HI 1216
KINGSHIP AND WARFARE: IRELAND, c.1000–1318

Course Organiser: Seán Duffy (sduffy@tcd.ie)
Duration: Michaelmas Term (Sept-Dec)
Contact hours: 2 hrs per week plus 6 tutorials
Weighting: 10 ECTS

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This module begins with the rise Brian Boru from modest origins to become Ireland’s most famous high king—a spectacular career that ended in the iconic battle of Clontarf in 1014. We explore how Irish society and kingship changed in the aftermath of Clontarf as a result of inter-provincial warfare and the changing role of the church.

The second half of the module examines the causes and implications of the English (or Anglo-Norman) invasion of the late 1160s, perhaps the single most formative development in Irish secular affairs. We study the interaction of cultures in its aftermath and the Irish opposition to English rule that saw the emergence of England’s ongoing Irish problem through later centuries. The module closes with the most serious challenge to English power in medieval Ireland: the Scottish invasion (1315-18) led by Edward Bruce, brother of Robert Bruce king of Scots.

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 High and 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.1000–1318
- 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 importance of kingship, and especially the position of the high-king
- the role of the church in medieval Irish life
- patterns of settlement and the physical imprint of man on the landscape
- the impact of the Vikings on Irish society and politics
- the causes and 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
1. “Brian was in fact the first overlord of all Ireland” (Kathleen Hughes). Discuss.

2. “The history of Ireland in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is the history of a race evolving its monarchy” (Standish Hayes O’Grady). Discuss.

3. To what extent was Dublin the de facto capital of Ireland before the Anglo-Norman invasion?

4. “Whatever the obstacles faced by reformist clergy, their genuine concern to transform the Irish church and society cannot be doubted” (Marie Therese Flanagan). Discuss, with reference to the twelfth-century reform movement.

5. “It is clear that Diarmait [Mac Murchada] intended to make himself high-king of all Ireland with the help of his Anglo-Norman allies” (Francis John Byrne). Discuss.

6. “The Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland [was]...an episode in European history” (Robin Frame). Discuss.

7. Evaluate the impact of the Anglo-Norman invasion on the physical landscape of Ireland.

8. “John...must be counted one of the best of the foreign kings” (Edmund Curtis). Discuss.

9. “Sooner or later the ruthless pressure of the barons towards expansion of the colony was bound to provoke a crisis” (Katharine Simms). How accurate is this assessment of Irish politics in the thirteenth century?

10. “The principal factor was national sentiment, intensified and supplied with a more definite political form under a sense of national oppression” (Eoin Mac Neill). Discuss, with reference to Irish opposition to English rule in the thirteenth century.

11. “A century and a half of remarkable progress, vigour, and comparative order” (Goddard Orpen). Discuss, with reference to the effects on Ireland of the Anglo-Norman presence, 1169-1315.

12. Why does it matter that a Scot was proclaimed king of Ireland in 1315?
4. INTRODUCTORY READING

Easy reads:
Donncha Ó Corráin, *Ireland before the Normans* (Dublin, 1972) [out of print; available in library].

More difficult reads:

The wider context:
Seán Duffy and Susan Foran (eds), *The English Isles: cultural transmission and political conflict in Britain and Ireland, 1100-1500* (Dublin, 2013).
5. MODULE BIBLIOGRAPHY

General Reading:

Bibliographies and guides:

Padraig Ó Riain et al. (eds), *Historical dictionary of Gaelic placenames*, Irish Texts Society (London, 2005-).


**Viking-Age Ireland**


F.J. Byrne, *The rise of the Uí Néill and the high-kingship of Ireland* (Dublin, 1970).


Clare Downham, *Vikings kings of Britain and Ireland: the dynasty of Ívarr to A.D. 1014* (Edinburgh, 2007).


David Griffiths, *Vikings of the Irish Sea: conflict and assimilation AD 790–1050* (Stroud, 2010).


Ailbhe MacShamhráin, *The Vikings: an illustrated history* (Dublin, 2002).


Aidan Ó’Sullivan et al. (eds), *Early Medieval Ireland, AD 400-1100. The evidence from archaeological excavations* (Dublin, 2014).


Seán Duffy, ‘“The western world’s tower of honour and dignity”: the career of Muirchertach Ua Briain in context’, in Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006), pp 56-73.


**The pre-Norman church**

Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006).


Colmán Etchingham, *Church Organisation in Ireland, AD 650 to 1000* (Maynooth, 2000).


Marie Therese Flanagan, ‘St Mary’s Louth and the introduction of the Arroasian observance into Ireland’, *Clogher Record*, 10 (1978-81), 233-44.


Kathleen Hughes, The church in early Irish society (1966).


A. B. Scott, Malachy (1976).


Ireland and the 12th-century Renaissance


Eadem, Irish art during the Viking invasions, 800–1020 A.D. (Cornell, 1967).


Myles Dillon, ‘Literary activity in the pre-Norman period’ in Seven Centuries of Irish Learning ed. Brian Ó Cuív (Dublin, 1961), 27-44.


Tadhg O’Keeffe, Romanesque Ireland: architecture and ideology in the twelfth century (2003).


Roger Stalley, The Cistercian monasteries of Ireland (New Haven, 1987.)

The English Invasion

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**Aftermath of the invasion**


C.A. Empey, ‘The settlement of the kingdom of Limerick’ in *England and Ireland in the later Middle Ages*.


James Lydon, ‘John de Courcy (c. 1150-1219) and the medieval frontier’ in *Worsted in the Game* (see above, no. 63), 37-48.


**Medieval Dublin**


Art Cosgrove (ed.), *Dublin through the ages* (Dublin, 1988)


Ruth Johnson, *Viking Age Dublin* (Dublin, 2004)

Margaret Murphy and Michael Potterton, *The Dublin region in the Middle Ages: settlement, land-use and economy* (Dublin, 2010).

**The church in later medieval Ireland**


Margaret Murphy, ‘Balancing the concerns of church and state: the archbishops of Dublin 1181-1228’ in Barry, Frame and Simms (eds), *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland*, 41-56.


**The thirteenth century**


Eadem, ‘English Lords in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Ireland: Roger Bigod and Thomas de Clare’, *English Historical Review*, 121 (2007), 318-48


Helen Perros, ‘Crossing the Shannon frontier’ in Barry, Frame and Simms (eds), Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland, 117-38.

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).


The age of the Bruces


Idem (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.


**Gaelic Ireland in the later middle ages**


Kenneth Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the later middle ages* (1972, revised ed. 2003).


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


Eadem, ‘Frontiers in the Irish church – regional and cultural’ in Barry et al. (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland*, 177-200.


