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Bachelor thesis:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY

- the cultural politics of the EU

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the European Union through its cultural program “Creative Europe” is constructing and promoting a transnational European identity. In the context of humanities and European Studies this can be seen as relevant in the sense it is the study of man as a cultural being, as well as it is stated in Merriam-Webster dictionary “*humanities plural : the branches of learning that investigate human constructs and concerns as opposed to natural processes and social relations*”,¹ and a part of the EU. According to social constructivism, identity is a social construction created by people in interaction with each other by creating joint institutions in order to facilitate joint solutions to a problem. In addition, other ideas and knowledge of these institutions are exchanged, thus gradually creating common interests, which in turn can also result in a common identity. Identities and interests of an actor are formed based on ideas. No interests are identified as already predetermined. This makes it possible to have multiple identities at the same time. A European identity does not necessarily mean that the national identity may give way since nationalism is a political principle in which politics and national unity must integrate, which generates nations and uses pre-selected cultural mechanisms for its people. The common ideas and arguments developed in political cooperation through cultural policies can be seen as part of the creation of a European identity, which is an important part of europeanization.

Keywords: European Union; culture policy; Creative Europe; social constructivism; nation; nationalism; europeanization; identity

¹Merriam-Webster dictionary, “Definition of Humanism”, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/humanism>

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Part 1

1. Introduction

*“The EU shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the member states, while respecting their national and regional diversity and shall bring common cultural heritage to the fore.”*²

The preservation and promotion of cultural diversity is one of the founding principles of the European Union. Culture occupies a central place in our social fabric - shapes our collective identity, aspirations and relationships with others and with the world. The EU's cultural politics manifests themselves in a large variety of programs and projects. One of the most famous and far reaching is the *“Creative Europe”* program, presented by the European Commission, which devotes special support to the preservation of cultural heritage, mutual knowledge of works, support for local cultural activities and cultural exchanges between regions and countries. These are all means capable of contributing to social development and harmony among its members.³ The European Union's cultural policy is between the EU and its Member States. It can be understood as the top-down influence of the EU on its member states, along with a feedback loop into the bottom-up process of European integration.⁴

² European Parliament, *“Culture Policy”*, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/facts_2004/4_17_0_en.htm

³ European Commission, *“Creative Europe”* <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/>

⁴ Schmidt V.A. (2009) *“The EU and its Member States: From Bottom Up to Top Down.”* In: Phinnemore D., Warleigh-Lack A. (eds) *Reflections on European Integration*. Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics. Palgrave Macmillan, London

1.1. Purpose and objective

The aim of this thesis is to qualitatively frame and analyze the main ideas and arguments within current cultural politics of the EU, which focus on construction and promotion of a transnational European identity. A particular focus is oriented towards the EU's cultural program named "Creative Europe". Among the recent theories of European cultural integration is *social constructivism*, embracing theoretical elaborations and the thesis key concepts: *identity, nation and nationalism, europeanization*. Using a social constructivist approach and methodological tools from *idea analysis* and *argumentative analysis*, I aim to systematically present and analytically discuss the EU's attempt to construct a European identity, by looking at the EU's main ideas and arguments for its cultural program.

1.2. Disposition

After the introductory first chapter is a review of social constructivism. Chapter 2 begins to present how social constructivism can be used as a general theoretical framework in relation to identity construction and international relations. Then, with a social constructivist framework as a general basis, the concepts of identity, nation and nationalism and Europeanization are defined. The idea of this chapter is to point out the basic mechanisms of identity construction and hopefully it will also clarify how the EU tries to promote the European identity through its cultural program. Chapter 3 focuses on the methodological approaches in the thesis. Further in chapter 4, the motivation behind the choice of method and sources is described. In chapter 5, the pure theoretical frameworks exist and enter the main empirical material, which is a brief description of the EU cultural program "Creative Europe", followed with a summary of the EU's cultural policy and lastly some examples of cultural projects within Creative Europe. Chapter 6 presents and analyzes the main ideas and arguments of the European Commission for their cultural programs based on the underlying social constructivist theoretical frameworks and conceptualizations. The thesis ends with chapter 7 with a final summarizing discussion and some final thoughts as well as further research is shortly discussed. The thesis is parted into two main chapters; Part 1 entails the theoretical and methodological approaches before continuing on to Part 2 that bring about the empirical material and analysis of such.

2. Theoretical approaches

Using social constructivism as a general theoretical framework, and adding theoretical ideas from the field of identity studies and international relations, the promotion of European identity can be approached in order to understand the EU integration process and how policy strategies are defined. Furthermore, we can get an understanding of the various social and political effects they have had. While social constructivism is a general theoretical starting point, the use of the theorists such as Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, Alexander Wendt's and others' thoughts and ideas make up the more concrete theoretical reasoning and concepts in the present thesis.

The greatest benefit of social constructivism is its ability to include the impact of norms and ideas on the construction of identities and behaviors.⁵ This suggests that integration will only be possible when common interests are the basis to justify the pursuit of common goals. Similarly, a common identity, with shared culture and shared values, must define its boundaries. The constantly evident efforts to create a greater sense of belonging within the EU demonstrate the pursuit of transnational community feeling. Since norms, institutions and actions are subject to change, it is important to understand its limitations and to research deeper about different social views and institutions by directing research into its origins: reconstructions of identities, the effect of rules and norms.⁶ A slightly more general approach is taken of social constructivism and its different branches, in order to avail the greatest benefit of the theoretical approach in respect to study identities and integration.

2.1. Social Constructivism

Social Constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and give context to understand what happens in society.⁷ It is based on concrete assumptions about reality, knowledge and learning. Social constructivists believe that reality is constructed through human activity. The members of a united society create the properties of the world. For social constructivism, reality can not be discovered because it does not exist before its social invention.⁸ Knowledge is also a human product, and is constructed socially and culturally. People create meaning through their

⁵ Christiansen, Tomas; Jorgensen, Knud Erik & Antje Wiener (2001) *'The Social Construction of Europe'*. London: Sage Publications, p. 5

⁶ Christiansen, Jorgensen & Wiener (2001) *'The Social Construction of Europe'*, p. 13

⁷ Burr, Vivien (2003) *'Social constructionism'* 2. ed. London: Routledge Oxford, p. 25

⁸ Burr (2003) *'Social constructionism'* p. 27

interactions with others and the environment in which they live. Social constructivists consider learning as a social process and the most important learning occurs when people engage in social activities.⁹ Within constructionism, a social construction is a concept or practice that may appear natural and obvious to those who accept it but in reality it is an invention or cultural artifact or of a particular society.¹⁰ An important focus of the theory is to investigate the ways in which individuals and groups participate in the creation of their social perception of reality. The constructed social reality is considered as a dynamic process: reality is reconstructed by people who act in their interpretations and their knowledge.¹¹

Another important element in social constructivism is the construction and reconstruction of identity, which can give us insight into how European identity can be developed. The European construction is dependent on a parallel construction of “the others”.¹² As for the EU’s integration process, rules and norms are of crucial importance, as the provisions and the attendance of these are the basis for what the EU is. An integration by policies is made.

