

Robert the Bruce and the Scottish Independence

The Influence of Historical Films and National Tourism Board VisitScotland on the Representation and Popularization of a National Stereotype

MASTER THESIS



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Robert the Bruce and the Scottish Independence

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Abstract

This research aims to contribute to the field of tourism by investigating national identity and stereotype formation of and by tourism destination Scotland. It poses as a response to a question from earlier academic literature about what ambiguous narratives might be successful. By exploring concepts of country branding and cinematic representations of Scotland via the legend of Robert the Bruce, the King of Scots in the early fourteenth century, this thesis provides insight into the success of this ambiguous narrative and its place within Scottish identities and stereotypes. This research considers his legend, its role in Scottish identity, its cinematic adaptations, namely *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019) and its marketing on VisitScotland, the official Scottish National Tourism Board. These analyses serve as the groundwork on which I base my results. This thesis examines how the perceived Scottish national identity is shaped by its historical past, the stereotypes to which it is reduced and its differentiation with identities of foreign countries. Dominant Scottish stereotypes continue to be formed by circulating representations, such as cinematic adaptations of Scottish narratives and perceived identities, and interpretations of filmmakers, audiences, governmental officials and tourists. The analysis of what cinematic representations of Robert the Bruce are present on VisitScotland, clarifies how tourists and online visitors might interpret the legend of Robert the Bruce as a characteristic of the popularized Scottish national stereotype.

Keywords: branding, representations, film, Scotland, Robert the Bruce, national identity, national stereotype, VisitScotland.

Author's Note

*“Oh flower of Scotland
When will we see, your like again
That fought and died for
Your wee bit hill and glen
And stood against him
Proud Edward's army
And sent him homeward
Tae think again.”*

– The Corries, *The Flower of Scotland*.

In May 2019, I had the privilege to visit the site of the Battle of Bannockburn, where I photographed Robert the Bruce's statue (see the front page) and beheld the circular monument that depicts the opposition of the Scottish and English, while Robert the Bruce's axe on the flag pole stands in the middle. My visit was part of the study association's annual study trip to the United Kingdom. I have always been interested in British history, hence my Bachelor's degree in English Language and Culture, but after my two visits to Scotland and its Highlands in 2019, I knew that I would remain fascinated by Britain.

Tourism and travelling are other interests of mine. As 'the tourist' in my friend group, I seek cultural hotspots and quiet towns when on holiday. Tourism fascinates me because of the contact with other cultures and the possibility to meet and learn from new people. This Master has allowed me to gain knowledge about the theoretical aspects of travel and issues of mass-tourism, while my thesis subject relates to my interest in Scotland.

Writing my Master thesis during the COVID-19 pandemic has not been an easy task but I have managed to complete it with the support of several people. I would like to thank my parents for their support and interest in my writing process. Many thanks also to my supervisor, Prof.dr. Anneke Smelik, for her feedback and understanding. Lastly, I would like to thank my peers and friends from the Master, who have encouraged me and offered their advice, friendship and distraction through many video calls.

Introduction

At the start of 2020, during Brexit, the Scottish Parliament requested another referendum for Scotland's independence from Great Britain after failed attempts throughout history.¹ This commenced with the First War of Scottish Independence in the late thirteenth until the early fourteenth century against the English oppression.² Later attempts, such as after the 1707 Act of Union that established one monarch and united the parliament of England, Wales and Scotland into Great Britain, might have been stimulated by the wish to separate the Scottish national identity from the British one.³ The century-old battle for Scottish independence is deeply ingrained in the Scottish collective memory and the perceived Scottish national identity.⁴ The contemporary revival of the wish for Scottish independence awakens memories of the Scottish myths and legends about previous times that Scots fought this battle and might help to arouse patriotic sentiments that are mirrored in historical wars of independence.

Myths and legends hold a prominent place within the Scottish identity in their past and contemporary society, exemplified by popular fictional narratives about the Loch Ness Monster, the Kelpies, or Whisps. Some of these mythical narratives have become symbolic of Scottishness in the eyes of foreigners. A frequent example of this is the kilt, which characterized Highland clothing since 1822, whereas tartan kilts that differentiate clans is an invented tradition from the early twentieth century.⁵ Over the years, filmmakers use the visual or cultural characteristics derived from legends to actively symbolize Scottishness on the one hand or, through repeated exposure to such characteristics, audiences interpret them as Scottish. As a result, cinema audiences might form expectations of what Scotland, Scots and Scottishness entail and tourists might travel to see these expectations confirmed. These interpretations continue to be shaped through the input of film, literature, songs, meetings or word-of-mouth mythical narratives about Scottishness. Still, the popularity of a country's perceived national stereotype might not be identical to what Scots perceive as their national identity.

¹ Philip Sim, "Scottish independence: Could a new referendum still be held?" *BBC News*, BBC, Jan. 31, 2020, accessed Apr. 27, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-50813510>.

² G.W.S. Barrow, *Robert Bruce: And the Community of the Realm of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 245.

³ "Act of Union 1707," *Parliament UK*, accessed July 5, 2020, <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/evolutionofparliament/legislativescrutiny/act-of-union-1707/>; T.C. Smout, "Perspectives on the Scottish Identity," *Scottish Affairs* 6 (1994), 112.

⁴ David Lowenthal, "British National Identity and the English Landscape," *Rural History* 2, no. 2 (1991), 209, accessed July 3, 2020, DOI: 10.1017/S0956793300002764.

⁵ Eric G.E. Zuelow, "'Kilts Versus Breeches': The Royal Visit, Tourism and Scottish National Memory," *Journeys* 7, no. 2 (2006): 34, 45, 48, accessed Apr. 27, 2020, DOI: 10.3167/jys.2006.070203.

In this thesis, I will contribute to the field of tourism, as well as national identity construction and interpretation in relation to tourism destinations, by responding to Brown, McDonagh and Shultz's call for the investigation of "which aspects of ambiguity work better than others."⁶ They argue that myths are malleable and have ambiguous meanings and interpretations, which I recognise in Scottish historical myths, such as that of Robert the Bruce, King of Scots. The legend of Robert the Bruce, or Robert I of Scotland, can be perceived as a folk-myth because of its oral narratology and resulting interpretations of his legacy. He is a nationally celebrated figure known for defeating the English and ensuring Scottish independence in the early fourteenth century. Because of this historical gravity, his legend holds a place in the Scottish collective memory and might be recognised internationally. To answer the question of Brown, McDonagh and Schultz, I will analyse the following corpora.

The popularity of Robert the Bruce's legend can be observed from the considerable number of cinematic adaptations of his legend. I will investigate the following historical films about or featuring him: *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019). This selection of films encompasses all films incorporating his legend and several of these were internationally successful.⁷ It would be interesting to compare the representation of the legend in popular films, such as *Braveheart* (1995) to lesser-known representations of Robert the Bruce, as in *So Dear to My Heart* (1948). I recognise that adaptations of a historical legend on film might stimulate ambiguity of the narrative because of various individual interpretations of the film. Therefore, I will analyse Scotland's national identity through the academic literature and cinematic representations of the legend of Robert the Bruce, while remaining aware that the representations themselves are, in fact, ambiguous interpretations of a perceived national stereotype. I will evaluate the impact on Scotland's national identity and image construction by ambiguous legends and filmmakers' interpretation of these narratives that are then turned into cinematic representations. Furthermore, I will investigate how VisitScotland, the official National Tourism Board of Scotland, markets the legend of Robert the Bruce and its cinematic adaptations to its online visitors and future tourists. All in all, I will examine the representation of Robert the Bruce in academic literature, through its adaptation in films and on the website of VisitScotland because

⁶ Stephen Brown, Pierre McDonagh and Clifford J. Shultz II, "Titanic: Consuming the Myths and Meanings of an Ambiguous Brand," *Journal of Consuming Research* 40 (2013): 609, accessed Mar. 20, 2020, DOI: 10.1086/671474.

⁷ "Braveheart," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1065684_braveheart; "Outlaw King," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/outlaw_king.

these corpora will allow me to investigate how various interpretations of his legend influence the perceptions of national and international tourists of Robert the Bruce and Scottish identity.

STATUS QUAESTIONIS

Previous research regularly addresses both Scottish identity formation and history because they are integral parts of each other. As the understanding of these concepts will be crucial for the analyses in this thesis, I dedicate the following section to the state of the art of Scottish history, myths and national identity.

Hearn argues that Scottish national identity is an accumulation of narratives that are “part history, part myth.”⁸ He highlights the difference between individual identities and the individual’s possibility to connect with a larger, collective narrative, for instance through the identification with the key protagonists and their race, class, gender, profession or nationality.⁹ Brown takes it a step further by noting that there are various perceptions towards the Scottish identity and that “any form of national identity depends on [...] ‘imagined communities’ where that sense of community is supported, indeed developed, by means of shared mythologies, some often passed off as ‘history’.”¹⁰ He is critical of the relationship between history and mythologized history.¹¹ Brown indicates that myths “portray the contradictions in the basic premises of the culture” – they are concepts with a historical foundation that “can come into being, alter, disintegrate, disappear completely.”¹² Legends, however, refer to historical people or events, heroism and romanticism.¹³ Morey agrees with Brown in her research on history in film, in which she expresses that “[myth-like] storytelling is a part of history, and so film, like a story, should embrace the mythic aspects that a historical tale inevitably brings to the table.”¹⁴

Morey also argues that history is imperative in creating a national identity but recognises that narratives about historical individuals and social history have become even more important

⁸ Jonathan Hearn, “Narrative, Agency, and Mood: On the Social Construction of National History in Scotland,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 4 (2002): 745, accessed May 10, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3879521>.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 747, 749-750.

¹⁰ Ian Brown, *History as Theatrical Metaphor. History, Myth and National Identities in Modern Scottish Drama* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016): viii. The term ‘imagined communities’ is coined by Benedict Anderson. Brown refers to Anderson’s book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 [1983]).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 49.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 16, 52, 90.

¹⁴ *Bringing History to Life through Film: The Art of Cinematic Storytelling*, edited by Kathryn Anne Morey (Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014): xiii.

to the understanding of national identity.¹⁵ Callenbach, too, suggests that folk-myths are often loosely based on social history and affect national identity. While he does not shed light on national identity construction, he notes that folk-myths in films are “mythic, having little concern with character in the particularist, realist sense” but convey symbolic meanings.¹⁶ The mythical climate is especially found in Scotland, argues Murray in his analysis of the trilogy of films, *Dog Soldiers* (2002), *Doomsday* (2008) and *Centurion* (2010) by Neil Marshall. These films illustrate and discuss Scotland’s atmosphere, describing it as “a line between myth and reality.”¹⁷ In these films, Murray also discovers the continuous representation of “Scottish culture and identity as pre- and/or anti-modern phenomena.”¹⁸ In other words, the distinction between history and modernity is ever-present within Scottish identity.

The research that I have thus far considered, agrees that history and myths are not the same but that there are mythical aspects in history. However, the line between fact and fiction is often blurred as narratives are retold, such as folk-myths.¹⁹ This also happens with cinematic adaptations. Meir finds that financial support for Scottish cinematic productions has occasionally come from Scottish institutions such as Channel 4 and Scottish Screen but is most often given by film companies in the private sector.²⁰ What is more, Scottish cinema has become “an industrial and aesthetical ideal that combines ‘serious’ artistic content with elements of popular genre film-making.”²¹ This might refer to the previously noted combination of history and myth in historical films. Unfortunately, continues Meir, “[this] mould is one that all Scottish films were at one point or another squeezed into, either by financiers or marketers” over the last thirty years.²² This recognisable presentation of Scotland might have stimulated tourists to visit Scotland, hence the circulation of a selection of Scottish stereotypes. The frequent combination of fact and fiction in Scottish films might not only influence audiences’ understanding of the historical narratives on which the films are based but might also affect the understanding of

¹⁵ *Bringing History to Life through Film*, edited by Morey, 82, 215.

¹⁶ Ernest Callenbach, “Comparative Anatomy of Folk-Myth Films: Robin Hood and Antonio das Mortes,” *Film Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1969-1970): 42, accessed July 6, 2020, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1210521>.

¹⁷ Jonathan Murray, “Give a dog a bone: representations of Scotland in the popular genre cinema of Neil Marshall,” *Visual Studies* 28, no. 3 (2013): 229, accessed May 5, 2020, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2013.830000>.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 228.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 229.

²⁰ Christopher Meir, “Conclusions,” in *Scottish Cinema: Texts and Contexts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015): 176, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1mf71d9.12>.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 176-177.

²² *Ibid.*

historical facts because the films' incorporation of legends based on history means that they are retold, popularized and commercialized.

CORPUS, METHODOLOGY AND THEORY

The academic research thus far has touched upon national identity formation and recognition, including the role that myths, legends and history play within it. Yet, little research has been carried out on the effect of commercialized and marketed films that incorporate Scottish myths and legends, upon the representation and understanding of these legends. Films about Scotland and their marketing might confirm or shape the interpretations of Scottish identities and stereotypes through the creation or recognition of a set of characteristics of the legend.

In this thesis, I will analyse the understanding of the legends and their influence on Scottish national identities and the formation of stereotypes by looking at the role of Robert the Bruce within Scottish national identity and the representation of his legend in film. I will analyse the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019) as well as the website of the National Tourism Board of Scotland, VisitScotland, to investigate their representations of Robert the Bruce. I will carry out this research within the theoretical frameworks of country branding, national identity formation and representations in films. Country branding is an important theory within the field of tourism and is relevant in my thesis because it relates to how a country attracts tourists before they travel to the country.²³ The manner of representation of the legend can give an insight into audiences' interpretations of cinematic depictions of Robert the Bruce. National identity is relevant when investigating country branding because the tourist's impression of a country's identity, otherwise known as a country's image, is shaped by its brand.²⁴ My methodology consists of a discourse analysis of the Scottish national identity, film analysis of the five above-mentioned films and content analysis of the marketing of the legend of Robert the Bruce on the VisitScotland website. I expect that this platform is suitable for the assessment of the popularity and incorporation of the cinematic adaptations of Robert's legend as it signifies how Scotland, on behalf of Scottish officials, markets national stereotypes for tourism purposes.

²³ Carmen Blain, Stuart E. Levy, and J.R. Brent Ritchie, "Destination Branding: Insights and Practices from Destination Management Organizations," *Journal of Travel Research* 43 (2005): 331-332, accessed Mar. 20, 2020, DOI: 10.1177/0047287505274646.

²⁴ Teemu Moilanen and Seppo Rainisto, "Theoretical Framework for Developing a Place Brand," in *How to Brand Nations, Cities and Destinations* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 7.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND SUBQUESTIONS

I will conduct a discourse analysis of the academic literature, film analysis of the five films and content analysis of VisitScotland website, while considering theories about national identity construction, country branding and representation in film, to answer the following research question:

In what ways is the legend of Robert the Bruce both interpreted and applied as characteristic of the Scottish national identity in popular films since the 1990s?

I will answer this question through the following subquestions which numbers correspond to those of the chapters:

1. How do representations in films and country branding contribute to national identity formation of a tourism destination?
2. What is the role of Robert the Bruce's legend in the national stereotype of Scots, before the representation in films?
3. How is the Scottish legend of Robert the Bruce portrayed as and representative of a Scottish national stereotype in films?
4. How does VisitScotland use the cinematic representations of the Scottish legend of Robert the Bruce to market and popularize a national stereotype of the tourism destination Scotland?

HYPOTHESIS

I hypothesize that the influence of the cinematic representations of Robert the Bruce's legend on the understanding of 'the' Scottish national identity stems from the synergy of active identity construction and cinematic interpretation. Furthermore, I speculate that the dominant view of the Scottish national identity as derived from academic literature differs from the national stereotypes that the films portray. The Scottish national stereotype might be influenced by cinematic portrayals of characters, landscapes and heritage, however, these stereotypes might not be what Scots identify with or recognise as accurate depictions of their collective national identity. Nevertheless, myths and legends are significant parts of Scottishness and I expect to discover how they have shaped the Scottish national identity of today and influence tourists' perceptions of Scottish stereotypes.

CHAPTER STRUCTURE

This research aims to investigate the popularization of myths and legends since their inclusion in films, exemplified with Robert the Bruce, and analyses the role of his legend within national identity and stereotype formation. I start first with the theoretical framework that gives an overview of relevant concepts, then move swiftly on to the actual research. The second chapter considers the Scottish national identity through a discourse analysis of the dominant view of the national stereotype as observed by foreign nations and the role that the legend of Robert the Bruce played within this. Next, the thesis moves on to observation and film analysis of the representation of this historical figure in the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019) through an examination of narrative and mise-en-scène. In chapter four, I analyse the popularization of the films and how VisitScotland's marketing of the films influences the formation and circulation of the perceived Scottish national stereotype. In the conclusion, I will present, discuss and reflect on my findings.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

National identity is influenced by the presentation and image of a country. Tourists attribute characteristics to a country because of the representations that circulate, which inhabitants of the country might not identify with. In Scotland, too, the dominant view of the national identity is affected by stereotypes and circulating images. Media forms, such as films, attempt to capture the dominant view of the Scottish identity through a critical assessment of circulating Scottish characteristics, which are then categorized as Scottish stereotypes. Myths and legends, as part of Scottish history, are frequently used in films to convey Scottish identity. This is exemplified by the legend of Robert the Bruce, who fought in the First War of Scottish Independence in the late-thirteenth to early-fourteenth century. His significance is reflected in the sheer number of films made about him compared to other significant historical individuals, namely *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019).

This chapter aims to answer my subquestion on how films and country branding can influence national identity formation. It serves as the theoretical foundation of my thesis and outlines the essential concepts that I need to answer my research question and subquestions in the following chapters. I offer an overview of key concepts that relate to national identity construction and interpretation of a tourism destination. Considering my research question, which inquires Robert the Bruce's role within Scottish national identity in films, I believe it will be best answered with the concepts of country branding and cinematic representation. These two concepts relate to national identity construction as, on the one hand, country branding creates awareness about marketing strategies towards tourists, whereas cinematic representations indicate how audiences perceive the image that films portray of a tourism destination. This chapter will analyse academic literature on these key concepts, while the following chapters will combine these theories with the analyses of my corpora. In chapter two, I will examine national identity construction. In chapter three, I will conduct a film analysis and use the academic literature of this chapter about representations in films. In chapter four, I will apply the concept of country branding to the official website of the Scottish National Tourism Board. In the conclusion, I will present my findings and reflect on the key concepts of this chapter.

