

Revolution and Nationalism in Ireland
1780 to the Present

Course Description

"Romantic Ireland is dead and gone," declared the poet William Butler Yeats. But Yeats was premature in writing this obituary. Romantic Ireland, like Mark Twain, might well respond that the reports of its death have been greatly exaggerated. And indeed, they have been, for the ideal of a free and independent Irish nation, nurtured by the countless patriot men and women who rebelled against British rule in 1798, 1848, 1867, and 1916, remains alive and well in Ireland today.

In this course we will examine the historical development of this ideal of Romantic Ireland and its attendant handmaidens, Revolution and Nationalism, from its infancy in the eighteenth century through its maturity today. Irish patriots have tended to regard revolutionary republicanism as a phoenix, the mythical bird which emerges renewed with youthful vigor from the ashes of its own funeral pyre. "Out of the graves of patriot men and women," declared the celebrated rebel Patrick Pearse, "spring living nations." It is this cult of the dead which has made every failure an inspiration to subsequent patriot rebels, providing even more sacrificial victims to the altar of an independent Irish republic. It was this tradition which succeeded in 1921-2 in securing the independence of twenty-six of Ireland's thirty-two counties. The fourth green field, the six-county northern state, still eludes the revolutionary republicans.

The revolutionary tradition of 1798, 1848, 1867, 1916, and of the Provisional Irish Republican Army today is only half the story of Romantic Ireland's quest for liberation. A succession of constitutional nationalists have denounced violence as a means of overthrowing British rule. And they too can point to successes as well as failures. Nevertheless, the record of achievement favors the men of violence, not the men of peace. Every major concession extracted from a reluctant Britain was secured by Irish violence or the threat of it, a conclusion which strongly enforces the persistency of the IRA in today's struggle. If history tells them anything, it is that they will in time prevail.

But the persistence of discontent and division in Ireland cannot be laid solely at the feet of the unresolved national question. Social and economic problems continue to vex modern Ireland as they have in the past. Most of the time social and economic protest has been subsumed within the nationalist juggernaut. Nevertheless, such protest requires our attention.

Lastly we shall examine how the course of Irish history has determined not only the content of the current "troubles" in the North, but also the nature of politics and society in the South today. As Yeats asked, was it:

"For this that all the blood was shed,
For this Edward Fitzgerald died,
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone
All that delirium of the brave."

Written assignments and exams

There will be a mid-term take-home exam (approximately 750-1,000 words or 3-4 double-spaced typed pages) due on Monday, June 30. The final exam will be held on the last day of class, July 10.

Required Readings

J.C. Beckett. The Making of Modern Ireland, 1603-1923.

Dervla Murphy. A Place Apart

Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh

Alan J. Ward. The Easter Rising: Revolution and Irish Nationalism

General Course Outline

<u>Day</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Reading</u>
6/16	Introduction	
6/17	Protestant Ascendancy	Beckett, Ch. 8-10
6/18	Volunteers and United Irishmen	Beckett, Ch. 11-13
6/19	Rebellion, Act of Union, and Catholic Emancipation	Beckett, Ch. 14-15 & Ó Tuathaigh, Ch. 1-2
6/23	Repeal, Young Ireland, and the Famine	Beckett, Ch. 16-17 & Ó Tuathaigh, Ch. 3-6
6/24	Post-famine economy and society, the Fenians	Beckett, Ch. 18
6/25	Land question and Home Rule	Beckett, Ch. 19
6/26	Parnell, Cultural Nationalism	Beckett, Ch. 20-21
6/30	Ulster Unionism and Constitutional Nationalism	Beckett, Ch. 22 [mid-term due]
7/1	The Ulster Crisis and the Easter Rising	Beckett, Ch. 23 & Ward, Ch. 1-2
7/2	Independence and Civil War, Partition and Treaty	Ward, Ch. 3
7/3	The two Irelands; North-South, 1920-69	---
7/7	Northern Ireland Crises, 1969-86	Murphy
7/8	Northern Ireland Crises, an analysis	---
7/9	Discussion and Review	---
7/10	Final Exam	---

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Zimmerman, Georges-Denis, Songs of Irish Rebellion: Political Street Ballads
and Rebel Songs, 1780-1900. Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1967.