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According to theorists Jill Steans & Lloyd Pettiford, social constructivism is based on intersubjective interpretations of joint agreements.¹⁴ What is more united under social constructivism is that society is created by people in interaction with each other. Within international politics, social constructivism analyzes the interaction between structures and actors and focuses on ideas, norms and institutions, and argues for the importance of identity and culture.¹⁵ Social constructivism means that the actor's actions are created by the structure in which the actor is active and through these actions, the actor also helps to reconstruct the structure. This leads to a situation where the environment affects the actor and what it does at the same time as the actor affects the structure around him. This interaction brings rather slow-moving social relationships, which can change over time by changing the actor’s behavior, thus ending the reconstruction and creating something new.¹⁶

⁹ Burr (2003) ‘*Social constructionism*’ p. 28-29

¹⁰ Burr (2003) ‘*Social constructionism*’ p. 53-54

¹¹ Burr (2003) ‘*Social constructionism*’ p. 100-102

¹² Christiansen, Jorgensen & Wiener (2001) ‘*The Social Construction of Europe*’, p. 320-322

¹³ Christiansen, Jorgensen & Wiener (2001) ‘*The Social Construction of Europe*’, p. 13-14

¹⁴ Steans, Jill & Pettiford, Lloyd (2005) ‘*Introduction to international relations – perspectives & themes*’, Pearson Education Limited, Essex, p. 183

¹⁵ Steans & Pettiford (2005) ‘*Introduction to international relations – perspectives & themes*’, p. 181

¹⁶ Steans & Pettiford (2005) ‘*Introduction to international relations – perspectives & themes*’, p. 185-187

Theorist Thomas Risse worked on another approach, anchored in the Habermasian concepts of communicative action to investigate the way in which the processes of argumentation and persuasion in which foreign policy agents participate function as “micromechanisms for socialization and social learning”,¹⁷ that is, to modify the interpretation frameworks from which state agents approach a question of their foreign policy subject to cooperation with other states. In this sense, institutions are thought of as “discursive arenas that allow for deliberative processes oriented towards solving problems”.¹⁸ This approach calls attention to the argumentative logic of social action, according to which “the actors try to challenge the claims of validity inherent in any causal or normative statement and try to reach a communicative consensus regarding the understanding of the situation as well as on the justifications for the principles and norms that guide their actions”.¹⁹ This logic follows an argumentative rationality, according to which, instead of seeking to optimize their given interests, participants in a public exchange of ideas are willing to be persuaded by the best argument, prepared even to change their visions and their interests in view of a better argument, even though the way of arguing is still rational. But communication as a social action becomes something more than the exchange of information, as it would be in the consequentialist logic, while the debate can change the goals and self-understandings of the participants. With a social constructivist framework as a general foundation one can conduct a deeper elaboration into concepts such as identity, nation and nationalism and europeanization.

2.2. Concept definitions

Identity

In the “modern” approach to social constructivism, the best known researcher is Alexander Wendt, who says that identities are role-specific representations and expectations, defined relatively according to principles, values and norms. According to Wendt, identity is described as “a property of actors that generates motivational and behavioral dispositions”. Identity thus influences the external policies of states. Wendt proposes a classification based on four types of

¹⁷ Risse, Thomas (2002) ‘*Constructivism and International Institutions. Towards Conversations across Paradigms*’, Milner, H., Political Science: State of the Discipline, p. 607

¹⁸ Risse (2002) ‘*Constructivism and International Institutions. Towards Conversations across Paradigms*’, p. 607

¹⁹ Risse (2002) ‘*Constructivism and International Institutions. Towards Conversations across Paradigms*’, p. 602

identities at the origin of the constitution of national interests: personal identity, type identity, role identity and collective identity.²⁰

Personal identities are constituted by self-organization, they are basic structures that make the actors distinct identities. The actors will have only one personal identity and the consciousness of it will repeat itself in several spheres. This type of identity is the only one that is not, for Wendt, shaped by the relations the state has with other states.²¹

Type identity, rather represented by a social category of people sharing behavioral traits, is based on attitudes, values, qualities, experience, etc. The contours of these identities will vary culturally and historically. The political regime and the economic system of the state influence the elements of this category.²²

On the other hand, Wendt presents role identity as based solely on the relationship to others and not on intrinsic characteristics. The institutionalization of the different roles held within the structures is important. For Wendt, the various dynamics of states emerge particularly through collective identities.²³ “Role identity concerns the properties that characterize a state’s relations with states, which perceive it as a hegemonic power or as a satellite state, as a partisan state of the status quo or as an unsatisfied power, etc.”

Collective identity, or in other words, the relationship between the self and otherness, seems to be the most used in foreign policy studies. Time and time again, Wendt emphasizes the weight of collective identity in International Relations.²⁴ In most of its publications, the focus is on this type of identity as a tool to better understand the transformations taking place in foreign policy. It will therefore be transformations within the collective identity that we will retain in the framework of this research.

During structural changes, actors will redefine what they are, their identity, and what they want, their interests. For example, Wendt describes domestic determinants as: “a sense of societal collective identity based on cultural linguistic or ethnic ties”.²⁵ In this context, it is interesting to note that states are, for social constructivists, socially constructed, both from an

²⁰ Wendt, Alexander (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 224-225

²¹ Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 224-225

²² Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 225-226

²³ Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 226-227

²⁴ Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 227-228

²⁵ Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 336-337

internal and an external perspective. State interests are therefore dependent on identities. These interests refer to what states want and so they help explain behaviors.

According to Wendt, the collective interest brings an identification in direct connection with the fate of the “other”. States thus perceive the other states and the various actors of the international system in constant relation with themselves. According to Wendt, the identification process is a gradation of the state’s perceptions of the outside world. These values can be placed according to the various poles, motivated by solidarity or selfish perceptions.²⁶ In summary, the national interest that guides behavior, while referring to the security and survival requirements of a state, is embedded in the norms and values that shape its collective identity.

