Proceedings of the Conference of the German Association of University Teachers of English

Volume XXXII
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Preface

At first glance, Saarbrücken may seem an unlikely location for an Anglistentag, the annual conference of the Anglistenverband, the Association of University Teachers of English Language, Literature and Culture and the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in the German-speaking countries. Situated right on the German-French border, Saarbrücken is, as the cliché has it, in the heart of Europe, not far from, say, the Alsace and Verdun, and these days it takes less than two hours to get to Paris by high-speed train. Saarland University, or Université de la Sarre, as it was then called, was founded by the French in 1948. While links to France abound, those to the British isles are not equally obvious. Yet an English department was soon established after the founding of the university. The renowned Philip Brockbank came to Saarbrücken, so the department's standard of scholarship was high from the beginning. In the following, eminent scholars like Thomas Finkenstaedt, Willi Erzgraber, Karl Klein and Peter Erdmann made sure that this high standard was kept while the English department attracted more and more students – in 2010, they numbered about 1200. The first Anglistentag at Saarbrücken was held in the 1960s, and more than 40 years were to pass before the second, which took place from 19 to 22 September 2010.

Before the conference took off with the traditional conference warming, which took place on the evening of 19 September in the vaulted Ratskeller of the splendid neohistoricist building of Saarbrücken's Rathaus, Jana Gohrisch (Hannover) and Andrea Sand (Trier) chaired the well-attended workshop "Von der Bewerbung zur Berufung". On the evening of 20 September, Charlotte Britz, the mayor of Saarbrücken, graciously organised a welcome for the conference participants in the impressive Festsaal of the Rathaus, and after kind words of welcome by Erik Schrader, the representative of the city government's department of culture, all were generously treated to drinks and finger food. In our planning of the conference programme, we sought to make sure that, given the numerous papers and all the other, non-obligatory official events like the city tour, the participants would still find enough time to meet in private to enjoy the informal communication that is an essential part of every conference, and in particular of a conference like this one that extends over four days. Hence, there was no official event on the evening of Tuesday, 21 September. The feedback we got was that, after a good number of papers and events since Monday morning and after the annual assembly of the members of the Anglistenverband, which always takes up a good part of the afternoon, the conference participants welcomed this 'free' evening. We therefore recommend it to future organisers. The final excursion on the afternoon of 22 September took the participants, after lunch at a nearby restaurant, to the Völklinger Hütte, the gigantic steelworks about 10 km east of Saarbrücken that closed only in
can be threatened by the need to assimilate; "Tartan and Turban," moreover, implies that a proper sex change seems to have taken place, as it is the only poem in the collection with a male persona. Despite these negative undertones, however, the idea of a hybrid identity is at the basis of Fraser's Tartan and Turban. In the eponymous poem, she introduces the imagery of weaving in order to apply visualize her idea of an ideally blended Indian-Scottish identity. Bashabi Fraser's basic idea is that of exchange and dialogue between cultures, which she tacitly presupposes in Tartan and Turban, a notion she explores in greater detail in her recent epic poem From the Ganga to the Tay (2009) By postulating hybridization and fashioning an Indian-Scottish identity, Fraser adds a new voice to the on-going debate about the definition of contemporary, post-devolution Scottishness.

References

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Secondary Literature

DIETMAR BÖHNKE (LEIPZIG)

A Devolved Cinema? The 'New' Scottish Film since the 1990s

This is an exciting time in Scottish culture and politics. More than ten years after devolution and three years since the Scottish National Party took over power in the devolved administration, the Scottish nation has clearly accommodated itself to its newfound autonomy. There seems to be a new relaxed self-confidence both about Scottish national identity in general and about the evolution of devolution, so to speak, which is seen by many as a work in progress rather than a one-off event. In Scottish culture, too, the oft-quoted 'Renaissance' seems to be continuing, even though the term itself is open to debate. At the same time, the general political and economic climate is rapidly changing and clearly ominous for the arts in Scotland – the recent concentration of arts funding into the central agency Creative Scotland (launched in summer 2010) is a momentous and ambivalent development in this context.

