Foreword

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The journal *Études écossaises* / *Scottish Studies* contributes to the ongoing research project of the Institut des Langues et Cultures d'Europe, des Amériques, d'Afrique, d'Asie et d'Australie (ILCEA4, EA 7356 – Grenoble Alpes University).

- 1 The concept of national cinema rests on two underlying assumptions: first, that “films produced in a national context will display some distillation of the historical, social and political culture of that country”; second, that “cinema (as one aspect of popular culture) plays a role in the construction of national identity”,¹ thus participating in the building of what Benedict Anderson termed “an imagined community”—or perhaps more appropriately in this case, an imaged community.
- 2 In the case of Scotland, this imaging early on took the form of iconographies inherited from history: such films as the first Scottish feature, *Rob Roy* (Arthur Vivian, 1911), or the adaptation of Stevenson's *Kidnapped* (George Terwilliger, US, 1917) are often seen as early examples of cinematic tartanry, with their blend of local custom and costume, chivalric code, representation of the Highlander as noble savage, and all the visual markers received from long-standing pictorial representation, later joined by Kailyard (Scotland as an insular country, the insistence on local intrigue...) and “Clydesideism” with films mythologizing industrial Scotland (*Red Ensign*, Michael Powell, 1934, is frequently listed as an example).
- 3 But it is not just films that help visually create and disseminate this national image. For Duncan Petrie, novels, cinema and TV productions are
[...] narrative-based popular forms that provide the means by which the myths and realities, experiences and dreams of Scotland and its inhabitants have been reflected and asserted, imagined and reimagined through a process of cultural transmission dating back to the bardic tradition of oral storytelling. Moreover, these are also the forms that have enjoyed the widest and broadest circulation and consumption—both at home and abroad—reinforcing their significance as the

primary media through which the cultural transformation of Scotland [...] has been creatively addressed and conveyed to audiences,

this in a context

[...] of a sub-national entity located within the British state [...] necessarily bound up with the assertion of cultural difference, political self-determination and the creative appropriation of myth and mythologisation.²

- 4 Fiction, however, is just part of the story, and the circulation of the image of Scotland owes just as much to pictures in the context of documentaries, the news, commercials... and other media formats.
- 5 Krisitine Chick examines how many of the stories in Jackie Kay's three short story collections engage with the lives of ordinary people on the margins of society, such as the elderly, the obese, the sick, the unloved, the mentally unstable, the exploited and victimized. In her stories, Kay explores themes of reality, memory, love and loss, among others. Often, imagination is shown to offer escape from unbearable reality for Kay's characters. In the process, the boundaries between the real and the unreal, the physical and the spectral, the rational and the magical, are destabilized and blurred. This essay discusses Kay's exploration of the above-mentioned themes and how her use of magical realism plays into the transposition of the ordinary and banal into realms of the extraordinary and fantastical.
- 6 John Ritchie's paper researches representations and performances of Scottishness in UK and US cinema from 1934 and 1935. Utilising archive material in tandem with performance analysis this paper addresses questions of verisimilitude in these productions. The UK presents two very different Scotlands and different people. A Scotsman to be feared, savage and pious and afraid of outsiders in Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps* is juxtaposed against the first truly modern screen Scotsman in Clair's *The Ghost Goes West*. The US present adaptations of two of J.M. Barrie's works, *What Every Woman Knows* and *The Little Minister*. Two films led by female characters, the US productions put the idea of a 'real' Scotland at their core. The paper concludes with a surprising revelation regarding verisimilitude in executions of performed Scottishness.
- 7 Anne-Lise Marin-Lamellet explains how defining Scottish cinema is often a source of debate but Scottish identity is never as obvious on screen as in genre films set in Scotland rather than in the usual supposedly Scottish canon. Whatever their diegetic time and genre, these films all put forward a certain number of "Scotch myths" such as Hadrian's Wall. This ultimate border trope symbolising a forever other Scotland is one of the signs that the country still fascinates Scottish as well as non-Scottish directors. The numerous peplums, adventure/historical films and horror films of the last twenty years can be viewed as a will to use a well-known mythology, albeit revisited, to reclaim one's history while tackling universal issues such as imperialism/neo-colonialism, multiculturalism and nation-building.
- 8 Petra Pugar analyses how Scotland and Scottishness are represented and re-imagined in selected online texts aimed at international tourists visiting its castles, cities and landscapes that double as locations for the TV-series and films *Outlander*, *Harry Potter* and *Trainspotting*. In a dialectic relationship between consumerism, secondary-world building, spatial practices and concepts such as vision and authenticity, each particular moving-image genre is accompanied by a different set of images of Scotland brought forward in these texts, largely supporting the fixed representation of banal

Scottishness and its romanticized tropes, with some exceptions that challenge these images and contribute to the type of culturalism seen in contemporary Scottish literature.

