From the Outhouse of the Empire to the Celtic Tiger and Beyond:
Transformations of a Sense of Irishness
Autumn Semester, 2016

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Course Description

Ireland had come a long way from a colonial past to becoming a booming country of the European Union at the end of the 20th century earning the title “Celtic Tiger.” With the onset of the global economic recession in 2008 the Irish “success story” came to a halt, was followed by a period of crisis, from which the country is slowly recovering at the moment. The aim of this course is to map the social and cultural transformations that accelerated during the Celtic Tiger period. We will inquire especially into how crucial cultural markers of Irishness have changed in the past three decades, always keeping an eye on the historical dimension of the issues discussed. Our topics will include colonial and self-representations of the Irish, the Irish language and Irish-English, folklore/the myth of the West, music, religion, emigration/immigration, the “Troubles” and “the Peace Process” in Northern Ireland and the cultural relations between Ireland and Hungary. Our discussions will also be supported and/or prompted by ample audio-visual material: music, films, sitcoms (in English as well as in Irish with English subtitles), advertisements and documentaries.

Requirements

1. The class format: will mainly be discussion, so students are expected to read all the assigned articles and watch the assigned visual material. The reading assignment for most classes consists of an article that highlights the aspect of Irish culture in question in its historical development and another one that focuses on the present. Orientation in the reading material will be aided by a list of questions pertaining to aspects to be discussed in class. Check out these questions before reading the articles and try to identify the answers to at least three of them while reading the articles.

NB! If a student comes to class without finding an answer to any of the questions, despite the fact that (s)he is present, it will count as an absence.

2. Presentation: 10-15 minutes in length, preferably, but not necessarily a power point presentation. Students are requested to do library and/or on-line research and explore an aspect of the topic to be discussed at class. Read the assigned material and the related questions first, they may give you ideas in what direction to set out.

3. Home essay: an essay of about 2000 words, written on the basis of students’ presentations or cultural representations related to the topic within which students prepared their presentation. It should be written in the form of a research paper, but the use of non-scholarly, on-line material is also allowed. The deadline to submit the home essay is 5 December.


5. Class attendance: more than three absences will result in failing the entire course.

NB! Out of all the course components, only one re-sit will be granted; in case you fail in more than one component, the course is a failure.
Grading
The final grade will be based on
- in-class participation 10%
- presentation 20%
- home essay 30%
- end-term test 40%

Schedule:
Week 1 (19 Sept) Orientation

Week 2 (26 Sept) The Rise and Fall (and Rise?) of the Celtic Tiger & Culture in the Celtic Tiger:
- F. O’Toole, “Foreword” & Eamon Maher “Introduction” to Cultural Perspectives on Globalisation and Ireland
- “Europe’s Shining Light” (The Economist May 1997)
- Visual: watch The Tiger’s Tail (dir. John Boorman 2007) & the 1st episode of the 2nd season of Moone Boy (2014 sitcom) at home

Week 3 (3 Oct) Colonial vs Celtic Tiger Representations of the Irish:
- L. Perry Curtis, Jr., “The Importance of Being Paddy.” Anglo-Saxons and Celts
- V. Cheng, “White Negroes.” Joyce, Race, and Empire
- Recommended: excerpt from Matthew Arnold’s On the Study of Celtic Literature; all of Black Books (2000-2004 sitcom); IT Crowd (2006-2013 sitcom)

Week 4 (10 Oct) The Irish Language and Irish-English:
- S. Coleman, “The Centralised Government of Liquidity: Community, Language and Culture under the Celtic Tiger.” The End of Irish History?
- Visual: watch Yu Ming is ainm dom (short film) and the 1st episode of An Crisis (2010 sitcom in Irish with English subtitles) at home

Week 5 (17 Oct) Irish Folklore & the Myth of the West:
- L. Gibbons, “Synge, Country and Western: The Myth of the West in Irish and American Culture.” Transformations in Irish Culture
- V. Cheng, “Authenticity and Identity: Catching the Irish Spirit.” Semicolonial Joyce
- Visual: watch the 4th episode of An Crisis at home & check out on YouTube Tullamore and Jameson Irish whiskey advertisements (esp. Beyond the Obvious ad campaign) at home
- Recommended: Silence (dir. Pat Collins 2012); The Man of Aran (dir. Robert Flaherty 1934); J. M. Synge, The Aran Islands; Flann O’Brien, An Béal Bocht (The Poor Mouth)
Week 6 (24 Oct) **Irish Music and Dance:**
L. Ó Laoire, “Irish Music.” *The Cambridge Companion*
from K. Whelan, “The Cultural Effects of the Famine.” *The Cambridge Companion*
T. Wilson & H. Donnan, “Troupes and Tropes in Dancing Ireland.” *The Anthropology of Ireland*
**visual:** watch the 5th episode of *An Crisis & Riverdance* at home
**Recommended:** *The River of Sound* (1995 BBC documentary, Micheál Ó Suilleabháin, available on YouTube) & *Folk Hibernia* (2006 BBC documentary about the Irish folk music revival in the 1960s, available on YouTube); *The Chieftains: Water from the Well* (available on YouTube); *Aisling Gheal* (dir. Dónal Ó Céilleachair 2012)

Week 7 (31 Oct) **CONSULTATION WEEK (No class)**

Week 8 (7 Nov) **Religion:**
T. Inglis, “Religion, Identity, State and Society.” *The Cambridge Companion*
R. Foster, “How the Catholics Became Protestants.” *Luck and the Irish*
**Recommended:** Lionel Pilkington, “Religion and the Celtic Tiger: The Cultural Legacies of Anti-Catholicism in Ireland.” *Reinventing Ireland*
**Visual:** watch 1st episode of *Father Ted* (sitcom 1995) & *The Frontline* (7 December 2009: talk show about current affairs in the Republic of Ireland targeting religion)

Week 9 (14 Nov) **Emigration/immigration:**
M. J. Hickman, “Migration and Diaspora.” *The Cambridge Companion*
C. Kuhling and K. Keohane, “Culture: Race and Multiculturalism in Ireland.” *Cosmopolitan Ireland*
O’Bama in search of the lost apostrophe: Check out on YouTube Barak Obama’s speech delivered during his visit to Ireland in May 2011.
**Visual:** Watch the 5th episode of the 2nd season of *Moone Boy* (2014 sitcom)

Week 10 (21 Nov) **Northern Ireland:** “The Troubles”
Laura Pelaschiar, “The Wounds of History: A Short Sketch of Northern Irish History.” *Writing the North*
Richard Kearney, “Myths of Motherland.” *Postnationalist Ireland*
**visual:** Watch *Understanding Northern Ireland* (1991 BBC documentary) & Cranberries: “Zombie” music video at home

Week 11 (28 Nov) **Northern Ireland:** “The Peace Process”
Paul Arthur, “Conflict, Memory and Reconciliation.” *The Long Road to Peace in Northern Ireland*
Joanne McEvoy, “Towards Restored Devolution.” *The Politics of Northern Ireland*
Visual: watch *The Trouble with Northern Ireland* (2010 BBC Northern Ireland, documentary)

**Recommended:** David McKittrick and David McVea, *Making Sense of the Troubles: A History of Northern Ireland Conflict* (2012); see the films representing “The Troubles” in the *Introduction to Irish Studies* course

Week 12 (5 Dec) **Ireland and Hungary:**
Mary McAleese’s official address at the Hungarian Academy (2000)
Bertha Csilla & Donald E. Morse. “Introduction.” *A Small Nation’s Contribution to the World*

Week 13 (12 Dec) **End-term paper**
Week 14 (19 Dec) **Evaluation**

**Reference:**