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## **“And you’ve heard of ancient glories both renowned in song and story”<sup>1</sup> – the role of folklore in the formation of Scottish identity and its influence on the creation of Scotland as a brand**

What distinguishes Scotland from other European countries is that its nation is not synonymous with the state. With the Act of Union signed in 1707 the fate of Scotland as a part of Great Britain was irrevocably sealed. Long before that, the identity of the Scottish people had been based on the memories of the ancient past and the dreams of the equally glorious future prospects. Concurrently, the Scots had to develop other points of reference as far as identity was concerned. Since the political situation of the country was unstable and the isolation of the Highlands and Islands was not conducive to the creation of a strong national identity, it was necessary to base it on the regional or even local heritage. This article deals specifically with the role of one aspect of heritage, namely folklore, as it influenced the mental integrity of the inhabitants of the Scottish Highlands and the Orkney Islands.

Shortly after Scotland emerged as a country, it had to face the territorial ambitions of England. A significant part of Scottish heritage is woven around the eulogized victorious Scottish War for Independence. The loss thereof was mythologized to even a greater extent, and the myth involves both Highlands and Lowlands. The Orkney Islands, in turn, experienced a far greater turmoil, as the allegiance of the earldom shifted between Norway and Scotland, until it was finally pawned to the latter in 1468.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the Orcadians developed a locally based identity, generously seasoned with Norse and Celtic influences, to create a rich *mélange*.

Before attempting the analysis of the particular aspects of folklore, it seems worthwhile to ponder the question of what constitutes folklore. Several aspects appear to be of greatest import, namely the interaction of man and the natural world, which generates customs, prejudices and superstitions. Although the ancestry belongs more to the field of heritage in general, the particular structure of the ancient familial ties in Scotland finds its reflection in folklore as well, as it pervaded the daily life of the people. And finally there is mythology, in the case of Orkney largely based

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<sup>1</sup> The Corries, *A Scottish Holiday*, <http://www.lyricsvip.com/The-Corries/A-Scottish-Holiday-Lyrics.html>.

<sup>2</sup> William Thomson, *The New History of Orkney*, Birlin, Edinburgh, 2008, p. 189.

on *Orkneyinga Saga*, and in the Highlands the function of mythology is performed by the legend of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobites. These factors may no longer be of paramount importance to the contemporary Scotsmen, yet in the course of time they formed an ever-growing residue that excited the imagination of the outsiders and resulted first in Scotomania, and then in the creation of "Scotland the Brand".

The Scotland of yore appears to have been more than averagely festered with malicious or benign witches of both sexes, with the balance slightly more tilted towards females. If sufficiently placated, they could cure disease or tamper with winds to ensure favourable weather, but more often than not they were the source of trouble, surreptitiously intercepting milk from the cows or souring the cream by dint of unhallowed means, and appropriating the benefits of the household.<sup>3</sup> If even equipping the cattle with charms and herbs possessing evil-repellent properties failed, both in Orkney and in the Highlands there was one sure means of regaining the goods: the urine of an affected animal was placed in a corked bottle, which deprived the witch from the ability to urinate. Inevitably, the culprit revealed herself and the excruciating pain compelled her to take off the charm.<sup>4</sup> At some point the rate of similar incidents was so high that every person above twelve years of age had to swear an oath denouncing witchcraft.<sup>5</sup> That convenient way of attributing all sorts of unforeseen failures and accidents to the 'evil eye' of a witch in Orkney in particular acquired a serious turn when during witch trials innocent women were burnt at stake, since the frenzied people required very little in a way of evidence. These grim superstitions became such an important part of the Scottish folklore that several books were written on the subject, among others Walter Scott's *Letters of Witchcraft and Demonology* (1830).

Another extraordinary aspect of the life in Scotland in the past was a profusion of seers, persons allegedly gifted with 'a second sight', or the ability to predict the future as well as recounting events occurring in a very distant place. Unfortunately, it was nearly always reduced to the skill of foretelling the death of a person in question. The gift was a great burden to the one who possessed it and probably was considered more a curse than a blessing, for though he or she was respected by the community, they were feared and shunned, as they were usually the bearers of bad tidings.<sup>6</sup> The seers could also offer advice on whether the day when a particular event was to take place was auspicious or not, a belief inherited from the ancient Celts.<sup>7</sup>

The recognition of the supernatural and the uncanny in the surrounding world presented the opportunity to victimize a concrete embodiment of the alleged evil powers, thus providing a safety valve for the community. The presence of an augurer in nearly every village allowed the people a glimpse into the future, a precious gift in

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<sup>3</sup> Ernest Marwick, *The Folklore of Orkney and Shetland*, Batsford, London 1986, pp. 51-52.