COUNTRY BRANDING

Definition

Country branding is a significant theory within tourism studies that might influence national identity construction and tourists' perception of it. The widely accepted definition by Aaker indicates that "[the role of a brand is] to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors."²⁵ It thus refers to the active creation of a country brand that becomes recognisable for locals and tourists and can influence their perception of the country. Country branding for a tourism destination offers first insights into the manipulation of a historical narrative for, I suspect, commercial, economic, political or national reasons. Moilanen and Rainisto define a brand as "an impression perceived in a client's mind of a product or service," "a sum of all tangible and intangible elements, which makes the selection unique," "a symbol that separates one product from others," and "all the attributes that come to the consumer's mind when he or she thinks about the brand."²⁶ I subtract from this definition that they define a brand as relating to its consumers rather than the creators of the brand, thereby underlining the importance of the consumer's interpretation.

The most inclusive definition is that of Blain, Levy and Ritchie's definition, which relates to destination management organizations that aim to attract tourism. They look at logo designs because destination images are meant to "convey the overall idea of the experience a visitor can anticipate at the destination."²⁷ They measure the recognition of themes of destination branding including image, recognition, differentiation, consistency, brand messages, emotional response, and creating expectations.²⁸ Blain, Levy and Ritchie argue that the themes can be applied to other marketing strategies besides logo's if they relate to concepts of experiences, destination image and competitiveness.²⁹ Their definition includes the perspective of destination marketing that goes beyond consumerism to experience-based travel. They define branding by "the marketing activities (1) that support the creation of a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both *identifies* and *differentiates* a destination; (2) that convey the *promise* of a memorable travel *experience* that is uniquely associated with the destination; and (3) that serve to *consolidate* and *reinforce* the recollection of pleasurable

²⁵ Aaker quoted in Blain, Levy, Ritchie, "Destination Branding," 329.

²⁶ Moilanen and Rainisto, "Developing a Place Brand," 6.

²⁷ Blain, Levy, and Ritchie, "Destination Branding," 334.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 335-336.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 329-330.

memories of the destination experience, all with the intent purpose of creating an *image* that influences consumers' *decisions* to visit the destination in question, as opposed to an *alternative* one."³⁰ A brand can thus be applied to marketing products but it can equally say something about a country, identity or concept.

Moilanen and Rainisto's definition and the perspective from consumers on the brand image are useful in this research as they underline the importance of the country brand's identity, image and manner of communication when conveying its message to tourists. They define these concepts by noting that "the identity of the brand is defined by the sender itself, whereas the brand image is the real image developed in the receiver's mind."³¹ Within this thesis, the concepts can be applied to understand the role of Robert the Bruce's legend within the country brand and how this legend influences the country's image.

Brand Equity

Hamilton applies country branding to Scotland as a tourism destination and argues that 'brand equity' ought to be preferred over 'brand image' because the former "[takes] best possible advantage of what already exists."³² I propose that this fits in with the consumer's image because Hamilton notes that brand equity relates to "the residual beliefs that exist beyond people's minds, the observations and conclusions they believe they have arrived at for themselves and that, therefore, carry great conviction."³³ As the concept relates to existing Scottish collective memory and locations, it might also work well with historical narratives that relate to physical locations. History and culture, overall, are important elements within Scottish brand equity because the present-day identities are an accumulation of historical events, traditions and changes. To understand Scottish brand equity, Hamilton creates axes of opposites that reflect what she considers to be indicators of Scottish identity, namely the range from past to present and from culture, under which she categorises tourism, to products.³⁴ She then identifies Scottish key values in these axis – integrity, tenacity, inventiveness and spirit – that have been confirmed by both Scottish and foreign subgroups as apt descriptions and which can be exploited to successfully brand Scotland.³⁵ Hamilton hereby demonstrates how brand equity

³⁰ Blain, Levy, and Ritchie, "Destination Branding," 331-332.

³¹ Moilanen and Rainisto, "Developing a Place Brand," 7.

³² Kate Hamilton, "Project Galore: Qualitative Research and Leveraging Scotland's Brand Equity," *Journal of Advertising Research* (2000): 107-108, accessed Apr. 20, 2020, DOI: 10.2501/JAR-40-1-107-111.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

carries a strong sense of pride in working with existing identities because it can combine the remains of historical culture and narratives with current developments and events.

Identity Construction

National Stereotype

An aspect within country branding that is overlooked by Moilanen and Rainisto, Hamilton, and Blain, Levy and Ritchie is the creation of a national stereotype. Billig defines stereotypes as “shared, cultural descriptions of social groups” and “distinctions [...] between different sorts of foreigners.”³⁶ He argues that stereotypes stem from sudden crises, creating a contrast between ‘us’ and ‘them’.³⁷ Furthermore, they involve repetition of perceiving someone or something as a stereotype, as well as recognising and agreeing or disagreeing with a stereotype.³⁸ Lastly, Billig indicates that “the assumptions, beliefs and shared representations, which depict the world of nations as our natural world, are historical creations: they are not the ‘natural’ common sense of all humans.”³⁹ As a historical creation of a stereotype, “‘we’ will be reassured to have confirmed ‘ourselves’ as the Other of ‘our’ Other.”⁴⁰ What can be understood from this quote is that all national identities are, in fact, stereotypes that have been created through frequent recognition of distinct groups about which insiders and outsiders of the groups form their conclusions. Stereotypes might carry negative connotations for national citizenry due to simplification or generalisation of the representation of a person or character trait that is associated with their country. Still, stereotypes help to represent the characteristics of a country for international tourists. Billig might have been inspired by Levi-Strauss, who had researched mythologies based on race and society since the 1950s and noted the importance of dualities to understand how people think and talk in stereotypes.⁴¹ His perspective on creating mythological narratives about other people gives insights into the inclusion and exclusion of groups. Stereotypes can thus be found in the distinction between the self and the other, which aligns with Rose’s definition of ‘othering’: “where you belong [is defined] through a contrast with other places, or who you are through a contrast with other people.”⁴² She also uses the concept to highlight differences “between the ‘normal’ and the ‘deviant’... [*sic*] the ‘acceptable’ and

³⁶ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1995), 80-81.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 102-103.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴¹ Jasmina Sopova, “Claude Lévi-Strauss: the view from afar,” *The UNESCO Courier* 5, no. 2057 (2008): 8, accessed May 4, 2020, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000162711>.

⁴² Rose quoted in Pritchard, Annette, and Nigel J. Morgan, “Culture, identity and tourism representation: marketing Cymru or Wales?” *Tourism Management* 22 (2001), 169, accessed June 29, 2020.

the ‘unacceptable’ [...].”⁴³ Othering can occur between unrelated nations but could also be applied between related nations, such as those who have been invaded through imperialism. In the latter case, asserts Spivak, the imperialist would still speak of the Other, “because the projection of imperialism has always already historically refracted what might have been the absolutely Other into a domesticated Other that consolidates the imperialist self.”⁴⁴ In other words, Spivak argues that the imperialist country does not dismiss the notion of ‘othering’ when it has the authority over a subordinate country but still recognises the differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ within the countries over which the imperialist country has extended its rule.

Ambiguity

Rather than stereotypes, Brown, McDonagh and Schultz suggest that certain mythical narratives can be part of an ‘ambiguous brand’ because they resonate with wide audiences, such as the myth of RMS Titanic.⁴⁵ They ascribe the success of specific myths to “their imprecision, their amorphousness, [and] their ambiguity.”⁴⁶ Not only do ambiguous narratives allow consumers to resolve questions that remain unanswered, ambiguity “enhances processing, elaboration, arousal, and affect generally.”⁴⁷ Brown, McDonagh and Schultz quote Barthes, who proposes that a myth is “not at all an abstract, purified essence; it is a formless, unstable, nebulous condensation [...] an unlimited mass of signifiers.”⁴⁸ Brown, McDonagh and Shultz also argue that myths are “metamorphic” and that “[they] transmogrify through time as they shape, and are shaped by, consumer adoption and abandonment.”⁴⁹ The versions of narratives, thus, not only affect interpretations of and identification with historical narratives that are part of the national identity but also influence consumerism and cultural trends that stem from the marketing of retold myths.

REPRESENTATION IN FILM

Brand equity, as shown, encompasses both the constructed identity and the perceived image. The latter falls under the understanding of a brand. However, the image of something can also stem from an interpretation by audiences that does not correspond with the image the brand

⁴³ Hall quoted in Pritchard and Morgan, “Culture, identity and tourism representation,” 170.

⁴⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism,” *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985), 253, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.jstor.com/stable/1343469>.

⁴⁵ Brown, McDonagh and Shultz II, “Ambiguous Brand,” 596.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 597.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Barthes quoted in Brown, McDonagh and Shultz II, “Ambiguous Brand,” 597.

⁴⁹ Brown, McDonagh and Shultz II, “Ambiguous Brand,” 596.

originally hoped to inspire. This is exemplified in circulating media especially, such as books, films or music, which might inspire diverse and unintentional interpretations. In films, particularly, audiences' perceptions are influenced by various combined factors, such as narrative, accent, music, and visuals. To understand the various interpretations that audiences might make, based on the aspects of a film, I first look at the construction of films that is part of my theoretical framework and which will be linked to my analysis in chapter three.

Elements of Film Construction

Films can be used to impact its audience's interpretations of a country through the filmmakers' selection of attractive images and narratives. Frost analyses the effect of historical films on the interpretation and images of history and finds that "the interest generated [by historic films] is story-based rather than visually based."⁵⁰ He also refers to authenticity, "[the] question of portraying facts accurately or not," and questions if it should be adhered to by discussing "the filmmakers' interpretation of why certain episodes occurred, their relative importance and the motivations of characters."⁵¹ Frost asserts that the notion of authenticity is important to consider in the construction of a brand image and thus, the interpretation of audiences.⁵² Most importantly, he argues that filmmakers can have different interpretations of a historical event, character or landscape, meaning that "the presentation of history is never absolute, whether it is in a book, at a historical tourist attraction or a historic film."⁵³

Narrative

Bordwell, Thompson and Smith explain that films are dependent on form, meaning, function and type. Form relates to "patterns of elements", whereas functions are what these elements do in the larger whole.⁵⁴ Narration is an important film form, which represents a "range of knowledge" for the characters and audience, which might fluctuate throughout the film.⁵⁵ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith quote director Alison Maclean to further convey the importance of the narrative, who thinks "[that there is] a power in withholding information, revealing things gradually. Letting the audience discover things within the frame in time, in the way they stand."⁵⁶ Content, different from the form of a film, "is governed by the film's formal

⁵⁰ Warwick Frost, "Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly: historic films, heritage tourism and destination image," *Tourism Management* 27 (2006): 253, accessed June 26, 2020, DOI:10.1016/j.tourman.2004.09.006.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 249.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 253.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 249.

⁵⁴ David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson, and Jeff Smith, *Film Art*, 11th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2015), 62.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁵⁶ Alison Maclean quoted in Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 133.

context” and consists of “subject matter [or] abstract ideas.”⁵⁷ Lastly is the type of film, which relate to genre.⁵⁸ The elements combined might give an insight into the filmmaker’s choices and intentions.

Mise-en-scène

Equally important to content is the visual aspect of films, note Bordwell, Thompson and Smith. These consist of mise-en-scène, which they define as “the director’s control over what appears in the film frame [...] [including] setting, lighting, costume and makeup, and staging and performance.”⁵⁹ Mise-en-scène can create the difference between realism and fantasy and can strengthen the interpretation of a film’s genre through, for example, manipulation of lighting in horror films or romantic films.⁶⁰ Cinematography is also a visual aspect and refers to “how light from some object will be registered [by] the filmmaker [who] can select the range of tonalities, manipulate the speed of motion, and transform perspective.”⁶¹ The visual aspects can intensify the narrative elements and therefore, might influence the engagement of the audience.

Sound

The next steps of film construction are editing and including sound and music. Bordwell, Thompson and Smith explain that sounds that need to stand out are usually recorded afterwards, which is the same for dialogue and music.⁶² Sound might be used as a tool to emphasize narrative elements or mise-en-scène through loudness, pitch, timbre.⁶³ For example, sound or lack of noise can be used to create suspense. Furthermore, the sounds that stand out guide the audience, such as footsteps or clatter, and are used to alternate the audience’s attention between important lines of dialogue and realistic background noise.⁶⁴ The audible elements highlight what the story aims to convey and both narrative and sound are imperative in creating a successful film because they help to set the mood of the film, uncover themes, confirm expectations or draw an emotional response from audiences.⁶⁵ In other words, sound helps the narrative to steer audiences into the film’s intended direction.

⁵⁷ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 54, 70.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 325.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 112-113.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 271-272.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 267-270.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 271-272.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 265.

Audience's Interpretation of Meaning

The combined elements that construct a film also have an impact on the audience's understanding of the possible meanings of the film. The following section discusses the same categories but links them to the audience's interpretation.

Narrative

In films, representation of a narrative comes in the forms of content and visuals. Films can steer audiences' understanding of a theme, location or person, to some extent but individuals' interpretation might still differ from filmmakers' intentions. Bordwell, Thompson and Smith explain that the filmmakers' choices within content and visuals influence the connection of audiences with the narrative as they "frame specific expectations," stimulate "curiosity, suspense, and surprise," "compare the particular aspects of the [film] with things that we know from life and conventions found in art," and "enables us to construct many types of meanings."⁶⁶ Since all films can conjure such interactions, including films with historical narratives, these emotions can give an insight into audiences' perceived image of, as I argue in this thesis, a national identity.

As mentioned above by Bordwell, Thompson and Smith, the narrative form, content and genre tell audiences something about intentions behind the creation of a film but they invite audiences to create their individual interpretations. Film audiences will look for meaning, "[test] the work for larger significance, for what it says or suggests."⁶⁷ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith break this down into four meanings: referential, explicit, implicit and symptomatic. Referential meaning refers to factual and core structure of the plot, while explicit meaning is an "openly asserted meaning", such as a cliché, that works because it is specific to the context of the film.⁶⁸ Implicit meaning, on the other hand, is rather abstract or general and can be interpreted differently by audiences because it relates to ambiguity.⁶⁹ Lastly, symptomatic meaning is abstract to such an extent that it can be used for other films or art forms, like paintings, novels and products.⁷⁰

Mise-en-scène

The next aspect of audience interpretation is found in the visual aspects of a film. These consist of the previously mentioned elements that filmmakers use to alter the visual aspect, namely

⁶⁶ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 70.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

mise-en-scène and cinematography. Bordwell, Thompson and Smith note that mise-en-scène can convey realism, authentic appearances of a setting and acting that looks natural.⁷¹ Details within the frame might fade to the background because audiences “blend what they see and hear into a larger pattern.”⁷² Hand gestures, facial expressions and who is speaking determine the attention of the audience.⁷³ How cinematography influences audiences’ interpretations is exemplified by director John Woo, who uses a zoom lens “[to simulate the feeling that] the actor is really standing in front of them [which] gives presence to the shot.”⁷⁴ Movement, or lack of it, thus makes audiences aware of time and space.

Aitken also reflects on the importance of visual aspects of film and gives an insight into its influence in identity construction. He refers to ‘childhood realism’ in Scottish films, which relates to the construction of childhood through emotional connections with spaces, landscapes, shocking scenes and poetic realism.⁷⁵ While Aitken is interested in childhood realism rather than mythical narratives, his perspective on audiences’ emotional connections that can be created with landscapes or spaces is nonetheless applicable to national identity construction.⁷⁶ What is more, his analysis of “[how] a protagonist is projected onto landscapes” has the potential to be investigated within all types of genres, including the historical films that this research will analyse in later chapters.⁷⁷

In an earlier article, Aitken investigated the connection between audiences and the protagonist within a space and related it to ‘image-events’, “a sequence of shots which violate or enhance the rhythm of a film and, as such, it is the fundamental level of communication between film-maker and viewer.”⁷⁸ The transactional theory, he explains, reflects on “person-in-environment contexts” which it finds that “individuals do not attain a stable adaptation to, or integration with, their environment.”⁷⁹ This theory suggests that events can create “imbalance and transformation” and initiate change, which is an important part of people’s experiences of a location.⁸⁰ Shocking events in the narrative thus influence the connection between characters

⁷¹ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 113.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁷⁴ John Woo quoted in Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 170.

⁷⁵ Stuart C. Aitken, “Poetic Child Realism: Scottish Film and the Construction of Childhood,” *Scottish Geographical Journal* 123, no. 1 (2007): 71, accessed June 10, 2020, DOI: 10.1080/14702540701383694.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁷⁸ Stuart C. Aitken, “A transactional geography of the image-event: the films of Scottish director, Bill Forsyth,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, no. 1 (1991): 106, accessed June 11, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/622909>.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

and heighten the involvement of the audience, while geographical spaces might reflect this tension rather than being neutral backgrounds.⁸¹

Sound

Lastly, I consider the audible elements, sound and music, which have an impact on the interpretation of a film. Bordwell, Thompson and Smith argue that audiences can differentiate between sounds in their daily lives but “[have] learned to ignore most sounds in our environment.”⁸² Film soundtracks are created separately from visual elements to highlight the importance of events, moods, characters or locations – details which are often not noticed by audiences.⁸³ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith quote director Sergei Eisenstein, who explains that sound in films creates the possibility of a “synchronization of senses” that indicates the effects of combining an image with sound.⁸⁴ This combination “shapes our understanding of images” through the emotion of the sound and “[guides] our eye and mind.”⁸⁵

In this chapter, I have given an overview of country branding and representation in film to answer my subquestion about how country branding and films can influence the identity and image of a tourism destination such as Scotland. This question is a crucial part of my research question about the role of the legend of Robert the Bruce in films within the Scottish national identity because it considers the changeability of a marketed and perceived identity for international tourists. To answer my subquestion, the academic literature implies that various factors can influence the constructed identity and perceived image of a country brand, ranging from stereotypes to ambiguity. The identity of a country brand and its image might not overlap as tourists and audiences are influenced by circulating representations. The manner of communication of a country brand influences how tourists interpret its image and a popular way to steer interpretations is through films. They can influence the audience’s perceptions of a country, identity or concept, oftentimes found in stereotypes, through both audible and visual elements. Visuals, narratives and sound can thus influence perceptions of national identities by creating an image within films that frames expectations, stimulates emotional responses, calls upon comparison with real life through recognition and allows audiences to construct

⁸¹ Aitken, “A transactional geography,” 106.

⁸² Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 264.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 264-265.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

meanings.⁸⁶ The repetition of stereotypes and the multiplicity of interpretations, thus, influences the representation of a person, event, period or location.

This chapter has used the concepts of country branding and representation in film, as well as their influence on national identity and stereotype formation, to lay the groundwork for the analyses of the legend of Robert the Bruce in the following chapters. The next chapter will examine the Scottish identity and stereotype since the fourteenth century, the legend of Robert the Bruce, king of Scots, and his role within Scottish identity and stereotypes.

