and therefore “good”. Gavin argued in these lines and, as Logan, claimed that because of the leftist traits in Scottishness, it is in direct opposition to Englishness.

I just think that the culture is just in general more collectivist and leftist. It just happens that Scotland has a culture that is less nationalist, in the blood and soil kind of nationalist, and more willing to help others and reconnect to the international stage. The phrase is always “little Englanders”. The idea of that they want to retreat, and they want to leave the European Union, and they want to live in a nice little English village. That’s a stereotype. It’s the opposite of Scottishness (interview, Gavin).

Where there is “good”, there is necessarily “bad”. This is what Claude Lévi-Strauss has referred to as *binary oppositions*²³, thus, two categories that are fundamentally oppositional.

²³ How Lévi-Strauss make use of this concept is influenced by the linguistics theory of de Saussure (1983).

What these myths implicitly proclaim is that the opposition that organize natural phenomena and life in society – heaven and earth, up and down, fire and water, fog and wind, near and far, Indians and non-Indians, countrymen and strangers, and so on – will never be symmetrical, even though each term of the pair implies the other. [...] The same always engenders the other (Lévi-Strauss 2016: 52).

Importantly, Lévi-Strauss argues that it is when something exists in opposition that it becomes meaningful (1976: 159). Binaries constructs the order of society, where something is true or false, moral or immoral, and, in the case of the Scottish identity, good or bad. Oppositional categories are necessary to make sense of the world. Because of its anti-nationalist character, the Scottish independence movement mobilise not through strictly national identities in the sense of heritage of being Scottish or English, but rather under the good Scottishness and the bad Englishness. Additionally, Scottishness is also argued to carry internationalism. Gavin claimed that Scottishness is more outward looking this is not recognised as a part of being English (this will be discussed more at length in the next chapter). Many people claimed, during my fieldwork, that there are right-wing people both within and outside of the independence movement. Even so, Scottishness is still perceived to entail an identity that is more Left than the English identity.

These days, in more recent years, I say I'm Scottish, it's partly because of the specificity, also partly a distancing thing, it's not just that I'm British. If I say I'm British you might think that I have something to do with all the horrible things going on, on the other side of the border. You might think like I'm a prick, like a horrible person (interview, Allison).

Herbert Marcuse writes: “Historical being is the being of *Life*. The analysis of historicity must lead back to an analysis of historical *Life*” (1932 [1987]: 320, emphasis in original). Meaning that neither person nor history are disconnected from the other. Instead, historicity accentuates how actors constantly construct history. In addition, historicity refers to how history constantly is engaged in the construction of identities in how people negotiate between “experience and expectation” (Stewart 2016: 80). I argue along these lines, thus, that the identity that is Scottishness is constructed out of historical narratives. This is made rather explicit in the last quote by Allison where she argued that “horrible” actions by the English, has caused her identity to be one of Scottish identity. Again, the English “horrible” or “bad” identity is perceived to be in direct opposition to the Scottish identity. In similarity with the Turkish ban

on Kurdish cultural expressions (Tambar 2016), the history of Scotland is also tainted by an alienage state intervening on specific Scottish expressions²⁴.

Kabir Tambar explains how the construction of minorities in nation-states have made minorities experience a form of “*negative historicity*: negative in the sense of being evacuated from the time and place of historical progression that has characterized the national subject” (2016: 34, emphasis in original). By this, Tambar claims that the majority in the nation-state has the ability to have a historicity, a history that constructs the nationality, while the minority is subscribed to and construct a negative historicity, a history of *anti*-nationality. By experiencing a negative historicity, Tambar claims that the Kurdish minority can argue for new political futures. Thus, by using the historical violent measures of the Turkish majority in order to establish grounds for oppositional resistance. This is transferable into the Scottish context:

Scottish independence offers two opportunities to literally and physically push back the rule of the British state to the border and replace it, ideally, with working-class democracy, and also to strike out the ideology of Britishness, the idea of the unionists. Independence would be a stake in the heart of these ideas. In a lot of ways, I can be cynically pro-independence, because there is a bigger goal. Not necessarily one that you will hear us talking about but we’re going to rule back the state, we want to strike out the Britishness itself. It’s true but it’s hard to communicate that because it makes you sound like a crazy person (interview, Ron).

Ron made the claim that independence, both in itself and the implications of independence, would mean eradicating the Britishness of and in Scotland. Thus, resisting oppression by the English, through establishing the Scottish negative historicity of Left ideology. I therefore claim that the Scottish independence movement is mobilised through the making of a negative historical identity. How people in the independence movement have come to accept and argue for the perception of a Scottish leftist identity can furthermore be analysed with the concept of *mythico-history* (Malkki 1995).

In Malkki’s work on Hutu refugees in Tanzania, she discusses the usage of historical narratives by the refugees in order to construct a collective national identity. Malkki illustrates how mythico-history is a practice to separate one group from another making your own group the “good” protagonist and the oppositional group an “evil” alien group. In similarity with negative historicity, the Hutu are not the majority population which evokes the need for constructing a

²⁴ This is discussed in the background chapter, where I delineate how the English banned e.g. bagpipes.

collective identity that enables resistance. Malkki claims that “historical narratives comprised a set of moral and cosmological ordering stories: stories which classify the world according to certain principles, thereby simultaneously creating it” (ibid.: 54). Therefore, mythico-history is a moral order which enables self-categorisation and through that positioning against the “evil” group. Here are the claims by Logan and Allison illustrative to the understanding of how certain political identities are constructed and reproduced in the independence movement. By using mythical-historical narratives, they can claim Scottishness as the “good” protagonist. Furthermore, Malkki describes how present “events” are shaped and made into episodes of mythico-history, therefore mythico-history is not fixated in time or space (ibid.: 55). Rather, it is a process of constructing categories that are perceived to carry meaningful connotations through historical narratives.

Additionally, Malkki writes that also historical and national consciousness is processual and transformable. By “living historically”, using historical narratives to make sense of current events, it is possible to construct collective identities (Malkki 1995: 105, 242). Malkki argues that mythico-history is a process where groups are manifested as separate, both by claiming a distinct collective history and by dealing with the present through distinct historical narratives. Because of the moral distinctiveness of the group it constructs a collective resistance (ibid.: 55). This is illustrated by how Mason argued for differences between Englishness and Scottishness through historical claims:

England is generally a more right-wing country, not fascist right-wing, or anything like that, but it just tends to be more individualist based. Were in Scotland it tends to be more collective based, there are lots of examples of that; like the National Health Service [NHS]. In Scotland we still have NHS whereas in England it's very privatised. But even historically, it existed in Scotland for a few years, there was a thing like maternity nurses provided by the state before World War II, that sort of thing.

