

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History

SEMESTER I 1984-85

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
365	<u>REVOLUTION AND NATIONALISM IN IRELAND, 1780 TO THE PRESENT</u>	MR. DONNELLY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Life springs from death," cried a famous Irish rebel in 1915, "and from the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations." The British, he continued, "have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." Since the 1790s Irish revolutionary nationalism has drawn much of its strength from this cult of the dead celebrated by Patrick Pearse in 1915. The Irish revolutionary tradition, however, was long denied its goal. Time after time, revolutionary republicanism either failed to arouse mass support, as in 1848, 1867, and 1916, or having done so, as in 1798, was crushed nevertheless. One of our objectives in this course will be to understand the reasons for these repeated defeats. But it was a central aspect of Irish nationalism that even the so-called constitutional nationalists, who rejected violence as the means of overthrowing British rule, were not without sympathy for the revolutionary tradition. We shall therefore be concerned to examine the succession of constitutional nationalist movements not only in their own right but also with an eye to the influence which the revolutionary tradition exercised over them. Finally, we will explore why it was that southern Ireland owed the degree of independence which it achieved in 1921-22 not to the constitutional variety of nationalism, dominant as it usually was, but rather to the violent revolutionary tradition. No doubt the triumph of 1921-2 was incomplete, but it was still substantial. The lesson of this triumph after repeated defeat is one of the things that gives such desperate courage to the Provisional I.R.A. today. History, as they interpret it, teaches them to soldier on, to endure, to suffer -- indeed, to court suffering -- in the unalterable conviction that some day victory will be theirs, theirs again.

LECTURES

Lectures two days per week (Tu, Th, 12:00 - 1:15), supplemented by weekly discussion meetings and/or audio-visual presentations, including films, slides, and music.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

Besides a final exam, there will be either one or two hour exams, depending upon the decision of the students during the first week of class. Those students who take the course for 4 credits will be asked to do a short essay (2,500 words) on some controverted issue relating to the subject matter of the course.

GRADING SYSTEM

If the students decide to have only one hour exam plus the final, the grade for the course will be determined on the following basis: active interest and regular participation in discussion, 15 percent; hour exam, 35 percent; final exam, 50 percent. If, on the other hand, the students decide to have two hour exams plus the final, a number of grading options will be offered, allowing students to determine, within broad limits, how they wish their grade for the course to be determined.

REQUIRED READINGS

Bowman, John, DeValera and the Ulster Question, 1917-1973 (Oxford University Press paperback).

Brown, Malcolm, The Politics of Irish Literature: From Thomas Davis to W. B. Yeats (University of Washington paperback).

Laffan, Michael, The Partition of Ireland, 1911-1925 (Dundalgan Press paperback).

McCaffrey, Lawrence, Ireland: From Colony to Nation State (Prentice-Hall paperback).

O'Malley, Padraig, The Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today (Houghton Mifflin paperback).

Ó Tuathaigh, Gearóid, Ireland before the Famine, 1798-1848 (Gill and Macmillan paperback).