

IMPOSTER ARISTOCRATS

Nobility, Race and Revolution in Eighteenth-Century Ireland

Lecture by **Professor Tim Mc Inerney** (Université Paris 8, Vincennes Saint-Denis)

April 27 at 4:30pm | Rutgers Academic Building, West Wing, 6th Floor Rm 6051

Description:

By the eighteenth century, a tiny colonial elite ruled over the island of Ireland. Dublin was equipped with its own parliament and peerage, which governed this notoriously hostile island in the name of the British crown. However, this coterie of relative *arrivistes* faced rival claims to power. Old Norman dynasties, largely dispossessed by reason of their Catholicism, still cherished the idea that they constituted the island's "real" elite. Meanwhile, all across the country, interest was growing in the pre-colonial Gaelic aristocracy, who had mostly been driven into exile during the previous century. Underlining all these tensions was a complete breakdown in the system of sectarian segregation on which Britain's control of the island depended. At the end of the century, the explosive rebellion of 1798 turned the old order of colonial Ireland on its head, ushering in a new age of radical republicanism and new understandings of who the Irish even *were*.

This lecture reviews the underlying ethnic basis of nobility in eighteenth-century Ireland, and explores how colonial systems of hierarchy imploded during the second half of the century, changing the course of the nation's history forever.