⁸⁶ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 70.

Chapter 2: Scottish National Identities and the Legend of Robert the Bruce

Scotland has always been recognisable for tourists due to its national stereotypes, including its distinct landscapes, dress, and history of conflict. Historical legends and mythical tales that downplay or question the accuracy of historical events still have an immense impact on tourists' contemporary understanding of the history of a nation.⁸⁷ Scottish national identity, too, often relates to historical events. The present-day Scottish wish for independence from England can be considered 'history in the making', as it is a repeat of past attempts to freedom. Robert the Bruce, or Robert I of Scotland, was one of the first in history to regain Scottish independence after English occupation. He led the fight against the English oppression in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century that, therefore, would become known as the First War of Scottish Independence, followed by the second, a few years after Robert the Bruce's death in 1329.⁸⁸

In my attempt to answer my research question on how the legend of Robert the Bruce in historical films is characteristic within the dominant view of the Scottish national identity, I first need to conduct a discourse analyse the perceptions of 'the' Scottish identity during and since Robert the Bruce's era. This will help me to answer my research question about the role of Robert the Bruce's legend in Scottish national identity and stereotypes before he was represented in films. This chapter will analyse the characteristics of the Scottish identity as discovered in academic literature. I will also incorporate the English perception of Scots as Scotland's former invader and contemporary fellow Britons because their shared history is part of the Scottish collective memory. When I have established the perceptions towards Scottish national identity, I will give an overview of the legend of Robert the Bruce. Lastly, I will consider how Robert's existence, leadership and victory has influenced Scottish identity, both as a historical figure who helped to achieve Scottish independence and as Scottish king whose power influenced future historical Scottish rules and regulations. With this analysis, I hope to find evidence of his influence in the present-day dominant view of the Scottish collective identity as part of my research question.

As a preliminary remark, I would like to note that the concept of 'the' Scottish national identity is complex and problematic because Scots cannot be reduced to one national identity.⁸⁹ Scottish identities are diverse, as exemplified through language, religion, employment, gender, or even football team. In the dominant narrative of Scottish history, there are moments of

⁸⁷ Hearn, "Narrative, Agency, and Mood," 745; Brown, *History as Theatrical Metaphor*, viii; *Bringing History to Life through Film*, edited by Morey, xiii.

⁸⁸ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 245.

⁸⁹ Smout, "Perspectives," 102.

Scottish heroism that are ingrained in the Scottish collective memory, such as in the legend of Robert the Bruce. Contemporaries of Robert might identify with the feeling of Scottish heroism and pride during this event but at the same time, Robert likely knew Scottish opponents in his fight against Edward I and II. Similarly, present-day Scots do not fit in a ‘one size fits all’ description because not all Scots might identify with certain stereotypes that derive from their past. The notion of ‘Scottish national identity’ in this and the following chapters will refer to the dominant view of the Scottish national identity as derived from academic literature or stereotypes.

SCOTTISH IDENTITY FORMATION: SCOTS AND FOREIGNERS

The perceived Scottish identity depends on only a few factors, according to academic literature. Meech and Killborn find that Scottishness is affected by its past and by how foreigners understand and create opinions about that same past.⁹⁰ Sawyers agrees that “Scotland finds its identity by either looking towards the past or looking to others for vindication, oftentimes both.”⁹¹ The inclusion or exclusion of Scots that recognise themselves in this past relates to Billig’s “test of nationhood” in which Scots “[show] that they possess some notional criterion of internal unity, whether ethnicity, language or culture.”⁹² The justification from outsiders comes as no surprise, find Meech and Killborn, as “Scottish culture is a composite and changing identity, drawing on the past certainly, but also open to influences from abroad and composed partly of ‘foreign’ forms which are often creatively synthesized with local traditions.”⁹³ Barrow adds to this discussion that for centuries, Scotland was influenced by outsiders through trade and royal marriage, amongst others.⁹⁴ It had such connections primarily with the English and the French. The control of the English over Scotland has both influenced and differentiated Scotland from England in their shared history. Billig argues that generally, “people ascribe more stereotypic traits to outgroups than to ingroups; ‘we’ often assume ‘ourselves’ as the standard, or the unmarked normality, against which ‘their’ deviations appear notable.”⁹⁵ Scotland’s relationship with England, as visible through their shared island, language and

⁹⁰ Peter Meech and Richard Killborn, “Media and identity in a stateless nation: the case of Scotland,” *Media, Culture and Society* 14 (1992), 254.

⁹¹ June Skinner Sawyers, “A New Day Dawning: The Struggle for National Identity in Contemporary Scottish Song,” *Scottish Tradition* 19 (1994), 11.

⁹² Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 85.

⁹³ Meech and Killborn, “Media and identity,” 247.

⁹⁴ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 13-15.

⁹⁵ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 81.

history, among others, indicates how each of the two countries creates a stereotype of the other. This relationship might also lead to othering, emphasizes Rose, by discovering the self by contrasting one's identity with that of others.⁹⁶

Scots and the English

Smout detects several interesting identity signifiers that highlight Scotland's differentiation and relation with England, consisting of language, religion, sports and military culture.⁹⁷

Language

Firstly, I look at Scottish languages. Meech and Killborn acknowledge the Scottish division "between the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders and Anglophone Lowland people" which, they note, equally relates to location and social distinction.⁹⁸ Smout and Barrow also emphasize the importance of language in recognizing groups because, over time, a distinction emerged between Gaelic (a Celtic language) and Scots or English-speaking (Gaelic with a northern tongue) languages.⁹⁹ Barrow argues that this distinction led "in the thirteenth century [to] Scots [being] an aggressive tongue, slowly but surely ousting Gaelic."¹⁰⁰ Kidd adds that the Scottish political identity was Gaelic because of the "ancient Dalriadic line of kings."¹⁰¹ Language thus influenced both culture and politics. The Scots language was undoubtedly spoken within Gaelic-speaking regions as well, for instance, as a consequence of international marriages with English speakers.

In the eighteenth century, however, Enlightened Scots disassociated themselves from the identity, ethnicity and nationality of the past 'primitive man', referring to the Gaelic tradition, as they "were far removed conceptually from the concerns of civilized, commercial modernity."¹⁰² As language relates to culture, the belief arose among enlightened Scots that Gaelic life was backwards.¹⁰³ During the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century, the Gaelic language has remained one with a damaged reputation and is not spoken collectively around Scotland.¹⁰⁴ However, Sawyers points to the revival of the Gaelic language since the

⁹⁶ Rose quoted in Pritchard and Morgan, "Culture, identity and tourism representation," 169.

⁹⁷ Smout, "Perspectives," 105-107.

⁹⁸ Meech and Killborn, "Media and identity," 246.

⁹⁹ Smout, "Perspectives," 105; Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 9.

¹⁰⁰ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 10.

¹⁰¹ Collin Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity in Enlightenment Ireland and Scotland," *English Historical Review* (1994), 1205.

¹⁰² Kidd, "Gaelic Antiquity," 1210.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1206, 1212.

¹⁰⁴ Sawyers, "A New Day Dawning," 9.

1970s among some groups, especially youths.¹⁰⁵ She highlights that the Gaelic language is “a cultural identity, something that is at once foreign yet strangely familiar, familiar if not in actual everyday usage at least in collective memory.”¹⁰⁶ Meech and Killborn identify this revival in Scottish radio stations, such as Radio nan Gaidheal which promotes the Gaelic language around Scotland since 1984 and offers a platform for Scottish culture.¹⁰⁷

Religion

The second distinctive category of identification by Smout is religion. Kidd distinguishes two groups in the earlier part of the Middle Ages in Scotland: on the one hand, Christianity on the isle of Iona and on the other, the proto-Presbyterian Church of Scotland on the mainland.¹⁰⁸ The Church of Rome and the Celtic churches were thus both influential in Scotland in the Middle Ages. MacQueen adds that Scottish affairs were dealt with within Scotland, except “the process of appeal to Rome.”¹⁰⁹ The Church’s court even had “extensive jurisdictional claims [that] were a cause of friction with Scottish secular government” which refers again to the rivalry between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church of Rome.¹¹⁰ MacQueen highlights that “[a] series of papal bulls between 1192 and 1218 [...] recognised that the *ecclesia Scoticana* was subject to none other than the Pope himself” and were “a key part of the argument that Scotland was a kingdom.”¹¹¹ Furthermore, “[the] independence of the Scottish church from the claims of Canterbury and, particularly, York was itself an important element in the formation of Scottish national identity in the thirteenth century.”¹¹² Barrow refers to the contemporaneous unity of ever-existing unity among ‘Churchmen’ amidst the Scottish resistance to England.¹¹³ The Scottish church thus influenced matters within Scotland and this verified Scotland as a separate kingdom, thereby attributing to the national identity of Scots.

The sixteenth century saw the arrival of the Church of Scotland and Smout discovers that its quick popularity “was an extremely powerful reinforcer of a national identity of being Scottish.”¹¹⁴ Kidd finds, however, that the previously mentioned distinction between Lowlands

¹⁰⁵ Sawyers, “A New Day Dawning,” 9.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁰⁷ Meech and Killborn, “Media and identity,” 249-250.

¹⁰⁸ Kidd, “Gaelic Antiquity,” 1205-1206.

¹⁰⁹ Hector L. MacQueen, ““Regiam Majestatem”, Scots Law, and National Identity,” *The Scottish Historical Review* 74, no. 197 (1995), 2.

¹¹⁰ MacQueen, “Regiam Majestatem,” 8.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ G.W.S. Barrow, “The Scottish Clergy in the War of Independence,” *The Scottish Historical Review* 41, no. 131 (1962), 1-2.

¹¹⁴ Smout, “Perspectives,” 105.

and Highlands peoples and their customs led to “frequent attempts by the officers of the institutions of the Scottish Kirk [(the predecessor of the Church of Scotland)] and state to tame the Highlands.”¹¹⁵ This attempt would lead to a rejection of Gaeldom and of their previous pride in Dalriadic line of kings by the Scottish Kirk and state in the eighteenth century.¹¹⁶ Still, argues Smout, the Church of Scotland’s “enormous importance in Scottish life before [the eighteenth century] can hardly be over-estimated [...]”¹¹⁷ He exemplifies the English help during the Reformation, that “inspired a feeling of difference from England without inspiring confidence to go it alone.”¹¹⁸ Jack Brand points to present-day influences of religion upon Scots as a factor of identity that is especially important during voting, alongside factors of class and nationality.¹¹⁹

Sports

Sports as an indicator of nationality is less clear, as this can apply to any country that supports its national sports team. Barrow mentions that few academic texts discuss Scotland’s thirteenth-century sports.¹²⁰ Still, people around the world are familiar with and offer activities relating to so-called ‘Highland Games’, associated with clan-games of the Highlands that develop as an event in Scotland since around 1820.¹²¹ Brewster, Connell and Page find that its origins are hard to trace, proposing several explanations, such as the import of Northern Ireland athletic traditions called ‘Tailteann Games’ between the fourth and sixth centuries.¹²² Other possibilities are that the Highland Games served as a test to become post runners and bodyguards for King Malcolm of Canmore in the eleventh century, or were a celebration for the victors after the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.¹²³ Since the 1820s, the Highland Games have been present in one way or another until the present day.

Meech and Killborn note that nowadays, while Scotland still shares much with England, sports are part of one institution which remains separate from the English one.¹²⁴ Smout adds that “in the late twentieth century [sports] surely means more to most Scots than religion in

¹¹⁵ Kidd, “Gaelic Antiquity,” 1206.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Smout, “Perspectives,” 110.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Jack Brand, “National consciousness and voting in Scotland,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 10, no. 3 (1987), 340.

¹²⁰ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 7.

¹²¹ Marjory Brewster, Joanne Connell and Stephen J. Page, “The Scottish Highland Games: evolution, development and role as a community event,” *Current Issues in Tourism* 12, no. 3 (2009), 271.

¹²² Ibid., 273.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Meech and Killborn, “Media and identity,” 245-246.

defining [identities]” as it is linked to local and a national Scottish identity “to distinguish it from, and oppose it to, a British identity.”¹²⁵ I agree with Smout because I find this notion reflected in the unofficial national anthem of Scotland, *The Flower of Scotland*, which is commonly played at sports events since the 1960s.¹²⁶ This song consists of an especially anti-English and patriotic chorus that refers to Robert the Bruce’s legend: “And stood against him, Proud Edward’s army, And sent him homeward, Tae think again” and later, “Those days are past now, And in the past, they must remain, But we can still rise now, And be the nation again.”¹²⁷ Smout also recognises that Scots would cheer for Scotland when in a match within Britain yet during an international match of England, a British team, against another country, Scots would not cheer for the English.¹²⁸ This aligns with Billig’s observation that stereotypes are used especially within patriotic representation, “so that speaker and audience can claim to recognise and regain themselves (‘ourselves’).”¹²⁹ This sentiment reminds of othering and applies to Robert the Bruce’s legend and its significance in the continuous Scottish battle for independence.

Military Culture

The Scottish military culture was an aspect closely related to sports in medieval Scotland. Brewster, Connell and Page suggest that a part of earlier existing versions of the Highland Games was used as a selection and preparation process for battles.¹³⁰ Smout highlights that men of fighting age fought in the early fifteenth century against the English in the Hundred Years War.¹³¹ However, there should be recognition of earlier organised battles against England, such as the Battle of Bannockburn in the early fourteenth century. Military functions were common in the thirteenth century as well, perceives Barrow, in the case of earls that were previously military commanders, or within the royal household of King Alexander III in the functions of constable or ‘marischal’, for example.¹³² Smout rightfully recognises that such military traditions can contribute to identity formation – on a local or national level but also on the level of the British Empire.¹³³ The former two identities were important in earlier cases when Scots

¹²⁵ Smout, “Perspectives,” 106.

¹²⁶ “Corries News,” *Wayback Machine*, The Corries, 29 Aug. 2010, accessed June 1, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20100829194041/http://www.corries.com/news.php>.

¹²⁷ The Corries, “The Flower of Scotland,” Barry Ferguson, May 11, 2009, video, 3:11, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiyLuv3GSs4>.

¹²⁸ Smout, “Perspectives,” 106.

¹²⁹ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 101-102.

¹³⁰ Brewster, Connell and Page, “The Scottish Highland Games,” 273.

¹³¹ Smout, “Perspectives,” 106.

¹³² Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 5, 12.

¹³³ Smout, “Perspectives,” 106.

fought for their clan or Scotland, whereas the British fighting cause became relevant only after the Act of Union in 1707, when Scotland and English territory that includes Wales, united into Great Britain. It must be noted, however, that the relation between the two countries was not repaired with the union and Scotland remained wary of the English. Sawyers explains that the Act of Union was followed by an “anger and sense of betrayal felt throughout Scotland.”¹³⁴ She emphasizes that “[the] image of Scotland as essentially Highland country first emerged in the post-Culloden era as Highland regimes began to earn accolades for their military prowess.”¹³⁵

Identity: Scottish or British?

The above overview of factors with which Scots can identify leads to the conclusion that language, religion, sports and military traditions indicate if Scots identify more with the perceived characteristics of either the Scottish or British identity. Since the Act of Union of 1707 England and Scotland have had the same monarch and parliament, yet this mutual sovereignty does not guarantee a harmonious co-existence, as can be concluded by past and present-day Scottish wishes to reclaim their independence. This might also stem from the inferior position of Scotland within Britain, regarding the recognition of its past. Sawyers indicates that Scottish children learn plenty about the English language, poetry and other cultural aspects, whereas “the history of [their] own culture remains hidden, swept away as if it didn’t [*sic*] matter, as if it held little relevance to contemporary Highland life.”¹³⁶ Lowenthal, too, finds that British history is predominantly English, as demonstrated in the percentage of English history in British educational material.¹³⁷ He also recognises this in British heritage, where Scotland’s “[prolonged] colonial status limits Scottish identity largely to things lost – battles, crown, the Stone of Scone” as opposed to the English identity.¹³⁸ I disagree with Lowenthal’s term ‘colonial’ as Scotland knew periods of English oppression but was not England’s colony, rather, they share the same monarch since the Act of Union in 1707.

Despite the evidence that Britishness often concerns English identities, Scottishness is not ignored. Smout counterargues that the Scottish identity and British identity can co-exist alongside each other.¹³⁹ He stresses the possibility that “Scots invented Britain: and that they have always been keener on the notion than the English, who misconstrue it as a synonym for

¹³⁴ Sawyers, “A New Day Dawning,” 3.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹³⁷ Lowenthal, “British National Identity,” 209.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 209-210.

¹³⁹ Smout, “Perspectives,” 107.

England.”¹⁴⁰ The British national identity would, in that case, be representative of collaboration between England and Scotland, rather than English dominance. Smout underlines that this argument would not abate “powerful surges of anti-English feeling,” especially before but also after the union of 1707, “as evidence of popular nationalist consciousness.”¹⁴¹ Robbins argues that the European Union has also played an important part in Scotland’s acceptance of its place within Great Britain and that Scottish National Party’s campaign slogan ‘Scotland in Europe’ in the nineties has provided yet another identity to which Scots might relate.¹⁴² The wish of many a Scot to remain in Europe when Brexit transpired in January 2020, emphasizes Scotland’s preferred position as European rather than Britain. Therefore, I suspect that Brexit has changed Scotland’s relationship with Great Britain.

The focus of Scottish identity has, thus far, predominantly been on the past. Robbins notes that “[a] ‘total’ history [entails] the rescue of individuals and groups who had been overlooked by a condescending posterity.”¹⁴³ Nowadays, there are many identities which Scots can relate to. Some might relate to their past via Celtic traditions or speak Gaelic, while others emphasize Scottish modernity, focusing on present-day developments in Scottish fields of art, technology or science. Smout explains this through his model of identification of territory: one can have loyalties on levels of the family, kin or clan, locality, nation, state, empire or the supranational.¹⁴⁴ Within these categories, other factors intersect: gender, class, occupation, race, language, religion, sports, and military culture.¹⁴⁵ The latter four subcategories have been investigated within historical identities that divided Scotland from England or Britain as a whole. Today, Scots have the luxury of individuality rather than dependency on clan traditions. Throughout history, Scots have broken with traditions, such as the disassociation with or revival of the Gaelic language, their residencies in the Highlands or Lowlands, their denomination as Protestant or Catholic, or their wish to stay in Europe or not. The Scottish identity, thus, consists of individual identities while ‘the’ Scottish identity, as a whole, relies on elements that frequent throughout history and are internationally perceived as stereotypical characteristics. Since most identities are an interplay of perceptions of and associations with traits, events or points of view, ‘national identities’ ought to be replaced with ‘national stereotypes’.¹⁴⁶ Stereotypes, too, can

¹⁴⁰ Smout, “Perspectives,” 112..

