Reading Ireland A

Michaelmas Term 2023 10 ECTS

Module description

This team-teaught module introduces students to a broad range of texts, authors and issues in Irish writing. Students work across genres and forms, encountering canonical and less often studied works. This comparative module proposes various ways of thinking about Irish literary texts, while at the same time providing a sound knowledge of the social, cultural and political conditions in which these texts were written, produced and read.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, students will:

• Be confident discussing some key figures and texts in Irish writing
• Employ a well-developed range of critical terms in discussion of the texts and genres
• Show a sound critical awareness in evaluating the relationship between texts and contexts, situating literary analysis within broader cultural and historical frameworks
• Relate the texts studied to relevant debates in criticism and theory, within and beyond Irish literary studies
• Generate questions, and robust comparative arguments, about these texts and authors, and pursue independent research to develop them

Module convener: Dr Amy Prendergast (Prendea1@tcd.ie)

Assessment: Two 3,000-word essays

Module Outline

1 Reading Ireland: Introduction (Dr Amy Prendergast)
2 Gerald of Wales, History and Topography of Ireland (1188) (Prof. Andy Murphy)
3 Spenser, excerpts from A View of the Present State of Ireland (1596) (Dr Ema Vyroubalová) *
4 Jonathan Swift, ‘A Modest Proposal’ (1729) (Prof. Aileen Douglas) *
5 Charles Macklin, Love à la Mode (1759) (Dr Amy Prendergast) *
6 Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry (1888) (Dr Stephen O’Neill)
7 Reading week
8 Irish Gothic? Bram Stoker, Dracula (1897) (Prof. Jarlath Killeen)
9 James Joyce, ‘The Dead’ (1914) (Prof. Sam Slote) *
10 Sheila Wingfield, Beat Heart, Beat Drum (1946) (Dr Tom Walker)
11 Tana French, Broken Harbour (2012) (Dr Clare Clarke)
12 Conclusions (Dr Amy Prendergast)
**Texts**

Texts marked with an asterisk will be made available as pdf versions via Blackboard. Students are encouraged to source their own copies of the other core texts, purchasing them new or second-hand or borrowing them from the Library. Further details on the weekly reading will be available through Blackboard, which will be the primary means of communication regarding the module.

**Suggested secondary reading**

The following texts provide a range of critical and theoretical approaches to Irish literature and culture. You may find it helpful to refer to some of them over the course of the module. Specific suggestions for secondary reading will be provided by individual lecturers.