Mason argued that the present NHS system mirrors how Scotland historically have implemented more collectivistic politics, which traditionally are more left-wing. Mason used this claim to oppose Scottishness to Englishness. Another example is Trident. I mentioned in the previous chapter how the issue of Trident became an issue of *moral aspirations* and, as I wrote, Trident was one issue where the Left ideology of the independence movement was made visible. The concept mythico-history illustrates how Trident merely is an expression of already established differences between Englishness and Scottishness. Thus, the event Trident can be

read as an episode that is interpreted by the independence movement through historical narratives. As mentioned, these historical narratives are tied to the cosmological moral order, making both Trident and NHS issues of “good” or “evil”. In extension this reinforces Scotland or Scottishness as, what Malkki calls, “an imagined moral community” (1995: 243).

So far, in this chapter, I have discussed how Scottishness is produced through historicity and mythico-history. How historical narratives have constructed Scottishness to be more about citizenship than heritage, how the Left political identity have defined, or replaced, the national identity. How Scottishness is proclaimed to be a good and moral identity in order to separate themselves from Englishness and Britishness. Hence, the Scottish identity contradicts the Québécois “national identity” (Handler 1988: 32), when considering the element of attachment to heritage. The Scottish identity as perceived by the Scottish independence movement is in constant negotiation since they need to fend off claims of nationalism, in the meantime, they need to oppose Britishness in order to make their own identity meaningful. Since social movements, need oppositional and challenging categories (Escobar 1992: 415), I will in the next section discuss how this identity is practiced and expressed by again invoking the contrast of Québécois nationalist ideology.

Subordinated Scottishness

In the Québécois independence movement, Handler refers to language as one of the traits for what makes a person Québécois, where speaking French fits into the category of *code for conduct* (1988: 36). Importantly, speaking French is portrayed almost as an inherent trait of the Québécois, they speak French because of their Latin heritage. Or in the words of Handler: “As in the example of language shows, Québécois behaviour is more than behaviour: it is a manifestation of an inner essence that is physical as well as spiritual, and more natural than cultural in the anthropological sense of the word” (1988: 38). As mentioned in the previous section, Scottishness is not argued in the same way. It was seldom argued as a natural essence, rather, Scottishness was argued as a “good” trait caused by leftist historical actions. In this section, I will argue that language, as an umbrella term for the Scottish accent and the languages Scots and Gaelic, is a practice that enables mobilisation of the Scottish independence movement.

From my perspective, I rejected nationalism to vote for independence, because I was British. When the referendum was announced, I was younger then and a bit less political. But I remember the first exact time it was on tele and I wasn't for it at all because I was British, I was not Scottish. I considered Scottish people to be something else because they would have an accent, that I didn't have. When I was a child that seemed like a big distinction, that sort of clinched that I was more English than Scottish (interview, Gavin).

Gavin argued in the interview that his accent formed his identity. Gavin invited me to a movie-screening of a documentary on Corbynism²⁵ at Strathclyde university. We decided to meet up before in the official-looking debate chamber where another member of the SPS, John, joined in. John sat quiet for the most part of the interview even if Gavin tried to include him in the conversation about the differences in self-identification of being brought up in the Shetlands²⁶ like Gavin, or in Glasgow like John. I found myself being surprised of Gavin's upbringing in Scotland, whereas Johns typical Glaswegian accent was recurrently apparent within the independence movement. John did not identify himself as British and as others he did not see independence as a nationalist claim but a way to implement "*our* politics" and to "get rid of *their* elitist force in Scotland", referring to how Scottish politics is at complete odds with English politics. Thus, even though Gavin and John defined their nationality differently, they argued for independence in similar ways. Gavin believed that, since he did not speak with a Scottish accent, his decision for voting Yes in the Scottish independence referendum was steered by politics rather than nationality. Hence, Gavin's upbringing shaped his identity which therefore made him consider himself British.

I felt like a Shetlander, and I felt British first, I consider Scottish to be something else. This I heard when I was a kid, this is when I was young, bringing it up now it still kind of informs me, that I grew up thinking I didn't feel Scottish. I still don't think I'm Scottish now really, I think I'm a bit Scottish. But yeah, I still feel British and I don't know. It's not a huge thing, it doesn't define me, obviously that's what we're talking about, I'm not voting solely on that basis.

In contrast with most others in this study, Gavin spoke in a typical English accent, something that is commonly referred to as "Queen's English". The differences in identities of Gavin and John gives an indication that Scottishness is perceived and defined in a specific way. Handler refers to this as code for conduct, a set of norms for how "one must act and *be*" in order to be

²⁵ Corbynism signifies the rise of Corbyn and the effects of the same on the British Labour party.

²⁶ Shetland islands belongs to Scotland and is situated in the middle of the North Sea, north of Scotland.

defined as Québécois (1988: 36, emphasis in original). Thus, so far this seem to be applicable to the Scottish context as well. Again, as Gavin claimed, his English accent made him define himself as well as by others as British, rather than Scottish. However, in the case of Québécois national identity, Handler argues that language is part of a *naturalization of culture* (ibid.: 38). Thus, there is an argued inborn quality in the Québécois causing them to speak French and, in the meantime, they are not Québécois if they do not speak French. In line with the previous argument of citizenship over heritage, the Scottish accent does not seem to follow the essentialism of Québécois logic. Instead, language seem to be a practice that can be used more or less actively in order to establish your national and political position. Ron explained this by referring to Glaswegian accent and its connection to a working-class position:

If you spoke in another way than Glaswegian working-class dialect, people would think you were above your station. People would think you think your better than everyone else because of the class issue. We have something called the “Queen’s English”. It’s almost kind of embarrassing to be working-class in Britain, you kind of look down upon low education, ignorance and that sort of thing. The things that represent, or is assumed to represent, working class people is embarrassing in themselves.

This quote illustrates two important issues. Firstly, not speaking Glaswegian even though you are from Glasgow is to violate the code for conduct. Secondly, speaking Glaswegian, and not “Queen’s English”, is read as working-class and therefore “embarrassing”. Thus, this constructs a paradox where both acting and not acting Glaswegian is faulty. Ron expanded his argument into being about the Scottish accent and Scottishness in general:

In Scotland there’s a phenomenon called the Scottish cringe; which means that people are kind of embarrassed of things that are Scottish. If you ever watched a movie with Scottish people, and it’s a Scottish person in it, and you hear the Scottish accent you’ll see the reaction. The kind of cringe. It’s very strange, I think this idea of the Scottish cringe is internalised embarrassment of being Scottish.

