

Week 8 Day 1: *A Drunk Man
Looks at the Thistle*

ENGL201: Introduction to Modernism

Schedule

- Major Assignment Prompts
- Hugh MacDiarmid and Scottish Modernism
- Persona and *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926)

Major Assignment

The major assignment may be either 1) a **critical essay** of 1500 words on one or more assigned text, or 2) a **digital project** that critically engages with one or more assigned text and represents the equivalent amount of work as a 1500-word essay.

Substantial external research is not required, and **detailed, close attention to the texts at hand will be the primary criteria for evaluation**. If you choose an essay option, your essay should have: a strong introductory paragraph; an argumentative, non-obvious thesis; good logical progression of ideas; and well-formed body paragraphs that draw on evidence from the text.

Major Assignment Con't.

If you wish to use the analyses you produced in your Digital Mapping Assignment, I encourage you to do so. However, the Major Assignment must represent a significant expansion from the Methodology Experiment assignment, and your TA or instructor will be attentive to whether you incorporated feedback from the previous assignments into your Major Assignment.

Propose your own essay topic or digital project

If you choose this option, please submit a proposal of approximately 250 words (which may be a proposed introductory paragraph if you wish) by email to me by Friday 10 March. A proposal is similar to an introductory paragraph of an essay: it should give an indication of the topic you wish to pursue, the argument that you wish to make, the evidence on which you plan to make it, the scope of your argument, and its significance. I will provide feedback on your proposal and I may wish to discuss it further.



Hugh MacDiarmid (1892-1978)

- Born Christopher Murray Grieve
- Scottish poet, journalist, essayist
- Hugh MacDiarmid is one of many pseudonyms
- Middle-class background; largely self-taught from the library that his mother ran
- Founded multiple literary and critical journals
- Founding figure in the “Scottish Renaissance”



aye be whaur/Extremes meet

Synthetic Scots

- Combination of dialects of Scots
- A *literary* dialect

“[Lewis] Spence singled out for special attention [MacDiarmid’s] advancement of ‘an enthusiastic claim for the status of the Scots vernacular as a language, advocating its enlargement from the condition of *patois*...by the revival of older forms, the creation of new ones, and the amalgamation of its several dialects, into a species of “generalised” or “synthetic” tongue’ for literary use.” (*Edinburgh Companion*, 2)



Stanley Cursiter, *Regatta*, (1913)

Weel, gin it's Sade
Let it be said
They've made me mad
—That'll dae instead.

But it's no instead
In Scots, but insteid.
—The life they've led
In my puir heid. (513-524)



To A Mouse; *On Turning up in Her Nest with the Plough, November, 1785* (Robert Burns)

Wee, sleeket, cowran, tim'rous
beastie,

O, what a panic's in thy breastie!

Thou need na start awa sae hasty,

Wi' bickerin brattle!

I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee

Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry Man's dominion

Has broken Nature's social union,

An' justifies that ill opinion,

Which makes thee startle,

At me, thy poor, earth-born
companion,

An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may
thieve;

What then? poor beastie, thou maun
live!

A daimen-icker in a thrave

'S a sma' request:

I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,

An' never miss 't!

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!

It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!

An' naething, now, to big a new ane,


O' foggage green!

An' bleak December's winds ensuin,

Baith snell an' keen!



Con't....



Thou saw the fields laid bare an'
waste,
An' weary Winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee-bit heap o' leaves an'
stibble
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy
trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the Winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

But Mousie, thou art no thy-lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' Mice an'
Men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an'
pain,
For promis'd joy!

