

**HL4030: Scottish Literature**  
NTU Semester 2, AY 2023/24



*An Incident in the Rebellion of 1745* by David Morier

## **HL4030 – Scottish Literature**

*Course guide subject to minor alterations.*

*Please print only when necessary*

This course will introduce you to the main achievements, themes, and characteristics of Scottish writing from the late-eighteenth century to the present day. We will cover Romanticism, the Enlightenment, Modernism, and the contemporary era. The course will trace the vast transformations undergone in modern Scotland and study how literature has both reacted to and driven those changes. The course includes prose and poetry from the nation's three languages – Gaelic, Scots (both alongside translations), and English. We will study some of the canonical texts and masterpieces of Scottish literature as well as some neglected works. Fàilte!

### **Course coordinator**

Associate Professor Richard Alan Barlow  
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### **Learning objectives**

The course will:

- Establish the main trends, concerns, and characteristics of Scottish writing
- Create links between course texts within historical and cultural contexts
- Demonstrate the complex relationship between Scottish culture and history

### **Content:**

- Canonical and lesser-known Scottish texts by men and women
- Material on critical approaches to Scottish writing
- Historical context – detailed information on the main developments of Scottish history

### **Assessment**

a) 15% – class participation

Student participation in seminars will be assessed.

b) 35% – 3,500 word essay to be submitted no later than Friday, March 22. The essay must cover two course texts and involve original research. The essay should also include a coherent argument supported by close readings of the texts. All paragraphs should be related to a central theme and adhere to a sound structure. Claims/readings/arguments should be properly developed and supported by relevant quotations from the texts. Relevant critical sources must be utilised and correctly cited.

c) 50% – 2 1/2 hour exam

Students will sit a 2 1/2 hour closed-book exam. The exam will test students' knowledge and understanding of the texts/themes of the course and their ability to construct arguments and critical positions relating to the course concepts.

**NB: Generative AI *cannot* be used for course assignments.**

**Set texts**

Alasdair Gray. *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2002.

James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Nan Shepherd, *The Living Mountain*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2011.

Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. London: Penguin, 2000.

NB: All other course texts are in the Norton anthology or will be provided via Blackboard.

## Seminar schedule (subject to minor changes)

Week one

Introduction

Week two

*Ossian* and Celticism: 'Darthula' by James Macpherson

Week three

Scottish Romanticism: Robert Burns, 'Tam O'Shanter'

Week four

The Wizard of the North: Walter Scott, 'The Two Drovers'

Week five

Scottish Gothic: James Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*: 'The Editor's Narrative'

Week six

Scottish Gothic: James Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*: 'Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Sinner' and 'The Editor's Narrative (continued)'

Week seven

Scottish Gothic: Robert Louis Stevenson: *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

Week eight

Scottish Modernism: Selected poetry by Hugh MacDiarmid

Week nine

Eco-literature: Nan Shepherd, *The Living Mountain*

Week ten

An 'unusual teacher': Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*

Week eleven

Contemporary Scottish Literature: Books three and one of Alasdair Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*

Week twelve

Contemporary Scottish Literature: Books two and four of Alasdair Gray's *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*

Week thirteen

Revision

## Suggested further reading

### Literature/culture

Barlow, Richard. *Modern Irish and Scottish Literature: Connections, Contrasts, Celticisms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023.

Bell, Bill (series ed.). *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland* (in four vols.). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007, 2011.

Bell, Eleanor. *Questioning Scotland: Literature, Nationalism, Postmodernism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004.

Carruthers, Gerard et al (eds.). *Beyond Scotland – New Contexts for Twentieth Scottish Literature*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2004.

Chapman, Malcolm. *The Gaelic Vision in Scottish Culture*. London: Croom Helm, 1978.

Craig, Cairns. *Devolving English Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.

Craig, Cairns. *Intending Scotland: Explorations in Scottish Culture since the Enlightenment*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

Craig, Cairns (ed.). *The History of Scottish Literature* (Vol 4, Twentieth Century). Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987.

Craig, Cairns. *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.

Crawford, Robert. *Scotland's Books*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Crawford, Robert (ed.). *The Scottish Invention of English Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Fazzini, Marco (ed.). *Alba Literaria: A History of Scottish literature*. Venezia: Amos Edizioni, 2005.

Gifford, Douglas et al (eds). *Scottish Literature*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002.

Gifford, Douglas (ed.). *The History of Scottish Literature* (Vol. 3, Nineteenth Century). Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988.

Hook, Andrew (ed.). *The History of Scottish Literature* (Vol. 2, 1660–1800). Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987.

McCulloch, Margery Palmer. *Scottish Modernism and its Contexts 1918–1959*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

McIlvanney, Liam and Carruthers, Gerard (eds.). *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Pittock, Murray. *Scottish Nationality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.

Pittock, Murray (ed.). *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Romanticism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011.

Alan Riach, *What is Scottish Literature?* Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2008.

Smith, Gregory. *Scottish Literature: Its Character and Influence*. London: MacMillan and Co., 1919.

Watson, Roderick. *The Literature of Scotland*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984.

## **History**

Devine, T.M. *Scotland's Empire, 1600–1815*. London: Penguin Allen Lane, 2003.

Devine, T.M. *The Scottish Nation: 1700–2000*. New York: Penguin, 2001.

Lynch, Michael. *Scotland: A New History*. London: Pimlico, 1992.

Lynch, Michael (ed.). *The Oxford Companion to Scottish History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Pittock, Murray. *Scotland: The Global History: 1603 to the Present*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022.