One of the art forms that during the past 15 years has increasingly moved into the limelight is film. In fact, for many observers, Scottish film as a national tradition in its own right barely existed before the 1990s (even though one of the effects of the recent revival is exactly to question this view). In this contribution, I want to look at the rather extraordinary development of Scottish film since the mid-1990s, exemplified by three case studies of recent Scottish films, and attempt to address the question of its status as either an autonomous national cinema, a 'devolved' British cinema (in the words of the doyen of Scottish film studies, Duncan Petrie) or a small 'trans- or post-national' cinema.

1. Scottish National Identity and Cinematic Representation

The above mentioned terms immediately raise a number of theoretical problems relating to Scottish and British national identities and their representation in the media. Obviously, I cannot here address these issues in any great detail. Suffice it to say that film and cultural studies have long since established the significance of the film medium for the representation of the nation, and have more recently discussed the 'instability of the national' as represented for example in British films since the 1980s (Higson 2000). The significance of both multiculturalism and devolutionary sub-nationalisms for this development has increasingly been recognised (Blandford 2007, McLoone 2009, Street 2009). Concepts of postnational or transnational cinema are thus becoming something like the default position in British film criticism. This is clearly also due to the impact of globalisation and the precarious position of the British film industry between Hollywood dominance and the European national cinemas.

In the Scottish context, the traditional discourse on film and national identity has taken the form of a trenchant criticism of stereotyped and clichéd outside representations of
Scotland (à la *Brigadoon* [1954] or *Whisky Galore* [1949]), as evidenced in the foundational text of Scottish film criticism, Colin McArthur's edited volume *Scotch Reels* (1982), and a simultaneous bemoaning of the lack of indigenous film production. This discourse has singled out three main representational traditions of Scotland on film that have since become dominant in academic discussions of Scottish films: Tartanry, Kailyard and Clydesideism:

McArthur identifies how, despite the transformation of Scotland by industrialisation and urbanisation during the nineteenth century, cinematic imagery of the nation remained indebted to the discourses of Tartanry – romantic evocations of the Highlands – and Kailyard – sentimental portraits of small-town life. (Hill 2009, 91)

Scotland's third dominant myth, that of Clydesideism [sic], [...] explored the waning role of masculinity in Scottish society after the decline of its shipbuilding and manufacturing industries in the latter half of the twentieth century. Clydesideism mourned the loss of 'real' masculinity (the myth of the industrialised 'hard man') in the feminising environment of the services industry. (Martin-Jones 2009, 6)

There seems to be a (partly unspoken) assumption that these are distortions of 'authentic' Scottish identity that should be rectified by more 'correct' or 'real(istic)' representations, preferably from inside, i.e. by indigenous filmmakers. While it is certainly understandable why a small stateless nation like Scotland that is so predominantly represented on screen from outside should aspire to a national film tradition (just as it possesses a rich literary one), the idea that it should somehow represent the 'real' Scotland is certainly problematic in the context of recent discussions on national and cultural identity in general (Hall 1997). It is indeed reminiscent of the "burden of representation" frequently bemoaned by British ethnic minority filmmakers in the past. Against this background, it is interesting to observe that recent discussions of Scottish culture and national identity have clearly moved away from this fixed (Nationalist) idea of Scotland towards a much more fluid and relational concept of neo-nationalism, as Tom Nairn and David McRone, among others, have called it. In a similar vein, Berthold Schoene has argued for a 'cosmopolitan' concept of post-devolutionary Scottish identity (Schoene 2007, 2008). So it is no real surprise that discussions of Scottish film have also increasingly stressed the global and transnational connections and elements (cf. already the titles of several recent publications, such as Martin-Jones 2009, Petrie 2006b, several essays in Murray et al. 2009). In the case of film, this emphasis is perhaps even more propitious than in other cultural fields, since the industrial element all too often trump the cultural one here, and thus immediately introduces questions of American or European (or at the very least British) funding and distribution. In what follows, I will therefore pay particular attention to this ambiguous position of contemporary Scottish film between national culture and international production and consumption.

