

Abstract

The aim of my bachelor thesis is to analyse what is the portrayal of Scottish identity and culture in the contemporary film production. The thesis is concerned with the employment of recurring motifs and thematic links in Scottish film from the year 2000 until 2016 and will analyse how film-makers render Scottish culture in their productions and the relative effects this has on contemporary culture. Existing research into the representation of Scottish culture on screen analyses mainly historic trends of remythologizing the Scottish past¹ and using traditional stereotyping symbols still present in modern cinematography. Many authors, however, point to the establishment of new Scottish representation by leaving those symbols behind and focusing on contemporary Scotland with its political debates and social relationships.

This thesis contends that contemporary directors are no longer retrospective and are concerned primarily with the contemporary political and social dispensation of modern Scotland. The historical lexicon of Scottish film history is still present but no longer central and has been problematised by its now typically ironic employment. The new grammar of Scottish film is predicated on a new referential mode which is connected with independence (both the formal concept and the philosophical discourse) and the debate over identity in the Scottish community, imagined or otherwise.

The first chapter introduces the concept of identity as the main core of the thesis and characterizes several divisions of identity. The major part of the chapter is devoted to a national identity and its understanding.

The second chapter develops the focus on identity issues and further discusses the representation of identity in culture, mainly in popular culture such as film, television or radio and concentrates predominantly on depiction of identity in audio-visual media. It also introduces several approaches to representation of identity in culture, above all Stuart Hall and his book *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*.

In the third chapter, Scottish identity is introduced. The main emphasis is put on Scottish identity in culture. The chapter looks at three myths that is Tartanry, Kailyard and Clydesidism and explains their role in the history and development of Scottish culture.

¹ Hardy Forsyth, *Scotland in Film* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990) 213.

The fourth chapter focuses specifically on Scottish identity included in film. The chapter begins with the history of Scottish cinematography with the views of many film critics. It further delineates the traits of formation of Scottish identity in film. The chapter also draws nearer the connection of Scottish film, identity and tourism and Scottish film, identity and involvement of the government of Scotland.

The fifth chapter outlines the recent development of Scottish cinema and films with Scottish identity in the 20th and 21st century and also develops the concept of “New Scottish Cinema.”

The sixth part consists in practical criticism and focuses on on three films from both native Scottish and non-Scottish production in the 21st century. The research respects the principles of qualitative content analysis. It examines the films with the reference to theories of Scottish film representation and enquires what patterns of the Scottish identity are projected, whether they share any common features and what features appear most frequently. The individual films were selected with respect to several criteria: the date of the release falls into the 21st century and the director of the film is either of Scottish origin or bases his/her product on a Scottish theme. Frequent use is made of established secondary texts and critical research into Caledonian Filmography.