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Paraskevova, Minka (2009) *Children of Medea: constructing female Scottish identity in the dramatic adaptations of Liz Lochhead*. In: Graduate School Conference, 25th November 2009, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh.

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Children of Medea:

constructing female Scottish identity in the dramatic adaptations of Liz Lochhead

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Main Subject

Focusing the subject of contemporary Scottish identity into the work of a prominent figure like Liz Lochhead, leads to a number of research areas of study, spreading from questions on nationhood and cultural images, through key

issues of traditions and transitions in Scottish theatre and women's roles in it, to views of dramatic adaptations, translation and cultural dialogues, spoken with a strong female voice.

The main research subject will be analysis of female characterisation in two adaptations, *Educating Agnes* and *Medea*, discussing *femininity* in both artistic and cultural dimensions. *Medea* is a tragic story about a princess and sorceress from Colches, seen as barbarian by her husband Jason and the society of ancient Athenians where the story takes place. Medea's infamous murder of her own children becomes a part of her revenge plot for being abandoned by her husband and banished from the city of Corinth. *Educating Agnes* is based on a comic story about an old man, Arnolphe, determined to marry a young and innocent girl, Agnes, whom he decides to educate for the role of a perfect wife. In the end, Arnolphe becomes victim of his own plotting.



Medea

Methodologies

The subjective nature of the study will draw upon qualitative methods of research with the application of postmodern feminist and cultural studies approaches.

- Feminist theories: *semiotics, deconstruction and sociolinguistics*
- Cultural theories: postmodern culture and anthropology
- Interviews with Liz Lochhead and Graham McLaren, director of Theatre Babel
- Workshops with students to discuss interview answers

Methods

- *theme identification*
- *questionnaires and interviews*
- *comparative textual and contextual analysis*



theatre babel

Scottish identity?



Educating Agnes

The problem of Scottish identity proves complex with its marked features of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

What differentiates Scotland from countries with analogous cultural

establishment is the ambiguous status of all vernacular forms of Scots and Gaelic and the acknowledgement of English as the only official language

This in a country of religious polarity, regional distinctions and historical heritage of attempts for adopting new identities, e.g. *Athens of the North* cultural project in the eighteenth century, has led to constant experiences of divided national identification with various degrees of marginalization.

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Special thanks to Douglas McBride for the photo material.