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Brittany and the 1916 Easter Rising

# En Envor



Birth of the Irish Republic by Walter Paget: the General Post Office (Dublin) during the Easter Rising. Wikicommons.

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# Brittany and the 1916 Easter Rising

In its chronology of “The Bretons,” the Longman Companion to European Nationalism candidly identifies the 1916 Easter Rising as having “inspired Breton nationalists.”<sup>1</sup> This is undoubtedly true. However, the detached tone in which this historic stimulus is often presented significantly downplays the depth and complexity of the Breton-Irish relationship. Ireland and Brittany, as well as expatriate Irish and Bretons throughout France, interacted in a variety of ways prior to the Great War and throughout the Irish revolutionary period (1916-23). Though concentrated, such influences helped to develop Breton nationalism and legitimize the internationalism of the Irish independence movement. The centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising invites a revisiting of this relationship, its cultural roots and political connections, and the extent and nature of the Easter Rising’s reception abroad.

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<sup>1</sup> PEARSON, Raymond, *The Longman companion to European nationalism, 1789-1920*, United Kingdom, Longman Group, 1994, p. 110-11.

## Connections before the First World War

Catholicism has provided an important cultural link between Ireland and France throughout the modern period, one Great Britain often interpreted beyond a religious commonality. Penal Laws reducing Catholic influence and political access were instituted in an attempt to suppress Jacobite threats to the Protestant Ascendancy in Britain and Ireland. More direct efforts were made to monitor the extent and influence of Irish nationalism in the wake of the Great Famine (1845-52), particularly as leading ideologues within the Young Ireland movement had attempted to internationalize the Irish cause in France and North America. French interest in Ireland expanded in the late nineteenth century as British imperialism threatened to marginalize French interests in Africa. During this time, Paul Cambon, French ambassador to Great Britain, dutifully reported on Irish public opinion and nationalist activity to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Théophile Delcassé. Outside government circles, Irish channels in France echoed nationalist sentiment from home. For example, an 1897 edition of *L’Irlande Libre* – “the voice of Irish ex-patriots in Paris” – identified England as “the enemy of peace in the world,” referencing Britain’s naval hegemony and colonial expansion. This tone softened following the

Entente Cordiale, as Britain and France drew closer in the face of expanding German power in Europe. However, political dissenters and cultural activists remained active in both Brittany and Ireland; both argued for devolved or regionalist political autonomy and revived folk legends in literature to demonstrate distinct and separate historic traditions. These movements, along with contributors from Scotland and Wales, helped to create and strengthen pan-Celtic identity.<sup>2</sup>

### Different movements

Ironically, pillars of Breton and Irish cultural revival operated in their respective métropoles, Paris, London and Dublin, as opposed to the exalted rural peripheries they honored.<sup>3</sup> While Anatole Le Braz, Le Braz, W.B. Yeats, and Lady Gregory infused their work with Celtic interpretation, debate on home rule, regionalism, and political devolution was present throughout the western Celtic periphery, in Brittany and Ireland as well as Scotland and Wales. Social, athletic, political, and linguistic complements to the literary scene were experienced in the Gaelic League, Gaelic Athletic Association, Young Scots Society, Young Wales, and the Breton Regionalist Union. Attempts at broader, Celtic cohesion were present in the Celtic Literary Society, the Pan-Celtic Congress, and the Celtic Association. Though unable to achieve levels of membership or influence enjoyed by intra-national organizations, pan-

<sup>2</sup> See BERRESFORD-ELLIS, Peter, *The Celtic revolution: a study in anti-imperialism*, Wales, Y Lolfa Cyf, 1985; 2000; BERRESFORD-ELLIS, Peter, *Celtic dawn*, Wales, Y Lolfa Cyf, 1993; 2002; GREENBERG, William, *The flags of the forgotten: nationalism on the Celtic fringe*, Brighton, Clifton Books, 1969; STOVER, Justin Dolan, "Celtic nationalism in the period of the Great War: establishing transnational connections" in FURCHTOTT, Deborah, HENLY, Georgia, and HOLMBERG, Matthew, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic colloquium*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2013, p. 286-301.

<sup>3</sup> REECE, Jack E., *Bretons against France: ethnic minority nationalism in twentieth-century Brittany*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1977, p. 36.