<sup>4</sup> Anne Ross, *The Folklore of the Scottish Highlands*, Rowman and Littlefield, Totowa, 1975, p. 73.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> A. Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

the violent and unpredictable world. Another way of taming the wayward elemental forces and introducing some order adjusted to the knowledge and consciousness of the people was to populate the hills and the body of waters with creatures that, while not being humans, were endowed with human-like mentality. That mental operation forms a convenient basis for familiarizing and structuring the alien and the unknown by projecting onto it the features that could be, if not entirely understood, at least related to. The maritime example are selkies, or half-humans, half-seals, which according to tradition inhabit the depths of the seas washing the shores of Scotland. The sea-folk once in a while cast off their grey skins and dance on the beach in the form of beautiful men and women. Probably the male conviction of the capricious and intractable female nature wove a motif recurring in a plethora of stories: a young man, enraptured with the beauty of a seal-maiden, steals her skin, thus imprisoning her on solid ground. She becomes his wife and grows accustomed to the new life, however, at the first opportunity she regains her skin and without a moment’s hesitation abandons both the husband and children and returns to the sea.<sup>8</sup> A version offers their children a choice between the sea and the land.

Away from the shore did not, however, mean away from trouble. Hills and mountains were in the possession of trolls and fairies. Trolls had a penchant for music which proved the undoing of many a fiddler who, spirited away to the trolls’ haven for an evening revelry, returned to the world of the living only to realize that a quarter of a century elapsed.<sup>9</sup> To step into a ‘fairy ring’, or a circular area of grassland with very short, worsted grass, was to court disaster. Fairies supposedly held their saturnalia there and readily punished any daring trespasser.<sup>10</sup>

The numerous pagan Celtic festivals were cultivated for generations after the Christianization of Scotland and survived in the vestigial form until the present day, still attractive for both contemporary Scotsmen and foreign enthusiasts of the Celtic culture. Of all the major and less important feast days, the following three are particularly worthwhile to be mentioned: *Beltain*, *Lughnasa* and *Samhain*, as they hold the charm of novelty for the representatives of the Continental culture.<sup>11</sup> *Beltain* was observed on the first of May and involved food offerings aimed at ensuring the safety of the cattle and abundance of crops. *Lughnasa* was originally a celebration of the pagan god Lugh and was incorporated into the Christian tradition as a feast observed at the beginning of the harvest. Initially, it was connected with the corn crop, later it was extended to potatoes as well. As the harvest time marked the termination of the period of semi-starvation, not unusual in the Highlands after the winter provisions were depleted, it occasioned a lot of joy and jubilation. *Samhain*, the most popular, gradually becoming international, and commonly known as Hallowe’en, was in its vernacular form a sombre and sinister occasion, the polar opposite of what it morphed into as a result of commercialization. On the night of the first of November it was believed the earth was peopled with ghosts,

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<sup>8</sup> E. Marwick, op. cit., pp. 27–28.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>11</sup> A. Ross, op. cit., p. 134.

demons and other supernatural beings.<sup>12</sup> The Otherworld and the everyday world overlapped and druids would disguise themselves in order not to be recognized by the formidable apparitions.

Through the analysis of customs associated with the most frequent celebrations, those accompanying birth and death, it can be inferred that, quite paradoxically, the first was a source of sorrow, the other of rejoicing. Even if the delivery was successful, the period afterwards was precarious both for the mother and the child. The greatest danger was that of spiriting away the baby and substituting it for a changeling by fairies or trolls.<sup>13</sup> That magical explanation accounted for all sorts of handicaps, deformations and probably even cot death. In both Protestant and Catholic communities it was vital to christen the new-born promptly, and it was considered unlucky if the period extended beyond one year. Also, the mother was considered unclean until she was 'churched' or 'kirked', meaning a participation in the religious service.<sup>14</sup> If, however, the child did not live long enough to be given the sacrament, the Orcadians resorted to various means to ensure the peace of its soul. A name was written on a piece of paper and placed in the coffin, and if that was neglected, the spirit of the child could appear and demand to be given a name.<sup>15</sup> Otherwise, identity-less, it was not allowed to rest in peace.