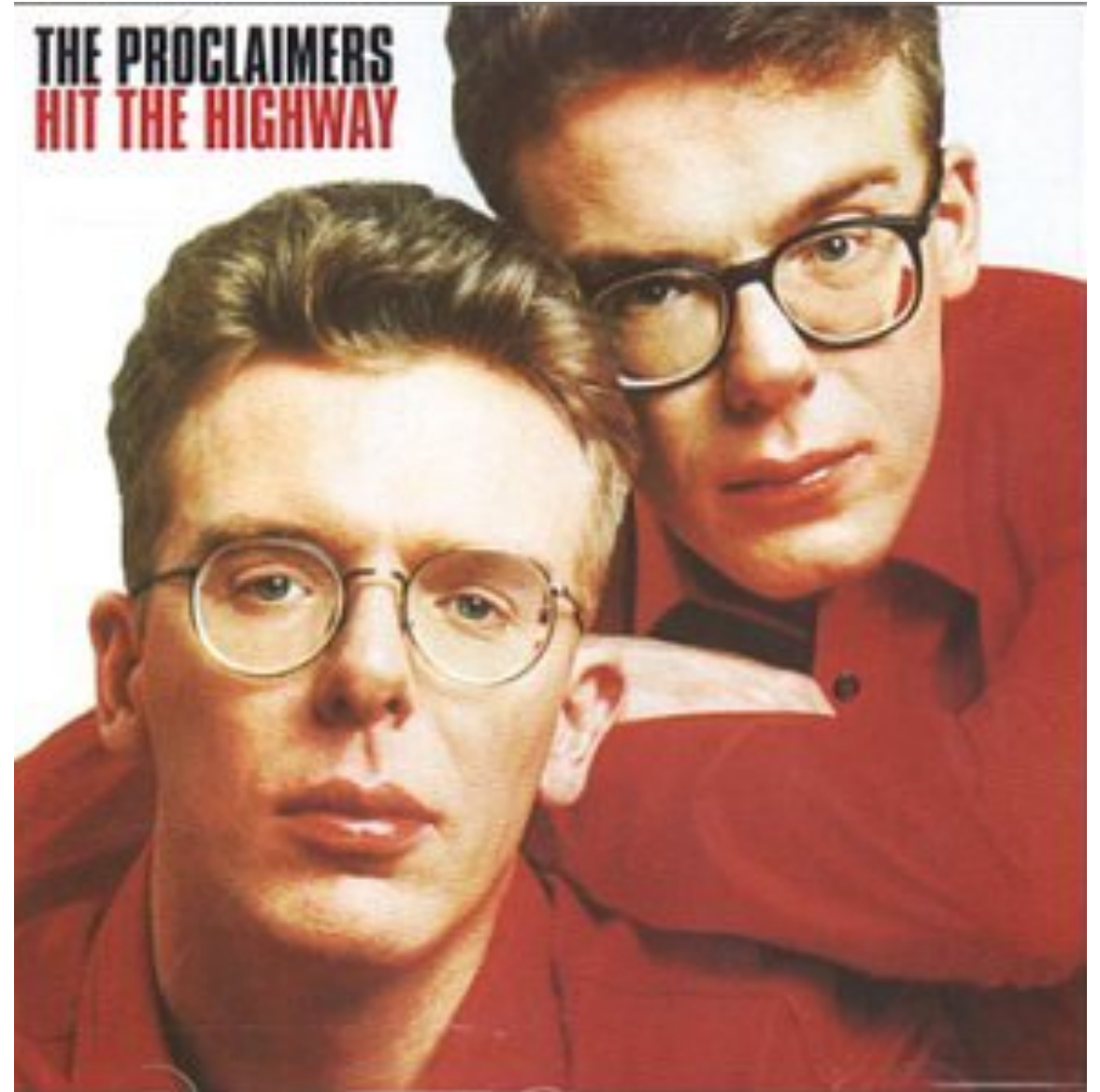
Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But Och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

I'm haveran, Rabbie, but ye
understaund

It gets my dander up to see your
star

A bauble in Babel, banged like a
saxpence

'Twixt Burbank's Baedeker and
Bleistein's cigar. (69-72)



*A Drunk Man
Looks at the Thistle*



HUGH MACDIARMID

Big Question: What is the relationship between the Drunk Man and Modernism?

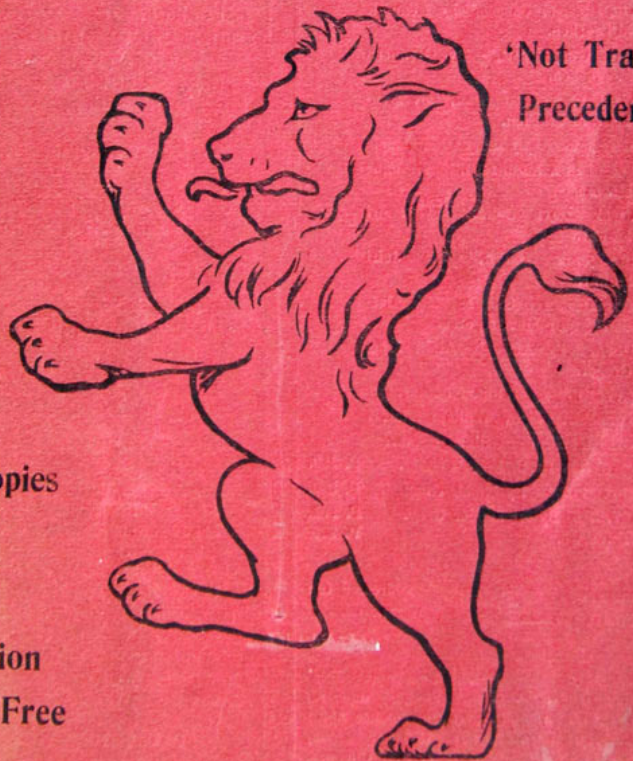


Close Read

- 21-52
- 571-656

William McCance, "Highland Fantasia" (1925)

The SCOTTISH CHAPBOOK



'Not Traditions--
Precedents'

Single Copies
1/6 each
—
Annual
Subscription
15/- Post Free

Vol. I. No. 7.

FEBRUARY, 1923.

T.S. Eliot—it's a Scottish name—
Afore he wrote 'The Waste Land' sud hae come
To Scotland here. He wad hae written
A better poem syne—like this, by gum! (345-48)

...the Scots Vernacular is a vast storehouse of
just the very peculiar and subtle effects which
modern European literature in general is
assiduously seeking...It is an inchoate Marcel
Proust—a Dostoevskian debris of ideas—an
inexhaustible quarry of subtle and significant
sound. (Grieve, *Scottish Chapbook*, 1/3 (Oct.
1922))