Celticism suggested a reciprocal partnership, something Breton poet Camille Le Mercier d'Erm observed as evidence of "racial solidarity."<sup>4</sup>

Such cohesion was welcomed from a variety of observers. "Taldir" (François Jessrennou), Breton poet and co-founder of the Breton Regionalist Union, cheered the founding of *Celtia*, a pan-Celtic magazine published by the Dublin Celtic Association:

Thanks then to ye, people of Ireland, and to you especially, "Negesydd o'r [Messenger of] Ynyswerdd," for your work on behalf of our countries through good times and bad. We in Brittany are with you[.]<sup>5</sup>

*The Celtic Review*, first published in 1904, featured contributions from Irish, Scottish, and Welsh authors and poets, and dedicated an entire issue to Breton proverbs.<sup>6</sup> In 1912, the French Celtic League (*La Ligue Celtique Française*) published *La Poétique*, which coordinated and translated news from throughout the Celtic periphery. Outside literary sphere, few other examples demonstrate individual or local impressions of the Breton-Irish connection before the Great War. Irish records provide some narrow views. After being married, Desmond and Mabel Fitzgerald escaped to St. Jean du Doigt, north of Morlaix, which Desmond had learned of during his earlier involvement with the Imagist poet group.<sup>7</sup> Around the same time, Reverend Brother Denis O'Dowd shared his

<sup>4</sup> LE MERCIER D'ERM, Camille, *Les hymnes nationaux des peuples celtiques*, Paris, 1920, p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Celtia*, Jan. 1901, on line archive.

<sup>6</sup> HINGAUT, Abbé and VALLEE, François (Ab. Hervé), "Proverbs of Brittany", *The Celtic Review*, April 1905, p. 316.

<sup>7</sup> In the opening of his autobiography, Fitzgerald states he was "living abroad;" his editor added "in Brittany." FITZGERALD, Desmond, *Desmond's rising: memoirs 1913 to Easter 1916*, Dublin, Liberties Press, 1968; 2006, p. 11; FOSTER, R.F., *Vivid faces: the revolutionary generation in Ireland, 1890-1923*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 2015, p. 124-5.



Photograph of delegates at the Celtic Congress 1904, Caernarfon. Back row: Maggie Jones (harpist of Arfon); Mrs Gruffydd Richards (chief harpist of Gwent), David Roberts (blind harpist of Mawddwy), Gwyneth Vaughan. Front row: Pedwr James, Emile Hamonic, Lena Botrel, Theodore Botrel, Professor Paul Barbier. Wikicommons.

knowledge of Irish, Welsh, Manx, French and Breton with Christian Brothers School students in Dingle, County Kerry. The encounter left a deep impression on young Tadhg Kennedy, who would later join the Irish Republican Army's Kerry Brigade.<sup>8</sup>

Efforts to organize pan-Celtic literary community exceeded any political coordination prior to the Great War. In Ireland, the Sinn Féin political party stayed true to its name, "Ourselves alone," while the *Fédération Régionaliste de Bretagne* and the Breton Nationalist Party, both founded in 1911, grew its structures in Brittany. Nevertheless, by the summer of 1914 Breton regionalists had greatly aligned various causes toward cultural and political autonomy, and an Irish Home Bill had passed in the House of Commons at Westminster. In many ways, expectations featured in a 1901 issue of *Celtia*, which stated that the twentieth century would recognize "those characteristics which distinguish the Celtic nationalities from their more powerful neighbors," seemed prophetic.<sup>9</sup>

### The Great War

The outbreak of war in Europe significantly altered the trajectories of Irish and Breton nationalism. Irish Home Rule became law but its application was postponed until hostilities ended. Political leaders John Redmond and Edward Carson called on their respective nationalist and unionist followers to enroll in Irish divisions of the British army; Irish and Ulster Volunteer units flocked to enlistment centers in variant displays of loyalty to Britain.<sup>10</sup> Overall, Ireland contributed nearly a

<sup>8</sup> Statement of Tadhg Kennedy, Irish Military Archives, bureau of military history, witness statement 1413, p. 13-14.

<sup>9</sup> *Celtia: a pan-Celtic monthly magazine*, Jan. 1901, p. 1. A welcoming review of *Celtia* was featured in *The Academy*, 12 Jan. 1901, p. 24.