Important as it was to endow a newcomer into the world with a token of identity, even greater care was taken after death to deprive of it the one who passed away. Quite simply, since the moment of death, the name of the person ceased to be used.<sup>16</sup> He or she was referred to by means of inventive circumlocutions: 'the thing that's away', 'him that was taken' and the like. The reason was the residual fear of the departed one's haunting the relatives and friends. The tradition of a wake, or a funeral reception, can evoke mixed feelings. The name comes not, as it may appear on the surface, from the actual hope of waking the dead with a noisy party, but from the need to keep vigil, or watch (corrupted into wake), over the body until it was buried.<sup>17</sup> The wake did not typically denote a dolorous congregation mourning the parting, but quite the opposite, it promised an occasion for drinking whisky and ale, and even playing cards or games and is one of the better known former Celtic traditions.

One of the first associations with Scotland for an average person is the tribal organization of the people – the clans. It is generally viewed as a symbol of Scottish identity and after the symbolic demise of the clan system following the defeat of the Jacobite army by the British troops, it acquired a tinge of mystical romanticism. One frequent misconception is that the clan system was a dominant social structure in all the regions of Scotland, whereas, much as the family ties were valued elsewhere, the strictly tribal organization concerned only the Highlands. In Orkney the loyalty was due to the earl or earls (in the case of co-rule) and later to the laird, whereas

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 151–152.

<sup>13</sup> E. Marwick, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>14</sup> A. Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 110–111.

<sup>15</sup> E. Marwick, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>17</sup> A. Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

the social structure of Lowlands of Scotland was characterized by extended families. While the Orcadians traced their origins to the mythical Norse tribes as recounted in *Orkneyinga Saga*, the Highland clans claimed to have their roots in Ireland and some in the kingdom of Dalriada in the late fifth century.<sup>18</sup> The paramount role of ancestry was still visible until recent times, when some of the oldest members of a community could enumerate the names of the forebears of a given family down to several generations back.

The clan as a social unit did not correspond with the later imposed feudal system. If the two happened to be at variance, the loyalty of the clansmen was first to the chief and only secondly to the feudal lord, and the obedience was rather difficult to enforce, as some of the communities lived in secluded areas.<sup>19</sup> For that reason the infamous interclan fights were frequent and anything more permanent than short-term alliances was virtually unattainable. The clan system has invariably fascinated generations of Scoto-enthusiasts, as it did not stem from a feudal dependence between a sovereign and his subject, but rather seemed to resemble familial bonds between a parent and his children serving him out of their free will. Although the members of a particular clan traced their origins to a common, often legendary, ancestor,<sup>20</sup> not all clansmen were blood-related. The chief was sometimes willing to recruit new followers from among ‘broken men’. They were either people whose clan was for some reason dissolved or renegades and outlaws looking for a powerful protector.<sup>21</sup> Another useful method of tightening the bonds between given households was the institution of fosterage, practised at length by the Celts in general. Typically, the son of a chief was brought up by an inferior kinsman, which at once enhanced the position of his foster-brother and taught the young chief-to-be respect for his subordinates.<sup>22</sup>

The romanticized image of the elevated and mysterious clan system was perpetuated by world-famous classics such as Walter Scott’s *Waverley*. However, when it came to interclan relations, the reality was a little grim. In case of a military necessity the chief could force his dependents into obedience by threatening to evict them or starve their families. Another myth to be dispelled is the popular conviction that the different clans distinguished themselves and were recognized during a battle by their garish tartans. In fact, especially in the earlier days of clanship, the variety of natural dyes was not great, so that the clans demonstrated their identity by means of badges, usually a plant available in the vicinity of the clan territory or an animal possessing some desirable, magical properties.<sup>23</sup> The problem of the kilt will be elaborated on in the last part of the present article.

To fulfil the demand for a mythology or national epic, which was required to assert the identity of the Scotsmen, James MacPherson published *The Poems of*

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> A. Ross, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Smout, *A History of the Scottish People. 1560–1830*, The Chaucer Press, Buncraig, 1973, p. 313.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 322.

