

## FOREWORD

This special issue, divided in two parts, aims to provide refreshing perspectives and new materials on Scott's writings as well as his literary legacies across the globe. There are six essays and two book reviews included in the first part of our December issue, and four essays and one book review scheduled to be published as the second part of the special edition in our June issue next year. These critical investigations presented in the special issue intend to celebrate the bicentennial publication of *Ivanhoe* by rethinking the historical, linguistic, political as well as aesthetic significance of Scott's writings and legacies across space and time. As the first of its kind to be published in Chinese-speaking countries, the special issue also hopes to speak to a wider range of readers with diverse scholarly interests and cultural-lingual backgrounds.

2019 marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first appearance of *Ivanhoe* in 1819. Completed in November of that year, it was published by Archibald Constable at Edinburgh on 20 December, and in London just over a week later. Ten thousand copies were sold in two weeks, and two hundred years later, the BBC have recently listed *Ivanhoe* as one of the most influential hundred novels in English. Its powerful themes about the effects of religious fanaticism, social and ethno-cultural division and the precarious nature of English national unity were relevant in the year of Shelley's "England in 1819" and remain so in that of Brexit. As with many of Scott's novels, the reconciliations at the end are undercut: in this case by the clear and chilling message, obliquely delivered, that there is no place for Jews in King Richard's England (it is possible that Rebecca was modelled on her namesake, Rebecca Gratz, the first Jewish female student in the US, whose name was referred to Scott by Washington Irving). Rebecca and her father must take refuge in Muslim Granada, Islam's last remaining foothold in Europe in the late twelfth century: in so doing, the conclusion of the novel seems to hint that King Richard's absence on the Third Crusade against the Muslims (during which he was responsible for massacres, as at Ayyadieh/Acre, where nearly 3000 Muslims were killed) was both an immoral absence and a struggle against a more tolerant foe. Scott would also have been aware that Richard's accession in 1189 and preparations to go on Crusade were marred by widespread violence against England's Jewish population, who were expelled from Richard's coronation, an event followed by massacres at the Old Jewry, Stamford, Bury St Edmunds, Lynn and York (on the night of the Shabbat before Passover, 16 March 1190) amid widespread attacks elsewhere. While Richard did not countenance these attacks, his absence on Crusade enabled them, and Scott makes it clear that there was reason for Jews not to trust to the king's return, a return which they had helped secure by having had a large share of his ransom extorted from them. Indeed in 1194

the Ordinance of the Jewry institutionalized a Crown tax on all transactions carried out by Jews, who were forced to reveal their assets to royal officials, in a move which both secured income for the king and facilitated any future expropriation of his Jewish subjects.

As with several other masterpieces of fiction—among them *Gulliver's Travels* and *Kidnapped*—Scott's great novel of English nationhood, a National Tale for England written by a Scotsman, has suffered from being thought of as a boys' adventure story: and this is as true in central Europe, Russia and in France (where it has appeared in *bandes dessinées* form) as in the Anglosphere. On the contrary, the influence of *Ivanhoe* was profound, immediate and long-lasting. In the British Isles it did much to create all modern versions of the story of Robin Hood (as well as the name "Cedric" and much of Victorian medievalism, including the historic Eglinton tournament of 1839). In the United States, *Ivanhoe*'s historic vision was relentlessly mocked by Mark Twain in *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* (1889), while Twain also (and famously) blamed Scott's promotion of chivalric values for starting the American Civil War in *Life on the Mississippi* (1883). In Scotland, Scott's successors (such as R.L. Stevenson in *The Black Arrow* (1888) and Arthur Conan Doyle in *The White Company* (1891) sought to outdo him in the mediaeval historical novel: they did not succeed.

In the wider world, *Ivanhoe* became the most translated of all Scott's novels. It has been filmed in the UK, US, Australia, Italy and Russia and been the subject of six operas, written by figures ranging from Rossini to Arthur Sullivan. There are towns bearing the novel's name in California, New South Wales, North Carolina and Victoria, and *Ivanhoe* Streets from Bolton to Sorrento. In fiction, its great heirs include Adam Mickiewicz's *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828), Nikolai Gogol's *Taris Bulba* (1835) and Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) whose climax reprises the siege of Torquilstone, as Richard Maxwell has pointed out. *Ivanhoe* is also central to Dostoevsky's *Netochka Nezvanova* (1848-9) and plays a role in underpinning the immense influence of Scott on Tolstoy. Less grandly, López Soler's *Los bandos de Castilla* (1830) leant heavily on Scott's plot, to the point of plagiarising his text. In Germany, the novel was a set text in school; in Hungary, *Ivanhoe* fed the cult of mediaeval pageantry and tableaux in the era of the national struggle in the nineteenth century.

