HI 1203

IRELAND c.1250-1500:
GAELIC REVIVAL AND THE ENGLISH PALE

Course Organiser: Professor Seán Duffy (sduffy@tcd.ie)
Duration: Hilary Term (Jan-Apr)
Contact hours: 2 hrs per week plus tutorials
Weighting: 10 ECTS

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This module begins in the aftermath of the English invasion of Ireland in the late twelfth century, examining the ensuing upheaval in Irish political life and in Anglo-Irish relations, and considers the course of the English attempt to conquer Ireland throughout the later Middle Ages; it ends in the run-up to the rebellion of Silken Thomas Fitzgerald in 1534, the failure of which ushered in Henry VIII’s Protestant Reformation, often taken to mark the end of medieval Ireland.

Study is made of the socio-economic consequences of English colonization; the development of Dublin and other towns; and the economy of Ireland in the age of the Black Death. Attention is paid to the patterns of human settlement and the physical imprint of man on the landscape: where and how did people live, and what survives today in terms of archaeology and architecture? The process of change in Gaelic Ireland in the late Middle Ages; the ways in which Irish and English cultures clashed and blended; and the impact of war on medieval society and government – these are among the subjects likewise teased out during the module.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim:
The course aims to provide students with a basic understanding of political, social and ecclesiastical developments in Ireland during the Later Middle Ages, by introducing essential knowledge and key concepts.

Learning outcomes:
By the end of the course, students should be able to

• outline chronologically the key developments in Ireland c.1050-c.1500
• offer explanations for the key developments in the period
• evaluate the significance of those key developments and appreciate their impact on the subsequent course of Irish history
• search for, and critically appraise, relevant literature
• undertake an analysis of select contemporary records (in translation)

**Personal and transferable skills:**
This course is intended to sharpen skills in

• written and verbal communication (explanation and argument), through essay work and tutorial discussion
• capacity for independent learning, through preparation for essays and tutorials
• IT, including word-processing and internet retrieval, through preparation for tutorials and essays
• documentary analysis, through the study of extracts from primary (i.e., contemporary medieval) sources

**Attitudinal Skills:**
Specifically, this course is intended to enhance appreciation and awareness of

• the structures of medieval Irish society, how it functioned, and the ways in which it differed from or mirrored contemporary society elsewhere
• the role of the church in medieval Irish life
• patterns of settlement and the physical imprint of man on the landscape
• the implications of the English invasion
• the effects on Ireland of the assertion of English lordship, especially the ensuing upheaval in Irish political life
• the social, cultural and economic impact of English colonization
• the nature of the hybrid society that developed in later medieval Ireland.
3. ESSAY TITLES

1. In what ways did the arrival of the English affect the organization of society in Gaelic Ireland (including the role and power of kings)?
2. Evaluate the level of Irish opposition to English rule by the mid-thirteenth century.
3. Have historians underestimated the success of Henry III in strengthening English control over Ireland?
4. When and why did the English attempt to conquer Ireland fail?
5. ‘Irish connections with Wales were, if anything, closer than those with Scotland’. Discuss, with reference to the period covered by this course.
6. Account for the emergence of the O’Neills as the dominant force in Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages.
7. Have historians of the English colony in later medieval Ireland exaggerated the contrast between fourteenth-century decline and fifteenth-century recovery?
8. ‘More Irish than the Irish themselves’. How accurate is this depiction of the English inhabitants of late-medieval Ireland?
9. How significant was the Gaelic cultural revival in later medieval Ireland?
10. What impact did the English ‘Wars of the Roses’ have on Ireland?
11. Compare and contrast the operation of the late-medieval church in Gaelic Ireland with that in the English colony.
12. How effective was the Irish parliament in the later Middle Ages?
4. INTRODUCTORY READING

Easy reads:
- Art Cosgrove, *Late medieval Ireland, 1370-1541* (Dublin, 1981) [out of print; available in library].
- Robin Frame, *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369* (Dublin, 1981) [out of print; available in library].

More difficult reads:
5. COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Reading:

Bibliographies and guides:

Aftermath of the invasion
C.A. Empey, ‘The settlement of the kingdom of Limerick’ in *England and Ireland in the later Middle Ages* (see above, no. 73).


**The thirteenth century**


**The age of the Bruces**


Idem, ‘Edward I, Ireland and the war in Scotland, 1303-4’ in England and Ireland (as above, no. 73), 43-61.


A.A.M. Duncan, ‘The Scots’ invasion of Ireland, 1315’ in The British Isles 1100-1500 ed. Davies (as above, no. 99), 100-17.


Seán Duffy (ed.), Robert the Bruce’s Irish wars: the invasions of Ireland 1306-1329 (Stroud, 2002).

Idem, ‘Edward Bruce’s invasion of Ireland: a revised itinerary and chronology’ in idem (ed.), Robert the Bruce’s Irish Wars, 9-43.

Anglo-Irish colony in the late middle ages

Robin Frame, English lordship in Ireland, 1318-61 (1982).


Idem, ‘English Officials and Irish chiefs in the fourteenth century’, English Hist. Rev., 90 (1975), 748-77; reprinted in Ireland and Britain (as above, no. 103), 249-278.


‘War and peace in the medieval lordship of Ireland’ in The English in Medieval Ireland ed. Lydon (as above, no. 74), 118-41; reprinted in Ireland and Britain, 221-40.

James Lydon, Ireland in the later middle ages (1972).


G.O. Sayles, ‘The rebellious first earl of Desmond’ in Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn (as above, no. 87), 203-29.
Eadem, ‘The interim years: Richard II and Ireland, 1395-99’ in England and Ireland ed. Lydon (as above, no. 73), 175-95.
Katharine Simms, ‘The king’s friend: O’Neill, the Crown and the earldom of Ulster’ in England and Ireland (as above, no. 73), 214-36.

Colonial institutions, society and culture
Idem, ‘English law in Ireland, 1172-1351’, *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly*, 13 (1972), 393-422.
Eadem, ‘Royal service in Ireland’, ibid., 98 (1968), 37-46 (reprinted in Crooks (ed.), *Government, war and society*).
Eadem, *The Irish parliament in the middle ages* (1952).

**Gaelic Ireland in the later middle ages**
Robin Frame, ‘Two kings in Leinster; in *Colony and Frontier* ed. Barry et al. (as above, no. 70), 155-75.
Aoife Nic Ghioilamhaith, ‘Kings and Vassals in later medieval Ireland’, in T. Barry et al. (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland*, 201-16.
Kenneth Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the later middle ages* (1972, revised ed. 2003).
Brian Ó Cuív (ed.), *Seven centuries of Irish learning* (1961).


Eadem, ‘The brehons of later medieval Ireland’ in *Brehons, sergeants and attorneys*, ed. Daire Hogan et al. (1990), 51-76.


**The late medieval church**


Eadem, ‘Frontiers in the Irish church – regional and cultural’ in T. Barry et al. (eds), Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland, 177-200.
Roger Stalley, The Cistercian monasteries of Ireland (1987)
Idem, The church in medieval Ireland, chaps. 2-4.

Medieval Dublin
Art Cosgrove (ed.), Dublin through the ages (1988)
Margaret Murphy and Michael Potterton, The Dublin region in the Middle Ages: settlement, land-use and economy (2010).

Tudor Ireland
Robin Dudley Edwards, Ireland in the age of the Tudors (1977)
Donough Bryan, Gerald Fitzgerald, the Great Earl of Kildare, 1456-1513 (1933).
Steven G. Ellis, ‘Henry VII and Ireland, 1491-96’, in England and Ireland ed. Lydon (as above, no. 73), 237-54.