2. *Braveheart*, *Trainspotting* and the 'New' Scottish Film

It has become common ground to date the beginning of the 'new' Scottish film to the mid-1990s with the twin phenomena of *Braveheart* (1995) and *Trainspotting* (1996) as reference points (even though the first of these is not considered 'Scottish' in the strict sense by most critics). There is, however, a significant pre-history to this. In particular, one would have to mention Bill Douglas's influential autobiographical trilogy *My Childhood*, *My Ain Folk* and *My Way Home* from the 1970s, which is frequently quoted as inspiration by recent filmmakers such as Lynne Ramsay (and has finally appeared on DVD in 2008). Somewhat tragically, Douglas made only one more feature film after this, and died prematurely in 1991. In contrast to Douglas's stylistically innovative and demanding trilogy, Bill Forsyth's cycle of Scottish films *That Sinking Feeling* (1979), *Gregory's Girl* (1981), *Local Hero* (1983) and *Comfort and Joy* (1984) is significant for proving that it was possible to have commercial success with Scottish feature films. In addition to that, there were less easily classifiable earlier films such as *The Wicker Man* (1973), *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black Black Oil* (BBC 1974), and, of course, the Hollywood blockbuster *Highlander* (1986). There is no question, however, that the real revival started in the mid-1990s. It is a curious coincidence that in the span of only three years between 1994 and 1996 a cluster of important and high-profile films either made or set in Scotland was released after the nation had been almost invisible cinematically for a long time. Besides *Braveheart* and *Trainspotting*, there was also *Shallow Grave* (1994, the precursor to *Trainspotting* by the same team), Michael Caton-Jones's *Rob Roy* (1995), *Small Faces* by Gillies Mackinnon and Lars von Trier's *Breaking the Waves* (both 1996). Taken together, their impact on the Scottish film scene can hardly be overestimated. Because of this significance, I would like to briefly comment on *Braveheart* and *Trainspotting* here (even though they have been amply covered in the relevant literature), before moving on to the more recent films and developments.

Mel Gibson's film *Braveheart* about the 13th-century Scottish freedom fighter William Wallace, which won five Oscars including best film in 1996, could perhaps be dismissed as just another of those Hollywood versions of Scottish history in the Tarnanry tradition, were it not for its enormous impact on Scottish culture and even politics, which has led critics to speak of the "Braveheart phenomenon" (Edensor 2002, McArthur 2003). Even though the historical accuracy of the film is at least doubtful and it has been heavily criticised, and notwithstanding its having been filmed mainly in Ireland, it was a huge success with the Scottish public and was almost immediately used by Scottish (nationalist) political and tourist propaganda. The strongly anti-English message of the film clearly struck a chord with a population tired of a Conservative government that kept disregarding Scottish interests and sensibilities, and consequently the Scottish National Party used the film in their election campaign. It is also certainly no coincidence that after the resounding success of New Labour in the 1997 general election (when the Tories were completely wiped out in Scotland), the promised referendum on devolution was held precisely on the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Stirling Bridge on 11 September 1997. When the new Scottish Parliament was finally opened on 1 July 1999, television programmes used the soundtrack from the film for their coverage of the event. All of this has led one critic (or rather fan) to entitle a book *Braveheart: From Hollywood to Hollywood* (Anderson 2005). Apart from the historical background, a couple of Scottish actors in minor roles, and the filming of a few scenes near Fort William, the Scottish involvement in this global franchise was
minimal. However, this does not mean it has no relevance to modern Scotland, especially taking into account the necessarily globalised or transnational nature of any bigger-budget film and of the British film industry in general, so that the disregard with which it is commonly seen in Scottish film criticism should perhaps be reconsidered, as one critic has recently argued (Stenhouse 2009). Indeed, it did have a direct material impact on Scotland through a government review of the film industry occasioned by the 'stealing' of the film by Ireland, which led to the establishment of the funding and development body Scottish Screen (now part of Creative Scotland), which in turn can be seen as instrumental in the following renaissance of Scottish film.