Nation and Nationalism

Questions that deal with the creation of national identity and belonging as well as what causes these factors to have political relevance play an important role in IR and humanities. Before treating national identity, one has to first clarify some concepts such as nation and nationalism, as the terminology in the field is often confusing. According to Ernest Gellner, in his work “Nation and Nationalism”, nationalism “is a political principle that holds that there must be congruence between national unity and politics”, while the National feeling is nothing less than “the state of anger that raises the principle or the satisfaction that accompanies its realization”. This definition is also used by theorist Eric Hobsbawm, but he adds that the public duties of all members of the nation towards it are superior to all other public obligations and, in exceptional cases, to all other obligations in general. Gellner’s definition is based on the premise that nationalism is a fundamentally political movement with political ends. These aims are the equalization of national unity and political unity, which can only materialize in the modern State. In this way, the taking of control of the State by the nation is the primary objective of the nationalist movements.

But what is a nation for Gellner? Although it does not appear explicitly in his cited study, Gellner considers the nation an artifact, an invention, and uses the national and ethnic adjectives with equivalence in saying that nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy that prescribes that ethnic boundaries they should not oppose politicians.²⁷

²⁶ Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 337, 340-341

²⁷ Gellner, Ernst (1993). ‘*Nations and Nationalism*’ Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, p. 13

As mentioned earlier Hobsbawm in his “Nations and Nationalism” agrees that the political and national unit corresponds with each other. A national identity is therefore constructed from above. The constructed values and norms, traditions, are combined with a historical past in order to be used as a legitimizing power for political action.²⁸ The interests of society's political rulers thus determine the form of national identity at the expense of special interests among the population. Hobsbawm believes that the identity is then spread to the people through education and national ceremonies. National unity thus appears as the result of political inventions. Hobsbawm, however, argues that national identity does not need to be the most important identification, without other groupings being more important as a source of identity.²⁹ The state can not therefore fully rule the people through the construction of a national identity. It is the state that is the main actor behind identity creation, but the people still have no influence over its impact. As this thesis seeks to identify identity in integration policy, political action becomes the main focus. How the EU as a political actor want to socially construct and promote the European identity.

Europeanization

According to Johan P. Olsen, Europeanization can be seen as one of the process of change, including EU enlargement and the discussion of a common identity and values, which he separates into five different parts. The main focus will be on two parts where he shows where Europeanization can take place. These parts address Europeanization when changing institutions to more EU level and Europeanization when working towards creating a more united Europe, including transnational identities.³⁰ He also states that it is necessary to separate the five parts to specify which part of Europeanization you want to study, in order to make the concept useful.³¹

The first part is the “change of external borders”, in which Europeanization can be understood as a process where EU territorial scope is expanded and the EU’s political system expands to cover a greater area of the European continent.

The second part, the “establishment of institutions at EU level”, which can be seen as the development of institutions, capabilities and competences at EU level relating to control

²⁸ Hobsbawm, E.J. (1990) *Nations and Nationalism* since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality. Wiltshire: Redwood Press Ltd, p. 40-43

²⁹ Hobsbawm (1990) *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 47-48

³⁰ Olsen, Johan P. (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization* Journal of Common Market Studies, p. 921-925

³¹ Olsen (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, p. 943

and integrate the actions of the Member States. This part wants to create a collective policy within the EU. Institutional changes may be due to various changes in rules and laws, but also because of competition or as a conflict resolution.

Thirdly, the “EU impact on the domestic political system”, how the political system changes and is adapted to the new European level. For example, how the distribution of power and responsibilities between different political and administrative levels within the domestic political system is affected. The third part focus mainly on the impact of Europeanization on domestic politics and political structures.³²

“Europe’s political system as organizational export product” is the fourth part and refers to the EU’s institutional system and structure spreads outside the European context, where the focus is on the EU as an international actor and the interaction with and influence on other international actors and institutions.

Last but not least, the fifth part, “EU as a political consensus and association project”, which refers to how the previous four processes together result in a more equal and politically united Europe. The establishment of common political arenas and structures creates a stable organizational basis, which results in an enhanced ability for Europe to act as a unified political system, both internally and in its external relations. This development, in turn, results in the eradication of internal territorial borders and the strengthening of external borders, while developing a common European identity.³³

The second part shows how the EU transfers its values to other countries through institutions, which can also contribute to the spread of EU identity.³⁴ It is about the socialization of institutions with education and intercourse, which will develop, among other things, a more common identity and cultural affiliation.³⁵ He also states that Europeanization at EU level means creating and developing common institutions, identities and policies. How a country implements can be influenced by two factors; how well-developed institutions are before the negotiations and how the different national conditions of the countries are.

Since fifth part includes all them, in order to clarify the focus in this thesis, the main focus will be on the part that addresses the idea of a united Europe with a focus on identity with ideas of a common EU identity. This identity is shaped to have a general sense of belonging to

³² Olsen (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, p. 930-932

³³ Olsen (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, p. 939-940

³⁴ Olsen (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, p. 930

³⁵ Olsen (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, p. 930-31

the union. The EU is strengthened by making policies and institutions more equal and centered on the EU.³⁶

2.4. Summary

The social interaction between states has a significant impact on the international system, and here is a great emphasis placed on the importance of norms for the impact of social interaction. Social constructivist theories have shown a significant impact of national norms on international politics, and also on the contrary, at the international or European norms for domestic policy. The ongoing Europeanization reveals a new reality, where the political reality is beyond the sovereign state, which do not offer a common history or traditions. In such a reality, constructivism seeks to consider alternative directions for the creation of new realities. The chosen theoretical framework can be used to analyze the EU's main arguments and ideas for its cultural program "Creative Europe".

3. Methodological approaches

In this thesis, two methods are used as methodological approaches; *idea analysis* and *argumentation analysis*, with the purpose of analyzing the EU's cultural program. In Göran Bergström and Kristina Boréus book "Textens mening och makt" there are three different purposes with idea analysis, namely descriptive, explanatory and positioning. A focus in the analysis of ideas is to analyze the occurrences of ideas in general, for example in debates or on the practical and political areas. Another focus is based on a group or actor's perspective, for example, to investigate the ideological development of a political party for a certain period of time. Another aim is to seek logic in a political ideological argument, for example in a political debate. There is also a focus on the idea analysis that focuses on the effects and origins of ideas, both for a descriptive and an explanatory purpose, for example, to examine how ideas within a political party affect social cohesion and existence, and partly to give reason explanations to the occurrence of ideas. For example, how the social structure of individuals affects the messages they present and how the message affects a social context. A further focus in the idea analysis aims at comparing different elements of a dominant ideology with an external reality, in order to understand or reveal ideology. For example, to investigate whether what the ideology intends to

³⁶ Olsen (2002) 'The Many Faces of Europeanization', p. 940-942

do is actually in line with the external reality that the ideology expresses.³⁷ The approach is that, as a first step in the analysis, to first formulate a thesis based on the EU's arguments or ideas for its cultural program. Then there will be two argument analyzes where Pro and Contra arguments to the thesis are to be analyzed. In retrospect, the arguments will be set up with the purpose of trying to find various claims under the thesis that aims to emphasize or weaken each other.