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Keith Robbins, “National Identity and History: Past, Present and Future,” *History* 75, no. 245 (1990), 369-370.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 372.

¹⁴⁴ Smout, “Perspectives,” 103.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 12.

influence the dominant perception of Scots, Scotland and its history and might attract tourists because of their recognisability and uniqueness. Similarly, Scots might identify with their modernity, which might equally attract tourists. I have exemplified this identification with modernity via the Enlightened Scots in the eighteenth century but it is likely still true for some Scots today.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL IDENTITY AND ROBERT THE BRUCE

The century-old feud between Scots and the English, as well as the present-day general Scottish aversion of identification with Britishness, shows how much Scottish history is integrated into the Scottish identity. Smout mentions that the failures in Scottish history are also the roots of Scottish pride of their bravery.¹⁴⁷ Scottish national identities are constructed of “popular ideas about history that achieve mythic status, irrespective of what modern academic historians perceive to be their actual truth or importance.”¹⁴⁸ He mentions the Scottish victory at Bannockburn is part of “half a dozen ‘mythic’ episodes” that “Scottish history may be boiled down to.”¹⁴⁹ In this thesis, I remain conscious of the mythical status of Scottish history, however, historical accuracy is not the goal in my analysis of the essence of Scottish identity. Still, the mythical aspects of these legends form stereotypes that become the essence of the narratives that circulate in history and that tourists perceive as characteristic of Scotland. Robert the Bruce is an example of a national stereotype and essential figure within the Scottish past and identity because his legend captures not only some of the characteristics of Scottishness but also the dynamic between the English and Scots. This section analyses the general discourse of his legend and its relation to the Scottish identity.

The Legend of Robert the Bruce

Barrow’s book *Robert the Bruce: And the Community of the Realm of Scotland* elaborately discusses the legend of Robert the Bruce within its societal context and the consequences of Robert’s existence for the Scottish identity that was to come after his rule. He contextualizes Robert the Bruce’s reign among the threat of the English rule, which is how his legend began and is characterized throughout his reign as King Robert the Bruce.

¹⁴⁷ Smout, “Perspectives,” 108.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

The history of primogeniture and feudal relationships through which Robert the Bruce became king starts with Alexander III (1249-1286). He was the King of Scotland and a direct descendant from Iber Scot, who is considered to be the 'first Scotsman'.¹⁵⁰ After he died in 1286, his granddaughter Margaret of Norway would govern Scotland but due to her age, a 'parliament' of six wardens consisting of two earls, two bishops, and two barons, collectively named the 'Guardians', would govern Scotland her name.¹⁵¹ The Guardians recognised that the death of Margaret of Norway or absence of pregnancy of Queen Yolande, Alexander III's wife, would open the claim to the throne to two claimants: "Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale, and John Balliol of Barnard Castle."¹⁵² The Guardians sought the advice and protection of Edward I's, the king of England but this decision was met with general anxiety and criticism of many Scots about Edward's demand to have "superior lordship over Scotland."¹⁵³ The claimants were uncertain at the time of these developments and as a result, the claimant lord Robert Bruce and his son Robert, earl of Carrick, seized castles in Dumfries, Wigtown and Buittle.¹⁵⁴ This threatened the peace in Scotland but secured Robert's claim compared to Balliol's, also giving Robert the Bruce the nickname 'the Competitor'.¹⁵⁵ King Edward I's position in Scotland had strengthened through the marriage agreement between the five-year-old Queen Margaret of Norway and six-year-old Edward of Caernarvon, King Edward's heir.¹⁵⁶ This marriage would result in the Treaty of Birgham-Northampton in 1290: two separate kingdoms, ruled in harmony by one king and one queen.¹⁵⁷ Edward gained control over Scotland through 'overlordship' from 1292, which meant that the claimant would be decided upon under his rule.¹⁵⁸

Robert Bruce, the future king, was born on 11 July 1274, amidst the competition between his grandfather and Balliol.¹⁵⁹ Robert Bruce the Competitor's claim on the Scottish throne, as the future king's grandfather, was not strong enough compared to that of Balliol so Robert retreated from the competition so that his heirs might have a claim on the crown.¹⁶⁰ Meanwhile, his son, the Robert Bruce who now had the claim to the throne, resigned his earldom to his son, Robert Bruce, the future king.¹⁶¹ John Balliol was crowned King of Scotland

¹⁵⁰ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 8.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 24, 31.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 35-37.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

on St. Andrew's Day, 1292.¹⁶² King Edward I continued to interfere in Scotland through its jurisdiction, resulting in the breach of the peace treaty between England and Scotland.¹⁶³

In 1294, the Scottish War of Independence would start with the clash between King Philip IV of France and Edward I.¹⁶⁴ The Welsh went in revolt against the English and the Scots soon followed, resulting in the French-Scottish Treaty of 1295.¹⁶⁵ Robert Bruce the Competitor had died by then, on Maundy Thursday in 1295.¹⁶⁶ Edward I's army now fought against King John's army and won, after which King John Balliol resigned and Edward took over.¹⁶⁷ Scots found new leaders in the battle against Edward's oppression in William Wallace and Andrew Murray, representatives of the commons.¹⁶⁸ While Wallace regained an army of commons, many nobles who represented the Comyns and the Bruces, also supported the fight against the English.¹⁶⁹ The battle of Falkirk in 1298, led by Wallace, was met with defeat and would be the last "full-scale pitched battle against the English" for sixteen years.¹⁷⁰ It is unknown if Robert Bruce fought with Wallace but he did help to burn Scottish castles so that they were of no use to the English.¹⁷¹

Co-operation between Robert Bruce, the future king, and John Comyn began to break in 1299 and broke in 1300 as Bruce left his position as Guardian.¹⁷² Edward continued his fight against Scotland with only several intervals of peace. Meanwhile, Robert the Bruce submitted to Edward because of his father's loyalty to the English king and in return, was given Elizabeth de Burgh, daughter of one of Edward's magnates, as a bride.¹⁷³ As Wallace's fight against the English failed in 1303, Comyn negotiated the Scottish submission a year later with Edward.¹⁷⁴ Interestingly, in 1305, Bruce had been discussing revolution with the bishops Wishart and Lamberton.¹⁷⁵ At this point, the belief in John Balliol to rule Scotland had diminished greatly and Robert Bruce "feared that Comyn might hinder him in an attempt on the throne" as the more natural leader to the community of the realm.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, Robert led Comyn to the

¹⁶² Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 66.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 81-83, 86.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 92-93, 96-97.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 107, 111-113.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 127-128.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 135-136.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 139, 146, 149.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 160-162.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 171, 173, 181.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 182, 187-188.

Greyfriar's kirk in Dumfries in 1306 and murdered him at the high altar because, it is speculated, Comyn might notify Edward of Robert's treason.¹⁷⁷ Six weeks after the murder, Robert Bruce was inaugurated.¹⁷⁸ What follows is the steady rise of Robert against Edward as Bruce seized castles, took fealties, was absolved by Wishart for his murdering sin, swore an oath of loyalty and agreement with the clergy of Scotland and finally, was crowned King of Scots at Scone.¹⁷⁹

Bruce steadily gained followers over the next few years and fought his foes with "guerrilla warfare [tactics]" that included "[speed], surprise, mobility, small-scale engagements, scorched earth and dismantling fortresses [...]."¹⁸⁰ Edward I had died in 1307 and Edward II took over.¹⁸¹ Bruce's attempt to conquer Stirling Castle in 1314, in light of previous altercations between the Scots and English, was deemed "the occasion rather than the cause of a head-on clash between the forces of the two countries."¹⁸² This would later be known as the Battle of Bannockburn. The Scots, with their infantry, won from the English cavalry and foot soldiers because of Robert's leadership, the 'schiltrom' of spearmen and the Scottish knowledge of the carse [or 'sluggish streams'] and constricted grounds.¹⁸³ While Edward II had not quite admitted it to himself, the Battle of Bannockburn of 1314 was the start of Scottish independence.¹⁸⁴ However, "final peace was to come only after further warfare and under a new king of England," namely Edward III, crowned on 1 February 1327.¹⁸⁵ In 1328, a year before Robert the Bruce's death, the Scottish war would be over and peace between Scotland and England would begin with the Treaty of Edinburgh, which recognised Scotland as England as independent kingdoms.¹⁸⁶

The Aftermath of Robert the Bruce's Reign

Perspectives on Robert the Bruce and Contemporary Scots

Barrow not only conveyed the history of Scottish independence that started during King Robert I's reign but also took care to examine various perspectives towards Robert the Bruce, before and during his time as king. Robert was born into an aristocratic Scottish family in the thirteenth

¹⁷⁷ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 183, 188.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 191.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 191, 193-195.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 223.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 224, 254, 265.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 269, 277, 289, 293

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 303.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 327.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 339.

century that had ties to the Gaelic and Irish and was friendly with the English.¹⁸⁷ In Robert the Bruce, the future king, his grandfather Robert Bruce already saw “more fiery mettle” than in his son.¹⁸⁸ Concurrently, in the late thirteenth century, the English perceived Scots as “insignificant men, common folk” or as “inarticulate, unchronicled ‘poor commons’.”¹⁸⁹ Contrastingly, Barrow argues that “the Scots nobles in 1295 [catching] up with the [king-breaking practices of] English nobles of forty years before is proof not of the backwardness of Scotland but of the strength of Scottish hostility to Edward I.”¹⁹⁰ Robert Bruce had obtained a more significant role within the claim on the Scottish throne since 1292 as earl of Carrick. Barrow emphasizes that, for this, “[he] had to be more than a good general; he had to be a Joshua, a captain of his people, one who could not only draw on existing loyalty but awaken dormant loyalty and win over to himself the loyalty previously given to his enemies.”¹⁹¹ From the English perspective, Bruce was rather seen as a fugitive.¹⁹² Barrow characterizes the Scots of this period as conservative, brave, nationalistic and patriotic.¹⁹³ When he was crowned as King Robert I in 1306 at Scone, contemporaries described Robert as cautious, bold and aggressive in his tactics, sometimes generous, humane or courteous to captives but not a gentleman nor a deliberate man-slayer.¹⁹⁴ Edward II thought Bruce and his men led a “wicked rebellion” but one that was based on impeccable “morale”.¹⁹⁵

After his death in 1329, his legend makes people remember him as the “Good King Robert” who behaved characteristically for his time, while his ancestry and fight for his royal position made him a true Scot.¹⁹⁶ His legend can be considered a ‘metonymic stereotype’, a term used by Billig that means “particulars are presented to represent the whole country” because it encompasses various aspects that make up the perceived identity of Scots.¹⁹⁷ Robert’s contemporaries and present-day history books refer to him to Robert ‘the’ Bruce rather than Robert Bruce, presumably because he is the most famous and remembered Robert Bruce of his family. Sawyers mentions that the Scottish pride of Robert’s victory at Bannockburn is also reflected and remembered through the fourteenth-century poem called ‘The Bruce’.¹⁹⁸ Even in

¹⁸⁷ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 35, 66.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 32, 116.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 255-256.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 208.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 119, 167, 196, 404.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 236, 245, 258, 289, 300, 302.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 266, 272.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 341, 417.

¹⁹⁷ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 102.

¹⁹⁸ Sawyers, “A New Day Dawning,” 1.

the eighteenth century, explains Smout, tales of Robert the Bruce and his contemporary William Wallace “never lost their following or their ability to fire the blood with ephemeral patriotic and anti-English rage.”¹⁹⁹ From this, I conclude that the recognition and popularity of Robert’s legend have survived the test of time and that the terms frequently applied to his character, also frequent among descriptions of stereotypes of Scots, such as bravery, patriotism and anti-Englishness.

The Influence of Robert the Bruce’s Legend on Scottish Identity

As Robert the Bruce’s legend encompasses the characteristics typically attributed to the Scottish identity of his time, it is not hard to see how he also influenced certain elements of Scottish history. He frequently features religious buildings and statues, even when he murdered a fellow claimant to the throne in a church.²⁰⁰ The existence of the Scottish Kirk during Robert’s ascent to the crown cannot be fully credited for the popularity of the presbyterian church in Scotland since the Enlightenment, or of the protestant Church of Scotland since the sixteenth century, which presbyterian religion is part of. I recognise this because Celtic traditions are argued to have used proto-presbyterian churches since earlier centuries.²⁰¹ Moreover, Scotland knew both various forms of Protestantism and Catholicism since the late eighteenth century among Scots and nowadays, recognises both of the religions as “compatible with being Scottish.”²⁰² Equally interesting is the influence of Robert the Bruce’s reign on contemporary Scottish law. MacQueen finds the basis for Scottish governance in the ‘Regiam Majestatem’ that was composed sometime after 1318, which was the first systematically compiled collection of Scottish written law from the early fourteenth century, a time in which “the expression of [Scottish] identity and sovereignty through law had been under considerable threat.”²⁰³ In any case, argues MacQueen, “[it] remained a source of law which was in common use up to and after its eventual appearance in print, and which, with its reference to King David, was a constant reminder to Scots lawyers of the historic nature of their law.”²⁰⁴ The revival of the Gaelic language since the 1970s cannot be attributed to Robert the Bruce’s legend, however, the rise of interest in the language means that there is an acknowledgement of the existence of the Gaelic language which was spoken in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, concurrent with the emergence of the Scots language. The influence of Robert the Bruce’s era

¹⁹⁹ Miller quoted in Smout, “Perspectives,” 108.

²⁰⁰ Smout, “Perspectives,” 109.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 105

²⁰² Kidd, “Gaelic Antiquity,” 1208, 1213; Smout, “Perspectives,” 105-106.

²⁰³ MacQueen, “Regiam Majestatem,” 1, 3, 5, 13.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 16.

is also visible in the category of military culture, namely in the remnants of military preparation exercises which, as I have found, are imitated in contemporary Highland Games. Similarly, I have discussed how the Scots were commended for their distinctly different military tactics compared to the English, after the Battle of Culloden of the eighteenth century.²⁰⁵ I conclude that Smout's categories of language, religion, sports and military culture, as signifiers of identification with Scottishness, can be traced back through history. I have also explained how jurisdictional practices of Robert's era have influenced law since that period. It may be taken as reasonably certain that Robert the Bruce's era has set off developments that have constituted or contributed to historical or present-day forms of law, religion, language, military culture and sports.

In this chapter, I have first identified the characteristics that academic literature ascribe to Scottish identity and then analysed the general portrayal of Robert the Bruce and Scots since the fourteenth century. In doing so, I answer part of my research question about the role of Robert the Bruce's legend as part of the Scottish national identity, by depicting characteristics of the Scottish identity that are likely to have derived from this historical period. The relevant subquestion of this chapter relates to the depiction of Robert the Bruce and Scots before the circulation of popularized images and perspectives in cinematic adaptations, which I have analysed in this chapter and will answer shortly below.

I have discovered, firstly, that Scotland has differed and still differs from England in its identity through its distinct language, religion, sports and military culture. The origins of these indicators are found in history. For instance, the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century saw the existence of the Church of Scotland and the Gaelic language, the implementation of war tactics used during the battle of Bannockburn, the installation of *Regiam Majestatem* and possibly, the Highland Games. It may, therefore, be taken as reasonably certain that Robert the Bruce's reign and legend influenced Scottish national identities, traditions and regulations during and after his era. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that Scottish identities comprise of other factors beyond the recognisable aspects of the perceived Scottish stereotype because Scottish identities are diverse. For instance, historically, some Scots might have fought either alongside or against Robert the Bruce, might have spoken either Gaelic, Scots or English, and might have practised their religion at either the Church of Scotland or the Church of Rome.

²⁰⁵ Sawyers, "A New Day Dawning," 2.

Secondly, I observed that the stereotypical keywords that are used by historians and scholars to describe ‘the’ Scottish identity throughout the centuries until now are also used by scholars to portray Robert the Bruce and other Scots during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. Similarities are found in the collective animosity in particular against Edward I during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century, to which the contemporary unofficial Scottish anthem still refers.²⁰⁶ Scots held and still hold generally anti-English sentiments that stem from temporal English enforced overlordship and dominance in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries.²⁰⁷ In turn, the English might have perceived Scots as backwards. Scholars differ in their appliance of the term ‘backwards’ on Scots. Kidd uses the word to describe the perception that Enlightened Scots in the eighteenth century would have had of Gaelic-speaking Scots.²⁰⁸ Barrow argues that Scotland is not backwards because they are able to catch up with English proceedings, like breaking with their king, John Balliol, in 1295.²⁰⁹

In any case, in my answer to the subquestion on the role of Robert’s legend within the national stereotype of Scots, I can now say that his legend has inspired historical and contemporary characteristics of Scots. Furthermore, I conclude that Robert has influenced Scottish traditions and regulations in his time and remnants of this are found throughout history. His legend carries implications for Scottish stereotype formation and tourists’ recognition of Robert’s role in contemporary Scotland. In the next chapter, I will discuss how the impact and popularity of Robert’s existence have translated into several cinematic adaptations of his legend. I will analyse how the filmmakers’ interpretation of the legend is reflected on screen through their narrative and mise-en-scène choices and how audiences might interpret it. This will ensure that I have grounding for my research in chapter four, in which I will analyse how Scottish official VisitScotland includes the cinematic adaptations of Robert the Bruce’s legend on its website and thereby, I argue, helps to popularize stereotypes of Robert the Bruce and Scots for international tourists.

²⁰⁶ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 84; The Corries, “The Flower of Scotland,” Barry Ferguson, May 11, 2009, video, 3:11, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiyLuv3GSs4_

²⁰⁷ Smout, “Perspectives,” 112; Sawyers, “A New Day Dawning,” 3; Lowenthal, “British National Identity,” 209-210.

²⁰⁸ Kidd, “Gaelic Antiquity,” 1206.

²⁰⁹ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 84.

Chapter 3: The Representation of Robert the Bruce('s legend) in Films

The legend of Robert the Bruce, King of Scots, proves to lend itself well to cinematic adaptation, especially over the past thirty years. The century-old legend made it into the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019). The fact that Robert the Bruce encompasses many traits of the Scottish stereotype is some explanation for his success, however, the existence of several cinematic adaptations of his ambiguous legend also signifies the relevance and international interest in this narrative.

