

**HL2033 Irish Writing: 1800 to Modernism**  
(course guide subject to minor changes)

*Irish Writing: 1800 to Modernism* provides an introduction to the history and remarkably rich literary tradition of Ireland in the critical period from the Act of Union (1800) to the establishment of the Irish Free State (1922). The course will study how Irish culture reflected the different tensions and transformations in Ireland during the period and also how culture acted as a catalyst to political change.

**Learning Objectives**

The course will:

- Demonstrate the complex relationship between Irish culture and history in the period in question
- Establish the main trends, concerns, and characteristics of Irish writing of the period
- Create links between texts in the course based on historical and cultural context

**Content**

- Canonical Irish texts of the era
- Irish novels, short stories, poetry, plays, concerned with the ‘state of the nation’
- Material on critical approaches to Irish writing
- Historical context – detailed information on the main developments of Irish history generally and of the period specifically

## Course Outline

S/N	Topic
1	Week One Introduction: From the Union to the Free State
2	Week Two Ireland, the Ascendancy, and the Union: Edmund Burke, 'Letter to Richard Burke' (1792); Richard Brinsley Sheridan, from 'Union of Ireland with Great Britain' (parliamentary speech, 1799); Robert Emmet, 'Speech from the Dock' (1803); Daniel O'Connell, 'Speech at Tara' (1843)
3	Week Three Absenteeism and the 'Big House': <i>Castle Rackrent</i> (1800) by Maria Edgeworth
4	Week Four A National Tale: <i>The Wild Irish Girl</i> (1806) by Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan
5	Week Five Hibernian lyrics: Thomas Moore, selection from <i>Irish Melodies</i> (1807–1834)
6	Week Six A Malady of the Spirit: James Clarence Mangan, selected poetry
7	Week Seven Irish Gothic 1: William Carleton's <i>Wildegoose Lodge</i> (1833) and John Sheridan LeFanu's <i>A Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family</i> (1839)
8	Week Eight Famine and exile: Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan, section from 'Absenteeism' (1824); <i>The Nation</i> , 'A Voice from America' (1843), Aubrey Thomas De Vere, 'The Year of Sorrow – Ireland – 1849' (1855); Lady Jane Wilde, 'The Famine Year' and 'A Supplication' (1864)
9	Week Nine Stage Irishmen, Stage Irishwomen? Dion Boucicault, <i>Arrab-na-Pogue; Or, the Wicklow Wedding</i> (1864)
10	Week Ten Irish aestheticism: Oscar Wilde, selected writings
11	Week Eleven Irish Gothic 2: Excerpts from Charles Robert Maturin, <i>Melmoth the Wanderer</i> (1820) and Bram Stoker, <i>Dracula</i> (1897)
12	Week Twelve Revolutionary Ireland: Douglas Hyde, excerpt from 'The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland' (1892), Patrick Pearse, 'Speech at the Grave of O'Donovan Rossa' (1915), and 'The Coming Revolution' (1913); James Connolly, 'The Irish Flag' (1916); James Stephens, excerpt from <i>The Insurrection in Dublin</i> (1916)
13	Week Thirteen The Irish Literary Revival: John Millington Synge, <i>Playboy of the Western World</i> (1907); W.B. Yeats, selected poems

## Learning Outcomes

- To gain knowledge and understanding of key concepts in Irish writing from the period
- To gain an awareness of the importance of the Irish contribution to world literature and modern literature
- To develop independent thinking, develop planning skills, improve research capabilities
- To develop a critical approach to academic research
- To gain experience of text analysis and academic writing

## Assessment

A) 30% – 2,000 word essay (due in on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March)

- The essay must cover two texts and involve original research
- The essay should also include a coherent argument supported by close reading of the text(s)
- 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 text (s)
- Relevant critical sources must be utilized and correctly cited

B) 50% – 2 ½ hour exam

- Students will be required to sit a 2 ½ hour closed-book exam which will consist of a text identification component and an essay component.
- The essay will test the 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.

C) 10% - Class participation

Students participation in seminars – including attendance, engagement with seminar activities and discussions – will be assessed.

D) 10% - Class presentation

Students will be required to prepare and present a mini-lecture on a course theme/concept.

## Textbooks/References

Kiberd, Declan and Mathews, P. J. (eds). *Handbook of the Irish Revival: An Anthology of Irish Cultural and Political Writings 1891-1922*. Dublin: Abbey Press, 2015.

## Core texts (other course texts will be made available online via Blackboard)

Edgeworth, Maria. *Castle Rackrent*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Owenson, Sydney, Lady Morgan. *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Synge, J. M., O'Casey, Seán, and Yeats, W.B (edited by W. A. Armstrong). *The Playboy of the Western World and Two Other Irish Plays*. London: Penguin, 1987.

## Secondary Reading

Allen, Nicholas. *Modernism, Ireland and Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Cairns, David and Richards, Shaun. *Writing Ireland: Colonialism, Nationalism and Culture*.  
Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988.

Castle, Gregory. *Modernism and the Celtic Revival*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Cleary, Joe (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Modernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Connolly, S.J. (ed). *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Deane, Seamus. *Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Irish Literature 1880–1980*. London: Faber and Faber, 1985.

———. *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing Since 1790*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Deane, Seamus (ed). *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (Vol. III). Derry: Field Day, 1991.

Eagleton, Terry. *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*. London and New York: Verso, 1995.

English, Richard. *Irish Freedom – The History of Irish Nationalism*. London: Pan, 2007.

Foster, John Wilson (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to the Irish Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Foster, R. F. *Modern Ireland 1600 – 1972*. New York: Penguin, 1988.

- Gibbons, Luke. *Transformations in Irish Culture*. Cork: Cork University Press, 1996.
- Hederman, M. and Kearney, R., eds. *The Crane Bag Book of Irish Studies*. Dublin: Blackwater, 1982.
- Kee, Robert. *The Green Flag: A History of Irish Nationalism*. London: Penguin, 1972.
- Kiberd, Declan. *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation*. London: Vintage, 1996.
- . *Irish Classics*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Kiberd, Declan and Mathews, P. J. (eds). *Handbook of the Irish Revival: An Anthology of Irish Cultural and Political Writings 1891–1922*. Dublin: Abbey Press, 2015.
- Kelleher, Margaret and O’Leary, Philip, eds. *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature* (Vol. II).  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Lee, J. J. *Ireland, 1912-1985: Politics and Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Mackay, Peter; Longley, Edna & Brearton, Fran, eds, *Modern Irish and Scottish Poetry*. Cambridge:  
Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 20–38.
- McGarry, Fearghal. *The Rising – Ireland: Easter 1916*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- McIlvanney, Liam and Ryan, Ray, eds. *Ireland and Scotland: Culture and Society, 1700-2000*. Dublin:  
Four Courts, 2005, pp. 129–143.
- Pittock, Murray. *Celtic Identity and the British Image*. Manchester: Manchester University Press,  
1999.
- Platt, Len. *Joyce and the Anglo-Irish: A study of Joyce and the Literary Revival*. Amsterdam and Atlanta:  
Rodopi, 1998.
- Quigley, Megan. “Ireland” in Lewis, Pericles (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to European Modernism*.  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 170–190.
- Regan, Stephen. *Irish Writing: An Anthology of Irish Literature in English 1789-1939*. Oxford: Oxford  
University Press, 2008.
- Watson, G.J. *Irish Identity and the Literary Revival: Synge, Yeats, Joyce, and O’Casey* (second edition).  
Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1979, 1994.