

SAMPLE SCOTTISH LITERATURE SYLLABUS

[Senior seminar taught from 2006-8 at the University of Stirling]

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THE SCOTTISH HISTORICAL NOVEL

Module Description and Rationale

Despite a profoundly nostalgic self-image, modern Scottish culture has continually re-invented history and tradition to suit the needs of the present. Small wonder that the historical novel is a Scottish 'invention', a modern and progressive way of explaining and dramatising the past. But history in such novels can seldom be understood as the objective reconstruction of 'what happened'. From the Scottish Enlightenment onwards, writers have been highly sensitive to the politically charged and partly imaginative process by which remembered events are shaped into coherent narratives; by which history is recorded, transmitted, preserved, manipulated; and by which 'historicity' – the aura of authentic oldness – is marketed and consumed.

This course examines a wide range of Scottish historical fictions, from the popular mode of romantic adventure which uses history mainly as an exciting backdrop (Stevenson), to more 'serious' rhetorical constructions of the past in terms of the author's present view of historical progress (Scott) or degeneration (Gibbon), to more obviously poetical approaches (Mackay Brown) and explorations of the nature of historical writing itself (Galt, Robertson, Gray). We will read these novels with a view to better understanding a thread of Scottish writing which is not only 'historical' but often 'historiographical': that is to say, concerned not just with representing the past, but with interpreting and re-shaping such representations.

Set Texts

James Robertson, *The Fanatic* (2000; Fourth Estate, 2001)

Walter Scott, *Old Mortality* ed. by Jane Stevenson and Peter Davidson (1816; Oxford WC, 1993)

John Galt, *Annals of the Parish*, ed. by Ian Campbell (1821; Saltire Society, 2002)

R.L. Stevenson, *Kidnapped* (1886; Penguin Popular Classics, 1994)

Lewis Grassie Gibbon, *Grey Granite* (1934; in *A Scots Quair*, Canongate, 1997)

George Mackay Brown, *Beside the Ocean of Time* (1994; Polygon, 2005)

Alasdair Gray, *A History Maker* (1994; Canongate, 2005)

Assessment

Two essays of 2500 words, each weighted 40%

One seminar presentation (to be submitted in written form) weighted 20%

Seminar Timetable

Seminars will take place on X from Y to Z

The **emboldened** readings listed here are compulsory, and can be found in the module reader.

[See below for bibliographic details.]

- 18 Sep Introductory: When was Scotland? – Narrative and Nation
Craig, from *Out of History* (MR1)
- 25 Sep Invoking a Ghostly Past: *The Fanatic*
- 2 Oct Historicism and the Scottish Enlightenment
Broadie, from *The Scottish Enlightenment* (MR2a)
Kelman, ‘An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding’ (MR2b)
- 9 Oct Exorcising the Ghastly Past: *Old Mortality*
- 16 Oct *Old Mortality* as Tory/Whig/Marxist History
Lukács, from *The Historical Novel* (MR3)

23-27 October: Semester Break

- 30 Oct The Teller and the Tale: *Annals of the Parish*

Essay 1 due Friday 3 November, 5 pm

- 6 Nov Romancing National Memory: *Kidnapped*
- 13 Nov History as Fall: *Grey Granite*
Grassic Gibbon, ‘The Antique Scene’ (MR4)
- 20 Nov Orcadian Dreamtime: *Beside the Ocean of Time*
Mackay Brown, ‘The Broken Heraldry’ (MR5)
- 27 Nov Back to the Future: *A History Maker*
McCrone, ‘Tomorrow’s Ancestors’ (MR6)

Essay 2 due Monday 4 December (submit in Pathfoot B2)

Module Reader Sources: ('MR 1-6')

1. Cairns Craig, from *Out of History: Narrative Paradigms in Scottish and English Culture*
2. a) Alexander Broadie, from *The Scottish Enlightenment*
b) James Kelman, 'An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding' (from *Lean Tales*)
3. Georg Lukács, from *The Historical Novel*
4. Lewis Grassie Gibbon, 'The Antique Scene' (from *A Scots Hairst*)
5. George Mackay Brown, 'The Broken Heraldry' (from *Memoirs of Modern Scotland*)
6. David McCrone, 'Tomorrow's Ancestors: Nationalism, Identity and History' (from *Understanding Scotland: Sociology of a Stateless Nation, 2nd edn.*)

Appendix:

D.S. Mack, 'Historical Note' in Walter Scott, *The Tale of Old Mortality*, ed. by D.S. Mack (Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels, Edinburgh UP, 1993)

Secondary Reading

It is expected that students will undertake their own, independent research into individual texts, writers, theories and historical contexts. I have requested that one copy of asterisked titles be kept in the library's Reserve Book Room.