3.1. Idea analysis

As mentioned earlier, this thesis is based partly on idea analysis which can come in many different ways, but the main principle is to study political messages.³⁸ It is a broadly defined method and because the thesis aims to analyze political messages, idea analysis should be a reasonable starting point for creating an analytical tool. It can have three main purposes: to describe, explain or take a stand on the material to be studied. These three objectives are the basis for the kind of analysis of ideas one choose to use.³⁹ The main purpose of this thesis is to clarify what the EU wants with its cultural program and its projects, thus describing the material in question.

A distinction is made between two different types of idea analysis, namely contentual and functional idea analysis.⁴⁰ The contentual analysis of ideas studies political messages as a collection of arguments. The purpose with such an analysis is to test and criticize the validity and sustainability of the arguments. The functional idea analysis differs from the content in the sense that political messages are considered variables in a chain of events rather than arguments. The purpose of such a study is not to determine whether the message is correct, instead focusing on the messages and motives or other underlying causes. In this sense, it is more interesting to look closely at the "functional idea analysis" which either examines the origin of ideas, its spread or their consequences. The analysis focuses on the effects of political ideas and what impact they have on the social context they touch.⁴¹

This thesis is an idea based type of study because the focus is on ideas and in this case what ideas the EU has as an actor. As an analytical technique for the study, concept analysis is used. The analytical technique deals with the collection and processing of materials and is

³⁷ Bergström, Göran & Kristina Boréus (2005) red. "*Textens mening och makt- metodbok i samhällsvetenskaplig text och diskursanalys*", Lund: Studentlitteratur, p. 155

³⁸ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 139, 145

³⁹ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 155

⁴⁰ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 146

⁴¹ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 146-147

done regardless of the purpose of the study.⁴² The purpose of this thesis is to, by looking at, describe what the EU's cultural program are and what they want to convey. To do this, one needs to create a tool for analyzing and specifying as well as making distinctions of the material that can categorize the study.⁴³ The analytical tool is about refining and interpreting ideas based on the ideologies or ideas that you want to compare. This is called ideal types.⁴⁴ The purpose of the ideals is not to describe the actual existing message but should be seen as an aid to clarify differences which can be considered essential. In the context of this study, no attempt will be made to formulate hypotheses based on the ideals to be implemented. Instead, these ideals will be used as a filter to analyze the empirical material from the outside.

3.2 Argumentation analysis

In addition to the idea analysis, an argumentation analysis will also be made. The aim is to create a broader and deeper understanding of the argumentation for the selected cultural program. Bergströms and Boréus's bring up a model that can be used when making an argument analysis by structuring the arguments, the "Pro et Contra" model, developed by Arnes Naess.⁴⁵ This means that an analysis is made by taking out the arguments from the EU descriptions of the program and some of its projects, creating first-order arguments, arguments of the second order, etc., categorizing these as pro- or counter argument.⁴⁶ Contra- argument intended to undermine the argument that the arguing for. Pro stands for favourable arguments, where the task of the argument is to strengthen the thesis.⁴⁷

One can also classify the arguments in 3 different ways; cause arguments, generalization arguments and authority arguments. Cause arguments are used when the sender uses arguments that indicate causal relationships. When using generalization arguments, the sender wants to convince by drawing conclusions from a few cases to many cases. Authority arguments are used when one want weight in ones arguments via a particular authority.⁴⁸ In this thesis, there will be no ranking of the first order, ie the arguments do not have a specific ranking.

⁴² Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 150

⁴³ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 150

⁴⁴ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 151, 155

⁴⁵ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 94

⁴⁶ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 101-102

⁴⁷ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 101

⁴⁸ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 122-123

4. Material and Source criticism

The primary material of the thesis is the European Commission's "*Creative Europe*" framework program, which came into force on 1 January 2013, ie the program description and the European Parliament's fact sheets on cultural policy; its legal basis, purpose, achievements taken from the European Commission's official website. Additional selected sources is objective empirical academic literature that has been used for the final analysis. Source criticism is an important aspect of social and humanistic research.⁴⁹ The empirical material chosen for this thesis thus consists of the European Commission's official documents including the description and argumentation of "Creative Europe".

Since the EC's website consists of factual information, statistics, investigations and legal documents that underlie their decision-making, the source can be considered as a good source. As the texts and facts are written by experts with an authority in the field. On the other hand, the material in question may represent particular interests or ideologies, and therefore angled messages by the actors and can affect the material. With this in mind, one should pay attention to what is said in the text, especially the relationship between the organization and the subject. The secondary material of the thesis is based on academic publications by known theorist of social constructivism, such as; Vivien Burr, Jill Steans & Lloyd Pettiford, Thomas Risse, Tomas Christiansen Tomas, Erik Jorgensen & Antje Wiener, and others' thoughts and ideas that make up the more concrete theoretical reasoning and concepts in the present thesis, being; Alexander Wendt, Johan P Olson, Ernest Gellner & Eric Hobsbawm.

4.1. Limitations and Credibility

As stated in the beginning of the thesis the aim is to "qualitatively frame and analyze the main ideas and arguments within current cultural politics of the EU, which focus on construction and promotion of a transnational european identity. A particular focus is oriented towards the EU's cultural program named "Creative Europe". Among the recent theories of European cultural integration is *social constructivism*, embracing theoretical elaborations and conceptualizations such as; *identity, nation and nationalism, europeanization*. Using a social constructivist approach and methodological tools from idea analysis and argumentative analysis", to

⁴⁹ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 406

systematically present and analytically discuss the EU's attempt to construct an European identity. Not to analyze; what they do, how they finance it, how they organize it or what collaborations are involved which requires a more in-depth analysis such as discourse analysis. Both idea analysis and argumentation analysis is perfect for this case because there is a delimitation already in the beginning instead of discourse analysis. The use of the methodological approaches as analyzers is in this thesis as glasses in the following analysis of political material. In other words, it is possible to investigate the EU's cultural program with these glasses by searching the material for motivations according to cultural policy patterns. Ideality types can thus help the viewer to theoretically organize the material and make estimates of what is at the heart of the political message.