Much more important for the aesthetics and the themes of the new Scottish film than this import, however, were the first two films by the Scottish-English team of filmmakers Danny Boyle (director), John Hodge (screenplay) and Andrew Macdonald (producer), who partly profited from the newly established funding possibilities: Shallow Grave and Trainspotting. While the first of these was a clever little thriller set in the more upwardly mobile Edinburgh and pioneered a new speedy and 'hip' style for Scottish films (as well as inheriting something of the Gothic-Calvinist tradition of a James Hogg or Robert Louis Stevenson), the second meant the international breakthrough not only for the filmmakers and some of the Scottish actors (notably Ewan McGregor and Robert Carlyle) - and according to some commentators for British film as a whole - but also for a Scotland on screen that was as different from Brigadoon or Braveheart as possible: this was a Scotland of the drug-consuming underclass of the housing estates whose opinion of their home country was memorably expressed in the probably most frequently quoted statement by central protagonist Mark Renton: 'I hate being Scottish. We're the lowest of the fucking low, scum of the earth, the most wretched, servile, miserable, pathetic trash that was ever shut into civilization' (qtd. in Blandford 2007, 70). Significantly, part of the attraction of the film was that it was not specific to Scotland - it was about global youth culture and the club (and drug) scene as much as it was about (post) Thatcherite Britain or Edinburgh, and its style was more reminiscent of Tarantino than Bill Forsyth. It was also very cleverly marketed and included a soundtrack of hugely popular 'Britpop' bands (as well as Iggy Pop). On the other hand, this film takes into the Scottish tradition of 'boozie and violence', of (Calvinist) self-loathing and the hard man figure; it features strong(ish) Scottish accents, and was adapted from Irvine Welsh's eponymous cult novel of 1993. It was thus the first successful example of a Scottish film that managed to depict a vital, yet largely overlooked face of the nation with honesty and humour, while also appealing to a wide international young audience. This, together with its stylistic innovations (such as the fast-paced opening sequence or the fantastic dream sequences), made Trainspotting the starting point of the new Scottish cinema while also prefiguring the transnational character of many Scottish films to follow.\footnote{Some would even say it was the starting point of a new type of British film, if we take such 'spin-offs' as Twin Town (1997) or Human Traffic (1999) into account, or perhaps also the gangster films of Guy Ritchie.}

While it is true that the success of Trainspotting could not be repeated by later films, the sheer number, range and artistic quality of films made in Scotland in the following decade or so has been unprecedented. Scotland's visibility on screen has been significantly enhanced during this period, partly due to the (re)discovery of Scotland as a setting for international big-budget productions like the Harry Potter films or The Da Vinci Code (as well as several Bollywood films, as Martin-Jones outlines in his book Scotland: Global Cinema) and some lower-profile non-Scottish films such as Mrs Brown, The Governor, Skagerrak and Wilbur Wants to Kill Himself. However, the most important and momentous element of this new cinematic presence of Scotland, I would argue, is to be found in a series of interesting and well-received films made in Scotland by predominantly Scottish filmmakers, including My Name is Joe (1998), Orphans (1999), Ratcatcher (1999), Morvern Callar and Sweet Sixteen (both 2002), Young Adam (2003), Ae Fond Kiss (2004), The Flying Scotsman and Red Road (both 2006), Hallam Foe (2007), Stone of Destiny (2008), and most recently Neds (2010), to name some of the more important ones. This 'new Scottish cinema' (Petrie 2000) has to be seen in the context of changes in the set-up of the film industry and funding structures. It is perhaps too early to talk of a viable and sustainable Scottish film industry (especially in the face of the recent crisis), but a start has been made with the foundation of institutions and organisations such as Scottish Screen, the Glasgow Film Fund/Office, the Screen Academy Scotland, Sigma Films, Filmitex Glasgow and Ecosse Films, as well as the involvement of several broadcasters in film production, such as Channel 4 (which co-produced both Shallow Grave and Trainspotting) and BBC Scotland.\footnote{In the context of my overall argument, it is significant to stress the British element in many of these funding bodies, including the major contribution to film funding made by Lottery money distributed through the UK Film Council, which was founded in 2000. It is in this sense that we have to speak of a devolved British cinema rather than an independent Scottish one.} In addition, Scottish-born actors have made an increasing impact on global cinema, following in the footsteps of the formerly lone Hollywood Scot Sean Connery: next to the most high-profile examples Ewan McGregor and Robert Carlyle, one would have to mention Robbie Coltrane, Billy Boyd, Ewen Bremner, Dougay Scott, James McAvoy, Kelly Macdonald and Tilda Swinton (an adopted Scot), who won an Oscar in 2008 for her role in Michael Clayton, as well as the belated film career of Billy Connolly. Perhaps even more important than that, several major filmmaking talents have emerged in Scotland in recent years, among them Lynne Ramsay, Peter Mullan, Richard Jobson, Paul Laverty and David Mackenzie. At the same time, a critical discourse on Scottish film has been developing, and this is clearly increasing in size and confidence at the present moment (cf. the list of secondary sources). These publications take their cue from the critical parameters signposted by McArthur et al. but also transcend and partly criticise them. The most significant contribution to this new critical discourse has certainly been made by Duncan Petrie, above all in his seminal Screenings Scotland (2000).\footnote{He reconsiders and updates his arguments in a contribution to Murray/Parley/Steneman's Scottish Cinema Now (Petrie 2009).} Taken together, all of this clearly constitutes a small-scale but noticeable boom for Scottish film that fits well with the broader cul-
tural Renaissance almost universally attested in Scotland in the 1990s and early 2000s. However, very few of the films mentioned were commercially successful in the way that *Trainspotting* managed to, so that the sustainability of this development remains open to question, especially with the amalgamation of various cultural funding bodies, including Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council, into the new agency Creative Scotland this year (which has just been established, to controversial reactions, after a prolonged and troubled planning period). In the following, I would like to briefly analyse three significant films from this recent revival and try to arrive at a few general conclusions about the 'new' Scottish film.