<sup>23</sup> A. Ross, op. cit., p. 25.

*Ossian*, purportedly translated by him from an original Gaelic source, now generally believed to be based on folk tales adapted and developed by the writer. In the case of Orkney, to satisfy the quest for identity, an increasingly popular theme since the nineteenth century, the source was already there and it only required a skilled translator to collect and render into English the separate parts written circa 1200 A.D. into what was called *Orkneyinga Saga*. The first English translation appeared in 1873 and the latest one came out in 1978<sup>24</sup>, which confirms the growing demand for discovering roots and the need for getting acquainted with the local heritage. Simon Hall underscores the significance of the work in creating the local identity of the islands:

The names chosen for the text by each translator, or pair of translators, follow Anderson's [the first translator] lead – *The Orkneyinga Saga* – and suggest a certain unity, as well as stressing the insular, Orkney provenance of the material of the story. This impression of unity, and the concept of the text's belonging to Orkney – the sense of *Orkneyinga Saga's* existence as a great Orcadian monolith – is in actual fact very much a Victorian construct.<sup>25</sup>

In fact, the original title was the *Saga (or Sagas) of the Earls*, which reflects the multiple sources available as well as the fact that the work comprises the accounts of the rule of Orkney-based leaders rather than the history of Orkney as a nation. "In this sense the saga might be viewed as the first in a line of self-conscious, identity-making 'Orkney Anthologies'".<sup>26</sup> The identity-shaping modelling of the Orkney heritage finds its continuation in the literary activity of Ernest Marwick and George Mackay Brown in the twentieth century.

The part of Scottish history romanticized and mythologized to the largest extent and vividly impressed on the minds of tourists and sympathizers concerns the eighteenth century and the Jacobite risings. The Scottish fight for independence, so famously crowned with success at Bannockburn in 1314, excites the imagination of antiquarians. Probably the most appealing aspect of the Jacobite risings was that they all failed to achieve anything more than atrocious repercussions. Ironically, only after the decimating carnage at Drumossie Moor, known as the battle of Culloden in 1746, when the demise of the Highland clan system was sealed, the myth of the Highlander emerged and has gradually evolved into the symbol of Scotland.<sup>27</sup> Before that, the mountaineers were in the imagination of the Lowlanders or Englishmen synonymous with uncouth, rugged peasants and their use of the Gaelic language was a sign of utter backwardness.

The last Jacobite rising indubitably emphasized many admirable qualities of the hitherto little known mountain-dwellers, like incredible stamina, perseverance and ferocity during a battle. The undeniable fact is that Prince Charles Edward Stuart very nearly reached London with an army whose large part consisted of undisciplined, almost untrained semi-savages. The most substantial food for imagination is, however, the fact that during the six months that the Prince was on

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<sup>24</sup> Simon Hall, *The History of Orkney Literature*, Birlin, Edinburgh, 2010, p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

<sup>26</sup> S. Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup> T. Smout, *op. cit.*, pp. 322–323.

the run in the Highlands and Islands, nobody betrayed him in spite of an exorbitant prize set for divulging his whereabouts. After the analysis of the available sources, a conclusion can be drawn that the man, undeserving as he was, already in 1740s was a phenomenon, a human receptacle onto which his followers projected the most desirable qualities attributed to the ‘Chief of chiefs’, as the Stuart monarchs were sometimes titled. As it sometimes befalls to individuals for some reasons elevated to the pedestal of leadership or influence, he failed to cope with the role assigned to him as a ‘product’ of the eighteenth century Scottish culture. Nevertheless, the myth stood its ground and nowadays innumerable painted, printed and engraved countenances of the Stuart Prince gaze at the bewildered tourists from every shop window and adorn the packages of Scottish exported goods, such as fudges and shortbread.

Scotland is a country whose name immediately brings to mind a smorgasbord of associations, from culinary ones, like haggis, through historical ones, like the Stuarts, to sport-related, for example the Celtic Football Club. Owing to its much-touted heritage, people around the world take pride in being of Scottish descent. As tourism is one of the main sources of the Scottish revenue and constitutes a major part of many Scotsmen’s income, it is only natural that Scotland itself should be promoted just like any other brand.