In rhetoric terms one speaks of *logos*, the "reason", when looking for the whole truth about how the actors do to convince others or why.⁵⁰ Since the thesis consists of the EU's argument for their cultural projects in the "*Creative Europe*" program it can sometimes be difficult to determine whether the argument's argument is reasonable and therefore one has to agree with qualified assessments. An argument that shows strong sustainability does not need to strengthen the force of its argumentation, in order to do this the argument has to be relevant.⁵¹

The advantage of using *ideal types* as analytical tool is that it facilitates the methodological research and descriptions of the material. In order to avoid mistakes when the material is interpreted and analyzed, it has been important to design an analytical tool that has the ability to analyze the studied texts in a consistent way. An additional important approach to achieving high validity is to ultimately criticize its findings and analytical tools, ask the question of whether the ideals succeeded in capturing the material and constructing counter arguments against one's interpretation of the material. To clarify the position in the epistemological discussion, it can be assumed that from Bergström and Boréus claim that a looser and more interpretation-oriented analysis model is linked to a hermeneutic tradition, while an analysis based on ideal types like a content analysis is a more positivist tradition of thought.⁵² In conclusion, to achieve good *reliability*, *validity* and *intersubjectivity* the study is based on argumentation and idea analysis with *ideal types* as analytical tools.

⁵⁰ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 131

⁵¹ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 132-133

⁵² Bergström & Boréus (2005) "*Textens mening och makt*", p. 169

4.2. Previous research

There is a lot of previous research on European identity and about the relationship between EU and the European identity. The research on European identity is very broad and is done with input from various academic subjects, theoretical perspectives and methods. In this thesis, previous research will be taken from the ideological, sociological and IR disciplines.

The thesis is primarily based on research on the EU and European identity, in which the Commission's role in the development of the European identity is in focus. Cris Shore addresses this in his book "Building Europe", where his aim is to show how the EU's elite has used culture as an instrument for creating community between citizens.⁵³ There are a lot of previous research focusing on the Commission and their efforts to strengthen the European identity, such as the EC's own policy review "The development of European identity/identities: unfinished business".⁵⁴ There has also been a study of EU policies on how they have developed a holistic view of culture as a tool for "urban renewal, attractiveness, entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainability".⁵⁵ Where the connections between the different dimensions of culture and how they contribute to different parts of the economy and society are addressed. However, only the use of "the Structural Funds and advice on how the new policy can make it easier for the cultural sector to access the Structural Funds" is analyzed.

The thesis will be based on; Ernest Gellner & Eric Hobsbawm's conceptualization of nation and nationalism, Alexander Wendt's conceptualisation of identity, Johan P. Olsen's conceptualization of Europeanization, and Jill Steans & Lloyd Pettiford, Vivian Burr, Thomas Risse's thoughts and ideas about social constructivism. There are many theories about European identity and how such an identity is constructed, these theoretical frameworks will help to structure and analyze the thoughts and ideas of European identity found in the empirical material.

⁵³ Shore, Cris (2000) *Building Europe – The Cultural Politics of European Integration*, Routledge

⁵⁴ European Commission "The development of European identity/identities: unfinished business"

https://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/development-of-european-identity-identities_en.pdf

⁵⁵ Iglesias, Maria, Kern, Philippe & Montalto, Valentina, KEA European Affairs, "Användning av strukturfonderna för kulturprojekt",

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/cult/dv/esstudyestructfundscultproj/esstudyestructfundscultprojsv.pdf

Part 2

5. Empirical facts about “Creative Europe”

The EU’s “Creative Europe” program objective is to support arts and culture, which should apply for the 2014-2020 period of the EU budget. This program was proposed by the European Commission in November 2011. According to the procedure in force in the EU, this Commission proposal must be examined by the two co-decision-making institutions of the Union: the Council, which brings together representatives of national governments and the European Parliament. Once their positions have been expressed, the Parliament and the Council then enter into a negotiation phase with the Commission to reach a final and operational version of the program, a three-way negotiation phase in the EU jargon. In fact, the decision-making process within the European Union also includes, in all phases of its development, the opinions and recommendations formulated by the actors in the field, the professional networks and other non-governmental organizations, as well as the voice local and territorial authorities represented in particular within the Committee of the Regions of the EU.⁵⁶

5.1. The culture policy in the Treaties

The Treaty of Rome do not contain a chapter or a specific section on cultural policy. Only in the preface of the Treaty was reference made to culture as a unifying element of the people and promoter of socioeconomic development. With the Treaty of Maastricht cultural policy acquired a legal basis.⁵⁷ Article 167 (Former Article 151 TEC) establishes a basis for action aimed at “promoting, supporting and complementing the activities of the Member States, with respect to their national and regional diversity, while at the same time highlighting the common cultural heritage”. The principles of Community intervention in the area of culture are complementarity and subsidiarity.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ European Commission, “*Creative Europe: Frequently Asked Questions*”, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-1009_en.htm

⁵⁷ Official Journal of the European Communities, “*Treaty on European Union*”, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:1992:191:FULL&from=EN>

⁵⁸ EUR-Lex, “*Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*”, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12008E167>

In order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the article mentioned above, the European Parliament and the Council, has to act in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and after consulting the Committee of the Regions, that shall adopt incentive measures, excluding any harmonization of legal provisions and regulations of the Member States. On the other hand, the Council will adopt, on a proposal from the Commission, recommendations. The Treaty of Lisbon enhances the importance of culture. In the preface itself of the Treaty of the European Union it contains the following expression: “Inspired by the cultural, religious and humanistic heritage of Europe”.⁵⁹ Among the objectives of the Treaty is to respect the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the Union and to ensure the conservation and development of the European cultural heritage (Article 3 of the EU Treaty).⁶⁰ The competences of the Union in the cultural field are specified as follows: “The Union shall have competence to carry out actions to support, coordinate or complement the action of the Member States”, Article 6 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. An important development is the fact that the decisions of the Council in the field of culture no longer require unanimity, but must be adopted by a qualified majority (paragraf 5 in Article 151, TFEU). It should also be noted that with the entry into force of the Treaty, the Charter of Fundamental Rights becomes legally binding (Article 6 of the EU Treaty).

