MEDIEVAL DUBLIN
HI3423

COURSE HANDBOOK

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1. AIMS OF THE COURSE:

Course Organiser: Sean Duffy  
Duration: Academic Year  
Contact hours: 3 hours per week  
Weighting: 20 ECTS

DESCRIPTION: This course covers the history of Dublin from earliest times through to the end of the Middle Ages. Among those subjects covered by lectures are the following: Dublin’s foundation as a Viking base in AD 841 and the early development of the Viking town; socio-economic life in pre-Norman Dublin; the emergence of the Hiberno-Scandinavian city-state of Fine Gall and its place in the body politic of native Ireland; overseas links; the conquest of Dublin by the Anglo-Normans in 1170; Dublin and its hinterland in the aftermath of the invasion; its role as capital of the new colony; the topographical development of the city; its churches and monasteries; municipal administration; society and economy in late medieval Dublin city and country.

AIM: This course aims to examine in detail the history of Dublin from its origins to the dawn of the Modern Era. This is done substantially through study of contemporary records (in translation) and through secondary sources, including, as well as historical studies, the results of archaeological excavation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:  
Intellectual skills: By the end of the course students should be able:  
- to detail chronologically the main developments in Dublin’s history from its first appearance in historical record to the end of the Middle Ages  
- to delineate the characteristics of a ‘town’ and to classify and articulate Dublin’s locus as such  
- to offer explanations for the emergence of Dublin as Ireland’s preeminent metropolis, and for other key developments in the city’s history  
- to comprehend the topographical and other factors that account for the physical development and morphology of the city  
- to evaluate the role of Dublin in the affairs of Ireland through the generations  
- to appreciate the status of Dublin in wider European affairs from the Viking Age to the Renaissance  
- to appraise critically relevant primary and secondary literature

Personal and Transferable Skills: By the end of the course, students should have:  
- enhanced their skills in written and verbal communications, through essay and examination work and seminar discussion  
- enhanced their teamwork skills, through collaboration with other students in group work, on-site visits, walking tours of the medieval city, etc.  
- enhanced their ability to learn independently, through preparation for seminars and written work
• enhanced their analytical skills, through the detailed examination of contemporary documents (in translation)
• enhanced their IT skills, through use of bibliographical tools
• enhanced their knowledge of analogous competencies, such as archaeology, cartographical studies, and historical geography

**Attitudinal Skills:** This course is intended to enhance appreciation and awareness of:
• the nature of towns and the role of urban studies
• the importance of Dublin
• the Viking contribution to Irish life
• the interaction between Dublin and the rest of Ireland
• the role of Dublin (and other Viking towns) as agents of change in medieval Ireland
• the influence of wider European developments on the subject
• scholarly debates relating to the city’s foundation and early developmental phases
• the extent and importance of Dublin’s surviving medieval inheritance on the landscape
• the skills characteristic of the professional historian
2. LECTURE TOPICS:

The following topics do not correspond strictly to a weekly lecture programme. Some may be omitted and others may extend for longer than one week. In addition to all/most of the themes below, we may have visiting lectures, reporting, for instance, on recent archaeological discoveries, we may abandon the classroom to visit an archaeological dig, and we will have at least one walking tour of the medieval city.

1. Introduction: the origins of Dublin
2. Early Viking-Age Dublin, c. 841-902
3. Early topographical development
4. Tenth-century Dublin, c. 917-980
5. Dublin’s Viking infrastructure: the Thingmót and beyond
6. The Age of Sitric and Brian Boru
7. The battle of Clontarf
8. The Hiberno-Norse church
9. The age of the Rí Erenn co Fressabra
10. The English conquest
11. The royal charters of Henry and John
12. Topography of the Anglo-Norman city
13. The suburbs
14. Administration of the city
15. Medieval street-life
16. Economy
17. City and County
18. Monks, canons, friars and nuns
19. The defences: castle and walls
20. The age of the Bruces
21. The Black Death and beyond
22. The late-medieval city
3. COURSEWORK:

Each member of class can expect to make at least one short seminar presentation per term. The idea is primarily that these will serve as a basis for group discussion.

