

## THE POLITICS OF VISUAL CULTURE IN DIVIDED SOCIETIES: THE CASE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

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### Summary:

This course examines the political uses of visual culture in divided and conflicting societies. It will mainly focus upon Northern Ireland. The first objective of this course is therefore to provide students with a sound understanding of the historical, political and social dimensions of the conflict in Northern Ireland as well as the peace process which finally led to devolution and power sharing between the catholic and protestant communities. This course also aims to introduce students to the study of visual culture and its political implications. A wide range of pictures will be considered, from stamps, posters and murals to press photographs, cartoons and films. These artefacts will be approached as historical documents *and* as vehicles for political expression.

All chapters in the course will be backed up by powerpoint presentations that will be made available through the Moodle platform, along with other documents, including a selection of research papers.

### Provisional outline :

#### Lesson 1: From Divisions in Ireland to a Partitioned Island.

1. The Historical Roots of the Northern Irish Question
2. Nationalists and Unionists during the Great War
3. The Advent of Republicanism
4. Partitioning Ireland

#### Lesson 2: "A Protestant State for a Protestant People": Northern Ireland from 1920 to 1963.

1. Stormont: 50 Years of Unionist Rule
  - 1.1. *Home Rule in Northern Ireland*
  - 1.2. *Political Stagnation*
2. An Insecure Statelet
  - 2.1. *Constitutional Uncertainties*
  - 2.2. *The Threat from the South*
  - 2.3. *The Threat from Within*
3. A Segregated and Discriminatory State
4. Visual Displays of Triumphant Unionism: Murals in Northern Ireland (1920s-1950s)
5. The Stormont regime in perspective: Northern Ireland compared to the southern United States and South Africa

#### Lesson 3: From Civil Rights Protest to Insurrection: The Descent into the 'Troubles' (1963-1972).

1. The O'Neill Years (1963-1969)

- 1.1. *Terence O'Neill's Reformist Agenda*
- 1.2. *The Civil Rights Campaign*
- 1.3. *Tensions Build Up*
2. Towards Armed Conflict: the Emergence of New Actors (1969-1971)
  - 2.1. *The Battle of the Bogside*
  - 2.2. *The Arrival of the British Army*
  - 2.3. *The IRA: Split and Rebirth*
  - 2.4. *The Growth of Loyalist Paramilitary Groups*
3. The End of an Era (1971-1972)
  - 3.1. *Internment and the Escalation of Violence*
  - 3.2. *Bloody Sunday*
  - 3.3. *The Abolition of Stormont*

#### **Lesson 4: Picturing the 'Troubles': The Northern Ireland Conflict and its Visual Representations (1972-1998).**

1. From Failed Political Solutions to Security Measures (1972-1979)
  - 1.1. *Failed Political Solutions: Power Sharing and the 'Irish Dimension'*
  - 1.2. *Security Measures: Criminalisation and Ulsterisation*
2. The Early Thatcher Years (1979-late 1980s)
  - 2.1. *The Hunger Strikes and the Emergence of Republican Mural Painting*
  - 2.2. *The Anglo-Irish Agreement and the Revival of Loyalist Mural Painting*
3. Towards the Peace Process (1988-1993)
  - 3.1. *Changes in Republicanism?*
  - 3.2. *The Loyalist Agenda and Paramilitary Activity*
  - 3.3. *Loyalist and Republican Iconography*
4. The Development of the Peace Process (1993-1998)
  - 4.1. *The Downing Street Declaration (1993)*
  - 4.2. *Ceasefires and Ceasefire Murals*
  - 4.3. *Stagnation, Violence and Negotiations*

#### **Lesson 5: Peace at last? Post-conflict Reconciliation and Reconstruction (1998-2007)**

1. The Good Friday Agreement (1998)
2. The Deferred Implementation of the Agreement (1998-2007)
3. Post-Agreement Murals: A Peace Iconography?
4. Memorialization and Musealization: Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and South Africa

### **Select bibliography:**

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## 2. Filmography

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