

Special Issue: *World and Nation: Tropes of Representation in Contemporary Scottish Writing*,  
December 2021

**Deadline:** 15 June 2021

**Guest Editor:** Petronia Popa-Petrar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania),  
petronia.petrar@ubbcluj.ro

When the 2020 Man Booker Prize was announced, during an online ceremony that featured President Barack Obama among its guest speakers, it appeared to both confirm and further consecrate the elevated status that Scottish fiction has enjoyed during the past decades. *Shuggie Bain*, the debut novel of the New-York based writer Douglas Stuart, inspired by the author's own experience of growing up in Glasgow under Thatcherism, was selected from a very international shortlist, which included Stuart as the only British-born author. The highly charged positioning of the award and its recipient on the global literary and political map encapsulates the tensions and ironies currently defining Scottish writing, caught between the widespread narrative of national emancipation led by poets and novelists, and the pressures of integrating Scotland into the web of historicity of the contemporary world. Nevertheless, the organizers' seeming reluctance to insist on, or even mention, the Scottishness of the winning novel (as one look at the official releases on the Man Booker web page shows) might seem surprising. This should perhaps be construed not as a dismissal of the (re)canonization of (formerly peripheric) Scottish writing, but, rather, as testifying to its embroilments in the power struggles of "world literature" and the global literary market that has not failed to promptly catapult Stuart to fame. Resolutely "local" in its form and content, reenergizing the tropes of the working-class realism that has become a marker of the Scottish novel, and explicitly drawing on James Kelman's aesthetic revalorization of disempowered voices, *Shuggie Bain* investigates the historical entanglements of its protagonists' fates, but keeps away from overt political engagement with the nation-building efforts of the period it is set in, or from simplistic guilt assignment, as it speaks to a cosmopolitan audience by addressing "universal" topical issues. Alternatively, there is also the critical and popular success of other Scottish authors such as Ali Smith, whose involvement with the immediate international present in the "Seasonal Quartet" (through the themes of Brexit, immigration, climate change and the pandemic) harks back to the cosmopolitan modernist transmutation of volatility and instability into aesthetic figurations of global experience. Such reconsiderations of the status of the author within Scottish writing are not only evidence of the refusal of its subaltern status, but also reminders of its historical centrality to the logic of world culture, and its continuous reconfiguring of the center-margin relation.

Taking the case of recent Scottish writing itself as "representative" for the need to reconsider the place of literature at a historical moment when concepts of nationhood both resurge and lose meaning, *American, British and Canadian Studies* invites papers on:

- The politics of authorship: "representing" the nation, "representing" the world in contemporary Scottish literature
- Regionalism, localism, globalization, planetarism in recent Scottish writing
- Post-Brexit devolution: redefining nationhood from a European perspective
- Migration, diaspora and global flow in the Scottish novel
- Realism, the new "authenticity" and experimentalism in Scottish writing
- The international reception of contemporary Scottish literature.

Articles will be subject to a blind peer reviewing process and must not be under consideration for any other publications. Please refer to the author submission guidelines on the *American, British and Canadian Studies* website, <http://abcjournal.eu/>.

**Submission guidelines:** The first page of the manuscript should carry the title, author's name, institutional affiliation, a 200-word abstract, and ten key words/ concepts. The article/ piece must be accompanied by a 200-word biographical note, and must conform to MLA referencing (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). Please see further information and instructions on the journal's guidelines at: <http://abcjournal.eu/>.

**The word limit for scholarly articles is 8500 words.**

**The word limit for creative pieces is 3000 words.**

**The word limit for reviews is 1000 words.**

Please email enquiries and submissions marked "*World and Nation: Tropes of Representation in Contemporary Scottish Writing*" to Dr Petronia Popa-Petrar at [petronia.petrar@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:petronia.petrar@ubbcluj.ro), and copied to [abc.journal@ulbsibiu.ro](mailto:abc.journal@ulbsibiu.ro), before the closing date.