In addition, you do two written assignment before Christmas (one minor and one major) and two after Christmas (again, the first is minor, the second major).

Essays must be handed in on the dates indicated below; the minor essays may be handed into me but both major essays must be handed into the History Office. The second essay in Hilary Term (after Christmas) counts towards Moderatorship, and Department rules state that it cannot be accepted unless credit has been received for the major essay in Michaelmas Term. The Moderatorship essay is not returned because it is send to the external examiner.

Essays should be no longer than 3,000 words and must include footnotes and bibliography.

Submission dates:

Michaelmas Term: assignment one (to SD): Monday of Week 4
Michaelmas Term: assignment two (to History Office): Monday of Week 8

Hilary Term: assignment one (to SD): Monday of Week 4
Hilary Term: assignment two (to History office): Monday of Week 8
4. MICHAELMAS AND HILARY TERM ESSAY

POSSIBLE ESSAY TOPICS (GENERAL)

1. Early (pre-Viking) Dublin
   - Location, topography, etc
   - Dublin in Irish legend
   - Ecclesiastical role
   - Continental hagiographical traditions, etc.

2. Ninth century: 841-902
   - First Viking base
   - Military activity
   - Political connections

3. Tenth century: 917-1014
   - Dublin and York/England
   - Career of Olaf Cuarán
   - Dublin and Scandinavia
   - Dublin and the Irish kings
   - Battle of Clontarf

4. Eleventh century
   - Internal politics
   - Relations with the Irish
   - Dublin and the wider world
   - Career of Sitriuc Silkenbeard
   - The church in the eleventh century
   - The economy
   - Slavery
   - Coinage

5. Twelfth century
   - The Uí Briain and Dublin
   - Dublin and Leinster
   - The church and diocese
   - The Anglo-Norman annexation

6. Anglo-Norman Dublin
   - The city’s defences
   - Dublin castle
   - The general topography of the walled town
   - The eastern/southern suburbs
   - Oxmantown
- Christ Church
- St Patrick’s cathedral
- Possessions of Dublin churches
- Dublin and Glendalough
- Archiepiscopal manors
- Parishes
- Career of St Lorcán Ó Tuathail
- Religious life
- Town life
- Trade and economy
- The mayor and municipality
- The guilds
- Wills

POSSIBLE ESSAY TOPICS (FURTHER SUGGESTIONS)

DYNASTIC RELATIONS WITH DUBLIN:
Cenél nEógain kings of Ailech to 1170
Clann Cholmáin kings of Mide to 1170
Uí Dúnlainge kings of Leinster to 1042
Kings of Osraige to 1170
Uí Máelsechnaill of Mide, 1022-1170
MacMurrough kings of Leinster, 1171-1603
O’Tooles of north Leinster, 1171-1603
O’Byrnes of north Leinster, 1171-1603
Earls of Kildare, Ormond, Desmond, Ulster.

HIGH-KINGS’ AND KINGS’ RELATIONS WITH DUBLIN:
Máel Sechnaill (I) mac Máele Ruanaid (d. 862)
Áed Findliath (d. 879)
Flann Sinna (d. 916)
Niall Glúndub (d. 919)
Donnchad Donn mac Flainn (d. 944)
Congalach Cnogba (d. 956)
Domnall Ua Néill (d. 980)
Máel Sechnaill (II) mac Domnaill (d. 1022)

Henry II (d. 1189)
John (d. 1216)
Henry III (d. 1272)
Edward I (d. 1307)
Edward II (d. 1327)
Edward III (d. 1377)
Richard II (d. 1399)
Henry IV (d. 1413)
Henry V (d. 1422)
Henry VI (d. 1471)
Edward IV (d. 1483)
Henry VII (d. 1509)
Henry VIII (d. 1547)

ARCHBISHOPS:
The career of one of the following: Luke (1228-55), Fulk de Sandford (1256-71), John de Derlington (1279-84), John de Sandford (1284-94), John of St Paul (1349-62), Thomas Minot (1363-75), Robert Wikeford (1375-90), Thomas Cranley (1397-1417), Michael Tregury (1449-71), John Walton (1472-84), Walter FitzSimons (1484-1511), William Rokeby (1512-21), Hugh Inge (1523-8).