- 9 Francesco Buscemi's paper analyses the way television has created or recirculated the haggis as the Scottish national dish. Drawing on cultural studies analyses of food and TV as sources of nation building, Appadurai's account of the construction of a national cuisine and Belasco's insight into the way national food cultures are created for political reasons, the article textually, visually and symbolically analyses accounts of the Scottish haggis constructed by celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver, the Hairy Bikers and Gordon Ramsay, and by videos on the web. The results show that the haggis is represented in two ways: on the one hand, it contributes to constructing Scotland as an ancestral nation based on tough nature; on the other hand, the dish is depicted as a tool for measuring the degree of Scottishness of people or as a passport which allows people coming from other countries to feel more Scottish.
- 10 Philippe Laplace examines how St Kilda was depicted in the only two fictional films about life on an island that has assumed mythical status since Martin Martin's travel account (1698): Michael Powell's *The Edge of the World* (1937) and Bill Bryden's *Ill Fares the Land* (1983). After a presentation of St Kilda, He examines the artistic and ideological objectives of the directors. He then more specifically examines how both directors represent distance and how they present the irruption of what Deleuze and Guattari called striated forces. He describes in the following part the various contact zones where islanders and mainlanders meet in the two films. The notion of St Kilda's lost voices is central to his article and allows us to see how these films tried to provide the St Kilda community with a means of expression.
- 11 The second part of this issue is composed of two papers, not unrelated to the previous section, although this was originally intended to be a full issue, which did not come to pass for want of more material. This is regrettable, as the texts offer a very promising entry into this underrated topic, Scottish kitsch.
- 12 For Lauren Brancz-McCartan, in "Le cerf en Écosse, emblème ou problème? Confrontation de mémoires collectives réévaluant la dimension kitsch du cerf", if today, the deer stereotypically represents Scotland, since it can be found on a great variety of objects presented as Scottish, the question is, how did the deer become a national, albeit kitschy, symbol which contributed to the shaping of a collective memory bringing Scotland closer to the rest of the UK from the nineteenth century onwards? Conversely, the ecological crisis caused by the exponential growth of deer populations in the Highlands throughout most of the twentieth century has been challenging the symbolic image of the deer, thus engendering a competing collective memory which allows Scotland to express its willingness to distance itself from the UK and from kitschy clichés.
- 13 For Emerence Hild, the development of the tourism industry rests on its ability to clearly delineate a territorial identity, one immediately identifiable and easily reproducible. The cultural policies undertaken by Glasgow aim at distancing the city from this, while reaffirming its local particularisms rather than integrating a uniform, "authentically Scottish", cultural model. The *Glasgow City Centre Mural Trail* finances

urban art so as to improve the visitors' experience of the city, the idea being that street art is one of the ways to convey a new, resolutely urban, local identity. However, if the *Mural Trail* seems to criticize Scottish kitsch, it in fact appropriates certain elements from it, so that it is possible to say that the public commission denaturalizes *street art* by depriving it of its status as cultural protest. Additionally, some motifs end up as symbols of Glaswegian identity, thus generating a new deformation of local identity. Navigating these two dimensions can prove tricky, and the paper proposes to understand the cultural implications of such a public policy.

- 14 The volume concludes with a paper by Ingibjörg Ágúsdóttir entitled "Mining the Mundane and Finding Gold: Reality, Imagination and the Magical in Jackie Kay's Short Fiction" as well as two reviews of recent books.

NOTES

1. *The Oxford Dictionary of Film Studies*, p. 177.
2. D. Petrie, *Contemporary Scottish Fictions*, p. 2.

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