

## Abstracts

### **Jean-François Baillon, Université Bordeaux Montaigne: “Poetics / Politics of Insularity in Scottish Cinema: Ben Sharrock’s Limbo (2020)”**

#### **Nicolas Bourguès, Université Paris Nanterre: ‘The Church Patronage (Scotland) Act of 1711 and its consequences: 18th- and 19th-century dissenting voices’**

Lay patronage had been abolished in 1690, but the Church Patronage Act of 1711 restored the right of landowners and town councils to appoint ministers in parishes, thus challenging the right of congregations to do so. While the 1711 Act was rescinded in 1874, a series of debates and disagreements stemmed from it, giving rise to the expression of dissenting voices within the Church of Scotland. A First Secession, with leading figures such as ministers William Wilson (1690-1741) and Alexander Moncrieff (1695-1761), happened in 1733, followed twenty-eight later by a Second Secession, initiated by the Scottish minister Thomas Gillespie (1708-1774), which revealed theological differences between the Moderates and Evangelicals. Tensions culminated with the Great Disruption of 1843, which pitted the Church of Scotland against the British government over the matter of which body would control clerical positions. This presentation will focus on the arguments used by the several ministers involved to justify their respective positions in order to analyse how they conceived of the religious and political foundations of the Church and Scotland and the way it should operate, thus shedding light on the dynamics which drove the institution at that time.

#### **Edwige Camp-Pietrain, Université de Valenciennes: ‘Republican ideas in Scotland : dissonant voices in the mainstream independence movement?’**

The Scottish National Party, which has been the main party calling for Scotland’s independence for almost a century, has always been very cautious about the future head of the new state. Many members would like to seize the opportunity to create a Republic. However as the party came to power from 2007 thanks to devolved institutions and was allowed to hold a lawful referendum on independence in 2014, it advocated continuity, *ie* a constitutional monarchy. Indeed as the monarchy is still supported by a narrow majority in Scotland, the party refrained from opening up another controversial debate. Nevertheless SNP politicians use different means to voice their reluctance. Besides, many pro-independence activists are republican, be they members of smaller parties (such as the Greens) or isolated figures. In 2022 the issue came to the fore as Queen Elizabeth II was succeeded by her son Charles III and journalists in particular reckoned that the new monarch might not arouse the same attachment.

This paper will focus on republicanism within the two parties in power, the SNP and the Greens (to a lesser extent), parties that cannot ignore public opinion. Leaflets, policy documents, parliamentary debates, polls and surveys will be analysed. The aim is to try and assess whether it can reasonably be argued that such ideas remain dissonant voices.

#### **Charlotte Gould, Université Paris Nanterre: ‘Glasgow, Britain’s first European City of Culture: Scottish cultural identity, British regeneration policy, European opportunity’**

The urban shift from heavy industry to the creative industries is a sensitive issue, and by no means one unique to Scotland’s largest city, Glasgow, but the vibrancy of the dear green place’s art scene, its self-sufficiency and its inventive territorialisation of derelict post-industrial spaces in many ways make it a case apart. This vibrant art scene was identified in the 1980s by the United Kingdom’s then tory government as a potential fertile ground for a successful process of cultural regeneration. The reasons why the Thatcher government decided to push Glasgow’s bid to become the first European City of Culture to ever be

selected on British soil, are also the reasons why groups of artists, poets, and writers became vocal in their opposition to the prestigious label. We will see how an artist-run gallery like Transmission, or a group called Workers City – formed specifically to challenge the new branding of the area near Trongate as “Merchant City” – opposed what they saw as the instrumentalisation of Glasgow’s identity for the benefit of a culture of capital (rather than simply as a capital of culture).

**Lucien Grillet, Université de Rouen: ‘William Cleland (v. 1661-1689) et les *Cameronians* (1679-1968). Une culture politique et militaire au cœur de l’identité écossaise ?’**

« *Fain would I know (if beasts have any reason)*

*If falcons killing eagles do commit a treason ? »*

Cet extrait d’un poème du *cameronian* William Cleland rappelle la violence des relations entre les autorités de la dynastie Stuart et une partie des sujets écossais dans les dernières décennies du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Cleland lui même est victime de ces violences, mourant lors de la bataille de Dunkeld en août 1689, espérant permettre ainsi le retour d’un monarque fidèle au *National Covenant* dans les Îles britanniques.