<sup>10</sup> FITZPATRICK, David, "The logic of collective sacrifice: Ireland and the British army, 1914-1918", *The Historical Journal*, vol. 38, no. 4, Dec. 1995, p. 1017-1030.

quarter-million soldiers. Over one million Bretons served during the First World War. However, it was their casualty rate that distinguished them within the French army; Breton losses approached twenty-two per cent – higher than the seventeen per cent national average.<sup>11</sup> Cultural nationalists continued their work throughout the war, while the political groups they complemented became increasingly marginalized. Though not a major party before 1916, Sinn Féin organizers were curtailed by the Defense of the Realm Act, and the Breton Nationalist Party suspended its activity in recognition of the political *Union Sacrée* in France.

While the war had aligned certain sections of British and French society, it threatened to radicalize others. Certain Irish factions viewed the war as an opportunity to strike for independence. The inner circle of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, an oath-bound republican society, began plans for a rebellion to overthrow British rule in Ireland. The war also spurred Breton nationalism. As Jack Reece has argued,

By thoroughly disrupting Breton society through mobilization of its people for war production at home and military service at the front and by causing the deaths of so many of its most vigorous young men, the war generated new resentments while it rekindled old ones.<sup>12</sup>

By 1915, French officials also recognized the war's potential to transform Irish society. "We in France don't understand the Irish question," wrote Cambon.

[F]or many years it appeared to us a religious question, or an agrarian question, or a question of parliamentary parties, but it is truly a

<sup>11</sup> LAFON, Alexandre, "War losses (France)" in DANIEL, Ute, GATRELL, Peter, JANZ, Oliver, JONES, Heather, KEENE, Jennifer, KRAMER, Alan, and NASSON, Bill (eds), *1914-1918-online: international encyclopedia of the First World War*, Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, 2014 ; REECE, *Bretons against France...*, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

<sup>12</sup> REECE, *Bretons against France...*, *op. cit.*, p. 88-9.

national question and it resumes its full extent under the influence of the war, which everywhere awakens the old instincts of nations.<sup>13</sup>

## The 1916 Easter Rising

Irish separatist nationalism matured as the war progressed. A disastrous campaign at Gallipoli in 1915 resulted in extensive casualties within Irish units, fuelling resentment.

### Irish Easter

Throughout Ireland, a small but influential contingent of the Irish Volunteers, ostensibly led by Eoin MacNeill, refused enlistment in the British army and insisted that fighting for Ireland did not imply service abroad. Irish Republican Brotherhood leadership, which had infiltrated key positions within the Volunteers, agreed. On Easter Monday, 24 April 1916, a small contingent of the Irish Volunteers, Irish Citizen Army, and Cumman na mBan (women's auxiliary) numbering approximately 1,500, occupied symbolic positions throughout Dublin and proclaimed an Irish Republic. The rebels held their positions through most of the week, until shelling from British artillery, subsequent fires, and the possibility of further civilian deaths prompted Padraig Pearse, Commander-in-Chief of rebel forces, to surrender.

The Easter Rising had a profound impact in Ireland and abroad. The physical destruction of Dublin was extensive;<sup>14</sup> separation women, whose husbands were at the front harassed rebels en route to their

<sup>13</sup> Cambon, Paul, to Delcassé, Théophile, 14 June 1915 in Archives Diplomatiques, Ministère des Affaires étrangères; guerre, 1914-1918: Grande-Bretagne, Irlande, Mars 1915-Nov. 1916.

<sup>14</sup> See STOVER, Justin Dolan, "The destruction of Dublin" in *Century Ireland, 1913-1923*, RTÉ.

internment in Britain. French military directors were confident of German complicity. From London, French Military Attaché, Colonel de la Panouse, attempted to relay ground truth to the Minister of War in Paris.<sup>15</sup> On 25 April, Tuesday of Easter Week, he delivered news that the rebels were "in the pay of our enemies [Germany]".<sup>16</sup> Cambon, too, pointed to German influence. Toward the end of Easter week he issued a telegram to French ambassadors and ministers throughout Europe stating that although the Rising emanated from a variety of factors, it "was surely caused by the German leaders."<sup>17</sup> Suspicion was not unfounded. Former British diplomat Roger Casement had traveled to Germany in late 1914 to recruit a fighting force from Irishmen within British Army prisoner of war camps. The force never materialized as planned and Casement was delivered to Ireland via German submarine on Good Friday in an attempt to stop the rebellion. Overall, France was relieved that the Easter Rising had not significantly upset the Allied war effort.<sup>18</sup>