*Young Adam* is the second feature film of David Mackenzie, one of the key figures in contemporary Scottish film. It is also based on a Scottish novel of the same name by Alexander Trocchi. This fact is significant, because one of the characteristics of the new Scottish film is the prevalence of literary adaptations, linking it to the literary revival, and perhaps also trying to cash in on its prestige and success (cf. *Trainspotting, Morvern Callar, Hallam Foe* etc.). This also highlights the fact that recent Scottish films predominantly fall into the art house genre and often aim at the international festival circuit (*Orphans, My Name is Joe, Magdalene Sisters and Red Road* won various prizes), a development both celebrated and criticised by scholars (cf. e.g. Martin-Jones 2009). In *Young Adam's* case, this was deliberately exploited in the marketing campaign, which positioned it as the rediscovery of a forgotten counter-cultural classic from the 1960s era (not quite forgotten in literary and academic circles of course); significantly, though, not specifically a Scottish classic – Trocchi being an almost prototypical cosmopolitan writer. After the rather low-profile first film by Mackenzie (*The Last Great Wilderness*), this was clearly a more ambitious project, signalled in the casting of McGregor in the lead role4 and Tilda Swinton and Peter Mullan in the other main roles. There was also an attempt to market it as a crossover film between art film and the more popular genre of the (dark, erotic) thriller (cf. Meir 2009). Mackenzie is now part of Sigma Films, one of the most active and high-profile new production companies in Scotland that also initiated the Filmcity Glasgow project, a state-of-the-art production facility in the former Govan Town Hall where many of the important new Scottish films were at least partly produced. Furthermore, this company is behind the Advance Party project of three films to be made in Glasgow with the same characters and actors (in cooperation with Lars von Trier's Zentropa company), whose first film was the immensely interesting *Red Road* (next one coming up: *Rounding Up Donkeys* by Morag McKinnon). This highlights a significant new trend in Scotland of European cooperations and coproductions in film, particularly with Scandinavian countries, and Denmark/von Trier specifically (Filmcity was modelled on the Danish equivalent). Once more, the transnational frame of reference is clearly relevant here.

4 By then an international star, this was McGregor's first Scottish project since *Trainspotting*. It is interesting to note that his next Scottish film is again directed by Mackenzie: *Perfect Sense* (forthcoming 2011).