Braveheart, *The Bruce*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* fall under what Harper calls the historical film genre because they include the representation of real people or events.²¹⁰ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith add that they are likely to “add purely make-believe characters, speeches, or actions,” or “[are] re-enactments that take liberties with actual events.”²¹¹ Stubbs argues, instead, that the characteristics of the historical film genre are oftentimes defined only after the labelling the films as such and that historical films, actually, “exhibit a massive variance in iconography, narrative style, setting, plot, and character types.”²¹² They are often a subgenre of action, adventure, drama and romance.²¹³ Still, Stubbs argues, stereotypical characteristics of the genre include romance, references to historical events and contemporaneous costumes.²¹⁴ Dancyger and Rush elaborately recognise these themes, which might validate Stubb’s argument that these characteristics derive after the films have been categorized by the time in which they are set. They demonstrate how the historical film genre is similar to the epic film but I argue that many of these characteristics also overlap with what Dancyger and Rush describe as the war film.²¹⁵ Characteristics of the epic film include a heroic struggle, a personal issue relating to morals or ethics, war, a charismatic and complex protagonist, a powerful antagonist, a historical crisis and mission, the real world rather than fantasy and lastly, the protagonist’s tragic fate.²¹⁶ The characteristics of the war film that I relate to the historical genre include the protagonist’s goal of personal or national survival, the challenge of values, the coexistence of and struggle of dominance between altruism and

²¹⁰ Harper quoted in Jonathan Stubbs, *Historical Film: A Critical Introduction* (New York, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 17.

²¹¹ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 353.

²¹² Stubbs, *Historical Film*, 10.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 11.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17

²¹⁵ Ken Dancyger and Jeff Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting: Beyond the Hollywood Formula*, 5th ed. (Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis, 2013), 117-118.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

barbarism, violence, relationships and romanticism, and criticism or contemplation of the implications of war.²¹⁷ A last set of stereotypes that the five historical films take into account are the stereotypical characteristics to which Scots and Scotland are reduced. Ranging from landscapes or music to various castles or villages, Robert the Bruce's legend in the films manages to touch upon various stereotypical visual and audible characteristics that shape Scotland's brand equity and its attraction for tourists.

The interpretation of the representation of Robert the Bruce in these films relates to the notion of what Bordwell, Thompson and Smith call 'implicit meaning', a concept which recognises the variety of interpretations of meanings by audiences.²¹⁸ Remaining aware of the different themes and topics that might be found in the five films and the various interpretations that audiences might have, this analysis focuses on the portrayal of Robert the Bruce in light of Scottish national identity. In doing so, I hope to shed light on national stereotypes in the films and to clear the way for the examination of the dominant view of the national identity that will be examined in the following chapter. In my search for the answer to what role Robert the Bruce's legend plays as characteristic of Scottish identity as represented in films and promoted on the VisitScotland website, I have to start with an overview of the various representations of his legend in films. This chapter first introduces the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019), then discusses how they differ from each other through a cinematic analysis of the narrative and mise-en-scène. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the differences between cinematic representations of Robert the Bruce's legend and answers the subquestion relating to how Robert the Bruce's legend represents a Scottish national stereotype in films.

FILM IN CONTEXT

So Dear to My Heart from 1948 is the first film that features Robert the Bruce, although briefly – only in the song 'Stick-to-it-ivity'. This cartoon-animated song portrays Robert the Bruce simultaneously by discussing his legend and allowing Robert to speak as if he makes decisions in the present. He is categorised with Columbus in the group of men who doubted themselves but persevered by 'sticking to it'. On the whole, this song represents a fragment of Robert the Bruce's legend that highlights Robert's bravery and perseverance, rather than his battles,

²¹⁷ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116.

²¹⁸ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 59.

kingship or relationships to Scots, the English, or his loved ones. As the 1948 film does not centre its narrative around Robert the Bruce or his legend but instead includes him briefly, I consider the 1990s as the start of a period that has seen several Robert the Bruce-centred films.

In 1995, the historical film *Braveheart* was released. Robert the Bruce and his legend are secondary within the narrative that centres around William Wallace, a contemporary of Robert the Bruce who also fought for Scottish independence. *Braveheart* is set largely in the period before Robert's claim to the throne, in the late thirteenth century, while the end of the film shows Robert on the battlefield. The narrative portrays Robert the Bruce as someone who joins the uprising at a later stadium and the fact that he leads the battle of Bannockburn is only shown at the very end of the film. As a result, audiences only see selections of Robert's life or observe how it intertwines at some points with that of Wallace. The film highlights Robert's initial stance among the nobles due to his aristocratic upbringing, which stands in stark contrast to Wallace, who leads the common people. Robert plays a leading role in the short scene of the battle of Bannockburn near the end of the film, however, the film chooses to underline the role of the Scottish patriots, rather than focus on Robert's efforts. *Braveheart* allows more screen time for Robert the Bruce than *So Dear to My Heart* did, however, the film still is a fragmented representation of Robert the Bruce's narrative. The representation of Robert in *Braveheart* might have inspired Scots to create a different narrative to do justice to Robert's legend. This could indeed be said about Angus Macfadyen, who portrayed Robert the Bruce in *Braveheart* in 1995 and again in the 2019 film he directed, *Robert the Bruce*.²¹⁹

The 1996 film *The Bruce* foreshadows through its title that this film is Robert the Bruce-centred. Unlike the previous two films, Robert the Bruce is the main protagonist. The narrative focuses on his rise towards the victory at Bannockburn and there is no reference to Wallace's existence or that he initiated the uprising against the English. The film is set during the dispute between John Comyn and Robert the Bruce as claimants to the Scottish throne and contains key moments within Bruce's narrative, such as the murder of Comyn and the battle of Bannockburn, with which the film concludes. Like *Braveheart*, the narrative of *The Bruce* shows Robert's transformation from a noble who has connections to the English, to a freedom-fighter who wants Scottish liberation from English control. The level of detail of the historical events in *The*

²¹⁹ "Angus Macfadyen: Biography," *IMDb*, accessed July 7, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0005171/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm#overview.

Bruce 1996 might account for the gap between this film and those that would follow in 2018 and 2019.

After a gap of over twenty years, *Outlaw King* reaches the public in 2018. While this film centres around Robert the Bruce and his legend, it is primarily a narrative of the group of Scots who fought for Scottish freedom. Robert might be the protagonist but several main characters help him achieve the Scottish goal of independence, including James Douglas, Angus Macdonald and Robert's brothers. The uprising is carefully pictured, from Robert's initial indifference towards the crown to the murder on Comyn and attacks on the English troops or castles to the Scottish victory at Bannockburn. This time frame captures a long enough period to picture the development of attitudes and events. Furthermore, the narrative recognises the existence of William Wallace and the discussion of Robert's chances as a claimant of the Scottish throne. My synopsis shows that this film includes a more complete overview of Robert's narrative and emphasizes the Scottish collective effort to achieve their goal.

The last film to consider is *Robert the Bruce*, released in 2019. This narrative focuses on Robert's legend but uses a rather different storyline compared to previous Robert-centred films, such as *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King*. The story is set after Robert has been crowned king in 1306, during his search for allies and his fight against rivals. His coronation nor the eventual battle of Bannockburn are included in the plot, rather, the narrative is set within a short and undefined time frame and presents him as feeling discouraged in his battle against the English oppression. The narrative focuses on how others perceive his legend, through flashbacks of his legend thus far, via confrontations with other characters who discuss his activities or by meeting Robert himself. The latter is portrayed by Robert's meeting with a small family and during his confrontations with opponents, who are led by the brother-in-law of the mother of the family. His legend is thus conveyed through a metanarrative because the overarching narrative about the small family incorporates the narrative of Robert the Bruce. The mother of the family explains how Robert took over from Wallace, what he had achieved and lost. This mother tells this story to her son Scot and the other children because Scot's father died fighting for Robert. This metanarrative, presented as a folk-myth that the mother narrates, might strengthen the relationship between Robert and the small family as they already knew something about him through the legend. In this sense, Robert's legend and his rise to the throne become secondary to his achievements thus far and relationships with others.

ROBERT ON FILM: ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVE AND MISE-EN-SCÈNE

Within the historical film genre, filmmakers might choose from a vast mix of narrative patterns, protagonists and time frames to portray one historical event. Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, find that “at different points in history, the stories, themes, values, or imagery of the genre harmonize with public attitudes in a more involuntary fashion.”²²⁰ For example, some films might choose to incorporate the Scottish stereotype of the kilt because it resonates with the perceived stereotypical image of Scots, while another might not include it because the filmmakers are aware of historical Scottish dress. This relates to Hearn’s notion that Scottish narratives have both mythical and historical elements, while Brown, McDonagh and Schultz’s note that narratives can be ambiguous and change over time.²²¹ My investigation will not focus on historical accuracy, rather, I am interested in what choices the films have made regarding narrative and mise-en-scène.

To explore how the films differ from each other in the portrayal of Robert the Bruce, several themes come to mind that allow for an elaborate film analysis of Robert’s historical legend that considers the representation of Scots. Such themes include the notion of Scottishness, battles and the heroic struggle. The findings of the analyses of the narrative, mise-en-scène and soundtrack within the subcategories of these themes will indicate the overlap and differences between the films.

Scottishness

Language

Within the portrayal of Robert the Bruce’s legend and considering the representation of the Scottish identity, language is the most obvious first category within the narrative analysis. Scottish actors portray Robert in *Braveheart*, *The Bruce* and *Robert the Bruce*. In *Braveheart* and *Robert the Bruce*, the same actor is used for that role, namely Angus Macfadyen. American actors attempt a Scottish accent in *So Dear to My Heart* and *Outlaw King* but only Chris Pine, who portrays Robert in the latter film, is relatively successful at imitating this accent. Robert the Bruce speaks Scots rather than Gaelic in all five films, as do the supporting characters, who are portrayed by both Scottish and American actors. The Gaelic language is the exception rather than the norm, even though Gaelic would have been the predominantly used language of Highlanders in the portrayed period.²²² The preference of Scots as a spoken language in the

²²⁰ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith, *Film Art*, 336.

²²¹ Hearn, “Narrative, Agency, and Mood,” 745; Brown, McDonagh, and Schultz, “Ambiguous Brand,” 597.

²²² Smout, “Perspectives,” 105, 107.

films is also heard in the song ‘Stick-to-it-ivity’ from *So Dear to My Heart*, as well as in songs in *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce*. Of the five films, only *Outlaw King* incorporates the Gaelic vernacular. It is used as a language to keep up morale, which is sung among Scots while fishing, sitting at the bonfire and when travelling.

I interpret the incorporation of the Scots language as the filmmakers’ choice for it might stimulate the films’ international attraction. Scots might be used as a primary language because it is still spoken in Scotland and audiences can understand and identify with it. Furthermore, because of the legend’s ambiguity, filmmakers can select parts of the historical facts and mythical aspects of the legend to shape its understanding.²²³ For instance, Gaelic only appears in *Outlaw King*, while it was a common language at that time. However, it is not commonly spoken by contemporary actors and it is currently a dying language. If actors had to learn Gaelic, it might have extended the production process. Using the Scots language that derives from and, therefore, sounds a lot like the English language²²⁴, diminishes the need for subtitles and the existence of a language barrier. It also means that internationally acclaimed actors could be considered to play the roles of Scots, which could make the films more popular.

Costume

The next category of the mise-en-scène is costume, which always sets historical films apart.²²⁵ The kilt is considered to be a Scottish stereotype that consists of a tartan garment worn by Scottish men and traditionally indicates to which clan one belongs – each clan has its tartan pattern and colours. However, it is generally argued that tartan kilts do not have century-old roots but have been popular since around the early eighteenth century.²²⁶ They are still worn by many Scots today. Of the five films, Robert the Bruce only wears a kilt in *So Dear to My Heart*; in the other films, he wears a thigh-, knee-, or ankle-length gown. It is not uncommon that other characters wear a kilt, such as William Wallace does in *Braveheart*. Instead of the kilt, some might wear a tartan cloth around the shoulders, as Robert is pictured in *So Dear to My Heart* and *The Bruce* and as some of Robert’s men portray in *Outlaw King*. Similarly, Robert is frequently clothed in battle armour throughout the films, whether that is full body armour, as in *So Dear to My Heart* and *The Bruce*, in chain mail, as pictured in *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King*, or clothing covered with armoured plates, as in *Robert the Bruce*. The costumes of the English in *Braveheart*, *The Bruce*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* is even more recognisable than

²²³ Brown, McDonagh and Shultz II, “Ambiguous Brand,” 596.

²²⁴ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 9.

²²⁵ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith, *Film Art*, 113.

²²⁶ Zuelow, “Kilts Versus Breeches,” 34, 51.

that of the Scots, because of their similarly coloured costumes during battles, heavy armour and lack of kilts.

Costumes can be used to differentiate parties from one another, note Bordwell, Thompson and Smith.²²⁷ The use of the kilt or cloth in *So Dear to My Heart*, *Braveheart*, *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King* is a method to identify and separate the Scots from the English. Similarly, the English wear more armour compared to the Scots in all films except *So Dear to My Heart*, where the English are not pictured. Lighting on and colour of costumes are also used to identify or highlight characters.²²⁸ In the murder of Comyn scene in *Outlaw King*, Robert and Comyn face each other and take up equal space within the mise-en-scène of the shot but Robert stands out because he faces the light and wears a red cape, as opposed to Comyn's brown attire. In *Robert the Bruce*, this same scene carries a different meaning as Robert initially stands in the shadow but during the fight, Robert and Comyn take turns standing in the light. Here, Comyn wears a red gown and Bruce wears a brown attire but considering the mise-en-scène and cinematography of the scene, I interpret Comyn's red attire as a reference to blood that foreshadows his fate.

Attitudes and Battles

Approach to Battle

The films, except for *So Dear to My Heart*, frequently use crosscutting to underline the differences of battle approaches between the Edward I or II and Robert the Bruce. *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King* use this method to depict differences between the Scots and the English as they prepare for battle. The scenes illustrate how Edward I and II act in anger, whereas Robert looks determined and ready for the battle. During the battle of Bannockburn itself, the characters convey these same emotions. Location or setting are other elements of mise-en-scène and are implemented to signify where the battle or set up of camps take place. Battle scenes regularly include bird's eye views, which are frequently used throughout *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* and employed once in *Braveheart*, whereas non-aerial landscape shots appear in all five films.

I argue that such mise-en-scène and editing of the shots can imply the differences between English and Scottish identities. They might even reveal the outcome of battles from the way such scenes are filmed: a hot-headed Edward II who depends on others to do his

²²⁷ Bordwell, Thompson and Smith, *Film Art*, 67.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

fighting stands in stark contrast to a calm yet determined Robert in *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King*, who fights alongside his people. Film music, too, can imply what comes next. For example, music with drums in *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* usually refers to battle. Scenes without fighting in *Braveheart*, *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King* frequently include bagpipe music, which indicates the stark contrast between moods when Robert's men have to fight and when they can rest. Such music is also a stereotypical indicator of the geographical location of the film. The setting is another important element of mise-en-scène and could foreshadow upcoming battles with shots that combine action with stereotypical Scottish landscapes. This is especially true for *Outlaw King*, where battles that are significant to the plot, take place outside. I exemplify this with the capture of Elizabeth and Marjorie after the English attack the forest in which Robert's army hid, the attack on Robert's men by the McDougall clan at the loch and the battle of Bannockburn that took place on an open field, surrounded by marshlands. The bird's eye view shots accentuate the magnitude and bareness of Scottish landscapes and demonstrate how the landscape calls for certain battle tactics. When films include such shots, their audiences can perceive how the Scots had an advantage over the English due to their familiarity with the landscape.

Props

The props make up the next category, related to armour and clothing. Robert's use of the axe during conflict is an additional important sign of his attitude during battles. Robert is not only pictured with an axe in the battle of Bannockburn against Edward II in *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King* but also fights with an axe in critical fighting scenes in *Braveheart* and *Robert the Bruce*. Nevertheless, Robert generally still carries and fights with a sword in all films, such as in the scene when he murders Comyn.

The use of the axe might be interpreted as barbarism, however, an axe might have been incorporated to portray the available equipment at the time. Still, in crucial fighting scenes in all of the films, Robert predominantly uses his axe and only uses his sword when he loses the axe during the battle. The use of the sword might refer to his aristocratic upbringing, whereas the axe embodies his place among the Scots and his willingness to fight with whatever means, so long he and his men continue to fight the English oppression. The implementation of both axes and swords might indeed refer to the characteristic of the war film, namely barbarism, as mentioned by Dancyger and Rush.²²⁹ They argue that there often is a coexistence and struggle

²²⁹ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116.

of dominance between altruism and barbarism.²³⁰ Both of these aspects are seen near the end of the battle of Bannockburn scene in *Outlaw King* when Robert the Bruce throws down his sword right after he sees that Edward II is fatigued and can no longer fight Robert.

The Heroic Struggle and National Survival

Barbarism

This category relates to Robert's role as leader of the First Scottish War of Independence and his relationship with other Scots and the English. Robert behaves differently to the various individuals to which he is connected, as I perceive in *Braveheart*, *The Bruce*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce*. Robert's relationships with Edward I and II is characterized by conflict, therefore it is no wonder that the battlefield is often where they meet, as *The Bruce* and *Outlaw King* illustrate. During these moments, the English might perceive Scots as barbaric. I have indicated that barbarism might be reflected in the use of axes but it is especially noticeable in the character of Douglas James in *Outlaw King*, who is one of Robert's men. Douglas is pictured multiple times with a red face while spit comes from his huffing mouth and clenched teeth, with blood spatters covering his face, all the while roaring his clan's family name 'Douglas' for whose overtaken land he seeks revenge.²³¹ During the main battle scenes in the five films, Robert does not come across as barbaric, rather, he fights when necessary and slays the English as they would slay him. However, Robert does get criticized for an act that might indicate his barbarism. Contemporaries, such as the English, priests and Scottish clans that are aligned with that of Comyn, condemn him for the murder of Comyn on sacred ground. The films that picture this act, show a clear difference in attitude: in *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce*, Robert looks more repentant than in *The Bruce*. In *Robert the Bruce*, Comyn's kin castigates Robert for this act. The film indicates that Robert is aware of the negative impacts of the independence fight and acts humbly towards the small family he stays with. Robert's murder of his opponent John Comyn creates new enemies and likely diminished the support he would get from some clans for his claim on the Scottish crown. Edward I and II prosecute Robert for his assault upon English troops, which is pictured throughout the narratives of *The Bruce*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* via long shots of pursuit, hiding and battles.

Historical films, which I associate with the genres that Dancyger and Rush identify as the epic and war film, typically include a heroic struggle, historical crisis and a mission for the

²³⁰ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116.