### Breton Easter

The Easter Rising significantly impacted Brittany in 1916 and thereafter, and inspired the further development of Breton nationalism. But how did it do so, and why? Immediate local reaction to the Rising in Brittany is difficult to discern. More intimate impressions were conveyed retrospectively, but nevertheless suggest the Rising's transformative impact. Several individuals, who would come to revitalize Breton

<sup>15</sup> ANN DE WIEL, Jérôme, *The Irish factor 1899-1919: Ireland's strategic and diplomatic importance for foreign powers*, Dublin, Irish academic press, 2011, p. 218; De la Panouse to Rocques, Pierre ("Minister of War"), 25 April 1916, Archives Diplomatiques, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, guerre, 1914-1918: Grande-Bretagne, Irlande, Mars 1915-Nov. 1916.

<sup>16</sup> De la Panouse to Rocques, 25 April 1916, Archives Diplomatiques.

<sup>17</sup> Cambon telegram, 27 April 1916. Archives Diplomatiques.

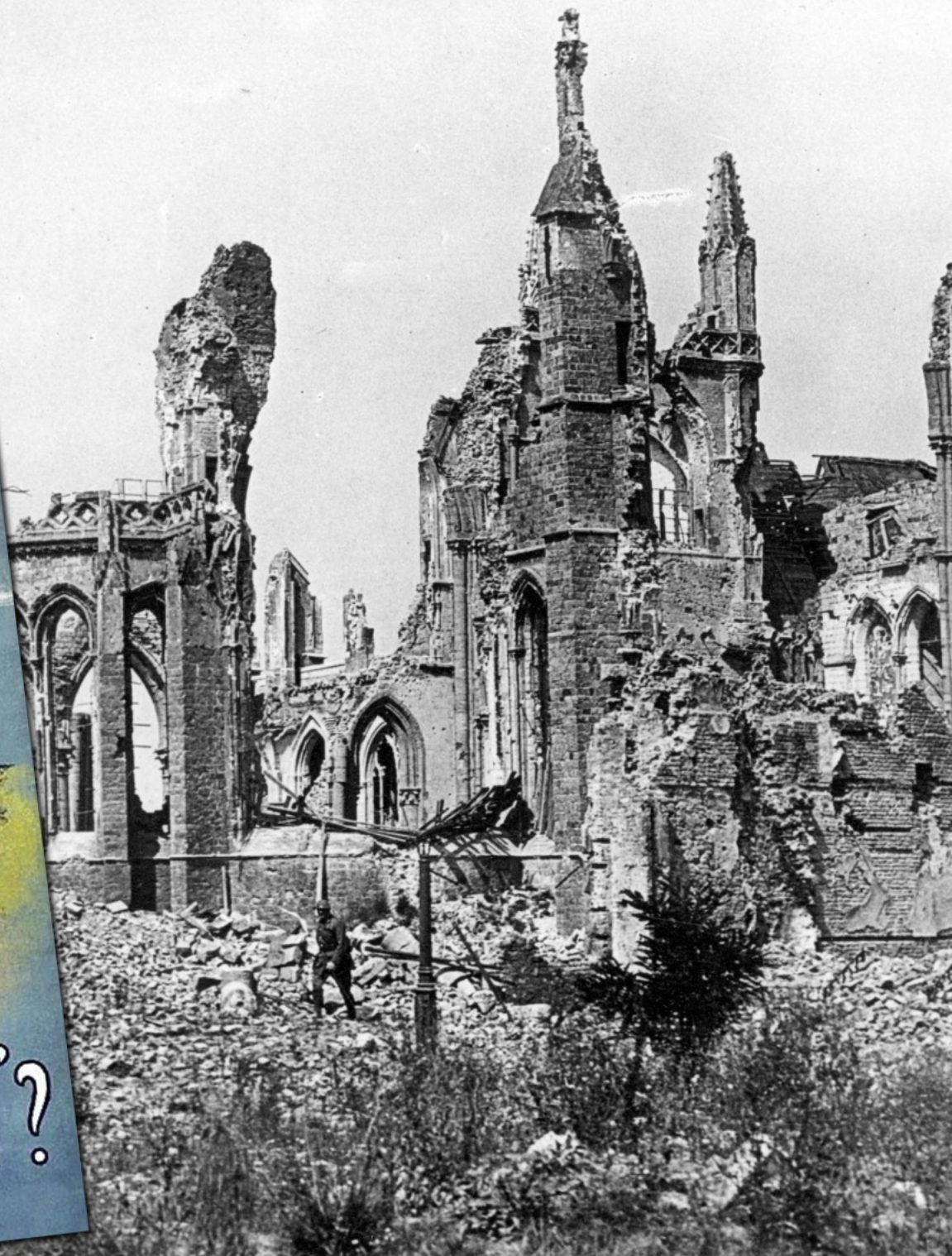
<sup>18</sup> ABAYAWICKREMA, Ronan, "My 1916: '1,200 Irish died while the Rising raged, most serving with British forces overseas'", *Irish Independent*, 14 Oct. 2015.

