

The Troubles in Ireland: Reflexes in The UK Musical Scenario

PART ONE

UNIVERSIDADE DO ESTADO DO RIO DE JANEIRO
INSTITUTO DE LETRAS
CURSO DE LETRAS PORTUGUÊS – INGLÊS

DISCIPLINA DE CULTURA INGLESA II - ILE04-10084 – 2025.2

Professor: Dr. Bruno de Sá Ferreira


Aluno: Paulo Cesar dos Santos – Matr. 2022.1.02222.11

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Roadmap

- The incident of “Sunday Bloody Sunday”;
- Ireland – The Isle
- Northern Ireland: From the past to 1972 – The Troubles;
- The Irish Question
- Connections between the incident and music in UK (rock & genres)

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Sunday Bloody Sunday

"Sunday Bloody Sunday" usually refers to the events of January, 30 1972 in Derry (Londonderry), Northern Ireland, during the period known as The Troubles. On that day, a civil rights march was organized by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) to protest against internment without trial (a policy under which suspected members of the Irish Republican Army, or IRA, could be imprisoned without formal charges)."

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Highlight: The Irish Brigade

So let's pull down the watchtowers

You're going home at last

Say farewell to Bellaghy

Carrickmore and West Belfast

With 'your kit bag on your shoulder and

A tear all in your eye

But pardon me for smiling while

You're waving me goodbye

Pardon me for smiling while

You're waving me goodbye

(c) 2000 - The Irish Brigade - "Going Home at Last"

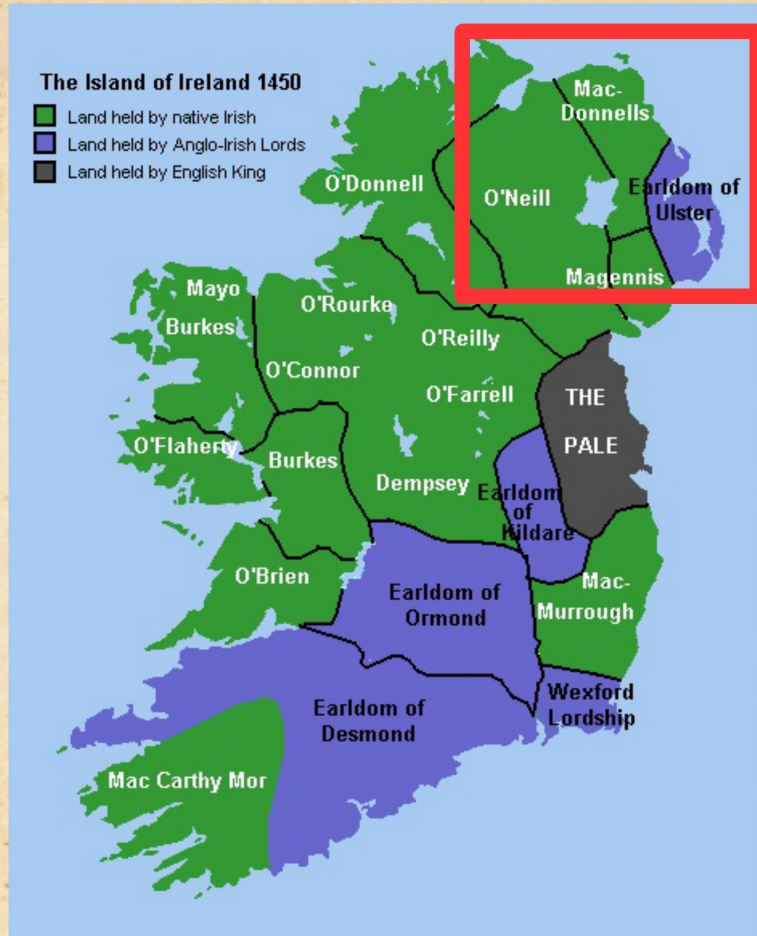
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Ireland in Europe



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Northern Ireland



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Derry



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King George III



"If you want to baste an Irishman you can easily get an Irishman to turn the spit"

King George III of UK and Ireland (1738 – 1820)

(acc. to HADDEN, 1994)