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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF IRISH HISTORY

Synopsis

I. Before 1800

II. Since 1800

a. Politics, 1800-1914

b. Politics since 1914

c. Economic, Social, and Cultural History

III. Two Textbooks

I. Before 1800

Corish, P.J., The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Dublin: Helicon, 1981. An excellent synthesis, harvesting much recent scholarship.

Cullen, L.M., Anglo-Irish Trade, 1660-1800. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968. Perhaps the best work of Ireland's most distinguished economic historian; much broader than its title might suggest.

Cullen, L.M., The Emergence of Modern Ireland, 1600-1900. London: Batsford, 1981. A stimulating collection of related essays dealing with social, economic, and political topics; breaks much fresh ground; full of valuable insights.

Elliott, Marianne, Partners in Revolution: The United Irishmen and France. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982. Prize-winning study of the origins, early growth, and temporary eclipse of Irish revolutionary republicanism; gracefully written and steeped in the sources; especially valuable on the French dimensions of the United Irish movement before and after 1800.

Lecky, W.E.H., A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century. New ed. 5 vols. London: Longmans, Green, 1892. Still essential reading for all those concerned with the eighteenth century. A one-volume abridgement, edited by L.P. Curtis, Jr., is available (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Lydon, J.F., The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972. No other book attempting to deal with medieval Ireland has similar breadth and scope; yet mainly a work of interpretation rather than description.

MacNiocaill, Gearóid, Ireland before the Vikings. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972. An excellent survey.

Moody, T.W., F.X. Martin, and F.J. Byrne, eds., A New History of Ireland, Vol. III: Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976. Much of what is known, and worth knowing, about early modern Ireland can be found in this rich volume, the first to appear in a grand project of collective scholarly labor. All major aspects of the history of the period are treated, each by an expert.

Nicholls, K.W., Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the Middle Ages. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972. The first coherent account of the society, laws, and institutions that lay beyond the reach of the Dublin government; a work of considerable erudition in a neglected field.

Ó Corráin, Donncha, Ireland before the Normans. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972. An excellent brief survey.

Ó Cuív, Brian, ed., Seven Centuries of Irish Learning, 1000-1700. Dublin: Stationery Office, 1961. A very useful collection.

Perceval-Maxwell, Michael, The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the Reign of James I. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973. The standard work on a movement that changed the face of Ulster and the course of Irish history.

II. Since 1800

a. Politics, 1800-1914

Brown, Malcolm, The Politics of Irish Literature: From Thomas Davis to W.B. Yeats. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972. Much more politics than literature; especially good on the Young Irelanders and the Fenians; a literary gem of great scope and insight.

Garvin, Tom, The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1981. A pioneering study of popular Irish nationalism and of nationalist political organization since the late eighteenth century; a wholesome blend of theory and solid research.

Kee, Robert, The Green Flag. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972. Vivid, highly readable survey of political nationalism from the 1790s to the early 1920s, by the distinguished journalist who gave us "Ireland: A Television History."

Lyons, F.S.L., Charles Stewart Parnell. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977. Incomparably the best biography, personal and political, of this great nationalist leader.

Macintyre, Angus, The Liberator: Daniel O'Connell and the Irish Party, 1830-1847. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965. Unrivalled study of O'Connellite politics after Catholic Emancipation in 1829.

Moody, T.W. , Davitt and Irish Revolution, 1846-82. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981. Magisterial life of Michael Davitt, the Fenian revolutionary and agrarian agitator who founded the Land League, by a great historian.

b. Politics since 1914

Bell, J.B., The Secret Army: A History of the IRA, 1916-1970. London: Anthony Blond, 1970. Balanced, readable, and better organized than its chief competitor, Tim Pat Coogan's The I.R.A. (1970).

Bowman, John, De Valera and the Ulster Question, 1917-1973. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982. Prize-winning study of De Valera's consistently unhelpful northern policies; essential for understanding the current stance of Fianna Fail.

Chubb, Basil, The Government and Politics of Ireland. 2nd ed. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982. The classic exposition of the structure and workings of the Irish political system since 1921.