As in the quote, Scottish language and Scottishness in general was almost constantly followed with “embarrassing” connotations. Not only was I informed of this through statements during interviews, but embarrassment is a recurrent theme in Scottish popular culture. The movie *Trainspotting* (1996) that was discussed in the introducing vignette of this chapter, is one example where Scottishness is argued to have a lower position than Englishness, which is clearly expressed in the quote: “lowest of the low”. Bruce and Judith Kapferer (1993) claims that the “cultural cringe”, as Ron refers to, is a characterising trait also of Australian culture.

The Kapferers argue that the cringe, the kind of embarrassment of not being culturally valuable, is an effect of the post-colonial discourse (1993: 87, 96). They refer to how this has come to be by invoking Bourdieuan theory of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1999: 97). Thus, even if Australia no longer is under British rule there is still an existing feeling of inferiority, which is a result of the Australian perception of its own cultural institutions as being of less worth in comparison to British culture.

According to the Kapferers, the cringe of the colonial era is reproduced in present days by the flow of popular culture from the US which reinforce the idea of the lesser Australian cultural identity. Since Australian culture is compared to a culture with higher symbolic capital (ibid.: 80). The Scottish cringe stems from similar traditions, where everything British, with hierarchical “high-culture” connotations (Kapferers 1993: 81), is met with contestation. Importantly, in the Scottish independence movement they often referred to the cringe as a defining part of their identity. Therefore, I argue that the Scottish independence movement make use of the cringe to claim oppositional identity to the British (or English) identity.

Again, this leads back to the concept of negative historicity, where Tambar (2016: 49) writes: “They [Kurdish minority] harbor a polemical ethics whose force derives from the way they recast the temporal valence of the minority”. Thus, Tambar claims that the Kurdish minority enact a contradictive moral through feelings connected to minority identity. This is tied to a collective feeling of vulnerability. As recent scholars have suggested, vulnerability can be seen as a productive force because it enables collective resistance (see e.g. Kulick & Rydström 2015). By acknowledging how we are all vulnerable, resistance becomes shared instead of individualistic. Tambar claims that the Kurdish minority in Turkey started to use Kurdish expressions to show solidarity in order to mobilise against the vulnerability (2016: 48). I encountered in the Scottish context several illustrative examples of when language was used actively to assert difference and enforce solidarity against the feeling of vulnerability. The Gaelic language was one of the cultural expression that, for a long time, was banned by the English, and interestingly, during my fieldwork I could often see the usage of Gaelic on flags, pins and images. In the Facebook group *All Under One Banner* (n.d.) dedicated to Scottish independence, Gaelic expressions such as “Alba gu bráth” [Scotland forever] and “saor Alba” [free Scotland] as well as expressions in Scots such as “Aye 2!” [Yes 2²⁷] were frequently used

²⁷ Yes 2 refers to showing support for a second referendum.

by people who commented in the group and by the administrators who regularly posted photos with such phrases.

Malkki argues that: “Yet merely marking difference was clearly not sufficient in the mythico-history; difference was accompanied by the assertion and affirmation in everyday practice of *categorical antagonism*, or enmity” (1995: 145, emphasis in original). Applying Malkki to my material, within the Scottish context, one can see how the cosmological order of mythico-history constructs a conduct of morality, where the identity of good or evil is determined by everyday practices (ibid.: 54, 245). In line with this, I believe that language is a practice to deal with vulnerability, thus using language in a specific way is an everyday practice of resistance that underlines the categorical difference between the identity of Scottishness and the identity of Englishness. Language is practiced as a way to carry out opposition against the “elitist force”. In line with this, I claim that the Scottish position is paradoxical. While the independence movement want to distinguish themselves from Englishness through establishing an oppositional political identity, the Scottish identity carries a negative sentiment constructed through historical narratives.

The mythico-history of Scottishness is, as argued, “good”, although Scottishness is still proclaimed to entail something lesser than Englishness in terms of symbolic capital. However, even though it is paradoxical, it is not necessarily contradictive. As Pierre Bourdieu would phrase it, the symbolic capital of Scottishness constructs a feeling of exclusion from Britishness (1995: 21). In turn, this makes the *habitus* for how the Scottish independence movement perceive the world, and thereafter acts within it (ibid.: 18). The feeling of inferiority thus enables mobilisation against the British and, from what I have stated above, I argue that this complexity is part of the Left political identity. Furthermore, the Scottish independence movement use certain forms of language to mobilise and reproduce the oppositional, subordinated, identity of Scottishness.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how Scottishness, within the Scottish independence movement, is perceived to be a Left identity rather than a national identity. I have contrasted with the

Québécois independence movement, in terms of how they use arguments of essentialism to determine the nature of the Québécois identity (Handler 1988). On the contrary, in the Scottish independence movement is Scottishness argued as a question of citizenship over heritage, thus, to be Scottish is to “have your life in Scotland”. However, this is not to say that the Scottish identity is without defining traits.

To be Scottish is to be a “good” person, which in Lévi-Strauss terminology, entails a binary category in opposition (1976: 159), i.e. a “bad” person. Escobar argues that social movements are dependent on a collective identity in order to mobilise resistance and that, rather than simply opposing power, social movements are “practicing an innovative politics of challenging, shifting, and sometimes accepting established forms of power” (1992: 415). The collective identity of Scottishness is, in line with Escobar, one that is challenging the “bad” British (or English) identity. As I have discussed, the oppositional categories of Scottishness and Britishness are cosmologically ordered in the *mythico-history* (Malkki 1995) of the Scottish independence movement. By the remaking of present events to be about the ordering of good or evil. The independence movement constructs and reproduces a specific Left identity that mobilise their political project. Furthermore, this constructs Scottishness as a *moral imagined community* (ibid.), which enables mobilisation beyond nationalism. I argue that, within the discourse of nationalism, the Scottish independence movement shifts the discussion from one being of national identity to be about a moral identity. Hence, instead of a national identity based on an essentialist *code for conduct* (Handler 1988), the Scottish independence movement constructs a moral code for conduct. Importantly, the Scottish independence movement is also “sometimes accepting established forms of power” (Escobar 1992: 415), in terms of how they establish a *negative historicity* (Tambar 2016). The Scottish cultural cringe exemplifies how Scottishness is practiced as a lower position towards Britishness. This subordinated position in terms of *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1999) illustrates how Scottishness is excluded from Britishness, which, I argue, furthermore legitimates mobilisation of an anti-nationalist nationalist movement.