**FOR THE GLORY OF IRELAND**



**'WILL YOU GO OR MUST I?'**

War propaganda in Ireland encourages Irishmen to save Catholic Belgium.  
Public domain.



Ruins of leper. City of Vancouver Archives: AM54-S4-: Gr War P35.



nationalism following the Great War, were deeply moved. For the adolescent François Debauvais, the Rising was said to have produced an instantaneous conversion in Brittany, “arousing their ethnic Breton feeling.”<sup>19</sup> Olier Mordrel, a Parisian-born Breton, recalled how “it was the Dublin rising of Irish patriots on Easter Sunday 1916 that instantly transformed the fifteen-year-old [Debauvais],”<sup>20</sup> who Bretonized his name to “Fanch” and inscribed *Vive l’Irlande* on walls throughout Rennes.<sup>21</sup> Mordrel was himself moved, and dreamt of how Bretons might emulate Ireland by staging a rebellion directed from post office of Rennes. “A thousand times we went to sleep dreaming of being in combat,” he later wrote in a history of Breton nationalism, “and we slept happily.”<sup>22</sup>

Cultural nationalist and poet Camille Le Mercier d’Erm produced a book of poetry shortly after suppression of the Easter Rising and execution of its principal leaders. “Ode aux martyrs de 1916” was dedicated to “The Martyrs of Ireland, fallen or imprisoned for their just cause in April-May 1916, and [to] the memory of all those who suffered and died before them.” A pamphlet of poems prepared under the title *Irlande à jamais!*, conveyed sympathy and admiration for Ireland and helped to develop the emerging interpretation of the Rising as an act of

selfless national salvation.<sup>23</sup> One poem in particular, written amidst the post-Rising executions, urged Bretons to rebel as Ireland had done:

The wind of freedom is blowing across the moor,  
Despite the Franks and their efforts  
[It] blows increasingly strong. ...  
The wind of freedom is blowing across the moor,  
[It] awakened ... the valiant Sinn Féin and the Fenians;  
The winds of freedom [are] blowing across the moor,  
Tomorrow, after the Fenians  
Awaken the great Chouans.<sup>24</sup>

But Brittany did not follow Ireland down the path of open rebellion, nor was it believed that imitation was necessary. Instead, some viewed the Easter Rising as having served a wider Celtic cause. Louis N. Le Roux, a contemporary of Le Mercier d’Erm and co-founder of the Breton Nationalist Party, confessed that, “Easter Week was for us a sign of Resurrection and its martyrs died for us too”.<sup>25</sup> Though a broader, coordinated and pan-Celtic departure into physical force nationalism failed to occur in Brittany, Scotland and Wales, each worked to re-establish their respective cultural programs following the Great War – often using nationalist Ireland and Sinn Féin as a model.

<sup>19</sup> REECE, *Bretons against France...*, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238, n. 16 citing MORDREL, Olier, “Fransez Debauvais, I,” in *Ar Vro 1*, Pâques 1959, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> O CIOSAIN, Eamon, “La Bretagne et l’Irlande pendant l’entre-deux guerres”, *Dalc’homp sonj*, nos. 22-3, spring-summer, 1988, p. 29-35, citing BOUESSEL DU BOURG, Yann, *Dalc’homp Sonj*. no. 7; MOFFATT, Bernard, *La Liga Celtia*, 28 Dec. 2015; LEACH, Daniel, “‘Repyaing a debt of gratitude’: foreign minority nationalists and the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter rising in 1966”, *Éire-Ireland*, fall/winter 2008, p. 267.

<sup>22</sup> MOFFATT, Bernard, “The impact of 1916 reverberated beyond Ireland and the Celtic countries”, *La Liga Celtia*, 28 Dec. 2015; O CIOSAIN, “La Bretagne et l’Irlande pendant l’entre-deux guerres”, *art. cit.*, p. 29-35.