RELIGIOUS HOUSES:
A history of: the priory of All Hallows (knowledge of Latin desirable).
St Thomas’s abbey (knowledge of Latin desirable).
St Mary’s abbey (knowledge of Latin desirable).
the hospital of St John the Baptist (knowledge of Latin desirable).
St Mary’s Carmelite priory.
St Saviour’s Dominican priory.
the Franciscan friary.
The crusading orders (Templars, Hospitallers) in Dublin.
Leper and other hospitals in medieval Dublin.
Female religious in medieval Dublin.

FAMILY HISTORY:
A history of a prominent Dublin family (e.g., Tyrrell, Barnwell, Cusack, Serjaunt/Sargent, Passavant, Le Decer, de Nottingham, Lawless, de Morton, de Bray, Unred, Garget, Olaf, (Fitz)Dermot, Talbot, Sedgrave, Ashebourne, Bagot, de Callan, Collet, Doubleday, Harold, de Lynet, Moenes, Nugent, Palmer).

COUNTY DUBLIN:
The history of a Dublin barony (Balrothery East/West, Nethercross, Coolock, Castleknock, Newcastle, Uppercross, Rathdown).
The history of a locality (e.g., Clontarf, Raheny/Kilbarrack, Howth/Sutton/Baldoyle, Malahide, Portmarnock, etc; Swords/Cloghran, Lusk/Portrane, Finglas, Balrothery, Naul, Ballyboghill, etc.; Kilmainham, Ballyfermot, Lucan, etc.; Glencullen, Kiltiernan, Carrickmines, etc.; Ringsend, Merrion, , etc.; Old Connaught, Bray, Rathmichael, etc.).

TEXTUAL STUDIES:
Dublin as seen through the eyes of the author of Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh; the war
What light can the Calendar of Archbishop Alen’s Register, c. 1172-1534, ed. Charles McNeill (Dublin, 1950) throw on pre-Norman Dublin?
M.J. McEnery and Raymond Refausse (eds), Christ Church deeds (Dublin, 2001), as a source for the topographical layout of medieval Dublin.
The Irish annals as a source for the history of Anglo-Norman Dublin.
The role of the municipal authority in Dublin life according to the Calendar of ancient records of Dublin, ed. J.T. Gilbert, vols 1-2 (Dublin, 1889-91).
Social and economic conditions in medieval Dublin as evidenced by the Calendar of ancient records of Dublin, ed. J.T. Gilbert, vols 1-2 (Dublin, 1889-91).
The power and possessions of the archbishops of Dublin according to the Calendar of Archbishop Alen’s Register, ed. Charles McNeill (Dublin, 1950)
The status and wealth of Christ Church cathedral as demonstrated in M.J. McEnery and Raymond Refausse (eds), Christ Church deeds (Dublin, 2001).
What insights into medieval Irish politics and society are provided by ‘A calendar of the Liber Niger and Liber Albus of Christ Church, Dublin’, ed. H.J. Lawlor, Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, 27 (1907-9), C, 1-93?
Social and living conditions in medieval Dublin revealed in M.J. McEnery and Raymond Refausse (eds), Christ Church deeds (Dublin, 2001).
Comment on the status of women as revealed in the Register of wills and inventories of the diocese of Dublin in the time of Archbishops Tregury and Walton, 1457-1483, ed. as H.J. Berry (Dublin, 1898).
Land ownership in County Dublin from the materials in Calendar of inquisitions formerly in the Office of the Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer, ed. M.C. Griffiths (Dublin, 1991).
A.J. Goedheer, Irish and Norse traditions about the battle of Clontar (1938)
Colm Ó Lochlainn, ‘Poets on the battle of Clontarf’, Éige, 4 (1943)
Aubrey Gwynn (ed.), The writings of Bishop Patrick 1074-84 (1955)
James Mills and M.C. Griffiths (eds.), Calendar of the justiciary rolls of Ireland (3 vols, 1905-56)
Barnaby Rich, A new description of Ireland (London, 1610)
F. Morgan, Rental of the estates of the Right Honorable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and burgesses of Dublin... (1868)
145-62