In the following chapter, I will expand on the subordinate Scottishness as an opposing identity to Britishness. I will discuss how solidarity becomes an expression of this, and how solidarity comes to define the movement.

5. “This Could Be Us”

The Saltires and the Esteladas²⁸ flew over our heads to the sound of activists and politicians performing the *cacerolada*²⁹. A woman from the *Scottish National Party* (SNP) engaged the crowd in chanting: “Visca Catalonia [Long live Catalonia]! No Pasaran [They Shall Not Pass]!”. When the crowd quiet down, a member of the teachers’ union took the stage:

It’s not just for Catalonia, clearly here when it comes to Catalonia and independence we draw the parallel to our own struggle for independence. So when we stand here and say ‘Visca Catalonia’ we are saying it for everybody. And when we say ‘No Pasaran’, we mean it in a real sense, we mean it on our own streets and in the streets of Barcelona.

I was standing at the stairs of the Museum of Modern Arts in Glasgow surrounded by people covered in various symbols signifying the support of independence for Scotland and Catalonia. The demonstration was a manifestation of sympathy with the political prisoners in Catalonia, and people wore yellow ribbons to emphasise the unjust treatment. I noticed three elderly women sipping coffee and jumping up and down to keep themselves warm in the freezing weather. They were holding Saltires in their hands and wearing Estelada’s on their backs. One of the women who wore tiny heart-shaped Saltires in her ears, complained in a broad Glaswegian dialect to the others that she could only recognise a few of the participants from that mornings demonstration in Edinburgh.

After the teacher, Johnathan Shafi took the stage, he is one of the front-figures of *Respect Independence Socialism Environmentalism* (RISE). He talked with a strong and assertive voice. Where speakers before him had troubles being heard, he did not need his microphone. Shafi stated that nationalism belongs to a right-wing agenda, and the independence movement is situated on the opposite side. Independence is “resistance against oppression, racism and nationalism”. With emphasis he claimed that “this is not a question for Catalonia, but for the whole of Europe”. Referring to how the EU is dealing with the Spanish oppression of Catalonia. In this chapter, I will discuss the concept *solidarity* (Liedman 1999), how solidarity is practiced by the Scottish independence movement as social and political identification. I will also point

²⁸ The Saltire is the name of the Scottish flag and the Estelada refers to the Catalanian flag.

²⁹ *Cacerolada* is a form of protest, were the demonstrators show their discontent by banging on pots and pans.

to the emotional expressions that are tied to solidarity. With reference to Liedman and Goodman, Jasper, and Polletta (2004), I regard neither solidarity nor emotions as irrational. Instead, they are important factors for continuous mobilisation. To further theorise this, I will make use of Jeffery S. Juris (2008) concept *affective solidarity*. Lastly, I will discuss the how present-day examples of solidarity are connected to the historical significance of British imperialism through the concept of *mythico-history* (Malkki 1995).

Instrumental Acts of Solidarity

Besides all of the signs of the *Yes Scotland* markers of other struggles were omnipresent in the physical environment of Glasgow. Flags, graffiti and stickers were evident in most parts of the city. Palestine, Catalonia, Tibet, Kurdistan and the South-African anti-apartheid movement, were the most occurrent mentioned struggles that seemed to inflict emotional and political engagement. Other struggles for independence and resistance against oppression were regularly topics for discussions at party-political meetings. However, the urgency of Catalonia,



triggered by the violent actions of the Spanish state and the imprisonment of Catalanian activists, surely caused the Catalanian question to get the outmost attention. During my time in the field, I attended several events that were directed at this issue. The Catalanian struggle were used as a platform, on which the threats to their own democracy could be uttered. One of these was an act of bridge activism.

We gathered in the midday under the “La Pasionaria”³⁰ monument raised by the city of Glasgow and the British Labour movement. The statue depicts Dolores Ibárruri³¹ and the words: “It is better to die on your feet than forever live on your knees”. The monument pays tribute and remembrance to the people who left the UK to fight fascism in Franco’s Spain. I immediately recognised people from previous events concerning

³⁰ “The Passion Flower”.

³¹ Dolores Ibárruri was the leader of the Spanish Communist Party 1945 – 1960, she also coined the motto: “No Pasaran” during the Spanish civil war.

Catalonia. The gathering was part of a mass-action in eight different Scottish cities, in order to protest the Spanish “oppression” and to show support for Catalonia in general. During this event there were speeches from the spokes-person from *Assemblea Nacional Catalana*, *Scotland/Alba* (ANCS) and *Bridges for Indy*. The woman from ANCS talked about the importance of solidarity and that at the exact same time, Saltires and Esteladas will be hung on bridges in these eight cities. A young female activist from *Bridges for Indy* continued by claiming the importance in standing up for solidarity:

There’s a lack of democracy all across the world, and it impacts every single one of us. The lack of media, the lack of coverage, we must bring that to the forefront of politics, *Bridges for Indy* a pro Scottish independence group are today showing solidarity with Catalonia. We’re gonnae [going to] march. Bring democracy back!

When the clock turned ten to one, we started to make our way from the monument. We marched side by side behind big flags, until we reached the bridge where we were given directions to



stand in line facing a woman from *Bridges for Indy* with a film camera. The bridge that was chosen for this event, is the bridge connecting the city centre with the south part of Glasgow, the “Jamaica Bridge”³². The name is one of the many architectural and spatial signifiers of the Scottish colonial heritage. Thus, while we were performing acts of solidarity, there was a constant reminder and echo of the British Empire. I will deal with the complexities of imperialism and colonialism in the next section of this chapter.

Many of the activists had covered themselves in symbols of the movement. More people showed up and started to hand out flags in all sizes and forms. They wore hats with Saltires or the traditional bonnets³³. While we were standing on the bridge, the leaders of the organizations

³² “Jamaica Bridge” is the colloquial name for the “Glasgow Bridge”. It connects Jamaica Street with the South part of Glasgow. Jamaica Street opened in 1763 at the peak of the rum and sugar trade of the British Empire, therefore, there is a deep connection to the slave trade (MacDonald 2017).

³³ It is traditionally called: tam o’ shanter.

encouraged us to join in the salutary chanting “Visca Catalonia”, which was fortified by several passing cars and people honking their horns, applauding and yelling “freedom”. I felt myself getting swept up by the visible enthusiasm and feeling hopeful for the possibilities of change. It certainly conveyed the feeling that the struggle is not lost.