<sup>23</sup> LE MERCIER D’ERM, Camille (ed), *Irlande à jamais! Edition du parti nationaliste Breton*, 1919, National Library of Ireland, pamphlets, IR 300, p. 53.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* Also cited in O CIOSAIN, “La Bretagne et l’Irlande pendant l’entre-deux guerres”, *art. cit.* p 29-35.

<sup>25</sup> “Biography of Louis Napoleon Le Roux (1890-1944)”, *Carn: A Link Between Celtic Nations*, 9, May 1975, p. 21, cited in n. 17 of LEACH, Daniel, “Bezen Perrot: The Breton nationalist unit of the SS, 1943-5.”, *e-Keltoi: Journal of interdisciplinary Celtic studies*, 4, 6 Feb. 2008.

## The Irish Revolution, Brittany, and the Celtic periphery

By the autumn of 1916 nationalist Ireland had reinterpreted the Easter Rising from a foolish, opportunist and perhaps treasonous adventure to one a patriotic national redemption, which influenced a significant social and political transformation in the following years.

### A founding myth

Sinn Féin gained a mass following at the expense of the traditional, and comparably conservative Irish Parliamentary Party. The 1918 anti-conscription campaign further alienated Britain and the war effort while personifying social and political rebellion against British influence as patriotic. As the war entered its final phases, newspapers throughout Europe offered ostensive support for the Irish cause; the French ministry of foreign affairs continued to monitor “The Irish issue abroad (*“La question d’Irlande à l’étranger”*)”,<sup>26</sup> while also paying close attention to how France itself was perceived in the Irish press. Following the Armistice, Irish nationalism was communicated to Europe in different ways, thanks mainly to the entrenchment of diplomats of the Irish Republic in most European capitals. France remained central to this dissemination, and to foreign recognition of the Irish independence movement as legitimate. The Great War helped to frame the chronology of the Irish question in France and to establish a common bond of victimhood. In early 1920, George Gavan Duffy, Irish republican envoy to Paris, outlined the development of Irish nationalism from the French

point of view: that was, “*avant la guerre ... pendant la guerre... [and] après la guerre*”.<sup>27</sup>

Development of Ireland’s revolutionary narrative, including Sinn Féin’s political victory and popularized accounts of the exploits of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), established a benchmark for sedition within the Celtic periphery and stimulated radical nationalism abroad.<sup>28</sup> For instance, the political philosophy of Sinn Féin inspired the resurrection of the Scottish Home Rule movement and the Scots National Movement after the war. One vocal adherent, Robert Erskine Marr, kept a steady correspondence with Art Ó Briain, who organized the Irish Self-Determination League of Great Britain from London. His encouragement of Irish-Scottish collaboration was often overt, as in this letter from October 1920:

The tragic death of Mac Suibhne [Terence MacSwiney, who died on hunger strike in Brixton jail in 1920] renders distasteful to one any mere expression of honor, indignation and sympathy, as words are quite inadequate upon an occasion so infinitely distressing, that I felt sure I am but voicing the sentiments of all Scottish Nationalists when I say that we feel his death as poignantly as you yourselves do. Let us mourn today, but tomorrow for revenge! And I have long thought that the best revenge we can concert for all such atrocities (and the record of English rule in Ireland and Scotland is full of them) is for Irish and Scots to stand together, and shoulder to shoulder to fight to free their usurped countries from the cause of more atrocities. I am firmly persuaded that Ireland and Scotland are strong enough to destroy English rule in both those countries; but I think that neither is,

<sup>27</sup> GAVAN DUFFY, George “La Question Irlandaise: Exposée par un Sinn-Feiner”, *Les Cahiers*, c. 23 April 1920, National Library of Ireland, p. 2282.

<sup>28</sup> STOVER, Justin Dolan, “A different four nations approach? Celtic nationalism in the period of the Great War”, *The Four Nations History Network blog*, 4 Aug. 2014.

<sup>26</sup> Archives Diplomatiques, Ministère des Affaires étrangères: Irlande, no. 1, Z-282-1.1a 2-7-18-20, Affaires intérieures.

nor ever can be, strong enough to effect that object unless the two combine to achieve it.

