**ENG 639 (88640)**



**Adv Studies in Modernism/Postmodernism**

W .B. Yeats

and Irish

Revival

Professor Gregory Castle

Fall Semester 2016

Tuesdays 4:50-7:35

West Hall 160

Off Hrs: T 3-4:30, W 3-4 & by appt.

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**Course Description and Goals**

This course will be an in-depth study of the career of W. B. Yeats and his various connections to and influences on the Irish Revival (ca. 1878-1922). Revival was a complex and wide-ranging movement that began in late colonial Ireland and, while it peaked in the era of Ireland’s armed struggle for independence (1916-1922), we see it today in may aspects of contemporary Irish writing. Revival, as a critical *and* creative attitude toward Irish culture, its past and its future, manifested in a number of ways: from the Literary Revival associated with Yeats to the Gaelic Revival of Padraic Pearse, from nativist “Irish-Ireland” ideology to the feminism of the Gore-Booth sisters and Alice Milligan. Both socialism and the agricultural cooperative movement also participated in Revival. Some Revivalists were explicitly political, while others were explicitly cultural, still others fell somewhere in between. They all drew on the historical, legendary, folkloric and ancestral past in order to construct a national literature and culture and a nationalist political framework. Some Revivalists were socialist others progressive, some ardently nationalist others mildly Unionist, some xenophobically nativist others cosmopolitan; there were conservatives and moderates from both the Anglo-Irish and Catholic constituencies. The Irish Revival, which has come to be known primarily as a *literary* revival (not without justification), might best be understood as a movement of decolonization, but it is also a *modernist* movement, one that had contributed significantly to the forms of modernism emergent in England, America, France, Japan and elsewhere. While Yeats may not represent the Revival *tout court*, he is vital to our understanding of how Revival works as a point of view on Irish culture. In addition to writing plays and helping to run the Abbey Theater, he was a poet (a Nobel winner in 1923), essayist and editor. He was, on many occasions, a controversialist, most famously during his years, in the early 1920s, in the Irish Senate. In this course we will study Yeats’s major works, including the poems, plays, essays and folkloric fiction. We will also read a number of other writers, including Standish O’Grady, Lady Gregory, Synge, George Moore, James Joyce and Flann O’Brien. We will also try to talk about Revival’s impact outside of Ireland.

**COURSE GOALS**

1. To understand the historical and cultural foundations of Irish Revival;

2. To evaluate literary texts through an analysis of linguistic, rhetorical and thematic elements;

3. To create an extended argument about literary texts and their social and historical contexts;

4. To demonstrate proficiency in literary research, using library and/or online resources.

**ASSIGNED TEXTS**

Standish O’Grady, *Standish O’Grady’s Cuculain* (PDF)

W. B. Yeats, *The Poems* (2nd ed. Scribner 1997) 978-0684839356

W. B. Yeats, *Collected Plays* *of W. B. Yeats* (Macmillan, 1967) Amaz. 3rd party, cheap http://amzn.to/2bL3ZyH

John Harrington, ed. *Modern and Contemporary Irish Drama* (Norton 2008) 978-0-393-93243-0

John M. Synge, *Aran Islands* (Penguin 1992) 978-0140184327

George Moore, *Untilled Field* (Colin Smythe 2000) 978-0861401994

Emily Lawless, *Grania: Story of an Island* (2 vols.) (online)

Flann O’Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds* (Dalkey Archive 1998) 978-1564781819

Note: Additional writers and works will be included, though less extensively, and I will provide them via PDF or some other mode.

**Course Requirements**

1. Seminar Paper (18-20 pp; exclusive of notes and bibliography): 60%
2. Seminar Thesis Proposal (to include research topic; statement of argument; preliminary outline; annotated bibliography of secondary/theoretical material): 20%
3. Presentation: 20% (typically, presentations consist of introducing the class to the critical literature on a specific text or problem)

*See Guidelines for Seminar Papers on Blackboard for information regarding the paper and prospectus.*

*Attendance.* Attendance, of course, is mandatory. More than 2 unexcused absences, counting from the first day of your enrollment in this course, will result in failure of this course. Excessive tardiness may have the same effect. Work in other classes, sporting events, hangovers, vacations, and sniffles do not count as excused absences. If you are in doubt, ask me. All excused absences require my approval. Contact me on or before class date (by e-mail, preferably), and, wherever possible, justify your absence with official documentation.

**Plagiarism**.Academic dishonesty (cheating and plagiarism) will not be tolerated. In the “Student Academic Integrity Policy” manual, ASU defines “’Plagiarism” [as] using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately.”  For additional information, see the Provost’s Academic Integrity site. <https://provost.asu.edu/index.php?q=academicintegrity>. See also the ASU Department of English *Guide to Style*.

**Note.** ASU policy states that email is an official means of communication and students are responsible for checking it. <http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm107-03.html>

**COURSE ITINERARY**

*Please read all materials by the day indicated*. Abbreviations: Blackboard (BB); Yeats, *The Poems* (P); , *The Collected Plays of WBY* (CP); *Modern and Contemporary Irish Drama* (MCID). The itinerary is likely to change regularly to reflect the addition of secondary readings as the course goes on.

**August 23**

O’Grady, fr. *Standish O’Grady’s Cuculain* (BB)

Castle, “Irish Revivalism: Critical Trends and New Directions” (BB)

**August 30**

Yeats, poetry *Crossways* through *Green Helmet* (P)

Yeats, *Land of Heart’s Desire* (CP)

Yeats, “The Celtic Element in Literature” (BB)

Duffy, et al. “The Revival of Irish Literature” (BB)

Check out the NLI Life of Yeats Exhibit <http://www.nli.ie/yeats/>

**September 6**

Yeats, *The Countess Cathleen*; w/Lady Gregory, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (CP)

Lady Gregory, “Spreading the News” and “The Rising of the Moon” (MCID)

Eglinton, et al. *Literary Ideals in Ireland* (BB)

**September 13**

Lawless, *Grania* (BB)

**September 20**

Moore, *The Untilled Fields*

**September 27**

Synge, *Aran Islands*

Joyce, *Dubliners*

**October 3**

Synge, *Riders to the Sea* and *Playboy of the Western World* (MCID)

O’Casey, *Juno and the Paycock* (MCID)

**October 8-11 Fall Break**

**October 18**

Yeats, poetry through *Michael Robertes and the Dancer* (P)

**October 25**

**November 1**

Yeats, *At the Hawk’s Well*, *The Green Helmet*, *On Baile’s Strand*, *The Only Jealousy of Emer*, *The Death of Cuculain* (CP)

Return to *Standish O’Grady’s Cuculain*

**November 8**

Yeats, *The Tower* and *The Winding Stairs and Other Poems* (P)

**November 15**

Yeats, *Parnell’s Funeral and Other Poems*, *New Poems* and *Last Poems* (P)

Yeats, *Purgatory* (CP); sel. fr. *On the Boiler* (BB)

**November 22**

Flann O’Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds*

**November 29**

Friel, *Translations* (MCID)

Carr, *By the Bog of Cats* (MCID)