J.T Gilbert, Crede mihi: the most ancient register book of the archbishop of Dublin (1897)
Charles Plummer, ‘Vie et miracles de S. Laurent archeveque de Dublin’, Analecta Bollandiana, 33 (1914)
Ambrose Coleman, ‘Obligationes pro annatis diocesis Dublinensis, 1421-1520’,
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M.V. Ronan, ‘St Laurentius, archbishop of Dublin: original testimonies for canonization’,
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Herbert Wood (ed.), The Court Book of the Liberty of St Sepulcre within the jurisdiction of
the archbishop of Dublin, 1586-1590 (1930)
Newport B. White (ed.), ‘The Reportorium Viride of John Alen, archbishop of Dublin,
1533’, Analecta Hibernica, 10 (1941), 173-222
Aubrey Gwynn, ‘Provincial and diocesan decrees of the diocese of Dublin during the
Anglo-Norman period’, Archivium Hibernicum, 11 (1944), 31-117
Gearóid Mac Niocaill, ‘The charters of John, lord of Ireland, to the see of Dublin’, Rep.
Novum, 3 (1961-4), 282-306
J.C. Crosthwaite (ed.), The Book of Obits and Martyrology of the cathedral church of the
Holy Trinity, commonly called Christ Church, Dublin (1844)
Idem, ‘Some unpublished tests from the Black Book of Christ Church, Dublin’, Analecta
Hibernica, 16 (1946), 281-337
G.H. Hand, ‘The psalter of Christ Church, Dublin’, Reportorium Novum, 1 (1955-6), 311-
22
M.P. Sheehy, ‘The Registrum Novum, a manuscript of Holy Trinity Cathedral: the
Newport B. White, ‘The ‘Dignitas Decani’ of St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin (1957)
224
H.F. Twiss, ‘Some ancient deeds of the parishes of St Catherine and St James, Dublin,
Idem, ‘Some ancient deeds of the parish of St Werburgh, Dublin, 1243-1676’, ibid, 282-
315
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John O’Donovan, Ordnance Survey Letters - County of Dublin. Letters containing
information relative to the antiquities of the county of Dublin, collected during
the progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1837 (Typescript, in T.C.D., National
Library of Ireland, Royal Irish Academy, etc.; also ed. M. O’Flanagan, Bray, 1927)
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Commission (1991) [County Dublin]
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Seamus Helferty and Raymond Refaussé (eds), *A directory of Irish archives*, 3rd edn (Dublin, 1999)

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J.N. Radner (ed.), *Fragmentary annals of Ireland* (1978)
John O’Donovan (ed.), *Annala rioghachta Éireann: annals of the Four Masters* (7 vols, 1851)
W.M. Hennessy, *Chronicum Scotorum. A chronicle of Irish affairsto A.D. 1150* (1866)
Idem [and B McCarthy], *Annála Uladh: the annals of Ulster 431 to 1541* (1887-1901)
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Séamus O hlnnse (ed.), *Miscellaneous Irish annals (A.D. 1114-1437)* (1947)
A. Martin Freeman (ed.), *Annála Connacht: the annals of Connacht, A.D. 1224-1544* (1944)
Denis Murphy (ed.), *The annals of Clonmacnoise* (1896; reprinted 1993)
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John Ferrar, *A view of ancient and modern Dublin with its improvements to the year 1796 added a tour to Bellevue in the County of Wicklow, the seat of Peter La Touche* (Dublin, 1796; 2nd edn., Dublin, 1807)
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Nora K. Chadwick, ‘The Vikings and the Western world’, in ibid., 13-42.


Poul Holm, ‘The slave trade of Dublin, ninth to twelfth centuries’, *Peritia*, 5 (1986), 317-45


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The story of King Brian’s battle as it is told in the Norse chronicles, published by Colm Ó Lochlann, with pictures by Seán MacManus (Dublin, 1933).

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