I stood next to an elderly woman who expressed worry of being faced with the same violence as Catalonia have dealt with. With a serious expression on her face she turned to her friend and said: “this could be us”. These acts of solidarity, seemed to be more than just promoting independence, it was acted out in a way to mobilise and stir up emotions in relation to the discontent of media and politicians. Emotional expressions such as “this could be us”, can be read as signs of what Jeffery S. Juris refers to as *affective solidarity* (2008^b: 83).

In his work on counter-summit demonstrations, Juris argues that anger, joy or fear becomes transformed into collective solidarity through the performative actions of counter-summits. Importantly, the Scottish independence movement is, by definition, not a counter-summit movement, since counter-summit refers to movements who are critical against the implications of corporation control through increased globalisation (Juris 2008^b: 62). Even so, counter-summits and the Scottish independence movement share many similarities. For example, as previously mentioned, a large part of the independence movement is a Left movement and position themselves against capitalism and neoliberalism. Additionally, as counter-summits express protectionist arguments, the Scottish independence movement often referred to the English exploitation of Scottish natural resources:

Basically, what happens is that, London has full control of the oil. Something like 90% of oil that is produced in Scotland goes to London. But you know, Scotland and the UK is one of the only countries that doesn't have a sovereign oil fund. So foreign companies, North American companies can come in and dictate the oil price and do it one time, and that's not really fair, is it? We should have an oil fund, but the UK government don't want to do that, because the UK is about business and stuff like that. And if 90% of it is produced here why is it all going to London? Why does it all being stuffed in the London treasury? (interview, Logan).

Juris argues that “[g]iven their highly unpredictable and confrontational nature mass direct action, in particular, produce powerful affective ties” (2008^b: 63), this separates the Scottish independence movement from the counter-summit movements. The Scottish independence movement acts in between routine ways and confrontational actions, because the movement

contains both party-political actors as well as activist groups who lack an ordered setting to construct affection. Juris claims that “formal movement organizations provide stability during moments of decreasing visibility” (ibid.). Whereas counter-summit organisations need stronger feelings of commitment to continue mobilisation. The Scottish independence movement is situated somewhere in between these categories. Diverse by nature, with several competing political and single-issued groups, but formal in some ways in how certain groups act by formal meetings in the smaller groups. However, to mobilise all the different groups into one specific project, I claim that they make use of demonstration as instruments to achieve continuous engagement. Furthermore, I argue that, counter-summit movements and the Scottish independence movement share the same *imagineering of resistance* (Routledge in Juris 2008b: 63).

[...] the imagineering of resistance implies both media-tion and the experience of reality as immediate. For the residents of the camp, the lived experience of the Free State – the articulation of an alternative way of being and of a culture of resistance to hegemonic values – was an end in itself [...]. The same could also be said of the practice of direct action in general. The enactment of resistance can accentuate the experience of ‘reality’ (Routledge 1997: 371, hyphenation in original).

Paul Routledge (1997) thus claims that resistance is a practice of embodiment and mediation. Following this, the activities of the Catalonian demonstrations are embodied performances which makes their own resistance more real again. They use signs of the struggle such as flags and clothing to make powerful images in order to “deepen the commitment and empower those who are participating in the campaign” (Routledge 1997: 373). Which could explain why *Bridges for Indy* advocate their importance in the struggle as the ones who has taken the role of mediating images, in a time when media has lost interest in the independence movement. In the summer of 2014, the situation was described to have been completely different, the signs of the independence movement were everywhere and both social media and traditional media were covered with images of massive “freedom-marches” and gatherings.

There were just Yes-stickers everywhere! People put up stuff in their windows, and it felt like everywhere you looked you were just bombarded by Yes, Yes, Yes! And because Yes is just an inherently positive word, it felt like a really positive campaign. It felt different from a general election, it just had a completely different atmosphere. And everything that happened in George square, it was just really exciting (interview, Allison).

Allison described the general excitement and positive emotions she felt during the campaign. At the *Radical Independence Campaign (RIC)* meeting Ellie told me with a sigh that “we were the centre of the world”. In line with this, several other people told me that running up to the referendum, they were totally swept up by the movement. Jessie, a 30-year old SNP voter who originally comes from a small mining community, talked about the intensity of living in Glasgow during that time. Even though she was against independence at the beginning, she changed her mind to the complete opposite. Jessie got emotionally involved in the movement and spent her days before the referendum partying in George Square, celebrating the possibilities of Scottish independence. During our interview in Maryhill, she talked extensively about the excitement and emotions that were in action in the time of *Yes Scotland*:

So, my gran as far as I'm concerned have always been apolitical. She has never spoken with me about politics. During the independence referendum it was a lot of energy in Glasgow, and she was completely soaked up on it. She phoned me weekly and asked if I'm still voting Yes. She was 87 at the time, and this was the first, as I'm aware, time that she was politically engaged. So, there was me at the age of 27, for the first time being almost a campaign vote and my gran, exactly the same. She was completely engaged in this debate as well. I remember talking about that. That this wasn't just students and young people, this is engaging everybody on both sides of the margin, I will always remember that she got so swept up in it.

As Jessie stated in the quote, the independence movement made people of all ages feel engaged. Hence, during the summer of 2014, the independence movement was provided, as Juris states it, a “space for diverse kinds of visual and emotional expression through distinct embodied performances” (2008^b: 71). Since there is no impending referendum, the independence movement need other platforms to enable continuous mobilisation. Thus, new platforms to reproduce emotional engagement. I claim that the Catalanian demonstration becomes sites of resistance, or in the words of bell hooks (1990) ‘homeplaces’, i.e. places where people who experience oppression can nurture ones’ spirits and create communities of resistance. Thus, the emotional engagement that is evoked at the Catalanian demonstrations is not irrational, neither accidental. The spatial and emotional resistance is, however, strategic. As Juris claims:

Emotion is not incidental to activism. Rather, organizers use emotion strategically in order to generate the commitment necessary to maintain participation (2008^b: 65).

Furthermore, emotions are deeply connected to culture in that how people of social movements strategically make use of emotions to mediate specific images of themselves, with that, as

Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta argue, they “depend on cultural rules about how, when and where to experience and express different emotions” (2004: 414). Importantly, the solidarity people feel and experience during the demonstrations are instrumental in order to define the Scottish independence movement.