Extrêmement minoritaire, le mouvement des *Cameronians* né dans le dernier tiers du dix-septième siècle est pourtant un acteur significatif de l’histoire politique écossaise à la charnière entre le règne du dernier Stuart et celui de Guillaume d’Orange. Se voulant les héritiers du mouvement *covenanter*, les *Cameronians* sont souvent désignés par leurs ennemis comme par des auteurs postérieurs, comme des « fanatiques ». Ils auraient mis en péril l’équilibre politique et social de l’Écosse, alors que paradoxalement, ils ont constitué le premier régiment écossais à servir la monarchie orangiste.

Ce dernier aspect est rarement associé à ces *covenanters* dont l’identité politico-religieuse radicale s’est muée en identité militaire. De plus, l’héritage culturel des *Cameronians* dépasse l’époque moderne puisque, jusqu’à la dissolution du régiment en 1968, le *Cameronian Regiment* a véhiculé de nombreuses références au mouvement *cameronian*.

**Scott Hames, University of Stirling, plenary speaker: ‘Wounded Attachments: Scottish Nationalism and Literary Criticism’**

This lecture will explore the interplay between Scottish literary and political culture over the past few decades. It responds to a paradox (and dissonance) in the call for papers, figuring Scotland as a peripheral, misfit polity seeking its own voice and agency. Why a paradox? Because this image of a marginal, subjected nationality has accrued significant institutional power since the 1980s, most visibly since the establishment of the Scottish Parliament. Arguably it is now the hegemonic narrative of Scottish cultural life, serving as a ‘wounded attachment’ of the kind Wendy Brown theorised several decades ago. ‘In its emergence as a protest against marginalisation or subordination’, Brown wrote in *States of Injury* (1995), ‘politicised identity becomes attached to its own exclusion’, tending to install its ‘logic of pain’ in the very foundation of its political claim, which comes to serve as a naturalised basis for ‘identity’ itself.

Scottish writers and critics played a key role in articulating, mobilising and ‘incorporating’ a cultural and political Scottishness of this kind, with its distinctive merging of class protest, democratic demand, and national-popular mythos. My aim is not to counter this narrative, but to trace the process of its emergence and institutionalisation – from small magazines and literary novels to the symbols and ceremonies of the Holyrood parliament – and to explore its implications for Scottish cultural criticism today. Raised beyond the terrain of historical process or political determination, the ‘wounded attachments’ of our discipline can often foreclose on other avenues of dissent, critique and empowerment.

**Robert McColl Millar, University of Aberdeen: ‘Politicising the Scots language? Elite, counter-elite and popular attitudes towards, and uses of, a national vernacular in polarised times’**

Scots has been recognised as a language for over twenty years. Since 2007, previous lip-service to this recognition has been replaced with a programme of activity designed to increase the status of the language, leading up to the present planning for a proposed Scottish Languages Act, to be introduced to the Scottish Parliament in 2023 or 2024. Yet there are a number of figures, most, but not all, on the political right, who deny the existence of Scots, while others are uninterested in the national debate, instead focussing on support for and promotion of regional varieties.

This presentation will consider these issues from historical and contemporary viewpoints, paying particular attention to whether, as some on the right have claimed, Scots has been politicised – perhaps even weaponised – by the nationalist left.

**Florence Pétroff, Université de La Rochelle: ‘The Popular party in the Church of Scotland: a different approach to the American controversy’**

The American Revolution divided the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The ministers of the Moderate party offered unreserved support to the British government against the American rebels. Their numerous sermons and pamphlets were consistent with the prevailing condemnation of the American rebellion among the Scottish elites. However, two ministers of the Popular party differed. John Erskine and William Thom disapproved of the war against the thirteen colonies and strove to convince their fellow countrymen that the colonists should be treated as Protestant brethren, not enemies.

This paper aims to explore the discourse of the Popular party relating to the American controversy and to bring to the fore their reasons for standing apart from the Scottish mainstream in the 1770s and 1780s. It will argue that their approach to the American Revolution was based on interrelated religious and political views as well as pragmatism, and it will draw a comparison with the work of other ‘friends of America’ in Great Britain so as to assess the specificity of the Scottish Popular party not just in Scotland but also on the scale of the union.