Edwards, Ruth Dudley, Patrick Pearse: The Triumph of Failure. London: Victor Gollancz, 1977. Richly illuminating biography of the Irish-language enthusiast, educationist, and messianic revolutionary who elevated the notion of "blood sacrifice" into the raison d'être of the 1916 Easter Rising.

Fitzpatrick, David, Politics and Irish Life, 1913-1921: Provincial Experience of War and Revolution. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977. The only book that really explains how and why militant and increasingly republican nationalism superseded the long dominant creed of Home Rule in Irish political organizations; essential for understanding the Irish war for independence.

Longford, Earl of (Frank Pakenham), Peace by Ordeal. New ed. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972, originally published 1935. The classic account of the negotiations that led to the Anglo-Irish treaty of December 1921, under which the 26-county Irish Free State became a self-governing dominion.

O'Malley, Padraig, The Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983. Indisputably the best book about the contemporary Northern Ireland crisis; exposes the myths and dubious assumptions of all parties to the conflict; dispassionate, hard-headed, and free of preconceived opinions -- a brilliant study.

Whyte, J.H., Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-79. 2nd ed. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1984. The classic work on the political influence of the Catholic church; takes the measure of the church's power without exaggerating it, as numerous writers have done.

c. Economic, Social, and Cultural History

Arensberg, C.M., and S.T. Kimball, Family and Community in Ireland. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968. A classic anthropological study, based on research in County Clare during the 1930s.

Brown, Terence, Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1922-79. London: Fontana, 1981. No other book provides as full an understanding of material and cultural changes in Ireland since independence; especially valuable on literary reflections of the conflict between stasis and change.

Clark, Samuel, Social Origins of the Irish Land War. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979. The best study of the Land War of 1879-82, which initiated the ending of landlordism, and a social history of Irish rural and small-town life in the nineteenth century besides.

Connolly, S.J., Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland, 1780-1845. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1982. The most important book in Irish ecclesiastical history in many years; shows how wide was the cultural gulf between the Catholic clergy and their often nominal parishioners; also shows that sexual repression was not a characteristic of pre-Famine society.

Connell, K.H., The Population of Ireland, 1750-1845. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950. The classic (and now controversial) account of the dynamics of the Irish population explosion that preceded the Great Famine; still "must" reading in spite of recent criticisms.

Daly, M.E., Social and Economic History of Ireland since 1800. Dublin: Educational Company of Ireland, 1981. Balance, clarity, and insightfulness make this book the best short treatment of the subject.

Donnelly, J.S., Jr., The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question. London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975. Prize-winning study of the transformation in Irish agriculture and rural social relations, as seen from the perspective of Ireland's largest county; revises long-established views about the mercenary character of Irish landlordism after 1850.

Edwards, R.D., and T.D. Williams, eds., The Great Famine: Studies in Irish History, 1845-52. Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1956. A landmark in Irish historical studies; more comprehensive and judicious, but also more diffuse and less readable than that best seller, Cecil Woodham-Smith's The Great Hunger (1962).

Evans, E.E., Irish Folk Ways. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957. The finest example of the work of Ireland's foremost cultural geographer.

Larkin, Emmet, The Making of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, 1850-1860. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980. Part of a historiographical monument, a multi-volume history of the Catholic church in nineteenth-century Ireland, this particular volume deals with the great reorganization under Archbishop Paul Cullen.

Schrier, Arnold, Ireland and the American Emigration, 1850-1900. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958. Still the best account of the great post-Famine exodus which powerfully affected so many aspects of Irish life.

Woodham-Smith, Cecil, The Great Hunger: Ireland, 1845-9. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962. An indispensable book written in a compelling style; argues that laissez-faire economic doctrines largely explain the inadequacy of British relief measures; not comprehensive, not always reliable, but still essential reading.

III. Two Textbooks

Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, Ireland before the Famine, 1798-1848. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972. By far the most comprehensive and reliable general work on early nineteenth-century Ireland; suitable for the specialist and nonspecialist alike.

Lyons, F.S.L., Ireland since the Famine. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971. The magisterial work of a great historian; better for political and cultural than for social and economic history, but offering more solid fare than any five competitors.