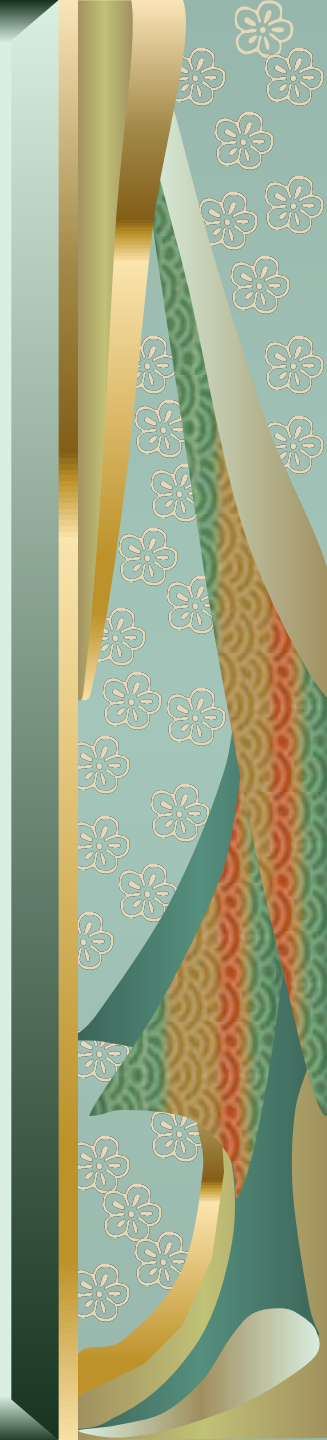


# A Myth Buster's Guide to Ireland



## **Class 1. Geography and the Ancient History of Ireland**



# Overview of the course

- **Class 1:** Geography, the Ancient history of Ireland. Celtic gods and mythology
- **Class 2:** Christianization, St. Patrick, the Book of Kells, Vikings, Brian Boru. The Conquest by the English
- **Class 3:** Medieval Ireland. Renaissance in Ireland
- **Class 4:** Religious issues in the XVII – XVIII centuries



# Overview of the course

- **Class 5:** Ireland in the XIXth century (Union, Famine, and Home Rule)
- **Class 6:** Ireland in the XXth century: Cultural Renaissance and nationalism, W.B. Yeats, Patrick Pearse, James Connolly, the Easter Rising 1916, the Civil War, the Partition
- **Class 7** Ireland in the XXth century: the Troubles. The politics of modern Ireland
- **Class 8:** students' own presentations.



# The Geography of Ireland

- **The climate.** Winter: 7 degrees C. Summer: between 15 and 20 degrees
- **Population.** 4,7 mln people. Dublin city and County: 1,3 mln (0,5 mln)
- **Administrative division.** The Republic: 26 counties, NI – 6 counties





# 4 ancient provinces

- Connacht
- Leinster
- Munster
- Ulster  
(Belongs to Great Britain)



# The Geography of Ireland

- **Economy:** agriculture
- **Currency:** the euro
- **Religion:** Roman Catholic (more than 90%)
- **Language:** English, Gaelic





# Ireland and its early history

- the Stone Age: between 7,000 and 6,000 BC
- Hunting, farming, fishing and gathering food
- 4,000 BC: introduction of farming
- tools of stone, bone and antler
- Monuments: *cairns*, *dolmens*, *passage graves*

