

Adéla Matejová, *Representation of Scotland on Screen: Symbols of Scottish Identity in the Cinematography of the 21st Century*

BA thesis

Opponent's review

The student has submitted a very substantial account of the history of Scottish cinematography from the beginning to the present time and it is necessary to point out that in this respect her work exceeds the definition of a BA thesis considerably. The first six chapters, i.e. about fifty pages of text, are based on a thorough research of a number of relevant sources, documenting not only under what conditions the Scottish film developed through decades but also mapping the changing picture of Scottish national identity as reflected in the movies of different periods. This part of the thesis thus provides the reader with an invaluable guide through a rich cultural and political spectrum of 20th century Scottish history – very well researched, very well organized and very well presented.

The final chapter provides an analysis of three recent films representing (each in its specific way) Scottish national identity: *Morvern Callarn* (2002), *Filth* (2013) and *Brave* (2012). This rather brief part was perhaps meant as the climax of the thesis but does not read as such. Instead it stands for a somewhat random illustration of the discussed tendencies, an impression supported by a rather pedantic division into subchapters with quite limited space for analysis. What I would object to, however, is not the above mentioned character of this chapter but the unclear criteria on which the selection of films was made. Why is *Brave* one of these? It is obvious that, being a cartoon film produced by Disney/Pixar, it is part of the entertainment industry with no serious attempt to say something new or substantial about Scottish national identity but using conventional clichés instead. Perhaps the student meant to show that Scottish identity is presented in various ways even today – but this fact could have been stated in one or two sentences. What we are actually interested in is how the Scottish national identity is represented in serious, ambitious and innovative projects, such as the other two movies. No wonder, then, that *Brave* only very badly fits the categories which the student discusses in the Conclusion.

Nevertheless, in spite of these reservations, I consider Miss Matejová's thesis a notable contribution to the topic and warmly recommend it for defence with a preliminary mark "výborně" (excellent).

PhDr. Zdeněk Beran, Ph.D.

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