Scottish Histories

- Colley, Linda, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1992)
- Devine, T.M., *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000* (London: Allen Lane, 1999)
- Finlay, Richard, *Modern Scotland 1914-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2004)
- Harvie, Christopher T., *No Gods and Precious Few Heroes: Scotland 1914-1980* (London: Arnold, 1981)
- Lynch, Michael, *Scotland: A New History* (London: Century, 1991)*
- Mitchison, Rosalind, *Lordship to Patronage: Scotland 1603-1745* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1990)
- Pittock, Murray G.H., *A New History of Scotland* (Stroud: Sutton, 2003)

Scottish Literary Histories

- Bold, Alan, *Modern Scottish Literature* (London: Longman, 1983)
- Craig, Cairns, (gen. ed.), *The History of Scottish Literature, 4 vols.* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1987-88)

- Craig, Cairns, *The Modern Scottish Novel: Narrative and the National Imagination* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1999)*
- Hart, Francis Russell, *The Scottish Novel: A Critical Survey* (London: John Murray, 1978)
- Walker, Marshall, *Scottish Literature Since 1707* (London: Longman, 1996)
- Watson, Roderick, *The Literature of Scotland* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984)
- Wittig, Kurt, *The Scottish Tradition in Literature* (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1958)

Relevant Studies of Scottish Literature, Culture, Identity

- Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (revised edn) (London: Verso, 1991)
- Bell, Eleanor, *Questioning Scotland: Literature, Nationalism, Postmodernism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- Bell, Eleanor and Gavin Miller, eds, *Scotland in Theory: Reflections on Culture & Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004)
- Broun, Dauvit, R. J. Finlay and Michael Lynch, eds, *Image and identity: The Making and Re-making of Scotland through the Ages* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998)*
- Carruthers, Gerard, David Goldie and Alastair Renfrew, eds, *Beyond Scotland: New Contexts for Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004)
- Cowan, Edward J. and Richard J. Finlay, eds, *Scottish History: The Power of the Past* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2002)
- Craig, Cairns, *Out of History: Narrative Paradigms in Scottish and English Culture* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1996)*
- Crawford, Robert, *Devolving English Literature* (2nd edn) (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2000)
- Cubitt, Geoffrey, ed., *Imagining Nations* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1998)
- Davis, Leith, *Acts of Union: Scotland and the Literary Negotiation of the British Nation, 1707-1830* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1998)
- Hobsbawm, E.J., *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (2nd edn) (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995)
- Hobsbawm, E.J. and Terence Ranger, eds, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983)*
- Kidd, Colin, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of Anglo-British Identity, 1689-c.1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993)
- Malzahn, Manfred, *Aspects of Identity: The Contemporary Scottish Novel (1978-1981) as National Self-Expression* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984)
- McCulloch, Margery P., *Modernism and Nationalism: Literature and Society in Scotland 1918-1939* (Glasgow: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2004)

- McCracken-Flesher, Caroline, *Possible Scotlands: Walter Scott and the Story of Tomorrow* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005)
- Middleton, Peter and Tim Woods, eds, *Literatures of Memory* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000)
- Muir, Edwin, *Scott and Scotland: The Predicament of the Scottish Writer* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1982)
- Petrie, Duncan, *Contemporary Scottish Fictions : Film, Television and the Novel* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2004)
- Pittock, Murray G.H., *Scottish Nationality* (New York: Palgrave, 2001)
- Pittock, Murray G.H., *The Invention of Scotland: The Stuart Myth and the Scottish Identity, 1638 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991)*
- Riach, Alan, *Representing Scotland in Literature, Popular Culture and Iconography: The Masks of the Modern Nation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) (on order)
- Richards, David, 'Making History: Scotland, 1814' in *Masks of Difference: Cultural Representations in Literature, Anthropology and Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994)*
- Sassi, Carla, *Why Scottish Literature Matters* (Edinburgh: Saltire Society, 2005)
- Wallace, Gavin and Randall Stevenson, eds, *The Scottish Novel Since the Seventies: New Visions, Old Dreams* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1993)

Studies of the Historical Novel

- Cam, Helen, *Historical Novels* (London: Historical Association, 1961)
- Ferguson, Stuart, 'The Imaginative Construction of Historical Character: What Lukács and Walter Scott Could Tell Contemporary Novelists', *Scottish Studies Review*, 6.2 (Autumn 2005): 32-48
- Fleishman, Avrom, *The English Historical Novel: Walter Scott to Virginia Woolf* (London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1971)
- Lukács, Georg, *The Historical Novel*, trans. by Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969)
- Lukács, Georg, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. by John and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963)
- MacQueen, John, *The Rise of the Historical Novel: The Enlightenment and Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1989)*

Scottish Enlightenment Material

- Broadie, Alexander, *The Scottish Enlightenment: The Historical Age of the Historical Nation* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001)*

Broadie, Alexander, ed., *The Scottish Enlightenment: An Anthology* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1997)

Broadie, Alexander, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003)

Historicisms/Historiography

Collingwood, R.G., *The Idea of History*, rev. edn (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994)

Fay, Brian, Philip Pomper and Richard T. Vann, eds, *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998)

Hamilton, Paul, *Historicism* (London: Routledge, 1996)*

Nietzsche, Friedrich, 'The Utility and Liability of History for Life', in *Unfashionable Observations*, trans. by Richard T. Gray (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1995), pp. 85-167 [ask tutor for photocopy]

White, Hayden, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1990)

White, Hayden, 'The Historical Text as Literary Artifact', in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. by Vincent B. Leitch (New York: Norton, 2001), pp. 1712-29