



Rapt in Plaid: Canadian Literature and Scottish Tradition

Elizabeth (Margaret Elizabeth Waterston)

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Rapt in Plaid combines reflection, criticism and memoir to illustrate a curious and long-lasting connection between Scottish and Canadian literary traditions. Examples drawn from genres including lyric poetry, narrative romance, war fiction, children's literature, sentimental fiction, thrillers, domestic novels and short stories link Canadian writers such as John Richardson, Isabella Valancy Crawford, Sinclair Ross, Hugh MacLennan, Margaret Laurence and W.O. Mitchell to Scottish writers such as Robert Burns, Walter Scott, Thomas Carlyle, J.M. Barrie, Robert Louis Stevenson John Buchan and George Mackay Brown.

A line is traced in each chapter from directly imitative nineteenth-century Canadian writers to modern Canadian works where Scottish tradition persists, sometimes transformed and sometimes distorted. Lively biographical sketches and close analysis of particular passages by Scottish and Canadian writers are set in the context of multi-cultural, narrative, postmodern and postcolonial theories. This study illuminates the way Scottish ideas and values still wield surprising power in Canadian politics, education, theology, economics and social mores.

Although Professor Waterston's method is that of a literary historian, she frames each section in this new work with affectionate memories of reading, researching, and teaching Scottish and Canadian literature over a sixty year period.

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