²³¹ *Outlaw King*, directed by David Mackenzie (2018; Los Gatos: Netflix, 2018), DVD.

protagonist, as can be noted in each of the five films.²³² While Robert is not pictured as barbaric in any of the films, his murder of John Comyn in the church is seen as unholy and therefore, might still be linked to barbarism. This act would fall under the protagonist's goal of personal or national survival, a characteristic of the war film.²³³ The personal reason is obvious but I would explain the link to the goal of national survival through Robert's need to prevent Comyn from informing Edward I about Robert's plans to collaborate on ruling the Scottish crown with Comyn. Another interesting aspect of the scene of Comyn's murder is found in the use of mise-en-scène and camera movement, which *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* use to portray themes of lightness and darkness. This allows both characters in *Robert the Bruce* to fight among lightness and darkness, possibly referring to the good and bad in both of them. In *Outlaw King*, this scene shows that Robert steps out of the darkness into the light, which could imply his good intentions behind his proposal to collaborate on ruling Scotland. Comyn, meanwhile, is depicted with his back towards the light, which might illustrate his pernicious plans. The same lighting and composition are applied during the murder which could signify that Robert defeated the enemy, just like light overcomes darkness.

Defeat and Doubt

Robert's narrative is characterized by failures and victories, as the films demonstrate. However, a crucial scene that takes place before his victory, which is incorporated in most of the films, shows Robert reflecting on his failures during a sequence of English attacks. This contemplation is symbolized by the legend of the spider who attempts to build a web, fails and tries again. This legend does not appear in Barrow's detailed analysis of historical texts that relate to Robert the Bruce's rise to the crown, however, its popularity is acknowledged by the BBC.²³⁴ The scene about the spider and the web features in four out of five films and is told most clearly in the song 'Stick-to-it-ivity' from *So Dear to My Heart*. In this song, a wise owl narrates the story of Robert the Bruce and compares his legend to that of a spider building a web and failing. The spider succeeds while Robert is discouraged by his failures. He is told to "stick to it" so that he will have "never lost a fight", as the song goes.²³⁵ *The Bruce*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* also incorporate the legend of the spider and the web. In *The Bruce*, Robert confronts the spider in two scenes, once when he hides in a cave from his opponents and another time when he

²³² Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116-118.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 116.

²³⁴ "Scottish Wars of Independence," *BBC Home*, accessed July 3, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/as/warsofindependence/info.shtml?loc=cave2>.

²³⁵ "Stick-to-it-ivity," *So Dear to My Heart*, directed by Harold D. Schuster and Hamilton Luske (1948; Burbank, CA: Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2008), DVD.

reflects on his present predicament with Bishop Wisharton. The cave scene also features in *Robert the Bruce*, whereas in *Outlaw King*, Robert refers to the legend as an analogy for their attack strategy: “We’ll be like the spider and its web. [...] I’m done with running and I’m sick of hiding. We’ll provoke them until they come after us.”²³⁶ The different presentations of this myth show that it is an ambiguous narrative, like that of Robert the Bruce, that is shaped and interpreted differently over time.

The legend of the spider and the web is used as a metaphor for how Robert sees himself and what he should do to persevere, namely, to believe in himself and keep trying. The symbolism that Robert is the spider is portrayed through the cinematography of the back-and-forth perspectives on Robert and the spider in *So Dear to My Heart*, *The Bruce* and *Robert the Bruce*. These films portray this scene in a dark environment, possibly to convey the setting of the cave in which the legend is said to have taken place, or to express the significance of Robert’s moment of contemplation and realisation. This contemplation relates to a personal challenge during his mission, which are characteristics of the genres of the epic and war film.²³⁷

Respect and Romance

A significant part of the representation of Robert the Bruce in the films is the positive presentation, attributed to him predominantly by his kin and fighting men. The depiction of a charismatic and heroic protagonist characterizes the historical film genre but I also recognise it in the genre of the epic film.²³⁸ While *Outlaw King* shows a respected, protective, kind but just king of Scots, Robert is depicted as rather unsure in *So Dear to My Heart* and *Braveheart*, self-assured and passionate in *The Bruce* and tentative in *Robert the Bruce*. This is underlined by Robert’s visually close relationship with his wife, daughter, kin and men in *Outlaw King*, whereas the other films do not indicate harmonious relationships because all the attention is focused on Robert’s fight against Edward I or II. Therefore, Robert’s connection with his allies remains superficial in the other four films. The films demonstrate a final notion of respect for Robert the Bruce in their reflection on him and his legend, which the films integrate primarily at the end of the film through either a spoken or visual description. The exception is *So Dear to My Heart*, in which the narrating owl reflects on Robert’s legend by naming him “the bravest king Scotland’s ever known” in the song.²³⁹ In *Braveheart*, *The Bruce* and *Robert the Bruce*,

²³⁶ *Outlaw King*, directed by David Mackenzie (2018; Los Gatos: Netflix, 2018), DVD.

²³⁷ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116-118.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 117-118

²³⁹ “Stick-to-it-ivity,” *So Dear to My Heart*, directed by Harold D. Schuster and Hamilton Luske (1948; Burbank, CA: Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2008), DVD.

the films reflect on the freedom that Scotland has gained, primarily by referring to the victory at Bannockburn. *Outlaw King*, instead, indicates the path that was cleared for James VI to inherit the Scottish and English crown in the seventeenth century. *Braveheart* does not reflect on Robert's win and instead names it the victory of "patriots of Scotland, starving and outnumbered" who fought like "warrior poets" and "Scotsmen".²⁴⁰ *Braveheart* catches the eye with such an ending because it underlines the collective effort of Scots to win their independence. Such an ending is matched perhaps only by *Outlaw King*, where the text does not reflect on Robert's victory but rather indicates the future profit of the fourteenth-century effort.

In my analysis of the depiction of Robert the Bruce, I notice that the respect he gained from many Scots is pictured especially well in the first scene of *Outlaw King*. The extended camera movement in the first scene of the film does not merely attract attention to Robert the Bruce as the main protagonist – the cinematography and absence of editing also allow the audience to feel as if they are walking around as contemporaries of Robert and other claimants to the Scottish crown. The positive depiction of Robert in *Outlaw King* in scenes with his men and wife is presented explicitly, as noted above. Contrastingly, the romantic scenes in *The Bruce*, which is a characteristic of the historical genre and the war film genre, lack depth.²⁴¹ The romantic violin music in this film is what carries the message of such scenes, as does the music during William Wallace's romantic scenes in *Braveheart* and the scene in *Outlaw King* where Robert and Elizabeth reunite after her imprisonment.

Discussion of Findings

In the above analysis, I have indicated how Robert's characteristics, attitude or relationships are sometimes portrayed explicitly through visual aspects or dialogue, whereas at other times, mise-en-scène elements such as lighting, setting or visual perspective are used to highlight the narrative. Aitken argues that landscapes and other visual aspects can influence the emotional connection between the film and its audience through recognition of the scenery and identification with the protagonist within that landscape.²⁴² At other times, sound and music steer the audience's attention in a film. However, the narratives indicate most explicitly how the films differ from each other. Frost emphasizes that historic films influence audiences' interpretations of history and argues that narrative elements have an even greater impact on

²⁴⁰ *Braveheart*, directed by Mel Gibson (1995; Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2007), DVD.

²⁴¹ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116.

²⁴² Aitken, "Poetic Child Realism," 71-72.

audiences than the visual aspects.²⁴³ Aitken rightfully refers to ‘image-events’, “a sequence of shots which violate or enhance the rhythm of the film” which strengthens the emotional investment of the audience.²⁴⁴ I would like to add Bordwell, Thompson and Smith’s notion of ‘implicit meaning’ to Aitken’s argument as this concept relates to the variety of interpretations that a film’s audience might have.²⁴⁵ The multitude of interpretations that might exist could be explained by the broad descriptions of different genres. The individual emotional response to various events thus varies per person due to their interpretation of meaning.

Image-events, shocking or unexpected events, are common in the historical film genre. I recognise these in the hardships that the protagonist experiences during his mission, which characterizes the epic and war film genre and overlaps with the aspects frequently seen in the historical film genre.²⁴⁶ Examples of these hardships in the films are Elizabeth’s capture and Edward II’s harsh measures when torturing men to discover where Robert the Bruce hides, as seen in *Outlaw King*. Another instance of a scene that differs from the general rhythm of the plot is the previously mentioned unexpected murder of Comyn, as seen in *The Bruce*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce*. It could also be noted in Robert’s defeated attitude during his confrontation with the spider, as I have analysed in *So Dear to My Heart*, *The Bruce*, and *Robert the Bruce*. The clear pause that this scene signifies within the narrative of the films relates to Aitken’s transactional theory, in which individuals do not adapt to or integrate with their environment.²⁴⁷ The scene with the spider stands out among the main narratives about achieving Scottish independence. Most of the films have incorporated the confrontation between Robert and the spider but *Outlaw King*, interestingly, refers to the spider and the web as an already existing legend. This exemplifies how the depiction of legends depends on the interpretation of the filmmaker. Frost recognises this too and emphasizes that, therefore, “the presentation of history is never absolute.”²⁴⁸

The films also differ in their portrayal of Robert the Bruce in their narratives. In doing so, they acknowledge the legend’s ambiguity because historical facts might have been considered in the films but identity is not a fixed construct. The depiction of Robert as the saviour of Scotland in *The Bruce* and at the end of *Robert the Bruce* is different than considering him the bravest king of Scotland, as in *So Dear to My Heart*, because the former description

²⁴³ Frost, “Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly,” 253.

²⁴⁴ Aitken, “A transactional geography,” 106.

²⁴⁵ Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith, *Film Art*, 59.

²⁴⁶ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116-118.

²⁴⁷ Aitken, “A transactional geography,” 107.

²⁴⁸ Frost, “Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly,” 249.

relates to his deeds while the latter describes what characterizes him as king. Another portrayal of Robert is seen in *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King*, which emphasize the collective effort of the fight against Edward I and II. These various depictions of Robert influence audiences' interpretations of the legend and their understanding of Robert's place within Scottish history.

In this chapter, I have given an overview of the cinematic representations of Robert the Bruce's legend and his contemporaries in the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019). This chapter has allowed me to answer my subquestion about how the films present Robert the Bruce's legend as characteristic of the Scottish national stereotype. This relates closely to my research question about the role of Robert the Bruce's legend in films as characteristic of the Scottish national identity because this subquestion investigates the filmmakers' and audiences' interpretation of the legend. I will present my answers to my subquestion below.

Firstly, the films have each, to some extent, conformed to the characteristics of the historical genre and to the stereotypes to which Scottish history is reduced. Such Scottish stereotypes include dress, music, accent and landscapes, as I have analysed above. These characteristics of Scottish history are reinforced because they have become recognisable through audiences' exposure to various cinematic productions of the historical film genre.²⁴⁹ *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce*, for instance, have undoubtedly been influenced by the narrative and visual choices of the three earlier films that feature Robert the Bruce. At the same time, the legend of Robert the Bruce is ambiguous and prone to change over time, therefore the five films each adopt various stereotypical characteristics, such as kilts or the Gaelic language.

Secondly, I have found that only the English verbally reflect on and describe 'the' Scottish identity in the films, except for *So Dear to My Heart*. Oftentimes, the adjectives that are used for Robert the Bruce are implemented in the same sentence that refers to Scots in general. Among these are the terms 'vermin',²⁵⁰ 'lunacy'²⁵¹ and 'Godless murderer'.²⁵² To complete the set of films about the legend of Robert the Bruce, then, it would be interesting to include a film about Robert's legend as told from the perspective of Edward I or II. If such a

²⁴⁹ Dancyger and Rush, *Alternative Scriptwriting*, 116-118.

²⁵⁰ *The Bruce*, directed by Bob Carruthers and David McWhinnie (1996; Livermore: Primetime Entertainment, 1999), DVD.

²⁵¹ *Outlaw King*, directed by David Mackenzie (2018; Los Gatos: Netflix, 2018), DVD.

²⁵² *Ibid.*

film was created, it would give a different perspective on issues like othering, as it could indicate how historical films about Scotland engage with the concept.²⁵³

From these findings, I propose that cinematic representations of Robert the Bruce, Scots and Scotland might influence audiences' perceptions of Scottish stereotypes and inspire tourists to form expectations. In the following chapter, I will analyse which cinematic representations of Robert the Bruce exist on the platforms of VisitScotland, the national tourist board of Scotland. This will shed some light on how representatives of Scottish tourism market Scottish national identities and which of the discussed films are incorporated on the website to represent Robert's legend. VisitScotland's selection of films about Robert the Bruce in its country branding of Scotland as a tourism destination will indicate how the National Tourism Board markets and popularizes the historical film genre. It also suggests how VisitScotland recognises and displays the stereotypical traits to which the dominant view of Scots is reduced and the influence this might have on tourists' understanding of and presumptions about the role of Robert the Bruce's legend within Scottish identity.

²⁵³ Rose quoted in Pritchard and Morgan, "Culture, identity and tourism representation," 169.

Chapter 4: VisitScotland's Branding of Robert the Bruce

Robert the Bruce's place within the Scottish collective memory is undoubtedly remembered during present issues of Scottish independence, as seen with Brexit. Because of the relevance of this narrative throughout history, it is no wonder that Robert the Bruce's legend is mentioned and marketed on Scottish government and tourism websites, such as VisitScotland. In the previous chapter, I have analysed the films that incorporate his legend, namely *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019). These films are marketed to tourists through film-related tours. The representations of Robert the Bruce in film might not only change the perception of film audiences on his legend but also that of online visitors and offline tourists who stumble upon such tours.

In this chapter, I will analyse the measure of success of the films about the legend of Robert the Bruce, the marketing of its cinematic adaptations, and the influence of the popularity of the adaptations on the marketing of the films. This will help me to answer my subquestion about how the historical films might be used in marketing as representative of a Scottish stereotype, which is part of my research question on how the depiction of Robert's legend in films characterizes the Scottish national identity. Frost indicates that film and television stimulate tourism to historical landscapes that feature in medieval films.²⁵⁴ The marketing of films about Robert the Bruce will likely have a similar effect because the films influence tourists' understanding of the legend and could stimulate tourism to Scotland. I will first conduct a content analysis of VisitScotland's marketing of the legend of Robert the Bruce and its cinematic adaptations because this platform represents the official National Tourist Board of Scotland. As such, the website of VisitScotland might indicate how the Scottish government would like to present Scotland to national and international tourists. Finally, the chapter aims to discover how the cinematic representations have been incorporated on the VisitScotland website and how their inclusion contributes to the popularization of a national stereotype.

MARKETING THE LEGEND

Several parties might benefit from the promotion of Scottish landscapes, national history and heritage. This relates to the marketing of Scotland's brand equity – the existing elements that already make Scotland unique and are recognisable for Scots and foreigners.²⁵⁵ The Scottish

²⁵⁴ Frost, "Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly," 247-248.

²⁵⁵ Hamilton, "Project Galore," 107.

government, tourist agencies, regional and local companies fall among the businesses that benefit from tourists and locals who have come to seek Scottish scenery, culture and heritage, or, notes Reijnders, might go on tours related to media tourism.²⁵⁶ The depiction of Robert the Bruce's legend in films might attract tourists who are interested in both Scottish brand equity and the cinematic representations of these landmarks, which would provide additional benefits for Scotland's local, regional and national tourism and economy.²⁵⁷

VisitScotland

The official Scottish National Tourist Board, VisitScotland, is a “governmental [body] that directly or indirectly supports tourism.”²⁵⁸ It is the most interesting organisation to analyse because, firstly, it is an overarching organisation for Scottish tourism, therefore it indicates the image that the Scottish government would want national and international tourists to recognise.²⁵⁹ Secondly, VisitScotland's consumer website, [visitscotland.com](https://www.visitscotland.com), has the goal to “ensure that our visitors experience the very best of Scotland and that the country makes the most of its outstanding tourism assets and realises its potential.”²⁶⁰ This indicates that the website is conscious about the image that they portray and the opportunities for local tourism that follow from an attractive country brand image. Thirdly, they capture the interest by providing “information and inspiration to visitors and potential visitors.”²⁶¹ In this aim, I recognise a non-profit mentality that intends to create worthwhile experiences for its tourists.

Variations of VisitScotland websites have existed in the past and some still do, such as [visitscotland.org](https://www.visitscotland.org), which is “the national tourism organisation for Scotland” whose “main aim is to contribute significantly to the advancement of Scottish tourism by giving it a real presence in the global marketplace and benefiting the whole of Scotland.”²⁶² Yet another website is the Scottish Tourism Alliance, which aims to inform tourism businesses rather than tourists themselves.²⁶³ Previous websites that represented the official Scottish National Tourist Board include [visitscotland.net](https://www.visitscotland.net), which existed in 2000, while both [visitscotland.co.uk](https://www.visitscotland.co.uk) and [visitscotland.org.uk](https://www.visitscotland.org.uk) have been under construction since 2000 and 2001 respectively. They have all redirected its visitors to [visitscotland.com](https://www.visitscotland.com) since 2005.

²⁵⁶ Stijn Reijnders, *Places of the Imagination. Media, Tourism, Culture* (Farnham, England and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 4-5, 37.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁵⁸ Blain, Levy, and Ritchie, “Destination Branding,” 328.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 335.

²⁶⁰ “About Us,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/about-us/>.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² “Welcome to VisitScotland.org,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.org/>.

²⁶³ “About us,” *Scottish Tourism Alliance*, 2019, accessed June 28, 2020, <https://scottishtourismalliance.co.uk/>.

Different from visitscotland.org and the Scottish Tourism Alliance, VisitScotland is a non-profit organisation whose primary goal is to attract and interest tourists rather than to promote consumerism. Still, the organisation VisitScotland does get funds from the Scottish government to sponsor national tourism.²⁶⁴ VisitScotland also offers links to tours from commercial enterprises of tourism but markets them inconspicuously – the website does not include them on the home page nor does it explicitly promote them. The website visitscotland.com thus represents the marketed Scottish national identity best, as an overarching organisation that is experience-based and aims to inform and enthuse future national and international tourists about Scotland.