5.2. Projects

The cultural project “The European Heritage Label” aims to strengthen the sense of belonging to the European Union based on history and common heritage. To this end, the Label encourages intercultural dialogue and values diversity. It also promotes the development of sites that have marked the history and construction of the EU. These sites may be monuments, natural, underwater, archaeological, industrial or urban sites, cultural landscapes, places of memory, cultural goods and objects and intangible heritage elements related to a place, including heritage contemporary. At the same time, it should help European citizens to better understand the construction of Europe as well as their common but diversified cultural heritage, in particular the democratic values and human rights that underpin integration. The eligibility criteria for

⁵⁹ The Lisbon Treaty, “*Analysis of Development Co-operation*”, <http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-the-functioning-of-the-european-union-and-comments/part-3-union-policies-and-internal-actions/title-xiii-culture/455-article-167.html>

⁶⁰ European Parliament, “*Culture - EU facts sheets*”, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/atyourservice/en/displayFtu.html?ftuId=FTU_3.6.1.html

obtaining the European Heritage Label: presenting a cross-border or pan-European nature: the past and present influence and attractiveness of the site must extend beyond the borders of a single Member State; have a place and a role in European history and integration, and present a report with key European events, personalities or movements; have a place and a role in the development and promotion of the common values that underpin European integration.⁶¹

The title of European Capital of Culture was initiated by the Council of Ministers of the European Union in 1985, on the initiative of the former Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri, and his French counterpart Jack Lang. It was originally attributed to a single city, for a year, on the basis of a cultural program illustrating “the diversity and richness of European cultures and the bonds that unite us as Europeans”. Since 2009, two cities from two different countries are designated each year, to which a third issue from a third country can be added. Cities must organize events in order to reinvigorate local cultural life, strengthen its international visibility, stimulate tourism and bring citizens closer to their city and, above all, to the European Union, via culture. A city is not only chosen as the European Capital of Culture for what it is, but also for the exceptional aspect of what it plans to do for a year as part of its appointment. Since Athens, the first European capital city of culture in 1985, more than 40 cities have obtained the title. The organization of events is partly thanks to European funding. Over the period 2014-2020, these funds are granted through the Culture component of the Creative Europe program.⁶²

The Creative Europe program, in its Culture component, supports the awarding of European Prizes, particularly in the fields of cultural heritage, architecture, literature and music. They serve to protect and promote European cultural diversity, and celebrate the importance of intercultural dialogue and cultural activities in Europe and beyond. One of the objectives of the project the “European Union Awards” is to “recognize excellence in different fields so that artists, works and cultural and artistic successes are known beyond national borders, thereby encouraging mobility and exchanges”. The awards highlight and reward artists, music groups,

⁶¹ European Commission “*Culture Sub-programme - SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROJECTS 2018 and for COOPERATION PROJECTS RELATED TO THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE 2018*”,

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/3_guidelines_coop_2018_eacea_32_2017_and_35_2017_0.pdf

⁶² European Commission, “*European Capitals of Culture*”,

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en

architects, writers or those working in the cultural field.⁶³⁶⁴⁶⁵ They respond to a need identified by the corresponding sector and are considered prestigious. They are specific and complement the elements of the EU's cultural policy.

6. Analysis

Below are the arguments found in the reports, documents and the EC and EP's official websites for EU's main ideas and arguments within current cultural politics of the EU. In addition to the empirical gathered material an analysis of the construction and promotion of a transnational European identity, based on a social constructivist approach is made. In summarizing the goals of the "Creative Europe" program the Commission emphasises three main arguments, that are as follows.

6.1. The cultural national and international spaces within the EU

The first argument is strongly related to an idea that cultural cooperation must exist as well between member states as the supranational level and the states. The commission argues that such a cooperation is necessary for strengthening the legitimacy of the European Union.⁶⁶ That can be defined as cause arguments,⁶⁷ seeing that they argue for its cultural program by emphasizing its commitment to promote a world order based on values such as: peace, legal certainty, freedom of expression, mutual understanding and respect for fundamental rights. Human participation in the cultural life of a given state (or a region, or internationally) makes it possible for people to develop a greater understanding of the world around them. Culture constitutes a framework in which conditions for such development can grow. Therefore the EU's focus on citizens' possibility to freely and actively engage in public, cultural life becomes prominent. According to the social constructivist ideas of Viviane Burr, important cultural policy should provide everyone with real conditions for an active participation in public life, where people may interact

⁶³ European Commission, "European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage", https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/heritage-prize_en

⁶⁴ European Commission, "European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture", https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/architecture-prize_en

⁶⁵ European Commission, "European Union Prize for Literature", https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/literature-prize_en

⁶⁶ European Commission, "Creative Europe: Frequently Asked Questions"

⁶⁷ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "Textens mening och makt", p. 122-123

and exchange ideas, experiences, etc.⁶⁸ Culture implies the conditions for free and active participation.⁶⁹ In other words, culture is about so much more than entertainment and pleasure. It is as well about formation of social spaces where citizens may collectively coexist and enrich each other by various modes of interactions. Politicians may sometimes create such public spaces due to their real democratic motivation, but sometimes cultural policy is used to promote other goals.⁷⁰

With that said, when it comes to the international dimension cultural diversity is an integral part of the EU's values and politics. The EU is strongly committed to the promotion of diversity through international cultural relations which is an important part of the EU's role as a global actor.⁷¹ This implies a willingness to promote "international cultural relations" through the support and assistance that the EU provides to third countries. This can be anchored to Johan Olson "fifth part of europeanization" that implies as well the promotion of the image of the Union, including the different cultures of the Member States, through cultural diplomacy.⁷² According to members of the European Commission, the union has much to offer the world: a multitude of cultural expressions, artistic creation of high quality and a dynamic creative industry.⁷³ Even the EU has a lot to gain from increased exchanges with the outside world. At the same time, the EU's diversity and pluralism is a major asset in promoting cultural policy as a driving force for peace and socio-economic development in third countries. Europe has strong cultural relations with other countries, promoted by its institutions. The Member States themselves have as well extensive and long-term international cultural ties with non-European countries. Generally, Europe is highly appreciated for its cultural traditions and creativity around the world. In line with the request of the Council and the Parliament, coordinated EU actions based on "smart complementarity" can help to strengthen these ties by creating synergies, pooling resources, facilitating cooperation and making these cultural exchanges more visible.⁷⁴

The EU proposes a strategy which focuses on developing cultural cooperation with partner countries in three main directions supporting culture as a motor for sustainable social and economic development, promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful intercultural

⁶⁸ Burr (2003) '*Social constructionism*' p. 27

⁶⁹ Wendt (1999) "*Social Theory of International Politics*", p. 224-225

⁷⁰ Gellner (1993). '*Nations and Nationalism*', p. 13

⁷¹ European Commission, "*Creative Europe: Frequently Asked Questions*"

⁷² Olsen (2002) '*The Many Faces of Europeanization*', p. 940-942

⁷³ European Commission, "*Creative Europe: Frequently Asked Questions*"

⁷⁴ European Commission "*Culture Sub-programme*"

relations and enhancing the European identity feeling. The interests of society's political rulers thus determine the form of national identity at the expense of special interests among the population. The EU aims to construct a common European identity, even if cultural diversities are acknowledged, the motto "Unity in Diversity".⁷⁵ As in the case of national identities, where politicians may construct, invent and even fabricate ideas of community⁷⁶ the European politicians can as well work for formations of unity and togetherness. As the result of political inventions and that the state that is the main actor behind identity creation, but the people still have no influence over its impact. In pursuit of these goals, the EU's argues that the international cultural relations will contribute to a stronger sense of European identity.