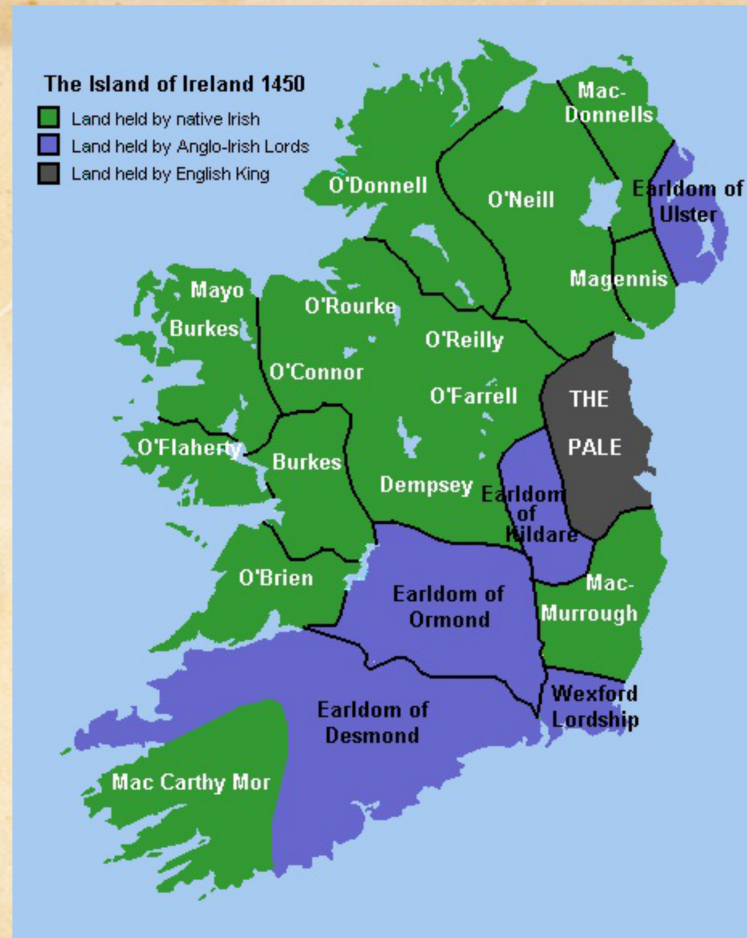
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King George III



*"You can easily persuade one Irishman to turn on his comrade or friends
if you pay him enough."*

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(c) Wikipedia

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Marx and Engels on the Irish Question

- Letters to Engels (1867–1870)
- The English Rule in Ireland (1853)
- Notes on Irish History (1867)
- Confidential Communication on the Irish Question (1870)

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Marx and Engels on the Irish Question

- England depended heavily on the exploitation of Ireland
- The division between English and Irish workers
- Ireland's liberation as a step for the emancipation of the English working class
- "The first duty of the English working class is to make Ireland a free nation."

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Ireland as the First British Colony ?

- Land confiscation
- Plantations
- Religious and cultural repression
- Transfer of English and Scottish settlers (especially into Ulster)
- Those colonial methods were later copied across the Americas, Africa, and Asia.
- "The lab of British imperialism."

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Great Writers of Ireland

- Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) - Dublin
- George Berkeley (1685–1753) - County Kilkenny
- Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774) - County Longford
- Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816) - Dublin
- Maria Edgeworth (1768–1849) - Black Bourton, England, but Irish family
- Bram Stoker (1847–1912) - Dublin
- Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) - Dublin
- George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) - Dublin

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Great Writers of Ireland

- Edith Somerville (1858–1949) - Corfu, Greece, but Irish family
- Violet Florence Martin (“Martin Ross,” 1862–1915) - Connemara
- W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) - Dublin
- J. M. Synge (1871–1909) - Dublin
- James Joyce (1882–1941) - Dublin
- Samuel Beckett (1906–1989) - Dublin
- C. S. Lewis (1898–1963) - Belfast
- Flann O’Brien (“Brian O’Nolan”, 1911–1966) - Tyrone

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Great Writers of Ireland

- Seamus Heaney (1939–2013) - Londonderry
- Eoin Colfer (1965–) - Wexford
- Anne Enright (1962–) - Dublin
- Colm Tóibín (1955–) - Enniscorthy

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Elections in Ireland

- The south had been independent since 1922
- It held regular democratic elections - general, local, and presidential
- In 1968, the Republic had Jack Lynch as Taoiseach


'tēSHək

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Elections in Northern Ireland

- Northern Ireland was still part of the United Kingdom in 1968 (and it remains so today).
- Local parliament at Stormont and held elections too.
- Discrimination in voting and representation.
- Catholics and nationalists often felt excluded or underrepresented.
- Gerrymandering in council elections.
- Civil rights marches of 1968, led by NICRA.

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A jump ahead to 1968

- England held its elections.
- The same could be said for the South of Ireland.
- But up there in the North, things were gettin' complicated.

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"The Players"

- Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) – Police 1836-1922 - quasi-military force
- Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) – 1922 – New british police after RIC
- Official IRA – Marxist – Political Action (Sinn Féin)
- Provisional IRA – Nationalist - (guerrilla)
- Black and Tans – RIC Special Force – 1920-1922 – Death Squads
- NICRA - 1960-1970 - The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association
- 1 PARA – 1st. Paratroopers Battalion (specialist in crowd control & civil populations)


• Sir Edward Heath was the Conservative Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1970 to 1974.

