

Klaus Peter Müller, Bernhard Reitz, Sigrid Rieuwerts (eds.)

Scotland's Cultural Identity and Standing

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Peter Erlebach, Klaus Peter Müller,
Bernhard Reitz, Sigrid Rieuwerts

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Editors' Preface

Scotland's Cultural Standing and Identity is the most recent result of the long history of Scottish Studies undertaken at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz. Horst Drescher founded the Scottish Studies Centre in Faculty 06 of Mainz University (located in Gernersheim) in 1981 as a centre for interdisciplinary research and teaching <<http://www.fb06.uni-mainz.de/englisch/183.php>>. At that time, this was – together with the 'Groupe de Recherches Études Ecossoises' at the Université de Stendhal in Grenoble, France – the only such centre in continental Europe. Whereas the focus in the beginning was mostly on Scottish literature and translation, it has now been expanded to include all areas of cultural studies, especially media studies. In 1982, Horst Drescher launched the successful book series *Scottish Studies International*, which has produced 37 publications, and in 1984 he started the *Scottish Studies Newsletter* with regular information offered to anybody interested in this field. On the main campus of Mainz University in Faculty 05 (located in Mainz), Bernhard Reitz and Thomas Michael Stein promoted Scottish Studies and led students on to research in this area.

Thomas Michael Stein, born in 1942, died in 2012, and Horst Drescher, born in 1932, passed away in 2013. Both will be remembered very fondly by everybody here as well as by the many people they met and knew in Scotland. This book is meant to pay tribute to them and to commemorate their individual personalities and their estimable work.

This work needs to be and will be continued at Mainz University. Sigrid Rieuwerts has an excellent record of publications and research projects on Scotland. She holds numerous Fellowships at Scottish universities and is currently based in Edinburgh, working as the project leader on the first critical edition of Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. It is the only project in the Humanities that is co-funded by Germany (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) and Scotland (Arts and Humanities Research Council). In 2012 she also founded the "Society for Scottish Studies in Europe" <<http://scottishstudies.eu/>>, of which she is the President. Klaus Peter Müller has taken over from Horst Drescher. He revived the *Scottish Studies Newsletter* in 2011 (when Drescher was no longer able to produce it), expanded the topics it covers, made it a bi-annual publication, and saw to it being accessible on the web <<http://www.fb06.uni-mainz.de/englisch/199.php>>.

The cooperation between Mainz University and Scotland thus has been very strong for a long time. A new important element was added in 2013 when Glasgow University and Mainz signed a contract supporting the exchange of students working on a PhD-thesis. We would like to have similar contracts with other Scottish universities, too, and the exchange of students and staff can be and must be increased. While Sigrid Rieuwerts from the Johannes Gutenberg University is currently based at the University

EDITORS' PREFACE

of Edinburgh, Ian Campbell has supported this link between Edinburgh and Mainz since he and Horst Drescher first met. Drescher also had the unfailing support of Douglas Gifford in Glasgow, where Murray Pittock and Gerard Carruthers now guarantee this link. New connections with Stirling (Neil Blain and Scott Hames) have been created, and the fruitful, prolific communication between people working in various regions, using different approaches for the same subjects, or investigating divergent fields, but with the common purpose of creating a comprehensive understanding of human cultures will, therefore, continue and improve.

This is also the intention of the book here presented, and it is precisely with this in mind that the introduction uses insights of the cognitive sciences, which at least promise what ultimately needs to be achieved, namely a more holistic comprehension of life. Each of the articles here is a small step into this direction.