When demonstrating for solidarity with Catalonia, the Scottish independence movement constructs a significant sameness with other struggles of marginalised people (Liedman 1999: 91). Thus, this reinforces the identity of the movement as one of resisting oppression, which in turn produces an oppressor, an “other”. As mentioned before, Scottishness is argued to carry internationalism, for example, RIC claimed to be internationalists instead of nationalists. From what I have argued in the previous chapters, Scottishness is perceived to be a Left identity. According to David Featherstone, this would therefore make international solidarity a fundamental practice of Scottishness (Featherstone 2012: 6). Additionally, international solidarity also enables the Scottish independence movement to argue against nationalism within a nationalist discourse. Since international solidarity immediately entails mobilisation beyond borders. I argue, how the Scottish independence movement allies with other proto-nations, or other marginalised groups outside of Scottish borders, reinforces their own struggle. It defines it as a Left movement fighting oppression rather than a nationalist movement. In what follows, I will discuss the historical implications of the British Empire and English politics, and how this has come to mobilise the Scottish independence movement.

Recasting the Empire

When I overheard the elderly woman saying, “this could be us”, during the gathering of bridge activism, I was immediately reminded of when Harris, at the RIC meeting, expressed those exact same words in relation to Catalonia. Both Harris and the elderly woman referred to through how the proto-nations share similar positions, the sovereign alienage states, England or Spain, can legally interfere in their affairs. Additionally, Harris argued that this has historical relevance:

I mean, this could be us. It might be a stretch but think of what's happening in Catalonia. I mean look at the interference by the Spanish state in Catalonia today and what the English did in Northern Ireland, what if they started to see *Yes Scotland* as a threat? What if they would start to see us as a threat? It's horrid to think about what they might do.

Harris reminded everyone of the English violence in Northern Ireland³⁴. Like many others, he was reluctant towards the Catalanian movement, since he claimed to believe that they had a capitalist agenda. But because of the response of the Spanish state and how it echoes of the violence during the Franco era, they should definitely have the right to self-determination. Hence, Harris argued that because of previous oppression, it strengthens the case for independence today. Another man at the meeting continued: "the English have one of the largest armies in the world". Thus, expressing the fear of military intervention, similar to what happened in Catalonia. People in the movement reflected on the English involvement during those troublesome years in Northern Ireland as one reason for why the Scottish independence referendum ended in favour of the No-side. Many of my informants who voted Yes expressed that people in the older generation, lived with the memory of English military involvement, and that they voted No because they were afraid that history would repeat itself. However, younger Yes-voters gave the exact same reason for why they voted for Scottish independence: to escape the brutality of being part of Britain.

I think we can agree that Ireland in history was treated as a colony. Ireland was oppressed. Scotland highland culture was oppressed to a certain extent, as well, that was where a lot of our idealised culture came from, literature from Walter Scott and so on. Because Scottish culture had been stamped out over the past five centuries (interview, John).

However, the issue of Northern Ireland was treated with caution. The activists were wary of equating the Scottish position and the Northern Irish position, since they did not want to diminish the atrocities against the Northern Irish. Even so, there is mutual sympathy. I was told that leading up to the referendum, the nationalist Northern Irish party *Sinn Féin* [We Ourselves] openly supported *Yes Scotland*. Which to some extent reinforces the Scottish independence movement and additionally, legitimise the reason for their existence.

³⁴ Referring to the civil war or, as it is often called, "The Troubles" in Northern Ireland from 1960s and onwards.

We like to see ourselves as the underdog and because of that I think people are more sympathetic to other underdogs, whether that is realistic or misguided or romantic. About that, I'm not sure, but, in Scotland we certainly have a sense that we can influence the world (interview, Ron).

As Ron claimed, to sympathise with other struggles, with other “underdogs”, is a result of their own position. It also makes for a feeling of the possibility to change the status quo. Featherstone (2012: 9) argues that solidarity in leftist groups is a practice of world-making by recalling histories of subalternates. As mentioned above, Malkki claims that through historical narratives, groups are actively engaged in world-making, in making their mythico-history (1995: 54). Following this, by recasting past events into present days, the perception of a Scottish subordinate position to the English is established and reproduced. Malkki suggests that the Hutu mythico-history is created in opposition against other versions of “ostensibly the same past”, which made the Hutu, as a people, heroes (ibid.: 55). This illustrates how mythico-history is constructed for a specific project, since in the context of the Scottish independence movement, rather than being heroes they perceive themselves as underdogs of history. Thus, past history of violence by the British state is remade into present identities of subordination. In the terminology of historicity, historical violence is remade in order to make sense of present-day actions, such as Catalonia, and which also entails a hypothetical future of continuous violence. This makes the mobilisation of the Scottish independence movement an act to disrupt this postulated future and, in the words of Arturo Escobar, take control of their historicity (1992: 420).

The history of English violence was also recognisable in how they contemplated the dualist relation between Scotland and the British Empire. It was argued as a two-sided position, as both an imperial nation *with* the English and as colonised *by* the English. Ron, especially, brought this up at several occasions during our interviews. He believed that if he had not studied at University, he would never had learned to what extent Scotland was involved in the British imperial project. Ron, who constantly remained reluctant to appear too idealising of Scottish national identity expressed that there is no escaping the Scottish crimes in the Empire.

Even the building behind us [Ron points at the Kelvingrove Art Museum] wasn't funded by people in Glasgow, it was funded by imperial wealth. And if people feel guilty about it? I wouldn't say guilty, but I think it's an unpopular reality. People in Scotland don't like to think of themselves as imperial conquerors. They want to think of themselves as freedom fighters, the little guy, the underdog. But this was an imperialist country, with a terrible history. But this has been buried, with the new sense of Scotland as the

progressive working fellow. History, we have to come to terms with that, we can't just pretend that it didn't happen, it did happen!

Ron reflected on the fact that the Scottish people do not like to think about themselves as “conquerors”, it does not conform well with the Scottish identity. Allison agreed with this and argued that even if Scotland is not acknowledging the wrongdoings of the Empire to the extent as they should, Scotland is still opposing imperialism to a higher extent than England does:

I think a lot of people in England, without realising it, are still very, very hung up on Britain's imperial past. There's still this kind of denial that we don't still rule most of the world. People want to think that Britain is better and different. I think sometimes, there's a bit of wiping of the past. Like Glasgow for example a lot of the Merchant city for example is built from the slave trade, and we don't really acknowledge that. We have this big colonial history here, and we sweep that under the carpet a bit. I don't think that's really wise, but at least it means that we kind of got away from that wish to dominate and the false pride in ruling the rest of the world.