In terms of content or themes, this is the story of Joe, a failed writer, who works on a barge on the Union Canal travelling between Glasgow and Edinburgh, and is involved in the accidental death of his former girlfriend, for which somebody else is being brought to court and finally sentenced. He also has multiple affairs and sexual encounters (the fairly explicit depiction of which in the film were one of its more controversially discussed elements), especially with the owner of the barge, Ella (T. Swinton), but does not commit himself to any of the women. This throws up themes of morality, guilt and fate perhaps linked to Calvinist conceptions. I say "perhaps" because Trocchi and therefore the film are also clearly influenced by existentialism, for one, and the obviously 'Scottish' elements are pretty minimal in the film, including the canal and barge setting, which emphasises movement and travel, transcending boundaries rather than sense of place. Fluidity is also a metaphor frequently used for contemporary mixed or hybrid identities that comes to mind in this context. Incidentally, several commentators have remarked on this unfinished search for identity as a striking element in many contemporary Scottish films, often involving adolescent or young adult characters (such as in *Trainspotting, Orphans, Morvern Callar, Sweet Sixteen* and *Hallam Foe*) – it is certainly possible to relate this to a sense of post-devolution identity in flux or transformation, even if this is just one possible interpretation. Finally, the film also exemplifies the dark atmosphere and gritty 'realism' of many recent Scottish films, and invokes the theme of confused or damaged masculinity.


This is the third in the Glasgow trilogy of films by the Scottish screenwriter Paul Laverty and the eminent English independent director Ken Loach, which also includes *My Name is Joe* and *Sweet Sixteen*. Loach had already collaborated with Laverty on * Carla's Song* (1996), starring Robert Carlyle and also partly set in Glasgow, and was attracted to Scotland both by the funding the newly established organisations offered and by the general background of the deindustrialised West of Scotland, which offers ample material for Loach's social-realist and politically critical type of films. Indeed, the working-class urban setting has been one of the staples of Scottish cinema (cf. 'Clydesidism'), and the spirit of the Scottish founding father of the British documentary movement, John Grierson, is perhaps still felt to be more alive north of the border. Significantly, after the characteristically bleak and hard-hitting first two films in the cycle, which were both concerned with the struggles of people at the lowest end of the social scale – mostly white, (non)working-class males – Loach and Laverty move to a different cultural setting with this film, in terms of class, religion and ethnicity, if not place. It is concerned with the love affair of second-generation Pakistani DJ Casim and Catholic Irish music teacher Roisin, and with the problems this – unsurprisingly – creates. While the class issue and the question of subsistence are marginal here (both protagonists and their families are comparatively well-off), the problems of religious and ethnic identities move centre-stage. The filmmakers have stated that the film is a reaction to the impact of 9/11 on British multicultural communities, and the 'clash of civilisations' is highlighted from the beginning. The opening scene involves a speech made by Casim's younger sister in her school (where Roisin teaches), in which she passion-
ately defends her right to be "a Glaswegian Pakistani woman teenager who supports Glasgow Rangers in a Catholic school" (qtd. in Blandford 2007, 77). The question of contrasting, mixed and confused cultural identities is therefore central to the film, and it seems to advocate the necessity of constantly accommodating and negotiating these identities, but also of allowing for differences, ambiguities and contradictions. While the film has been seen as the closest Loach has come to the romance genre, the final verdict on whether contemporary society is able to incorporate these differences is far from settled at the end - and the title Ae Fond Kiss does not seem to hold out much hope for the lovers, if we read the first two lines of the eponymous Robert Burns poem ("Ae fond kiss, and then we sever / Ae farewle, and then for ever!")), even though the possibility of their coming together is left open in the film. By invoking the national poet, this title significantly inscribes the film not only in the discourse of romantic love but also in the debate about Scottishness today. Once more, the national is being challenged by the focus on local, ethnic and religious identities in the film, and the general precariousness of identity does not lend itself to nationalist boasting à la Braveheart. But perhaps this is precisely the strength of the film and part of the 'message': the contradictory and contingent nature of identities in the film, their 'constructedness' may also signify their ultimate 'reality' and significance for contemporary Scottish, British and European societies exactly in this hybrid form. This is underlined by the fact that the film is a British-German-Italian-Spanish coproduction, and by a look at user comments on the Internet Movie Database, where it is celebrated as a "truly British movie" and linked to other recent hybrid or 'ethnic' films such as East is East or Bend it Like Beckham. This new 'transnational' or 'European' Scottish film is another staple of the recent revival, if we think of films like The Magdalene Sisters, Skagerrak or Withnail Wants to Kill Himself, but also the already mentioned Bollywood films and more recent 'multicultural' Scottish films like Nina's Heavenly Delights.