However, in regard to the social constructivist approach, to fully realize the potential of culture to play a dominant role in external relations, it is not enough to emphasize the diversity of European cultures, but one must also strive to create a new spirit of dialogue, mutual listening and learning.⁷⁷ It is therefore important to take account of regional differences and locally sensitive issues in cultural relations, and measures should be tailored to specific cultural contexts and interests.⁷⁸ Because people often link cross-border contacts,⁷⁹ communication between people should be encouraged in a spirit of respect, equality and partnership. Mutual learning and joint creation should therefore form the basis for the EU's international cultural relations.

6.2. The cultural policies

Secondly, in a interpretation of the EU's cultural policy the Commission connects the idea of cultural cooperation on different levels with their idea about legitimacy. By weighing in arguments via a particular authority the EU is strongly committed to promoting cultural diversity.⁸⁰ However, it can only be protected and benefited if human rights and fundamental freedoms are guaranteed. These fundamental rights are the cornerstones of democracy, legal certainty, peace, stability, sustainable development and people's participation in public affairs. States are required to respect, protect and promote the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including artistic forms of expression. In this respect, and in line with its obligations

⁷⁵ Europeiska Unionen, "EU's motto", https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/motto_sv

⁷⁶ Hobsbawm (1990) 'Nations and Nationalism', p. 48

⁷⁷ Burr (2003) 'Social constructionism' p. 28-29

⁷⁸ Burr (2003) 'Social constructionism' p. 27-29

⁷⁹ Olsen (2002) 'The Many Faces of Europeanization', p. 939-940

⁸⁰ Bergström & Boréus (2005) "Textens mening och makt", p. 122-123

under EU law, as mentioned in the social constructivism chapter; “an integration by policies is made”,⁸¹ the EU is therefore determined to promote a tolerant and pluralist attitude in its international cultural relations.⁸²

Since the proposed EU strategy for ‘International Cultural Relations’ is rooted in full respect for the EU and Member States respective areas of competence. According to Article 6 of the TFEU, “the Union shall have the power to take action to support, coordinate or complement Member States’ actions in the field of culture” and in Article 167 that states that the Union and the Member States shall promote cooperation with third countries and competent international institutions in the field of culture.⁸³ That can be seen as the second part of Johan Olson’s europeanization process regarding the development of institutions competences at EU level relating to control and integrate the actions of the Member States, to create a collective policy within the EU.⁸⁴ According to Article 167,⁸⁵ the Union shall also take into account the cultural aspects as it acts under other provisions of the Treaties. In development cooperation policies, EU and Member State complement and reinforce each other. With full respect for subsidiarity, the EU acts to promote european identity through measures taken at national, regional and local level. In other words the EU create conditions that contribute to encouraging synergies and cooperation between national cultural institutions.

Be that as it may, political decentralization and cultural regionalization of the EU is very limited. And this despite the fact that they should be the “foundation of cohesion in Europe” that affects collective identity of a territorial community and cultural diversity of people’s fundamental rights and minorities. The national identity is a collective identity that is a self-understanding for a larger group. The larger group can be created by the ones that have a common background. These identities form an image that many people are worried about when it comes to a larger union. When a country becomes a member of a larger union, some countries retain their features while others want to follow the developments that the other countries have done.⁸⁶ However, certain features may change or completely disappear when institutions and regulations change to become as at EU level. The idea of creating a united Europe requires

⁸¹ Christiansen, Jorgensen & Wiener (2001) *‘The Social Construction of Europe’*, p. 13-14

⁸² European Parliament, “*Culture - EU facts sheets*”

⁸³ Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

⁸⁴ Olsen (2002) *‘The Many Faces of Europeanization’*, p. 930

⁸⁵ Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

⁸⁶ Olsen (2002) *‘The Many Faces of Europeanization’*, p. 934

changing the institutions of the member states so that they become more like each other and fit the EU's regulatory system.⁸⁷

6.3. The cultural projects

Thirdly, according to the arguments found in documents about Creative Europe by the EC the EU argues that by promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful relations between peoples it can help to build fair, peaceful and inclusive societies that value cultural diversity and respect for human rights.⁸⁸ As social constructivist theorists Jill Steans & Lloyd Pettiford stated, a society is created by people in interaction with each other so by creating a common ground and favorable conditions for further exchanges. In other words, intercultural dialogue can help resolve tensions, prevent crises from escalating, promote national reconciliation and encourage new counterviews on a new socially constructed identity.⁸⁹ By using generalization arguments,⁹⁰ the EU directly promotes intercultural dialogue through international cultural cooperation projects, joint creation, contacts between people, by supporting cooperation between cultural actors. Cooperation, dialogue and mobility between and among cultural actors and artists are key aspects of intercultural dialogue. Circulation of artworks and cultural productions between countries spreads new ideas, creates direct and indirect ties and promotes innovation. Strengthening the feeling of European belonging.

However, in regard to intercultural dialogue as a social action it becomes something more than the exchange of information, as mentioned earlier by social constructivist Thomas Risse it “would be in the consequentialist logic”, that could change the goals and self-understandings of the participants in the social exchange.⁹¹ Furthermore, culture is not just about art or literature. Culture spans many different policy areas and political activities, ranging from intercultural dialogue to tourism, from the protection of cultural heritage to the promotion of creative industries and from craft to development cooperation, which can be linked to theorist Alexander Wendt conceptualization of identity.⁹² In the sense of societal collective identity is based on cultural linguistic or ethnic ties. The proposed strategy therefore encourages opportunities to promote culture within the framework of the EU's external policy. Culture is

⁸⁷ Olsen (2002) *The Many Faces of Europeanization*, p. 924-926

⁸⁸ European Commission “*Culture Sub-programme*”

⁸⁹ Steans & Pettiford (2005) *Introduction to international relations – perspectives & themes*, p. 183

⁹⁰ Bergström & Boréus (2005) “*Textens mening och makt*”, p. 122-123

⁹¹ Risse (2002) *Constructivism and International Institutions. Towards Conversations across Paradigms*, p. 607

⁹² Wendt (1999) “*Social Theory of International Politics*”, p. 227-228

also an important factor for sustainable development, as the creative sector can promote reconciliation, growth and freedom of expression, on which other fundamental freedoms can be based. In regard to the social constructivist approach, by promoting culture through existing cooperation frameworks, the actor's actions are created by the structure in which the actor is active and through these actions. The actor also helps to reconstruct the structure in order to ensure political coherence the most effective way of promoting culture within the framework of the EU's external relations is to use existing cooperation frameworks.⁹³

The Creative Europe Program uses its three projects, which are mentioned above, to “strengthen the sense of belonging to the European Union based on history and common heritage”, to show the bonds that unite Europeans and to strengthen its international visibility, via culture. By encouraging participation in “Creative Europe” the Commission argues for the cultural actors and creative actors from neighboring countries the opportunities to work with colleagues from across Europe, to join European cultural networks. For example the Cultural heritage project is an important expression of cultural diversity as well as European Capital of Culture and European Prizes.⁹⁴⁹⁵ Restoration and promotion of heritage attracts tourism and stimulates cultural growth. By developing strategies for the protection of heritage through education and the transfer of knowledge, the sense of European identity can spread to the people.⁹⁶ Cooperation on cultural heritage plays therefore an important role in international relations and development of European identity.

