

List II Hilary Term

HIU34576 Race, ethnicity and constructions of Irishness, 1150-1500 (Sparky Booker)



The twelfth century was a period of rapid change in Ireland as the English conquest and the resulting foundation of an English colony remade the political, social and economic landscape of the island. This development, and in particular the presence of a significant population of colonists, led to major shifts in the way that the Irish envisioned themselves as a group and the way in which they were described by their English neighbours. This module traces the ways in which the ethnic identities of Irishness and of Englishness (to which it was so often opposed in contemporary sources) evolved through the high and later middle ages. Students will analyse primary sources from the period to reflect on questions of identity, the terminology of 'race' and 'ethnicity', and what it meant to be 'Irish' in the middle ages.