The general consensus amongst people I talked with in the movement claimed that Scotland should take moral responsibility for the historical actions of the Empire. Again, this illustrates the mythico-historical moral order of the Scottish independence movement. Where the specific category of Scottishness in wanting independence is opposing the British Empire, the No-side is perceived to not acknowledge the same historical narratives as the Scottish independence movement. Because, as many of my informants argued, to vote to remain in Britain is to reinforce the Empire, and thus, not oppose the historical violence of the same. The mythico-history of the Scottish independence movement deals with, in Malkkis words, “the ordering and reordering of social and political categories, with the defining of self in distinction to other, with good and evil” (1995: 55). The categories of good or evil, moral or immoral, Scottish or English/British becomes reinforced through the history of the Empire in present terms, thus, in how colonialism is dealt with in post-colonial times. Therefore, people within the movement were somewhat optimistic of the overall awareness amongst the Scottish people of their country's involvement in the Empire, even if they disagreed on the extent of the awareness:

It turned out to work quite right for Scotland, and Scotland benefited greatly from the British Empire. So yeah, we have to pay for that now. So, Scotland has in fact been paying reparation to certain countries that were colonies. That's quite a distinct Scottish thing I guess, we feel very bad for the Empire, we generally feel quite bad. There is a song, almost like an official national anthem: “The black boy from Nigeria will curse Scotland Nae Mair, Nae Mair” [No More, No More], and it's saying that we recognise that we were

terrible in the Empire and we feel really, really bad for that too. Therefore, we should support people who want to fight against oppression. It's quite a big statement of Scottish identity. I think, Nicola Sturgeon said that it is her favourite song (interview, Mason).

Mason argued that the guilt of the Empire is distinctly Scottish. He referred to the unofficial national anthem as a sign of regret and the fact that Sturgeon, the Scottish first minister, claimed this to be her favourite song to be a sign of the Scottish anti-colonial engagement. Mason changed the lyrics of the song, when reciting it back to me he reordered the lyrics into being more directly about the Scottish actions during the Empire. Thus, on a small scale, this illustrates the construction of specific history, where the identity of Scottishness is produced through how people order narratives.

Furthermore, what has been touched upon is the spatial visibility of the Empire, almost the entirety of central Glasgow is named after slave trade. At several occasions people within the independence movement brought up the renaming of St. George Square to Nelson Mandela Place. This was described to be important because of the specific context that it occurred in, when several political leaders, amongst them Margaret Thatcher, referred to Mandela as a terrorist. My informants claimed this to be an indication of how Scottish politics historically have been more Left than English politics. As well as more internationalist.

When discussing what Britishness is, several of the activist claimed to associate Britishness with the Empire and Scottishness with opposing the Empire. As Stewart claims, historicity conceptualises how people establish their past in the present (2016: 80). In the context the Scottish independence movement, the historical crimes of the British Empire become a mobilising factor through how they construct an opposing present. By opposing the past and controlling their historicity, as Escobar (1992: 420) phrases it, they can argue for an alternative future.

Additionally, as mentioned, I argue that imperialism entails a second dimension, since Scotland, to some extent, experienced colonisation by England. As discussed earlier, the English ban on Scottish cultural expressions, such as kilts and the Gaelic language, have constructed an identity of *negative historicity* (Tambar 2016) of the Scottish independence movement. People exemplified also with historical actions in more recent times that they

believed to illustrate the English oppression of Scotland. Margaret Thatcher was frequently argued to have been of grave importance in eradicating the Scottish way of life.

Margaret Thatcher became prime minister and that is, you know, when the worst thing possibly happened to Scotland. When Margaret Thatcher was in power, nobody in Scotland had voted for her, and she came in and she basically made Scotland poor. She introduced the poor tax, I don't know if you heard about that? But it was basically a tax for households, the conservative argument was that, you know, for people who could not survive on their wages. But this was a controversial scheme, it badly affected working-class people. Essentially, they imposed the tax in Scotland on a trial period, for like a year, and not for everyone else. The tax was implemented like a year before the [rest of] UK, so that really pissed of a lot of people, and it caused a massive protest and all that (interview, Logan).

As Logan argued, the politics of the Thatcher government was met with deep discontent in Scotland, and even if almost twenty years has passed since Thatcher stepped down, she was still a recurrent topic during my fieldwork. People often referred to how Thatcher's politics had devastating effects for the Scottish working-class as well as the Scottish economy at large. In an interview with one of the founding members of the *Scottish Socialist Party* who was politically active during the Thatcher era claimed that: "one of the legacies that Margaret Thatcher left behind was the increased support of Scottish independence". Jessie, with her background in the mining community, argued that Thatcher's politics made her granddads poor and finally: "Margaret Thatcher killed them". These historical actions by the English government were constantly referred to as exploitation of the Scottish people, where they were treated as second-class citizens to England. Theresa May, the current English prime minister, were commonly compared with Thatcher. May was perceived to in similar ways as Thatcher, establish unfair policies in Scotland. As with Thatcher, May had little support in Scotland which Ron expressed: "no one, no one in this country wants Theresa May to be trying to carve out a national future on her one". The actions by May therefore symbolises the Thatcher era, making them recast historical events into current actions:

You have to remember that most British politics nowadays, hardly anything new happens in British politics, there have never been. It's hardly any new constitution or anything like that, everything is just handed down from the previous generation. So, the problems of the Empire are just handed down. The problems of Ireland have never been truly solved, it's just handed down (interview, Mason).

The relationship between Scotland and the British Empire is complex, while they felt guilt over their own role as "conquerors" they were treated as "underdogs", and, to some extent, as a

colony to England. Where the former connotes the opposite of Scottishness, the latter renders a Scottish identity that opposes Britishness. Through this complexity is the moral order, that is the mythico-history of the Scottish independence movement, illustrated. The moral order of good and evil is enhanced by the historical recasting of the Empire. It also reinforces the idea of the Scottish identity as an underdog in solidarity with other marginalised people. The Catalanian demonstrations, both spatially and emotionally, are used strategically to mobilise their own struggle for independence. By demonstrating on the “Jamaica Bride”, by constantly referring to the Scottish wrongdoings in the British Empire they use the still visible sites of imperialism to evoke emotional engagement.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how the Scottish independence movement practice solidarity. What has been made visible is that the Catalanian demonstrations become instrumental in three significant ways. Firstly, the demonstrations offer important *homeplaces* (bell hooks 1990). Meaning that the demonstrations are sites where the activist can practice embodied resistance and reproduce *affective solidarity* (Juris 2008^b) post-referendum. In a time when the movement is without other sites to stir up emotions and produce images of themselves. Secondly, the practice of solidarity with Catalonia defines the Scottish independence movement as a Left movement as well as it constructs and reproduces sameness with other underdogs (Liedman 1999). Thirdly, international solidarity enables the possibility for the Scottish independence movement to establish themselves as an anti-nationalist movement within a nationalist discourse. The Scottish independence movement struggle with their dualist position towards the British Empire, where they express regret and guilt of the former involvement, thus, solidarity is a practice to escape this agenda and reprimand historical actions. By enforcing solidarity is the *mythico-history* (Malkki 1995) clearly illustrated, since opposing oppression is an act of categorising moral and immoral actions. The way they recast historical actions is a practice of taking control over their historicity and by that their future. Hence, solidarity makes for continuous mobilisation, legitimation and identification of the Scottish independence movement.