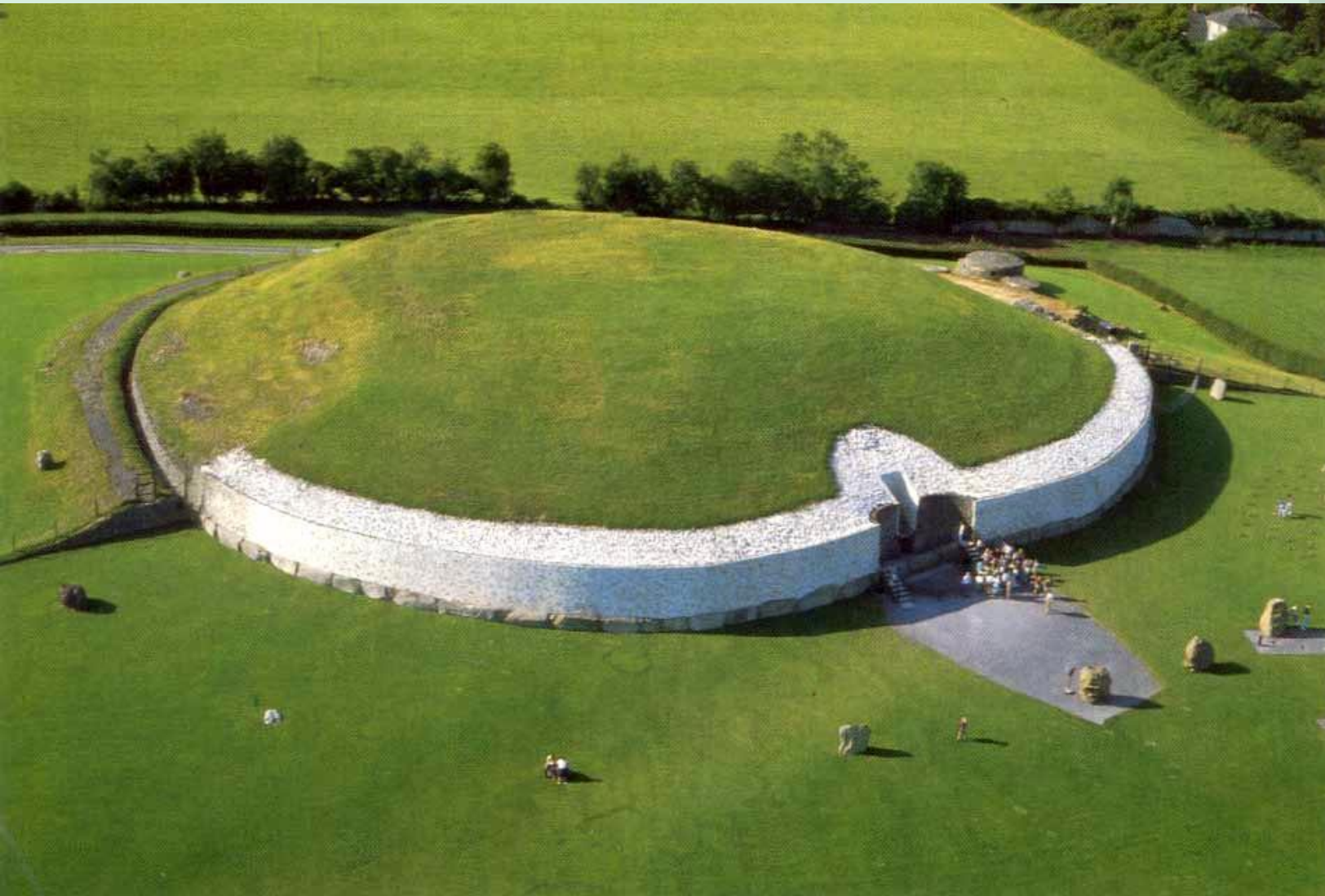


# Meabh's cairn (Knocknarea, Co. Sligo)





# Newgrange



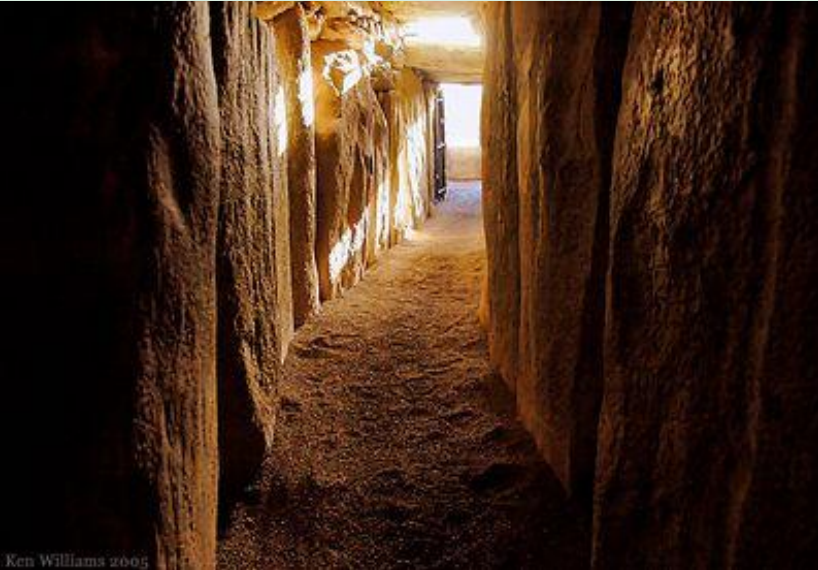
# Newgrange

- more than 5000 years old (3,200 B.C.)
- The Boyne Valley, Co.Meath
- a World Heritage Site protected by UNESCO
- 85 m in diameter, 13,5 m high
- A passage tomb
- Time-telling
- Surrounded by 97 stones
- Religious and ceremonial importance





# Newgrange



Ken Williams 2005





# The Hill of Tara

- The seat of the High King
- Use: ritualistic (laws, disputes, new kings)





# The Bronze Age

- Introduction of bronze
- Tools and weapons
- Stone circles
- Crannogs (lake dwellings)



# The Celts

- 500 BC
- Iron tools and weapons
- Warriors, stone forts, fighting in chariots
- Kings, aristocrats, freemen (farmers), slaves
- Divorce and remarriage
- Polygamy
- Druids (priests), religion - polytheism





# The Celtic Mythology

- **The Tuatha-De-Danann**
- **Morrigan** – a military Mother-Goddess
- **Danu** - Celtic Goddess of Wind, Wisdom and Fertility, a Mother Goddess.
- **Dagda** - the God of Life and Death, War, Banquets and Magic (cauldron, everlasting food)
- **Brigit** – poetry, healing, smith craft
- **Meabh (Maeve)** – bloodthirsty; sex, drinks, death, intoxication.
- **Cuchulainn** – a Celtic legendary hero, mortal