As it was mentioned before, Walter Scott is one of the first influential artists who participated in reinventing Scotland to fit into the still-lingering romantic spirit of Great Britain in the initial decades of the nineteenth century. In his literary career, Scotland was his principal subject matter and one can trace a silhouette of a ‘noble savage’ in the creation of many of his Scottish characters. In terms of references to Scotland, his purpose was most certainly what is now called ‘edutainment’. The impact on his readership was aptly summarized by John Newman:

[...] stimulating their mental thirst, feeding their hopes, setting before them visions, which, when once seen, are not easily forgotten, and silently indoctrinating them with nobler ideas, which might afterwards be appealed to as first principles.<sup>28</sup>

Apart from that, Scott aimed at establishing a better relationship between the English and the Scots when the latter were perceived as alien and frequently approached with hostility. Thus, he tamed for his English readers the wild and menacing Highlander and enclosed him in a glass ball of a romantic legend, where he remained henceforth.

He is responsible for organizing the first extensive pro-Scottish propaganda by directing the visit of King George IV to Scotland in 1822. The occasion was a pageant of ‘Scottishness’ which at times acquired grotesque traits with the good-naturedly gullible monarch convinced that since he related to Bonnie Prince Charlie, he was in fact a Stuart heir, therefore, by a stretch of the imagination, the King of Scotland and possibly even a Highlander. He would have doubtless offended many a stalwart nationalist by the act of complacently donning a Highland garb, had it not been for the fact that “tartan was ‘made’ for the modern world in the relatively short time

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<sup>28</sup> John Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, ed. Meyer Abrams, The Norton Anthology of British Literature, v.2. Norton & Company, London, 1993, p. 984.

between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century."<sup>29</sup> Ironically, before the demise of the clans it had not been regarded as a particular symbol of Highland identity, let alone the entire Scottish nation. The image of a sublimely mountainous and tartan-paved Scotland was perpetuated by another highly influential British personage, Queen Victoria, whence it spread all over the British Empire. Henceforth, the elites took to wearing the kilt, originally an attire of a scorned and dreaded 'alien', on special occasions.

At present, the kilt possesses unequivocal significance for the Scotsmen. On one hand it is still an element of a formal male dress, on the other hand, in its more vivid variant, it girds the loins of football supporters and was even adapted by the punk subculture. Thus, it can be surmised that some values previously associated with the tartan survived in the vestigial form. In the case of sports fans, it represents loyalty to and self-identification with a larger social unit representing certain principles and attitudes. For the latter group the kilt may symbolize nonconformism, rebellion and intentional alienation.

Apart from the kilt, the haggis (a culinary feat of dubious palatal appeal) and the unfortunate Bonnie Prince Charlie, the three key heritage icons of Scotland are Edinburgh Castle, Bannockburn and Culloden.<sup>30</sup> These 'terrains of power'<sup>31</sup>, in the political and historical sense, ubiquitous on shortbread tins, mugs and all sorts of tacky souvenirs, cause the visitors to lose sight of the people who constitute the country and the cultural products are derivatives of their activity rather than the other way round. The sublimely desolate landscapes with "people airbrushed out"<sup>32</sup>, which are instantly associated with Scotland, were popularized by the works of the Victorian artist, Landseer.

The myth of Tartanry, a term denoting the kitsch elements in the popular Scottish culture, is perpetuated by movies which rank high on the list of Scotland-set favourites. These are, among others, *Braveheart*, *Rob Roy* and *Highlander*. All of them, set in different epochs and varying in terms of the approach towards the issue of the Scottish identity, exploit the theme of belligerent kilted Highlanders, including William Wallace, the hero of *Braveheart*, who was in fact a Lowlander and would not normally wear a kilt. The paraphernalia associated with Scotland such as kilts, bagpipes, clans, noble savages and fierce battles are abundantly employed in all three productions and contribute to the establishment of Scotland the Brand. Fortunately, there is another tendency, elaborated by Sarah Neely:

Historically, Scottish film criticism expressed an urgency for debunking the myths of Tartanry and Kailyard.[...] films with Scotland as their subject matter were scrutinised for these types of representations; the depiction of Scotland was seen as limited to

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<sup>29</sup> David McCrone, Angela Morris, Richard Kiely, *Scotland – the Brand. The Making of Scottish Heritage*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1995, p. 51.