This is thus a timely special issue of *The Wenshan Review*, and as editors we have been fortunate in attracting some of the most senior Scott scholars, as well as new and emerging talents, to write for this issue. In the first part of the special issue, we have Graham Tulloch's opening essay on "*Ivanhoe* in Australia: The First Fifty Years" setting a suitable international theme. Caroline McCracken-Flesher's examination "Fighting Words: Duelling at the Bounds of Class and Culture in Walter Scott's Scotland" offers—with superb attention to

detail—a historicized understanding of single combat in Scott’s fiction and life. Paul Arant’s work on “The Romani and the Highland Clearances in Walter Scott’s *Guy Mannering*” offers a detailed exploration of a theme broached by Owen Dudley Edwards in the *New Statesman* almost thirty years ago. Scots, like Roma, were supposed to come from Egypt in traditional Scottish origin mythology, and Meg Merrilees was depicted in some earlier illustrations swathed in tartan to drive home the point. Fernando Toda, one of the most acute of Spanish comparativists, follows with an essay on the difficulties translation encounters given Scott’s central use of historical linguistics, while Emma Miller’s “Fact, Fiction, or Fantasy: Scott’s Historical Project and *The Bride of Lammermoor*” tackles this most complex of fictions in terms of Scott’s inhabiting of both local tradition and national history simultaneously. Alison Lumsden’s “Dabbling Among the Unhallowed Relics of the Grave: Waking the Dead in Scott’s *Castle Dangerous* and *Count Robert of Paris*,” looks at close quarters at two of Scott’s lesser-known fictions in detail to suggest that they can contribute to more complex global readings of Scott.

The first part of this special edition closes with two book reviews, one by Yiqing Lin on J. H. Alexander’s 2017 book *Walter Scott’s Books: Reading the Waverley Novels*, and the second one by Gao Dazheng on Bruce Gilkison’s 2016 book *Walking with James Hogg: The Ettrick Shepherd’s Journeys Through Scotland*. These recent inquiries, with diverge themes and various levels of engagement with the local and the transnational, the historical and the linguistic, testify to the relevance and potency of Scott’s writings (as well as those of his contemporary writers) in shaping the critical understanding of our own world.

The next four articles, scheduled to be published in the second part of the Scott special issue in June 2020, continue the thematic exploration of Scott’s international outreaches as well as historical legacies. Anna Fancett’s “Introducing Walter Scott: What Scott Scholars Can Learn from the Prefaces of Chinese Translations of Walter Scott’s Work” draws our attention to the Chinese view of Scott as a critic of bourgeois culture and identifies Scott’s approach to exploring class struggles as “a new area of investigation.” Ainsley McIntosh’s “Writing the Nation: Walter Scott’s Narrative Poetry” provides a reassessment of Scott’s poetry by showing how his narrative poetry “formulates a recuperative national narrative for Scotland within the context of the Napoleonic wars,” and how it unsettles “the terms and conditions upon which” the pro-Union narratives of his time were based. Emma Peacocke’s “*Ivanhoe* and Abolition” sheds some light on the association between *Ivanhoe* and slavery in the British West Indies, arguing for how the portrayals of serfs in *Ivanhoe* “owe as much to Abolitionist rhetoric as they do to antiquarianism”. Barbara Bell’s ““...anything like the words’: how stage performances from *Ivanhoe* brought Scott’s characters to the widest audiences” offers insight into

the theatrical receptions of Scott's works, showing how the adaptations of *Ivanhoe* stand out among their contemporaries as they "cross class and genre divides" throughout the nineteenth century.

*Ivanhoe* changed the way that the mediaeval period and its values were seen across the western world. It is one of the most important novels of its century, and we are proud to celebrate it here, not least because the doubts and reservations it expresses about the fates of minorities in national self-fashioning are sadly as relevant now as when Scott wrote. For the mere act of healing Rebecca's life is at risk: the suspicion and brutalism of the Norman Crusader elite cannot and will not credit an outsider with any skills which can contribute to their society. Men of wealth and power, their bigotry does not triumph, but it comes close to doing so, and in so doing continues to offer us both a warning and an awful example in 2019.

Murray Pittock  
Glasgow, United Kingdom

Li-hsin Hsu,  
Taipei, Taiwan