### **Brittany to**

Breton nationalism evolved as well, drawing inspiration from Ireland while attempting to foster broader Celtic ties. In 1919 Debauvais and Mordrel founded the *Parti National Breton*, or the Breton Autonomist Party, which attracted more radical nationalists than had subscribed to Le Mercier d'Erm's prewar organization, which had sought only localized Breton control of culture, language, and education.<sup>29</sup> Mordrel confessed that advocating a "Brittany Only" policy on a par with Sinn Féin separatism was the only way to remove "foreign ideology" from the region.<sup>30</sup> This outlook was articulated through the journal *Breizh Atao* (Brittany Forever), which was first published in January 1919 and promoted for the foundation of an independent Breton state.<sup>31</sup> Mordrel also worked in Paris to publish and distribute pamphlets exposing the violent nature of the Irish revolution, particularly the terrorism practiced by the "Black and Tans."<sup>32</sup> In 1920, Robert Bengnay (alias O'Benkett) attempted to establish a "Sinn Féin Organization of Brittany," which included branches in Angers, Brest, and Rennes. Founded with the aim of pressuring the French government to recognize the Irish Republic, it recorded thirty members by April. However, the Sinn Féin executive in

Dublin ordered Bengnay to cease his activities, stating that he had not been given permission to represent Sinn Féin in France.<sup>33</sup>

An array of biographies, memoirs, and histories surrounding the "Irish Question," the Easter Rising, the Irish Revolution and its participants circulated throughout France throughout the interwar years. Many directly detailed the Easter Rising and subsequent revolution, such as *L'Irlande dans la Crise Universelle* by Yann de Goblet (pseudonym Louis Tréguiz), which was published in 1919. Louis Le Roux published *The Life of Patrick Pearse* in 1932; the book's overleaf described the work as the "Life of the Irish martyr by a French admirer." Others more directly aimed their work at a Breton audience, such as Ernest Joynt's 1935 *Histoire de l'Irlande: des Origines à l'Etat Libre*. A chapter entitled "Toward deliverance" reinforced nationalism and redemption while it outlined the purpose, events, and deeper meaning of the Easter Rising in its "Nouvelles edition Bretonne." Finally, Dan Breen's popular but controversial 1924 autobiography the revolutionary period, *My Fight for Irish Freedom (Mon Combat pour l'Irlande)* was translated to French in 1939, providing French audiences a glimpse into the life of an Irish guerrilla.

<sup>29</sup> J.M.H., "Regionalism", *The Irish Statesman*, 1:6, 2 Aug. 1919, p. 140.

<sup>30</sup> GUIN, Yannick, *Histoire de la Bretagne de 1789 à nos Jours: Contribution à une Critique de l'Idéologie Nationalism*, Paris, François Maspéro, 1977, p. 201-2.

<sup>31</sup> S.a., preface by Gwynfor Evans, *Breton nationalism*, Denbigh: Welsh nationalist party, 1949, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> O CIOSAIN, Eamon, "La Bretagne et l'Irlande pendant l'entre-deux guerres," p. 29-35.

<sup>33</sup> MACWHITE, M., to unknown [addressed to 1 rue André Gill, Paris], 2 April 1920, National Library of Ireland, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington Papers, MS 22691.

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**H**istorical evidence of the Easter Rising's immediate impression in Brittany and on Breton nationalism is somewhat elusive but signs of its enduring influence are apparent. Foundational ties in literary and linguistic culture prior to the Great War matured after 1914. The 1916 Easter Rising was foundational in developing this relationship and radicalizing its interpretation. At times, however, it appeared that Irish nationalist influence in Brittany was nonreciprocal. This has less to do with grassroots efforts on the Continent than with Sinn Féin's desire for international recognition by postwar powers. However, wider support and the absence of open rebellion in Brittany should not be viewed as signs of an ungrateful people. The Rising, and the sacrifice it represented inspired future generations. The now iconic May 1935 issue of *Breiz Atao* reminded readers that it had been nineteen years since "the Irish saved their country by shedding their blood for it." In 1966, Bretons and other minority nationalist groups framed a pan-Celtic celebration around the Easter Rising's fiftieth anniversary.<sup>34</sup> Far from a minor scuffle on the fringe of the world's first industrial war, the Easter Rising resonated beyond Dublin and, as is evident in the growing literature on its global significance, far beyond 1916.

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<sup>34</sup> LEACH, Daniel, "'Repaying a debt of gratitude': foreign minority nationalists and the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter Rising in 1966", *Éire-Ireland*, fall/winter 2008, p. 267-89.