The previous two films had a considerable measure of critical but rather less commercial success - highlighting one of the key points of discussion in Scottish film criticism recently: the vexed position of contemporary Scottish film in between the cultural and the industrial/economic horizon (Petrie 2007). This problem is especially significant for a small national cinema, it seems (even though similar problems are discussed in the context of British film as a whole, usually referring to English film). Therefore, my last case study will be a different type of film of which several examples have appeared in the past few years in Scotland: the 'mainstream' film that aims at the perceived taste of a broader audience and therefore also more of 'big box-office success, rather than the critics and festivals - "Bill Forsyth rather than Bill Douglas" in the words of John Caughie. From my list, probably AfterLife, Dear Frankie, The Fly-5

5 It is also interesting to note that the film was being advertised in the German version (with the title Just a Kiss) with the Union Jack on the cover as a work by "der große britische Regisseur Ken Loach" (DVD cover).

6 This quote is from a personal conversation with Caughie at Glasgow University on 14 May 2008.

ing Scotsman, Nina's Heavenly Delights and Stone of Destiny fall most clearly into this segment, but there have been many more in now narrowly delineated genres (horror/SF, gangster film etc., cf. Martin-Jones 2009). Stone of Destiny is this inexplicably rare thing in recent Scottish cinema, a historical film highlighting important or forgotten events of Scottish history and politics, in this case the stealing (or 'recovering') of the Stone of Scone from Westminster Abbey by a group of students in the 1950s. The film is based on the book by one of the students, Ian Hamilton, published in the early 1990s - he also cooperated with the film crew and has a cameo in the film. This was obviously a hugely symbolic act in the 1950s, even though the Stone was eventually brought back to England and only returned by the Conservative government in 1996 in a futile last-minute attempt to bolster their rapidly vanishing vote in Scotland.

One of the merits of the film is the rediscovery of the debates surrounding possible Scottish autonomy in the immediate post-war years, a period that is still seen as predominantly unionist by many. In fact, this is probably the most openly nationalistic film since Braveheart, and again it is an American or rather British-Canadian production, starring some well-known Scottish actors (Carlisle, Boyd) but not in the main roles. There is a certain irony in the fact that these days this type of national film is best done by American or global coproductions, it seems (even though there was Scottish funding for the film). There is a scene towards the end of the film when the Stone is recovered by the students from a field where they had hidden it earlier, in which they encounter a group of 'travelers' with whom they bond in a sort of 'unity in adversity' spirit. This 'wretched of the earth' discourse encapsulates the nationalist ideology of the film quite well, but incidentally also highlights one of the problems of these types of film in general, and this one in particular: the slightly over-the-top melodrama lays bare the shortcomings of the script and the rather low production value of this movie, I would argue. With a view to such deficiencies, McArthur has criticised the increasingly formulaic character of many recent Scottish films, which he blames on the dominance of the industrial model of filmmaking encouraged by Scottish Screen and its funding initiatives such as Movie Makers (McArthur 2009). Some see these developments as indicative of the precarious state of the Scottish film 'industry' in general: Robert Carlyle commented at the 2008 BAFTA Scotland awards: "We don't have a film industry here. [...] An industry is something that feeds itself and grows. We make one film every ten years that gets any kind of notice. You can't call that an industry." (qtd. in the Introduction to Murray 2009, vii) This illustrates the various problems that still (or perhaps now even more than in 2008) beset filmmakers in Scotland. It will be interesting to see whether Creative Scotland will make a (positive) difference. In the case of Stone of Destiny, the artistic problems were compounded by the fact that it was a commercial disaster - in stark contrast to a film like Braveheart.