Robert the Bruce as a Brand

[Visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com), from here on reduced to ‘VisitScotland’, presents both Scotland’s historical landmarks and present-day activities. This method of country branding as a tourism destination fits in well with the definition of Moilanen and Rainisto, who note that the uniqueness of a brand leaves an impression with the client or, in this case, might attract tourists to Scotland.²⁶⁵ The website’s front page signals its reliance on the past for its brand equity, visible in the promotion of Scotland’s culture and heritage.²⁶⁶ Additionally, it markets Scotland’s nature and modern entertainment, such as films and series, to represent contemporary Scotland.²⁶⁷

Robert the Bruce is one of Scotland’s historical figures and as such, he is part of the country brand of VisitScotland. The website depicts his legend through a textual description and images. VisitScotland describes Robert as “Scotland’s most successful monarch,” “a nobleman from the south west of the country, who gained his nation’s crown and won the country independence in the early 14th century.”²⁶⁸ The website directs visitors to physical locations in Scotland for further information on historic buildings, monuments and areas he is associated with.²⁶⁹ Lastly, the page about Robert the Bruce includes a quote from the Declaration of Arbroath from 1320, which was a message from Scottish barons from King Robert I’s to Pope John XXII after the pope had excommunicated Robert for his disregard of the Scottish-English truce of 1317.²⁷⁰ The excerpt of the quote indicates Robert’s intentions

²⁶⁴ “Tourism and events: overview,” *Scottish Government*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.gov.scot/policies/tourism-and-events/>.

²⁶⁵ Moilanen and Rainisto, “Developing a Place Brand,” 6.

²⁶⁶ “Home: Welcome to Scotland,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/>.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ “About Robert the Bruce,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 25, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/famous-scots/robert-the-bruce/>.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ Barrow, *Robert Bruce*, 321-322.

behind breaking the truce and signifies how VisitScotland wants to present him: "... It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom – for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself."²⁷¹ The website underlines the influence of the past upon the Scottish national identity for it emphasizes that Robert the Bruce and other famous Scots, "continue to fascinate, inspire and leave their mark."²⁷² These quotes relate to the sentiment of the Scottish collective effort which *Braveheart*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* convey.

I have now established how VisitScotland portrays Robert the Bruce, which indicates how VisitScotland wants to present its historical past. The representation of Robert the Bruce's legend also signifies what Scottish officials advertise as characteristic of the ambiguous Scottish national identity. This answers part of my research question about how VisitScotland's markets Robert the Bruce's legend as characteristic of the Scottish national identity. In the next section, I will analyse the representation of the films about Robert the Bruce on VisitScotland and I expect to find that the films which narratives overlap with VisitScotland's promotion of Robert the Bruce's legend, are the ones that are incorporated on the VisitScotland website.

MARKETING ROBERT THE BRUCE FILMS

VisitScotland not only attracts visitors and potential tourists who travel for Scotland's heritage and landscapes but also those interested in Scottish film-induced tourism, literary tourism or music tourism. Film-induced tourism is most obviously promoted on the VisitScotland website, as it markets the prominent television series *Outlander* (2014-) and the film *Brave* (2012), both of which are set in Scotland. These films and series might influence audiences' perceptions and expectations of Scotland through their visual and narrative representation of Scottish landscapes and characters. Reijnders notes that contemporary television- and film tours yearly attract many tourists to real and fictional places.²⁷³ Films and series about Scotland inspire film-induced tourism and this might generate additional incomes for the tourism sector and local economy.²⁷⁴

It is no wonder then, that films and series about Scotland are included on VisitScotland. The website promotes films predominantly through tours, destinations and events, which is also

²⁷¹ "About Robert the Bruce," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 25, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/famous-scots/robert-the-bruce/>.

²⁷² "About Famous Scots," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/famous-scots/>.

²⁷³ Reijnders, *Places of the Imagination*, 4.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 2, 37.

the case for films about Robert the Bruce. The following section is dedicated to the marketing of such films on the VisitScotland website, making use of its present website and the Wayback Machine, which is part of the Internet Archive. This tool allows people to trace back earlier versions of a website through snapshots that people have taken of the page. It will be used in the following analysis to examine VisitScotland's representation of the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019) throughout the years. The findings will indicate what films have been adopted by VisitScotland and which, therefore, have been promoted as part of the identity that VisitScotland wants to portray of Robert the Bruce and his legend.

The Cinematic Representation of Robert the Bruce on VisitScotland

The first film that features Robert the Bruce and his legend is *So Dear to My Heart* from 1948. He is only mentioned in the song 'Stick-to-it-ivity', which might explain how the film is rarely acknowledged as a film that features Robert the Bruce. VisitScotland does not acknowledge the film nor Robert's existence in the song. In the 1940s, when the film was released, no official tourism board for Scotland existed yet.²⁷⁵ Therefore, I find it unlikely that this foreign film about Scotland was promoted nationally or internationally, especially considering the film's brief inclusion of Robert the Bruce and Scotland in only one song.

Braveheart (1995), on the other hand, is popular on VisitScotland as noted from the many tours about this film that the website promotes. Seven present-day tours refer to this film but which are promoted on the website only since June 2019.²⁷⁶ Because of the success that *Braveheart* still enjoys today, there may have been more *Braveheart*-related tours before 2019 but they might not have been marketed on VisitScotland's website. Still, the promotion of the seven tours since 2019 on leads me to hypothesize that they are relatively new, or have recently

²⁷⁵ "Tourism Timeline," *VisitScotland.org*, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.org/about-us/what-we-do/50-years-scottish-tourism>.

²⁷⁶ The following tours were found on Wayback Machine and thus have existed before the present-day version of the VisitScotland website: "Film locations tour," *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 27, 2020, <http://web.archive.org/web/20190628002528/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/film-locations-tour-e63e6428>; "William Wallace – Braveheart," *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 27, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/20190701000000*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/william-wallace-braveheart-df0d83d8; "Braveheart & Whisky country," *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 27, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/20190701000000*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/braveheart-whisky-country-412b6824;

The following tours were not found on Wayback Machine but do exist presently on the VisitScotland website: "Scotland in TV and Film," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/scotland-in-tv-and-film-37f885ff>; "Braveheart Tour," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/braveheart-tour-2b98e8f7>; "Braveheart Private Luxury Tour," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/braveheart-private-luxury-tour-56ade5e5>; "Braveheart Private Luxury Tour," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/braveheart-private-luxury-tour-cefc64ae>.

been added onto the VisitScotland website. Furthermore, several documents in the section ‘see and do’ mention *Braveheart* as they indicate the locations where the film was set or relates to.²⁷⁷ *Braveheart* is the only film about Robert the Bruce that is mentioned in the Scottish film and television itinerary of 2016 and still is included in the itinerary today.²⁷⁸ The Scottish guide of 2020 that is marketed at the United States and Canada also mentions *Braveheart* in relation to its brand equity by referring to “[the] dramatic hills of Glen Nevis and Glen Coe [...]”.²⁷⁹

Like *So Dear to My Heart*, the 1996 film *The Bruce* has not gained much attention. It features only once on VisitScotland in a 2017 brochure aimed at film enthusiasts, which is called ‘Set in Scotland: A Film Fan’s Odyssey’. Here, it refers to the film in relation to Dunfermline Abbey, one of the locations where Sandy Welsh portrayed Robert the Bruce in *The Bruce*.²⁸⁰ It is the first historical genre film that centres around Robert the Bruce and his legend but it has not gained the attention that a William Wallace film such as *Braveheart* has.

Outlaw King (2018) enjoys even more success among the film tours on VisitScotland than *Braveheart* does. The website promotes eleven tours about or referring to *Outlaw King*.²⁸¹

²⁷⁷ “Fort William,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/ebrochures/en/what-to-see-and-do/fortwilliam.pdf>; “Glasgow,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/ebrochures/en/what-to-see-and-do/glasgow.pdf>; “Edinburgh,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/ebrochures/en/what-to-see-and-do/edinburgh.pdf>; “Glen Etive,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/towns-villages/glen-etive-p1422341>.

²⁷⁸ “Scottish Film & TV locations itinerary,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, 2017, accessed June 27, 2020, <http://web.archive.org/web/20160326230003/https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/attractions/tv-film/locations-itinerary/>; “Scottish Film & TV locations itinerary,” *VisitScotland*, 2020, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/attractions/tv-film/locations-itinerary/>.

²⁷⁹ “Scotland Essential Guide 2020,” *VisitScotland*, 2020, 28. Accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/ebrochures/us.pdf>.

²⁸⁰ Tom Maxwell, “Set in Scotland: A Film Fan’s Odyssey,” *VisitScotland*, 2017, 38. Accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/ebrochures/en/set-in-scotland.pdf>.

²⁸¹ The following tours were found on Wayback Machine and thus have existed before the present-day version of the VisitScotland website: “Scotland’s History on Film Tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190703033454/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/scotlands-history-on-film-tour-8d918e1c>; “Outlaw King Tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/2019*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/outlaw-king-tour-86e66360; “The Outlaw King Tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/2019*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/the-outlaw-king-tour-d5479536; “The Outlaw King Tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, <http://web.archive.org/web/20181210185609/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/the-outlaw-king-tour-d840bf98>; “The Outlaw King Film Locations Tour – half day tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/20190701000000*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/the-outlaw-king-film-locations-tour-half-day-tour-e7f7bd93; “The Outlaw King film locations tour – full day private tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/20190701000000*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/the-outlaw-king-film-locations-tour-full-day-private-tour-fa878b66; “Outlaw King Private Locations Tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June 20, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/20190701000000*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/outlaw-king-private-locations-tour-abf95da0; “The Outlaw King Locations Tour,” *Wayback Machine*, VisitScotland, accessed June

One of the tours even refers to the film as “an epic story about Robert the Bruce [...]”²⁸² while yet another describes Robert as “Scotland’s greatest King” and mentions “the amazing film *The Outlaw King*, filmed entirely in Scotland.”²⁸³ The website also refers to the film in relation to its film set locations, such as Blackness Castle.²⁸⁴ Like *Braveheart*, the 2018 film is included in the essential guide of 2020 that is marketed at tourists from the United States and Canada.²⁸⁵ Moreover, VisitScotland has dedicated a special page to *Outlaw King* since 24 March 2019, which uses the same font, typeface and colour as the title on the official film poster.²⁸⁶ Considering its popularity, it is interesting that the previously mentioned Scottish film and television locations itinerary still does not acknowledge *Outlaw King*.

The 2019 film *Robert the Bruce* has been released only recently. The Wayback Machine shows that newly released films appear on VisitScotland approximately a year later, as exemplified by *Outlaw King*. Therefore, I expect that *Robert the Bruce* appears on the VisitScotland website sometime in 2020.

Marketing Methods of VisitScotland

From what I have perceived on the website, I can conclude that the most popular Robert the Bruce films on VisitScotland are *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King*. The connection between the tours about these two films and Robert the Bruce is predominantly location-related, referring to his home and grave.²⁸⁷ At other times, the tours aim to “discover the reality behind *Braveheart* and *The Outlaw King* [*sic*].”²⁸⁸ VisitScotland not only uses its website to promote these films

20, 2020, http://web.archive.org/web/20190701000000*/https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/the-outlaw-king-locations-tour-472e277c.

The following tours were not found on Wayback Machine but do exist presently on the VisitScotland website: “Film locations tour,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/film-locations-tour-e63e6428>; “Scotland in TV and Film,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/scotland-in-tv-and-film-37f885ff>; “Outlaw King,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/outlaw-king-a4cd5d7b>.

²⁸² “Outlaw King Tour,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020,

<https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/outlaw-king-tour-86e66360>.

²⁸³ “The Outlaw King Tour,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020,

<https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/the-outlaw-king-tour-d840bf98>.

²⁸⁴ “Blackness Castle,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/blackness-castle-p248561>.

²⁸⁵ “Scotland Essential Guide 2020,” *VisitScotland*, 2020, 29. Accessed June 27, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/ebrochures/us.pdf>.

²⁸⁶ “On the trail of the Outlaw King,” *Wayback Machine*, accessed June 27, 2020,

<http://web.archive.org/web/20190324225938/https://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/attractions/tv-film/outlaw-king-map/>.

²⁸⁷ “Film Locations Tour,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/film-locations-tour-e63e6428>.

²⁸⁸ “Scotland in TV and Film,” *VisitScotland*, accessed June 20, 2020,

<https://www.visitscotland.com/info/tours/scotland-in-tv-and-film-37f885ff>.

and tours but also uses social media to attract audiences to the website, the promoted films and Scotland.

The Instagram account of VisitScotland has existed since 24 November 2011 and predominantly shares pictures of locations that might be attractive to tourists. It sometimes shares narratives of Scots but does not promote historical films about legendary Scots. Their Twitter account, however, has promoted *Outlaw King* in November 2018 through a takeover by another twitter account, shortly after the film was released. The tweets actively promoted the film by sharing pictures of “the filming locations from the brilliant new Netflix movie” and use positive descriptions and smileys to enthuse audiences about the locations in the film.²⁸⁹ Earlier in November of 2018, the Twitter account ‘VisitScotland News’ had already tweeted about bloggers visiting “as many film and real-life locations associated with Robert the Bruce under 36 hours, as we celebrate the release of #OutlawKing on NETFLIX.”²⁹⁰ The official VisitScotland Twitter account has tweeted about *Braveheart* once when it referred to Robert the Bruce as “the real Braveheart” because “the term was coined by Sir Walter Scott, who lived not far from [...] Melrose Abbey where Bruce’s heart is interred.”²⁹¹ This suggest VisitScotland’s intention to form the association of a ‘braveheart’ with Robert the Bruce rather than William Wallace. The tweet does not indicate that VisitScotland criticizes *Braveheart* for this misconception, as I note from VisitScotland’s continued marketing of the film. The tweet about *Braveheart* ends with the hashtag #RealOutlawKing, undoubtedly to signify and promote the recent release of *Outlaw King* at the time of the tweet in November 2018. Interestingly, the official VisitScotland Twitter account has not promoted *Braveheart* nor *Outlaw King* since November 2018.

Moilanen and Rainisto argue that the concepts communication and image are crucial within branding, as the former influences the perceived image in the mind of the receiver by using the right communication.²⁹² The communication of the narrative of Robert the Bruce via the above-mentioned social media posts about *Outlaw King*, shows that VisitScotland aims to be factual. Therefore, it refers to the films and legend in relation to the locations associated with Robert, rather than to his ambiguous identity. The tweets might interest film audiences or social

²⁸⁹ VisitScotland on Twitter, 12 November 2018, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://twitter.com/VisitScotland/status/1061937681561800704>; VisitScotland on Twitter, 13 November 2018, accessed June 22, 2020, <https://twitter.com/visitscotland/status/1062313921602904064>.

²⁹⁰ VisitScotlandNews on Twitter, 6 November 2018, accessed June 23, 2020, <https://twitter.com/visitscotnews/status/1059775865838542848>.

²⁹¹ VisitScotland on Twitter, 13 November 2018, accessed June 23, 2020, <https://twitter.com/visitscotland/status/1062348277201489920>.

²⁹² Moilanen and Rainisto, “Developing a Place Brand,” 7.

media users in the legend of Robert the Bruce, however, I suspect that they are attracted to the films instead. Films are more easily accessible than visiting the locations that are promoted and they allow audiences to form individual expectations of Scotland without having to visit.

MARKETING AND POPULARITY OF ADAPTATIONS

The 1948 film *So Dear to My Heart* has thus far received the least recognition from VisitScotland, out of the five films that portray Robert the Bruce. Robert's insignificant inclusion in one song, the production in America and the lack of an official Scottish tourism board at the time of the film's release, likely play a large role in this. Meech and Killborn mention that from 1955 to 1982, there was a committee Films of Scotland for the "promoting, stimulating and encouraging [of] Scottish films of national interest."²⁹³ Still, Scottish television had, until the 1980s, lacked "engagement with a developed notion of national culture or national identity which goes beyond the reflection of an always already constructed "Scottishness" in the 1980s."²⁹⁴ Many Scots contend that the deficiency has been corrected since the 1980s, especially after funding from the Scottish Film Production Fund and Channel 4, the latter of which "has had a major impact in the support it has provided for Scottish film and documentary makers [...]."²⁹⁵ The Scottish funds might even have kickstarted the production of the first film which narrative centres around the King of Scots in 1996, namely *The Bruce*, which is directed and produced by Scots. With this funding, Scots could influence the dominant view of the national stereotype by creating another depiction of Robert the Bruce than is seen in *Braveheart*.

Critics and Fans

The narratives of each of the five films that represent Robert the Bruce have different focal points. Brown, McDonagh and Schultz argue that myths are metamorphic and prone to change over time, which is the case for Robert's legend for each adaptation shapes its understanding.²⁹⁶ The level of attractiveness of each film can differ between audience members because they might recognise or identify with the image, or the film might conform to its zeitgeist.

The films that I have noticed are popular with VisitScotland, are *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King*. The reasoning behind this popularity might be found in data from critics and audiences.

²⁹³ Meech and Killborn, "Media and identity," 253.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 250.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 252-254.

²⁹⁶ Brown, McDonagh and Shultz II, "Ambiguous Brand," 596.

The Rotten Tomatoes website is a respected authority within the field of film ratings, which evaluates and recommends films or television shows based on the judgement of hundreds of critics. It gives *Braveheart* a 78% score while *Outlaw King* receives 61%.²⁹⁷ The website also shows audience scores, which are 85% and 67% respectively.²⁹⁸ Of *So Dear to My Heart*, *The Bruce* and *Robert the Bruce*, only the latter film gives clear results on Rotten Tomatoes, as critics rate it at 44% and audiences rate it at 70%.²⁹⁹ *So Dear to My Heart* only features the audience score of 53%, whereas the website does not assess *The Bruce* from 1996. I hypothesize that *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* receive their success on Rotten Tomatoes for various reasons. Firstly, in the case of *Braveheart*, it is successful because it is a classic, which stems from its 32 million user ratings on Rotten Tomatoes compared to nearly 1,500 user ratings for *Outlaw King*.³⁰⁰ Secondly, while *Outlaw King* has fewer viewing rates, it scores relatively high percentages in both the audiences and critics scores.³⁰¹ This might be explained by the inclusion of multiple famous actors, the film's creation by an American film company for worldwide audiences and its technologically advanced equipment compared to the technological tools that were used when making earlier adaptations of Robert the Bruce's legend.

(Un)Accepted Representation

The films that have been marketed by VisitScotland, either through their inclusion in promoted tours or via social media, represent the dominant view of the national stereotype of Robert the Bruce that the website wants to portray. I argue this because the website has selected *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* for its marketing, rather than the other three films. Furthermore, I notice that VisitScotland's depiction of Robert the Bruce's legend, as depicted especially in its inclusion of the Declaration of Arbroath quote, overlaps with the sentiment of *Outlaw King* and *Braveheart*. As I have argued in chapter three, these two films convey how the war of Scottish independence was a collective effort. I have analysed that they portray this through their narrative and mise-en-scène, as well as via the reflection at the end of the film on the fight against English oppression. I conclude that the overlap between the marketing of the legend of

²⁹⁷ "Braveheart," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1065684_braveheart; "Outlaw King," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/outlaw_king.