<sup>30</sup> D. McCrone, A. Morris, R. Kiely, op. cit., p. 183.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>32</sup> D. McCrone, A. Morris, R. Kiely, op. cit., p. 59.



narratives of fantasy, more often projected from outside the country rather than from within.<sup>33</sup>

A notable example of playing with the convention of the Scottish myth is an award-winner, *The Last King of Scotland*. The title refers to the military leader and President of Uganda, Idi Amin Dada, who officially nominated himself the Uncrowned King of Scotland. In the movie, the dictator explains his predilection for that particular country, claiming that its inhabitants are renowned for courage and generosity. The scene in which the kilted Amin listens to the African rendition of the folk song *Loch Lomond* shows a stark contrast between the qualities the President admires in the Scotsmen and the ones he effectuates during his regime.

The famous Scottish movie *Trainspotting*, based on the novel by Irvine Welsh of the same title, moves away from portraying what is considered a ‘Scottish theme’. The story is set in Edinburgh and tackles the issues that could be set practically against any other modern background, thus breaking with the stereotypical image of Scottish products maintaining the internationally recognizable tartan-based representation of the Scottish Brand.

It is difficult to establish the degree of mutual influence between the identity of the people and the benefit (or burden) of their heritage. Are they petrified within the immalleable boundaries of the image of Scotland-the-Brand? Or do they rebound? It seems legitimate to fortify the reflective questions with yet another one, after David McCrone: “When people are defined as tourist attractions, do they not tend to relate to each other by way of commercially enforced stereotypes of themselves? How much of a meaningful identity do people have beyond that which is required by the touristic framework?”<sup>34</sup>

Impossible as it is to answer the questions with such a degree of certainty as to dispel all doubts, it can be noted that in this period marked by rampant globalization, the identity becomes at once a very fluctuating term and, owing to the vacillating nature of virtually everything, a covetable quality promising, if deceptively, stability and fulcrum. Even if it is created or imposed externally, it furnishes individuals with a point of reference and provides a sense of continuity with the putative collective heritage, genuine or faked, of their ancestors. If it is regarded as the Jungian collective unconscious, from that angle it belongs to all of us, embodying as much the ideals and hankerings of the people from the past as the present generations of any cultural background, thus allowing for modification and updating.

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<sup>33</sup> Sarah Neely, *Contemporary Scottish cinema*, p. 2 (152). <https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/1677/3/contemporary%20scottish%20cinema.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> D. McCrone, A. Morris, R. Kiely, op. cit., p. 9.

## **„Faceci w spódnicach i potwór z Loch Ness”. Rola lokalnej tradycji i folkloru w kształtowaniu się tożsamości współczesnych Szkotów oraz „szkockiego mitu”, czyli fenomenu Szkocji jako marki**

### **Streszczenie**

Artykuł podejmuje kwestię wpływu folkloru i lokalnej tradycji kulturowej na kształtowanie się tożsamości Szkotów zamieszkałych w górach oraz na wyspach. Poddaje analizie wspomniane wyżej wpływy z punktu widzenia ich udziału w procesie tworzenia fenomenu Szkocji jako marki. Folklor i dziedzictwo kulturowe Szkocji są bowiem obecnie „znakiem handlowym” tego kraju, który, począwszy od dziewiętnastego wieku, przyciąga rzesze turystów, gdyż na fali wzrastającej fascynacji Celtami wyewoluował w ikonę popularnej kultury. W artykule zostały omówione trzy elementy folkloru. Pierwszym jest interakcja człowieka z naturą, która generuje zwyczaje i przesady mające cel eksplikatywny w stosunku do często niezrozumiałej otaczającej rzeczywistości. Drugi to system klanowy, który jest znanym na całym świecie składnikiem dziedzictwa kulturowego Szkocji. Ostatnim jest mitologia, a ściślej źródła „szkockiego mitu”, przede wszystkim *Orkneyinga Saga* oraz zmitologizowana historia powstań jakobickich. Artykuł pokazuje w jakim stopniu i formie mity te zostały zasymilowane przez przemysł turystyczny. Podejmuje również kwestię wpływu, jaki ów „szkocki mit”, rozpowszechniony przez kulturę masową, wywiera na tożsamość współczesnych Szkotów. W konkluzji zawarty jest wniosek, że szkockie dziedzictwo kulturowe, nawet w formie skomercjalizowanej i strywializowanej, zapewnia punkt oparcia w czasach kryzysu tożsamości.

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