**Murray Pittock, University of Glasgow, keynote speaker: ‘Scotland’s Changing Union’**

The paper begins with a brief introduction to the key power, trade and territory drivers of the independent Scottish state prior to 1603, mentioning the brief creation of the Franco-Scottish composite monarchy in 1558. The reasons for the failure of Scotland to achieve its national ambitions in the composite monarchy era of 1603-1707 are explored, together with the persistence of aspects of the composite monarchy after the 1707 Union and the nature of Scottish national articulation in the British Empire. The effects of the shifting definition of the Union in the 1938-51 era and the decline of the instrumental opportunities afforded by the Empire created the conditions for Scottish dissonance and increasingly strident declarations of difference, which have been compounded by Brexit. The lecture concludes with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of Scotland’s links to the European Union.

**Céline Sabiron, Université de Lorraine (Nancy): “James David Forbes and the power of dissenting editorial choices”**

**Shane Strachan, University of Aberdeen; “DREEPIN: the (in)visibility of oil and workers’ voices in Aberdeen”**

DREEPIN presents the contradictions and hypocrisies surrounding Aberdeen’s, and the world’s, dependency on the oil industry as a seeming economic necessity, yet a ticking time

bomb with devastating ramifications. Through a queer subversion of petromasculine culture, it re-imagines this hypermasculine industry and its associated fetishisation of oil drilling, hedonism and petrol-head culture as a bad romance between Aberdeen and oil – our North Sea sugar daddy – who has long proved toxic, but hard to quit...

In Doric (North East Scots), the usually elusive oil finally tells its side of the story from love at first sight back in '69 to the present day attempts to go green. The poem at the core of the text is inspired by a variety of academic and archival material collaged together to reflect the rise and fall of the North Sea oil industry, where its workers are gagged by threats of blacklisting to keep safety mishaps secret. Excerpts from *Blowout* magazine – a worker-led publication which ran from the late 80s to the early 00s – feature to give voice to oil workers during a tumultuous period of fighting for better safety and better pay after the Piper Alpha disaster in 1988, before record profits subdued and silenced their voices once more.

The performance will be accompanied by a paper exploring DREEPIN's development as part of CRUDE, a research group and final exhibition exploring the (in)visibility of oil within Aberdeen and the wider implications of oil's ability to dominate all political, social and economic life the world over.

### **Yann Tholoniât, Université de Lorraine (Metz): “Robert Burns and the Critique of the Parrhesiastes’ Dialectic”**

Provocation is still palpable in Robert Burns's poems, songs, and articles he sent to various Scottish newspapers over the decade spanning between the first publication of *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786) and his death in 1796. The Scottish Bard questions all forms of authority, driven by a personal conviction for “truth” which he turns into a poetic strategy. « Plain truth to speak » (« Epistle to John Lapraik ») aptly describes Burns's motto of outspokenness. Michel Foucault studied the dialectic of such a public posture under the Greek term of *parrhesia*. Foucault traces back the semantics of this term in the courses he gave at the Collège de France, mostly in *Le gouvernement de soi et des autres, 1982-1983* (2008) and *Le courage de la vérité, 1984* (2009). This talk shall address the persona of Burns as a parrhesiast in his poems, songs and articles, while considering the limits and consequences of this political and poetic strategy which attacked the axiological foundations of British/Scottish society in the eighteenth century. More specifically, we shall focus on two polemic areas consistently broached by Burns, politics and religion.

### **Géraldine Vaughan, Université de Rouen: ‘A Voice Crying in the Wilderness: Rev. John Dunmore Lang and the Colonization of Australia (1830s-1870s)’**

The firebrand Presbyterian minister (b. 1799) hailing from Greenock (Renfrewshire) landed for the first time in Sydney in May 1823. Trained for the Presbyterian ministry at the University of Glasgow, he envisioned himself as a modern St Paul and his was a life of crusade in order to bring ‘virtuous’ Protestants into New South Wales. He spent no less than nine years at sea, travelling back and forth between his motherland and the Antipodes to accomplish his missionary duties. His voice was always one of dissent: he had already separated from the Kirk before the Disruption was enacted, and he firmly believed in the strict separation of Church and State. He was involved both in metropolitan and colonial politics and despite his deep anti-Catholicism, Dunmore Lang was an early partisan of Home Rule for Ireland. Dunmore Lang's anti-aristocratic stance accompanied his republican inclination. A prolific writer, he publicized his original ideas on Australian identity, history and religion in numerous essays and pamphlets.