

The James Bond question

Shaken, stirred and confused



- 1 JAMES BOND first came into being in the year of the queen's coronation, when he appeared in "Casino Royale" published in 1953. These two cultural ambassadors have been linked ever since, both conveying an obliging view of Britishness in a changing world. So it is fitting that special agent 007 celebrates his jubilee wrapped in a Union Jack. "Skyfall", the latest instalment of the longest-running cinema franchise, is the most overtly patriotic Bond film yet.
- 2 Played for the third time by a thuggish Daniel Craig, this Bond spends much of the film meditating on the sense of duty and love of country that inspired his work as a licensed killer, although it is unclear which country that is. Against a backdrop of a push for independence in Scotland, the half-Scottish Bond (his mother was apparently Swiss) careers among the thoroughly British imagery of fast Land Rovers, crushed German cars and the motif of a noble, if comical, English bulldog.
- 3 The plot hurls Bond to Istanbul and Shanghai in pursuit of a computer disk bearing identities of secret agents. But most of the action takes place on home turf, with sweeping views of London and a chase on the London Underground. Asked to respond to the term "country" in a word-association test, Bond promptly replies "England". Yet the film's climactic stand-off takes place in Bond's childhood home in rural Scotland, where he lived until he was orphaned. Gazing at this verdant countryside (after a long drive "back in time" in his vintage Aston Martin), Bond sighs wistfully.

- 4 If he seems a bit confused, it's not without good reason. Ian Fleming's original novels presented Bond as an aspirational, thoroughly English figure, who emerged from the post-war rubble with refined tastes and bold courage. Yet this post-imperial relic underwent a transformation when he made his big-screen debut 50 years ago. Brought to life by the Scottish Sir Sean Connery, Bond suddenly became Scottish too – elegant and classless, but also a roving outsider. The brogue softened Bond's imperial English inheritance, making him fit for a mass market, says James Chapman, a professor of film studies at the University of Leicester.
- 5 Fleming was so inspired by Sir Sean's performance that he retrofitted Bond's Scottish back-story into later books. An Englishman, Fleming enjoyed his own Scottish heritage (a grandfather), according to Ben Macintyre, who has written a biography of the novelist.
- 6 The reference to this cross-border heritage in "Skyfall" feels pointed. Bond seems moved by his complicated birthright, while his tough old boss M, played by a queenly Dame Judi Dench, more 36 cites a great English poet as her inspiration. In a potent scene before a parliamentary committee, Dame Judi summons Tennyson's restless Ulysses: "That which we are, we are." A fine sentiment. If only Mr Bond were so sure about the answer.

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Tekst 8 Shaken, stirred and confused

- 1p 33 “So it is fitting that special agent 007 celebrates his jubilee wrapped in a Union Jack.” (alinea 1)
Waarom?
Leg uit in je eigen woorden.
- 1p 34 Which question does the reviewer focus on in paragraphs 2 and 3?
A Does James Bond have second thoughts about betraying his Scottish roots?
B Does James Bond’s loyalty lie with his native Scotland or with England?
C Has James Bond’s attachment to England made him renounce his principles?
D Has James Bond’s loyalty to England been affected by his exposure to foreign cultures?
- 1p 35 “If he seems a bit confused, it’s not without good reason.” (alinea 4)
Wat is de oorzaak van deze verwarring?
Leg uit in je eigen woorden.
- 1p 36 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 6?
A ambiguously
B evasively
C innocently
D mysteriously
E straightforwardly

Bronvermelding

Een opsomming van de in dit examen gebruikte bronnen, zoals teksten en afbeeldingen, is te vinden in het bij dit examen behorende correctievoorschrift, dat na afloop van het examen wordt gepubliceerd.