6. Concluding Remarks

I haven't been through such a heartbreak in my years, we worked so hard for two years and we really thought we had a chance. I haven't cried like that, like I did that night watching the tele. The country was in optimism and now we feel a lot of anger and grief. We thought we could be a beacon of the world with a Left government and all that (interview, creator of the *Glasgow Feminist collective*).

In the aftermath of the Scottish independence referendum of 2014, the Scottish independence movement is situated in-between historical accounts, present urgent situations and the hope of achieving what they lost. In this thesis I have investigated practices, expressions and identity formation of the Scottish independence movement, by problematising how the Scottish independence movement is situated within an inescapable nationalist discourse without aiming for nationalism. I hope to have illustrated how, besides being a nationalist movement, in terms of their ultimate goal to be a sovereign nation-state, it is a leftist movement trying to establish a diverging political agenda. Through this I have aimed to clarify how the Scottish independence movement mobilise and identify themselves through cultural perspectives on history. By their constant positioning against nationalism, I found the movement to not claim difference in national identities but rather in political identities.

With the concept of *mythico-history* (Malkki 1995) I have discussed that these opposing political identities of Englishness and Scottishness are not free-floating or encompassing entities. Rather, I have tried to illuminate how historical cultural narratives are manifested and reproduced in the experience of Scottishness and Englishness. These categories vary depending on the position of the subject, therefore, Scottishness is not argued as one holistic identity. Instead, I have argued that the Scottish independence movement construct one specific identity of Scottishness that mobilise one specific political project: to become an independent nation and with that, to establish Left politics in Scotland. Independence is in many ways argued as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself, even though independence in itself is argued to be of varied significance. From this perspective, I claim that the Scottish independence movement

have constructed a morally admirable identity of Scottishness. The mythico-history of the Scottish independence movement categorise and counteract British immorality from Scottish morality, which enables mobilisation beyond nationalist claims. Making Scotland an *imagined moral community* (Malkki 1995: 243). However, Scottishness also entails a subordinate dimension.

This is illustrated by the Scottish cultural cringe constructed by a lesser *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu 1999) as well as the underdog position established by a *negative historicity* (Tambar 2016) of Scottishness. These expressions of subordination carry historical relevance. In this thesis, I have introduced historical accounts, such as Thatcherism, eradication of Scottish culture and the British Empire, that the people within the independence movement expressed as reasons for “breaking up the British state”. Within this was the dualist position of Scottishness at its most visible since arguing for independence from Britain entailed opposition against the historical actions by the British Empire. As well as it illustrated their own subordinated position as an (almost) colony of Britain.

As mentioned, historicity can be analysed as “a circular hermeneutic relation between past and present” (Stewart 2016: 86). Following this, I argue that the Scottish independence movement make use of their historical past in order to make sense of the present, where I claimed that solidarity is an important practice to understand the past in present terms. The historical violence of Britain is reinforced in present terms by referring to the Spanish oppression of Catalonia, which in turn legitimise their own position as underdogs (Liedman 1999). I have argued that demonstrations of and in solidarity offers sites of resistance, identification and spaces for uttering emotions. To clarify, I have claimed that emotions are strategical and logical, the former refers to how emotions are used by social movements in order to construct affective ties (Juris 2008^b) whereas the latter refers to how emotions follow the course of the movement, since emotion “is a dimension of all social action” (Goodwin, Jasper & Polletta 2004: 425) as well as in the aspect of historicity where present event can ignite feelings of the past (Stewart 2016: 88). Emotions are thus important practices of continuous mobilisation that, like culture, “accompanies the whole course of the life of social movements” (Salman & Assies 2017: 63).

How the actors in the Scottish independence movement recast history into contemporary events, such as Trident and the continuous power of “London rule”, is a way to enforce

arguments of that there is no other way than out (of Britain), in order to establish their “own” political agenda. Since, as Stewart claims, “[h]istoricity interweaves not only the present and the past, but also the future” (2016: 82). Therefore, adhering to subordination is a way to elude the past and argue for a new and better future. The subordinated position of Scottishness is thus a mobilising factor, where the moral order is reproduced making the subordinate vulnerable position of Scottishness a productive force. Hence, arguing in the predicaments of a nationalist discourse while ideologically being against nationalism has caused the movement to search for other possible practices, expressions and identities to continue and legitimise mobilisation.

They are not nationalists, but... they are caught in constantly fending off such claims. Which I claim, limits their mobilisation and identities to be constructed by a certain history, as well as it has caused the Scottish independence movement to be illegitimatised on wrongful terms. As solely a nationalist movement, rather than, what is argued in this thesis, a political Left movement without any other option than to position themselves in nationalism in order to achieve independence, since independence is the only possible “road” to socialism.

At the end of my fieldwork I found an interrelated issue which spurred interest for future research. In Glasgow, the division between the two major Scottish football teams *Rangers* and *Celtic* seemed to encapsulate many of the identity related issues of the Scottish independence movement. I was told that supporting *Celtic* over *Rangers* immediately entailed that you were pro-independence, it made me interested if the issue of independence comes to determine other seemingly non-political choices as well as how the question of independence is tied to other identification processes. Within this case there is also a strong historical and political connection with the *Celtics* and the Scottish independence movement, since it echoes of support for the republic of Ireland as well as religious sentiments in terms of the divide between Catholics and Protestants. Further research on this topic could illuminate more clearly how the independence movement make use of alternative anti-nationalist identification formation in order to navigate within a nationalist discourse. In general, I hope that my thesis will contribute to not disregarding social movements as what they from first sight might appear to be, but instead to pay attention to what they aim to be.

Even though the entirety of the empirical material in this thesis is written in past tense, it is in no way an indication that the Scottish struggle for independence is or should be a finished issue. While writing the final parts of this thesis, there is an ongoing influx covering my social media channels with images depicting activists in the Scottish independence movement with

Esteladas protesting outside the Spanish embassy in Edinburgh. As well as the recent independence march in the streets of Glasgow where close to ninety-thousand people joined. Clearly, the struggle for independence continues.

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