²⁹⁸ "Braveheart," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1065684_braveheart; "Outlaw King," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/outlaw_king.

²⁹⁹ "Robert the Bruce," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/robert_the_bruce.

³⁰⁰ "Braveheart," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1065684_braveheart; "Outlaw King," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/outlaw_king.

³⁰¹ "Outlaw King," *Rotten Tomatoes*, accessed June 30, 2020, https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/outlaw_king.

Robert the Bruce and the sentiment of *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* are the primary reasons for their incorporation on the website and signifies that VisitScotland presents these two films as representative of the dominant view of the Scottish stereotype of Robert the Bruce.

Braveheart and *Outlaw King* capture the established characteristics of Scottish stereotypes through, among others, their patriotism and the wish for independence. The other three films capture other elements of the perceived Scottish stereotype. *So Dear to My Heart* features the spider and Robert wears a tartan kilt. The kilts also feature in *Braveheart*. In *The Bruce*, Robert is self-assured in his fight against the English, which corresponds to VisitScotland's description of Robert the Bruce's legend. As VisitScotland has emphasized Robert the Bruce's efforts in the fight for independence, rather than the collective effort, *So Dear to My Heart* and *The Bruce* might also fit in on the website. Yet, *So Dear to My Heart*, *The Bruce* and *Robert the Bruce* have either not been featured or were included only to a small extent on VisitScotland. In the following section, I propose several reasons for behind their general exclusion of VisitScotland.

Firstly, the films might not have been historically accurate in the portrayal of Robert the Bruce. However, *Braveheart* is renowned for being historically inaccurate and still is a popular film.³⁰² The accuracy of a film does not need to impact the popularity of a film since the adaptation is an interpretation of the narrative. Furthermore, while certain elements of the legend of Robert the Bruce are fixed because of the factual evidence, such as heritage, progeniture or relevant individuals, many aspects of his narrative are mythical or 'legendary' due to word-of-mouth narration. Narration will thus, to some extent, be influenced by the passage of time since the legend took place or, as Brown, McDonagh and Schultz conceptualize it, are metamorphic.³⁰³

Secondly, the films might have been created and released by Americans or Scots only and therefore, might not have reached international audiences. *So Dear to My Heart* was released in the United States by American screenwriters, directors and producers and is not incorporated on VisitScotland's website.³⁰⁴ Yet, the opposite is true for the all-American written, directed and produced *Braveheart*.³⁰⁵ *The Bruce* was co-created by Scots and

³⁰² Finlay Greig, "10 Braveheart inaccuracies: historical blunders in the Mel Gibson film about the Wars of Scottish Independence," *The Scotsman*, May 26, 2020, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://www.scotsman.com/heritage-and-retro/heritage/10-braveheart-inaccuracies-historical-blunders-mel-gibson-film-about-wars-scottish-independence-2862621>.

³⁰³ Brown, McDonagh and Shultz II, "Ambiguous Brand," 596.

³⁰⁴ "So Dear to My Heart," *IMDb*, accessed June 24, 2020, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0041890/>.

³⁰⁵ "Braveheart," *IMDb*, accessed June 24, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0112573/?ref_=nv_sr_srsrg_0.

Americans.³⁰⁶ *Outlaw King*, too, was a collaboration of Scottish and non-Scottish efforts and shared by an American-headquartered distribution company.³⁰⁷ Lastly, *Robert the Bruce* was co-written by a Scot and American and distributed by a London-based distribution company.³⁰⁸ Most of these films have international co-creators and the films that are popular with audiences and VisitScotland, namely *Braveheart* and *VisitScotland*, have reached international successes.

The third possibility relates to the previous one and argues that American influences in the creative process might not have represented Robert the Bruce accurately or favourably. However, the influence of Americans in the creation of a cinematic representation of Scots is no reasonable evidence for the lack of attention that these films have received on VisitScotland. *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* have both been created by or with Americans and are favourites in the historical cinematic representations of the legend of Robert the Bruce among audiences, critics and VisitScotland.

A fourth factor might be related to the touristic aspect of the films, namely the possibility for film-induced tourism. The locations that are featured in *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* are pictured from afar, are distinct and possibly recognisable castles, and are alternated with landscape shots to showcase the various locations at which the film was shot. The variety of locations might stimulate heritage tourism as they inspire audiences to explore the films' buildings and landscapes, online or physically. *So Dear to My Heart*, *The Bruce* and *Robert the Bruce* feature locations that are less distinct, whether animated, filmed inside and without recognisable features or filmed outside without recognisable landmarks. This might influence VisitScotland's marketing of the films for heritage tourism, however, it is unlikely to keep audiences from watching a film.

Lastly, the films might be relatively new. As mentioned before, *Robert the Bruce* is expected to find its way to the VisitScotland website sometime this year. Its exclusion from the VisitScotland social media, however, is curious because the film has been released already in June 2019. As a Scottish-produced film about a Scottish legend, featuring a Scottish actor as the protagonist, VisitScotland's incorporation of *Robert the Bruce* could showcase Scottish cinematic expertise towards international tourists and might indicate Scottish ownership of the stereotypes that are sent into the world.

³⁰⁶ "The Bruce," *IMDb*, accessed June 24, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0115766/?ref_=nv_sr_srsg_0.

³⁰⁷ "Outlaw King," *IMDb*, accessed June 24, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6679794/?ref_=nv_sr_srsg_0.

³⁰⁸ "Robert the Bruce," *IMDb*, accessed June 24, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8000908/?ref_=nv_sr_srsg_0.

MARKETING A NATIONAL STEREOTYPE

VisitScotland has adopted the dominant view of the national stereotype of Robert the Bruce through its promotion of visual representations of his legend in the films *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* and recognition of the existence of *The Bruce*. Both *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* depict Robert in a manner that fits in well with VisitScotland's description of Robert the Bruce: successful, competent and patriotic.³⁰⁹ Furthermore, I have discovered that the representation of Robert in these two films is similar to that in the excerpt of the Declaration of Arbroath. I suggest that VisitScotland recognises the dominant view of the Scottish national stereotype and its popularity and might have chosen to market the films that portray similar characteristics. I want to stress that I am aware that the website's incorporation of films about a Scottish historical legend, does not necessarily elicit the same interest of individual Scots about the presentation of the historical legend. However, as representative of the official National Tourism Board, VisitScotland might have more influence than individual Scots on the kind of image of Robert the Bruce that is portrayed to national and international tourists.

A result of the existence of these films and the promotion of *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* by the official National Tourist Board of Scotland is that the perception of the stereotype might change. Before the creation of the films, especially before the twentieth century, Robert the Bruce and fellow Scots had often been called backwards by the English or by Enlightened Scots, as noted in chapter two. This notion related to their Gaelic language, the authority of the Church of Scotland rather than the Church of Rome, and their barbarism during sports and battles. The depiction of Scots as backwards has gradually diminished. Frequent representations of Scots, such as through films, stimulate continuous construction of the dominant view of the national stereotype. Billig and Rose agree that stereotypes are formed through distinctions between groups that differ from 'us', the audience.³¹⁰ Likewise, Levi-Strauss recognised stereotypes in dualities.³¹¹ I argue that the formation of stereotypes also occurs in cinemas, as audiences perceive a historical narrative and historical individuals on which, argue Sawyers, Meech and Killborn, contemporary Scottish national identity is built.³¹² It might even be true, then, that the gap of films about Robert the Bruce since 1996 has been filled in 2018 to highlight the individuality and image of Scots as a separate nation from the English. In any case, the

³⁰⁹ "About Robert the Bruce," *VisitScotland*, accessed June 25, 2020, <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/famous-scots/robert-the-bruce/>.

³¹⁰ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 80-81; Rose quoted in Pritchard and Morgan, "Culture, identity and tourism representation," 169.

³¹¹ Sopova, "Claude Lévi-Strauss: the view from afar," 8.

³¹² Meech and Killborn, "Media and identity," 254; Sawyers, "A New Day Dawning," 11.

release of two films about Robert the Bruce in 2018 and 2019 after plans for Brexit in 2016, not only actively exhibits and promotes the prevailing view of the national stereotype of Scots and the pride of their historical past but also serves as a reminder of Scottish patriotism and their unceasing wish for independence.

In the analysis of this chapter, I considered my subquestion on VisitScotland's international marketing of a national stereotype through the legend of Robert the Bruce, which is part of my research question on how the legend of Robert the Bruce in films serves as a characteristic of Scottish national identity. I have investigated the recognition of Robert the Bruce as a stereotype and have found this reflected in the popularization of the cinematic adaptations of his legend in *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* on the official website of the Scottish National Tourist Board, VisitScotland. I have suggested several possibilities for their successful representation of Robert the Bruce, which I deduce from their inclusion on VisitScotland and its social media. After a discussion of possible reasons, I have found that their popularity with VisitScotland likely stems from the possibility of film-induced tourism to the film sets of *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* because of the visual evidence of the locations. Moreover, the films have done well with critics and fans, which I suspect to be a critical factor for VisitScotland when selecting the films that might attract tourists. I argue that the films have constructed and popularized a national stereotype of Scots, rather than contributed to Scottish national identity, because they promote several Scottish characteristics that are recognisable, as they reappear in Scottish narratives and other cinematic productions. The films might have influenced Scottish national identity through a revival of patriotism, however, 'the' Scottish identity is ambiguous and constitutes of individual Scots that might not identify with this representation of the historical legend. VisitScotland, as a governmental Scottish institution, represents Scottish national identity but recognises and promotes Scottish stereotypes as they are part of its brand equity. I recognise that the promotion of the Gaelic language, kilts, lochs, bravery and axes can be used to underline the stereotypes that differentiate Scotland from other countries. The metamorphic and ambiguous legend of Robert the Bruce is susceptible to influences, such as variations of the narrative or new cinematic adaptations, and is not a set stereotype within Scottish history. It may, therefore, be concluded that national stereotypes are constantly under construction.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have strived to answer the question: “In what ways is the legend of Robert the Bruce both interpreted and applied as characteristic of the Scottish national identity in popular films since the 1990s?” I carried out a discourse analysis of academic literature about the perception of Scots and Robert the Bruce’s legend, a film analysis of *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019) and a content analysis of the representation of Robert the Bruce’s legend on the VisitScotland website.

In chapter one, I investigated the theoretical concepts of country branding of a tourism destination, national identity and stereotype construction, and representation in film. The academic literature suggested that historical narratives are often ambiguous, based on historical fact yet open to interpretation and therefore, are constantly changing. I gave an overview of aspects of country branding and the elements of film construction, which were crucial for my reflection on Scottish national identities and stereotypes in the chapters that followed. The theories implied that branding relates to identity, while representations refer to circulating images, interpretations and stereotypes. I found that this differentiation is imperative in the understanding of a country because it indicates that foreigners, as perceivers of a country brand that aims to influence and attract tourists, might not understand the essence of Scottish identities as Scots would.

In chapter two, I performed a discourse analysis of the identity and stereotypes of Scots as this would be imperative in the understanding of the dominant view of the Scottish national identity. I found that several categories might indicate whether Scots align with their Scottishness or Britishness, including language, religion, sports and military culture. These categories not only signify how the characteristics typically ascribed to ‘the’ Scottish identity differ from that of the English and indicate Scotland’s uniqueness but also underlines the ambiguity of Scottishness and how it is not limited to its ascribed stereotypes. This relates to the findings of chapter one, as I recognise that not even Scots might fully understand ‘the’ Scottish identity because it is comprised of various individual identities. The recognition of differences in Scottish identities shows, and I agree with Billig on this, that there are no national identities, rather, there are national stereotypes. In this chapter, I also discussed the legend of Robert the Bruce and recognised how some of the categories of contemporary Scottish identity, such as the four above-mentioned categories and law, likely found their roots in Robert’s era. I also noticed that the characteristics that are ascribed to Robert the Bruce are reflected in future

descriptions of Scots. These include the notion of the ‘barbaric past’, expressed by Enlightened Scots of the eighteenth century, and other Scottish stereotypes that are ascribed to Scots throughout history, including bravery, patriotism and anti-Englishness.

In the next chapter, I recognised these stereotypes in the cinematic adaptations of Robert’s legend. Through an investigation and cinematic analysis of the representation of Robert the Bruce in the films *So Dear to My Heart* (1948), *Braveheart* (1995), *The Bruce* (1996), *Outlaw King* (2018) and *Robert the Bruce* (2019), I discovered vast differences between the films that led to various interpretations of the legend of Robert the Bruce. I found varying levels of integration of Robert the Bruce’s persona in the films’ narratives and observed manipulations of the legend so that it might include aspects of the perceived Scottish stereotype, such as the inaccurate use of kilts in the late-thirteenth and early-fourteenth century. In this film analysis, I looked at the narrative and mise-en-scène to determine how Robert the Bruce, Scots and Scotland were represented. The similarities between the films were found in the characteristics of the historical genre, such as the male hero, romantic scenes, barbarism during battles and the protagonist’s struggle. Differences were discovered in Scottish stereotypes through the mise-en-scène, such as Scottish landscapes or differences in costumes, props, and accents. Diversity was also found in the technological advancement of the cinematography of the twenty-first-century films and the representation of the narrative of Robert the Bruce. I noted that the films *Braveheart*, *Outlaw King* and *Robert the Bruce* underline the collective effort of Scots in the War of Independence against the English oppression, while *So Dear to My Heart* and *The Bruce* instead emphasize Robert’s individual efforts and bravery. Furthermore, I argued that each cinematic adaptation of Robert the Bruce’s legend has been inspired by its predecessors and thereby construct and popularize new versions of what is perceived as ‘the’ Scottish stereotype.

What followed after the acknowledgement of the distinct narratives and visual depictions in the cinematic adaptations of Robert the Bruce’s legend, was an analysis of the popularization and marketing of the films. In chapter four, I conducted this investigation through a content analysis of the official website of the Scottish National Tourist Board, VisitScotland. As a governmental non-profit organization, this medium would be most interesting to look at. The website’s goal is to inform and inspire online visitors and tourists that plan to visit Scotland through images of and information about Scottish heritage, culture and landscapes. I found that VisitScotland refers to the films *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* most often, predominantly through marketing the tours about those films, while *The Bruce* is

mentioned once. I proposed explanations for the absence of *So Dear to My Heart* and *Robert the Bruce* on the website and suggested that the former might not be included because Robert the Bruce plays an insignificant part within the film and no official Scottish tourism board existed in 1948 to promote this film. Therefore, I recognise that the films about Robert since the 1990s held greater significance in the international interpretation and marketing of Robert the Bruce's legend. *Robert the Bruce* might not be featured on VisitScotland (yet) because of its relative newness. The popularity of *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* on the website could relate to its appeal to the general public, possibly due to the famous actors who portray the leading characters. Furthermore, the films' message about the importance of Scottish freedom is comparable to the depiction of Robert the Bruce on VisitScotland. Lastly, *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* might be favoured by VisitScotland because the films' locations are recognisable and could be used to stimulate film-induced tourism. In any case, it is clear that VisitScotland's inclusion and promotion of the films affect the information about Robert the Bruce that is available to visitors of the official national tourism website. As a consequence, the VisitScotland website might influence its visitors' perception and understanding of both the dominant view of the Scottish identity, shaped through its presentation of Robert the Bruce's legend, and stereotype, which is influenced by VisitScotland's marketing of films that include Scottish stereotypes.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this thesis lead me to the possible answers to my research question, "In what ways is the legend of Robert the Bruce both interpreted and applied as characteristic of the Scottish national identity in popular films since the 1990s?"

Firstly, I conclude that the legend of Robert the Bruce is characteristic of the Scottish past and reappears throughout history, often implicitly, as the root of many aspects of Scottishness, such as language, religion, sports, military culture and law. These might have historically differentiated Scots from the English and are therefore perceived as stereotypical traits of Scots, as exemplified by the Gaelic language. The legend of Robert the Bruce is a significant part of the Scottish collective past and carries patriotic sentiments that, I suggest, are aroused when Scottish freedom is threatened, such as during Brexit. Therefore, I concede that the legend of Robert the Bruce is characteristic of the perceived Scottish national identity. Still, Scottish national identity is ambiguous and Scottish individuals attach different meanings to it, so the legend of Robert the Bruce might not characterize all individual Scottish identities.

Secondly, the recognition of Robert the Bruce as a perceived Scottish stereotype inspired cinematic adaptations of his legend that might influence its understanding among audiences and tourists, and might inspire future adaptations. As a result, the perceived stereotype of the Scottish legend is continuously under construction and shaped by circulating depictions. Thirdly, the cinematic depictions of Robert the Bruce popularize the legend among international audiences, even so much so that officials of the country whose historical narrative is portrayed, recognise the international interest and participate in their marketing to stimulate tourism to Scotland. I recognise that VisitScotland's marketing of the cinematic adaptations of Robert the Bruce in *Braveheart* and *Outlaw King* does not mean that Scots throughout Scotland identify with the representation of Scots and Robert the Bruce in these films. Still, VisitScotland's marketing of the adaptations of the legend might stimulate film-induced tourism from which many Scots might benefit. Thereby, the benefits of tourism might outweigh the drawbacks of the misrepresenting a historical figure that lives on in the Scottish collective memory.

To make definite conclusions about my research question, however, further research is needed that conveys the perceptions of Scots, and preferably also the intentions of VisitScotland, regarding the marketing of Scottish national identities and stereotypes. It would also be interesting to carry out this research if and when a film is released about the Scottish Wars of Independence of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries from the perspective of the English. If such a film was released and analysed alongside the films that are included in this thesis, much more could be said about cinematic representations of and reflection on othering and imperialism, because the construction of national stereotypes could be investigated from the cinematic interpretation of the perspective of Edward I and II as overlords and oppressors.

Considering these points, I suggest that future analyses of the interpretation and marketing of a perceived stereotype conduct interviews with Scots, filmmakers and Scottish officials such as VisitScotland, to indicate their intentions or opinions. This would elevate the research from interpretations of meanings of myself, an audience member and website visitor, to grasping the intended meanings of filmmakers and government officials. It could also give insights into VisitScotland's expectations when marketing the films for tourism purposes. In any case, future analyses that incorporate these points might secure more decisive conclusions. Nevertheless, Scottish national identity is a complex concept to which definitive answers are unlikely to be found. I have discovered that on the one side, the dominant view of the Scottish national identity relates to the Scottish pride of their historical past, while on the other, Scottish

identity relates to modernity and the appreciation of present-day Scottish developments, institutions and people. Both of these perceived identities have attracted tourists to Scotland and continue to do so. The Scottish national identity might be an accumulation of enforced collective memories of the historical past and perceived stereotypes but in reality, it consists of whatever Scots want to identify with.

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