7 Cf. for example the beginning of the film, in which we see a Highland panorama accompanied by bagpipe music, reminiscent of the beginning of Braveheart (only that here it is Scottish rather than Irish bagpipes).

8 In the past few years, there have been several high-profile Scottish film projects that failed, among them an adaptation of James Hogg's Memoirs of a Justified Sinner, and a film project involving veteran director Nicolas Roeg.
6. Conclusion

After these case studies, let me briefly offer some general observations on post-devolution Scottish film. There can hardly be any doubt that the past ten to fifteen years have seen an unprecedented number of high-quality films made in Scotland, many of which have achieved both critical and (to an unequal extent) commercial success. In this light, it is certainly justified to speak of a new Scottish film emerging in the 1990s and maturing in the 2000s. As we have seen, however, it cannot be properly understood in an exclusively Scottish context. We may call it 'devolved' British cinema, since the British context is still vital for resources as well as consumption, and continues to provide the political framework more generally. Duncan Petrie writes in the reassessment of his Screening Scotland:

> Scottish cinema, like the Scottish nation, remains a devolved rather than an independent entity, embedded within the larger overarching British context and therefore subject to the same economic, political and ideological forces shaping the latter. (Petrie 2009, 154)

Like the Scottish nation post-devolution (for which the use of 'Scotland' in the plural has been suggested), the new Scottish film is characterized by a variety and vitality that defies easy categorisation, clearly leaving behind old stereotypes and clichés à la Scotch Reels. There is a strong independent and artistic spirit to be felt in many of these films, and they frequently deal with the dilemmas of fluid, developing, damaged or ambiguous identities, which can be related to the in-between state of the Scottish nation after Devolution. Many of these films are stylistically innovative and even daring, taking their inspiration more from European (particularly Scandinavian) art cinema and independent American filmmakers than from English/British models. In that sense it is a small transnational cinema. This is not to say that all tradition has been left behind – Bill Douglas being frequently mentioned as an important influence. He was also concerned with one of the abiding themes of Scottish culture (seen also very strongly in the literary field): childhood and growing up. This is clearly among the central concerns of the new Scottish film, and can be linked to the 'identity in flux' idea, often crystallised in rather 'weird' or at least outsider protagonists, and sometimes in the longing for – or actual – escape. There is also, finally, a conspicuously dark streak to the Scottish (cinematic) imagination, be it in a Gothic vein (cf. Jekyll and Hyde etc.), a Calvinism-inspired self-loathing and depression, or outbreaks of (usually made and drink-induced) violence. This has been criticised as debilitating for Scottish identity more generally – a view some of these films seem to actively invite – but can also be interpreted as a productive engagement with serious and difficult problems which should not be shunned and need to be represented (Petrie 2006a). In any case, judging from the many innovative, surprising, thought-provoking and exhilarating works of art that collectively make up the new Scottish film, Scotland can be proud of its creative potential – Creative Scotland indeed, but not necessarily in the sense of the new official agency, and certainly not outside the broader British, European and global context.

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Films

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Comfort and Joy (UK 1984, dir. + sc. Bill Forsyth).
Dear Frankie (UK 2004, dir. Shona Auerbach, sc. Andrea Gibb).
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My Childhood/My Ain Folk/My Way Home (UK 1972/73/78, dir. + sc. Bill Douglas).
Neds (UK/Italy 2010, dir. + sc. Peter Mullan).
Orphans (UK 1999, dir. + sc. Peter Mullan).
Ratcatcher (UK 1999, dir. + sc. Lynne Ramsay).
That Sinking Feeling (UK 1979, dir. + sc. Bill Forsyth).
Young Adam (UK/Fr/Us 2003, dir. + sc. David Mackenzie).

It is important to note that in official listings such as the Internet Movie Database there is no production country called Scotland, only UK.
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