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Sunday Bloody Sunday

As a result of the internment policy, the situation on the ground would escalate to the point where NICRA called for a march. NICRA was a non-violent civil rights movement, founded in 1967 and inspired by the American Civil Rights Movement. It campaigned for:

- 1. An end to discrimination in employment.
 - 2. "One man, one vote."
 - 3. An end to housing discrimination, as local councils were allocating public housing mainly to Protestants.
 - 4. An end to police violence.
 - 5. The abolition of the Special Powers Act, which reinforced Heath's policy.
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NICRA



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Sunday Bloody Sunday – Free Derry Corner



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Sunday Bloody Sunday – How the day unfolded

- The march began shortly after 15:00 GMT and the intended destination was the city centre.
- However, Army barricades blocked marchers.
- The majority of demonstrators were instead directed towards Free Derry Corner in the Bogside. After prolonged skirmishes between groups of youths and the Army, soldiers from the Parachute Regiment moved in to make arrests.
- Just before 16:00 GMT, stones were thrown and soldiers responded with rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannon. Two men were shot and wounded.
- At 16:07 GMT, paratroopers moved to arrest as many marchers as possible.
- At 16:10 GMT, soldiers began to open fire.

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Dead Civilians



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Dead Civilians



(c) BBC

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“Give Ireland back to the Irish”. Paul McCartney (c) 1972

*“Great Britain and all the people
Say that people must be free
And meanwhile, back in Ireland
There's a man who looks like me
And he dreams of God and country
And he's feeling really bad
And he's sitting in a prison
Say, should he lie down, do nothing?
Should he give in or go mad?
Give Ireland back to the Irish
Don't make them have to take it away”*

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“Give Ireland back to the Irish”. Paul McCartney (c) 1972



*“Great Britain and all the people
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By the way, Paul's
mother was Irish and
Catholic.

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The Town I Loved so Well – Phil Coulter - 1973

*“But when I returned how my eyes have burned
to see how a town could be brought to its knees
by the armed cars and the bombed-out bars
and the gas that hangs on to every breathe.
Now the army’s installed by that old gasyard wall
and the damned barbwire gets high and higher
with their tanks and their bombs, oh my god what have they done
to the town I loved so well.”*

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Alternative Ulster - Stiff Little Fingers - 1978

***"Take a look where you're livin'
You got the Army on the street
And the RUC dog of repression
Is barking at your feet
Is this the kind of place you wanna live?
Is this where you wanna be?
Is this the only life we're gonna have
What we need?"***

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Invisible Sun - The Police - 1981

***"I don't want to spend the rest of my life
Looking at the barrel of an Armalite
I don't want to spend the rest of my days
Keeping out of trouble like the soldiers say"***

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Invisible Sun - The Police - 1981

***"I don't want to spend the rest of my life
Looking at the barrel of an Armalite
I don't want to spend the rest of my days
Keeping out of trouble like the soldiers say"***



This is an
Armalite !

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Sunday Bloody Sunday - U2 - 1983

“And the battle's just begun

There's many lost, but tell me who has won?

The trenches dug within our hearts

And mothers, children, brothers, sisters torn apart

Sunday, Bloody Sunday

Sunday, Bloody Sunday”

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There Were Roses - Tommy Sands - 1985

*"Now fear it filled the countryside there was fear in every home
When late at night a car came prowling round the Ryan Road
A Catholic would be killed tonight to even up the score
Oh Christ it's young McDonald they've taken from the door
Isaac was my friend! he cried, he begged them with his tears
But centuries of hatred have ears that do not hear
An eye for an eye, it was all that filled their minds
And another eye for another eye till everyone is blind"*

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Zombie - The Cranberries - 1994

***"It's the same old theme, since 1916
In your head, in your head, they're still fightin'
With their tanks and their bombs
And their bombs and their guns
In your head, in your head, they are dyin'
In your head, in your head
Zombie, zombie, zombie-ie-ie
What's in your head, in your head?
Zombie, zombie, zombie-ie-ie-ie
Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
Eh-eh, oh, ya-ya"***

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No Frontiers - Mary Black - Re-recorded in 2008

*"And your spirit's a slave to man's whips and man's jails
Where you thirst and you hunger for justice and right
Then your heart is a pure flame of man's constant night
In your eyes faint as the singing of a lark"*

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Shipbuilding - Robert Wyatt / Elvis Costello - 1998

***“It's just a rumor, that was spread around town
Somebody said that someone got filled in
For saying that people get killed
In the results of their shipbuilding
With all the will in the world”***

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The Island (live versions) - Paul Brady - Revisited in 2020's

*"Now I know us plain folks don't see all the story
And I know this peace and love's just copping out
And I guess these young boys dying in the ditches
Is just what being free is all about
And how this twisted wreckage down on main street
Will bring us all together in the end
And we'll go marching down the road to freedom...
Freedom"*

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Ireland: What we know today


- British Empire's approach: never about peacekeeping or protecting civil order. It was about control.
- Historically, Ireland has been treated as a colonial outpost (the first one).
- Northern Ireland provided a strategic military foothold, especially during the Cold War.
- The British ruling class used tactics of division—Catholic vs. Protestant, working class vs. loyalist elite—to fracture solidarity and prevent unified resistance.
- Ireland will probably never unite again.
- Modern genetics is making great discoveries in Irish history.

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Ireland: What we know today

Sinn Féin is still active in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, advocating for:

- Irish reunification;
 - Social justice and equality;
 - Anti-austerity economic policies;
 - A progressive, inclusive Ireland.
- 

Slán go fóill ! (By for now !)



Thank You !

<https://treinamentolivres.com/sunday>