

This dissertation deals with the possibility of expressing cultural identities in contemporary literature. Scottish literature was chosen as it stands for a country which has been undergoing significant changes in its self-definition. The Scottish nation is still searching for its position within larger European or global structures. Thus, it provides an interesting basis for examining the validity of such concepts as nation, state or national culture during a period of time which has tended to abandon these traditional structures under the influence of globalisation. This cultural process of re-definition fuels an outburst of literary creativity and since the beginning of the 1980s, Scottish literature has been experiencing an incredible boom aiming mainly to get rid of traditional and limiting cultural representations. The dissertation is based on cultural and literary analysis. Cultural analysis starts with characterising the contemporary Scottish cultural context, typical mainly for its traditional dualities and internal oppositions, such as nation and region, coloniser and colonised, Highland and Lowland, Scottish and British, male and female. Most of these dualities have historical roots and the task of this text is also to find out to what extent these are valid today and how they influence contemporary Scottish self-definition. The second part of cultural characteristic focuses on establishing a theoretical frame of reference, which is later used in the literary analysis. Starting from the actual concept of identity in general, the discussion leads to the themes of national culture, postcolonial experience, the possibilities of minority literary representation and also characterising Scottish literature as minor literature. ...