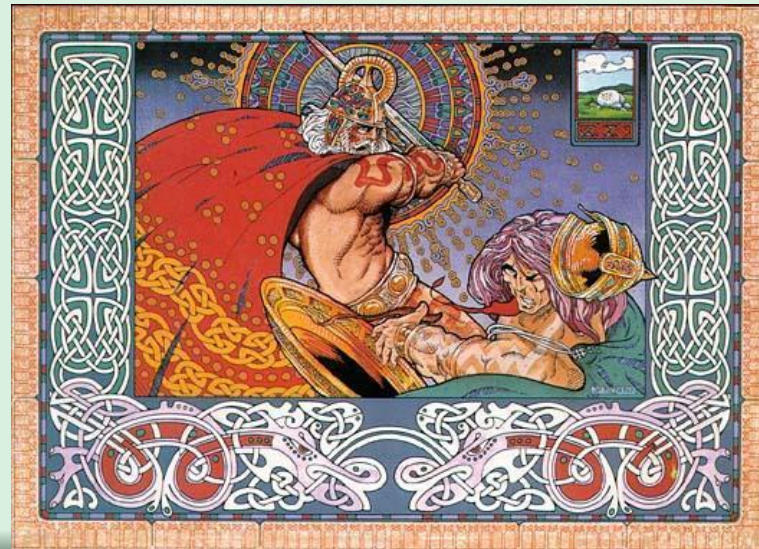
*The Táin (The Cattle Raid of Cooley):*

Cuchulainn vs queen Maeve of Connacht



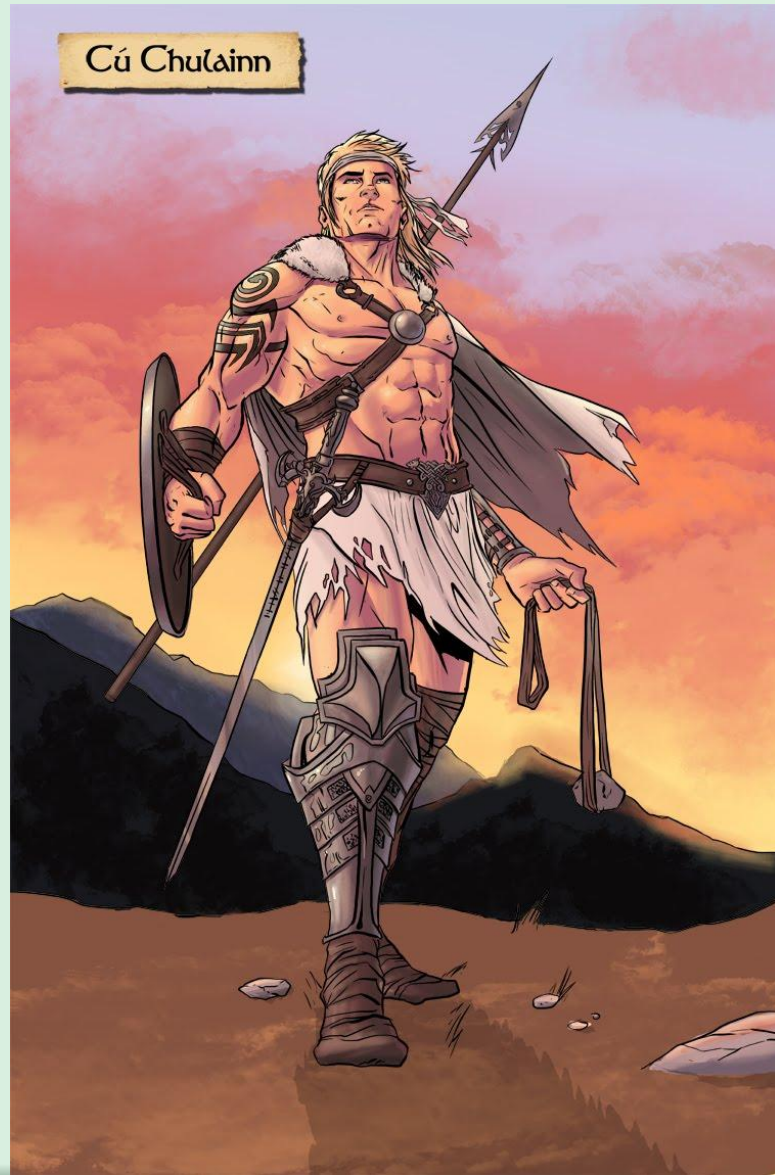


# The Celtic Mythology





# Cuchulainn vs queen Maeve of Connacht





# The Clonycavan Man

- The Iron Age, well-preserved
- Found in a swamp in 2003 (Co.Meath)
- A king ritually sacrificed
- In his 20-s, the hair
- Swamps and their chemistry





# People in swamps: contemporary art



# Extra resources

- <http://www.newgrange.com/index.htm> - Newgrange
- <http://www.carrowkeel.com/files/main.html> - Dolmens
- <http://www.dochara.com/places-to-visit/stone-circles/> - Stone Circles
- <http://atriptoireland.com/2013/06/26/a-brief-history-of-the-hill-of-tara/> - Tara
- [http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/past/pre\\_norman\\_history/iron\\_age.html](http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/past/pre_norman_history/iron_age.html) - The Celts
- <http://www.godchecker.com/pantheon/celtic-mythology.php> - The Gods of Celtic Mythology
- *The Secret of Kells* (2009):  
<http://rutracker.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=3565676>





# H/W: The Secret of Kells (2009)



- Pangur Ban
- Iona
- Kells
- Columba
- Aidan
- Tuatha de Danaan
- Crom Cruach