A recent survey by the European Parliament shows the many benefits of close cooperation for EU's cultural institutes and clusters in the network of national cultural institutions: “joint projects become less risky, more responsive and more visible, with greater learning opportunities”.⁹⁷ As in the case of social constructivism, by considering learning as a social process the most important learning occurs when people engage in social interactions, which is the objective of the EU' cultural program.

⁹³ Steans & Pettiford (2005) *Introduction to international relations – perspectives & themes*, p. 185-187

⁹⁴ European Commission, “*European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture*”, “*European Union Prize for Literature*”, “*European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage*”

⁹⁵ European Commission, “*European Capitals of Culture*”

⁹⁶ Hobsbawm (1990) *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 47-48

⁹⁷ European Parliament, “*The Creative Europe programme, European Implementation Assessment*”, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2016/581413/EPRS_IDA%282016%29581413_EN.pdf

7. Final summarizing discussion

“Culture” is, like “identity”, one of the most disputed and dissociated concepts of social sciences and humanities. The global cultural landscape has changed rapidly in recent decades. In a world facing many challenges and conflicts, culture has a great potential to contribute to bridging divisions, strengthening fragile societies and improving international relations. One can therefore state that social interaction between states has a significant impact on the international system. As mentioned earlier in the chapter on social constructivist the ongoing changes in society reveals a new reality, where the political reality is beyond the sovereign state, which do not offer a common history or traditions. The constructed social reality is reconstructed by people who act accordingly with their interpretations and their knowledge. That is spread to the people through the socialization of institutions with education and intercourse. That may develop, among other things, a more common identity and cultural affiliation. European unity thus appears as the result of political inventions, in other words an active political movement with political ends. The world perceives the EU as a continent rich in cultural heritage, with dynamic creative forces. Cultural diversity should therefore be an integral part of the European Union’s external action.

The Commission’s main ideas and arguments to promote a transnational European identity is to propose guiding principles that aims at ensuring human rights, diversity and intercultural dialogue while respecting subsidiarity and complementarity principles and preserving political coherence. Their actions are created by the structure in which they are active and through these actions, they also help to reconstruct the structure. This interaction can change over time by changing the actor’s behavior, thus ending the reconstruction and creating something new, “a common European identity”. States are socially constructed, both from an internal and an external perspective. State interests are therefore dependent on identities. Since the participants in a public exchange of ideas, such as “Creative Europe”, are willing to be persuaded by the best argument, they are prepared even to change their visions and their interests in view of a better argument such as belonging to several common cultural identities.

The establishment of common political arenas and structures creates a stable organizational basis, which results in an enhanced ability for the EU to act as a unified political system, both internally and in its external relations. This development, in turn, results in the eradication of internal territorial borders and the strengthening of external borders, while

developing a common European identity, which is why the EU is strengthened by making policies and institutions more equal and centered on the EU. In order to do so they propose three guiding lines for developing cultural cooperation with partner countries: supporting culture as a motor for sustainable social development; promoting culture and intercultural dialogue for peaceful intercultural relations; and strengthening cooperation on cultural heritage. The third guideline proposes a strategic approach for EU cultural diplomacy, which includes enhanced cooperation at EU level and intercultural exchanges to promote the EU's diverse cultures.

It is clear that the structures of the social reality around us affect most of the international political organization. They concern a political international order and greatly affect each other. A social constructivist explanation that seems to be consistent is the one who says that a state's identity is the basis for the interest one has and how to subsequently act. As it has previously stated that a collective identity could possibly be assumed to be stable in a highly unified society. However, such an identity would be impossible to achieve in the increasingly diversified European Union. The need for a European unity generates arguments that emphasize security and community. These guidelines, that EU argues for, may help to further develop communication channels between peoples and communities. As well as to help create the right conditions for cultural and creative communities to continue to grow, thus creating growth of the European identity. And maybe strengthening the protection and promotion of cultural heritage; stimulate intercultural dialogue and peace building; support cultural production and tourism as driving forces for development and economic growth. These actions should, in turn, contribute to making the European Union a stronger global actor, a better international partner and a stronger driver for sustainable development, peace and mutual understanding. That will in its turn create "common cultural heritage to the fore", a common cultural European identity.

7.1. Final thoughts and Further research

The EU's development, regionalization and greater emphasis on local self-government in Europe have complemented the national identities with new cultural identities. Europe today has more linguistic cultures than before. In order to hold the multicultural and at the same time boundless EU, it seems reasonable to ask for a common identity. In the same way as politics, law and economics tend to be homogenized, the common identity would contribute to the cultural integration of Europe's cultures. European identity is a term that, in a way, seems obvious.

Europe is a continent, its people are Europeans, they think as such and they act as such. Today there is a clear use of the concept of European identity. It is used in many different contexts. Both in political manifestos as in contemporary research analyzes. Often, descriptive studies are woven together with normative claims without it being clear what is what. There is no consensus about what the European identity is.

It would be interesting to do further research on European identity and a more thorough analysis of EU cultural policy with the goal of perhaps shaping something more official because it is spread out in the different treaties. As well as, the EU cultural program as whole. To do some sort of survey on the participants of the various cultural projects regarding their sense of belonging to the European identity, and to ask what the political actors attitude is for promoting it. Alternatively, it would also be interesting to do a follow-up study after the 2020 period if it is relevant to continue with the "Creative Europe" program or to start a new program. If the goals of the Commission's objectives with the program were met. However, the study has clearly shown how an understanding of the EU's different inclusions and exclusions of arguments and ideas. The findings on the thesis has been found relatable to the chosen theoretical framework. The Pro argument weighs heavier than the Contra arguments. Especially when it involves fundamental changes in both political and cultural attitudes, as well as social structures and conditions interested in the identity discussion.

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