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## **Na Gaeil agus Iriseoireacht na nGael san Airgintín ag deireadh na Naoú hAoise Déag agus ag tús na Fichiú hAoise**

*Dorothy Ní Uigín*

### **Réamhrá**

Chuaigh suas le 50,000 Éireannach go dtí an Airgintín sa tréimhse idir lár na naoú haoise déag agus an bhliain 1920. Luann Kelly (2009: 44) go raibh 36,800 duine a rugadh in Éirinn ag cur fúthu san Airgintín sa bhliain 1891. San alt seo pléitear roinnt de na foilseacháin a bhunaigh na hÉireannaigh seo ina dtír nua, go sonrach *The Standard*, *The Southern Cross* agus *Fianna*. Déantar beagán plé freisin ar thuairimí na nÉireannach san Airgintín i leith na Gaeilge agus i leith choincheap an náisiúin Éireannaigh – téamaí a bhí go mór i mbéal an phobail in Éirinn féin ag an am. Déanfar plé faoi leith ar William Bulfin, nó ‘Che Buono’ mar a thugtaí air, ar na deartháireacha Mulhall agus ar Patrick McManus, daoine a raibh baint thábhachtach acu le bunú agus le cur chun cinn an phreasa Éireannaigh-Airgintínigh sa tréimhse atá faoi chaibidil. Úsáidfear na foinsí iriseoireachta seo freisin le léargas a thabhairt ar mheon na nÉireannach i leith a dtíre nua agus ar cheisteanna féiniúlachta mar a bhain siad leo.

Gan eagrán ar bith de na páipéir thuas a cheadú, bheadh barúil mhaith ag taighdeoir nach n-aimseofaí mórán ábhar Gaeilge sna foilseacháin chéanna. Is cúrsaí deimeagrafacha is cúis leis seo: má bhreathnaítear ar na contaetha as ar tháinig na hÉireannaigh a chuaigh chun na hAirgintíne sa tréimhse seo, feictear nach contaetha láidre Gaeilge a bhí iontu. Luann Edmundo Murray ina leabhar *Becoming Irish: Private Narratives of the Irish Emigration to Argentina* (2006: 23):

*None of the source documents studied in my research include a single word in the Irish (Gaelic) language, with the logical exception of placenames in Ireland. Furthermore, there seems to be no semantic or syntactic influence that can be attributed to the Irish language. Hence the generous use of alanna, begorra, garrahalya, musha and other Irish terms uttered by characters and narrators in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Irish-Argentine fiction and press articles would have been ideologically manipulated by the authors. In this respect, the linguistic strategy implemented by William Bulfin, the accomplished Nationalist writer who adhered to the idea of raising the Irish language to be the official language of Ireland, is remarkable... There were some native speakers of Irish among the emigrants to Argentina... it is likely that the relatively small emigrations from County Clare and west Cork included a higher proportion of native speakers of Irish.*

Tá cainteoirí Gaeilge seo an Chláir luaite ag McKenna (1992: 69) freisin, ach ní léir aon mhórhionchar ag grúpa chomh beag ar chúrsaí teanga san Airgintín.

Ba chostasáí i bhfad dul ar imirce go Meiriceá Thuaidh ná mar a bhí sé dul go Meiriceá Theas sa tréimhse seo agus ba dhaoine ní ba rachmasáí – agus Béarlóirí – iad tromlach na ndaoine a chuaigh as Éirinn chun na hAirgintíne dá bharr. Deir McKenna (1992: 71):

*The cost of a third-class ticket from Liverpool to Buenos Aires was £16. A similar ticket from Ireland to North America cost £4 pre-Famine and as little as £0.75 after the Famine. While there is general agreement among the sources that many of the migrants' fares were pre-paid in Buenos Aires by earlier migrants or potential employers, there is very little evidence of the mass privation that was experienced among the Famine migrants travelling to North America, with the exception of those migrants who actually arrived during the Famine years of 1845-9...*

Tá le tuiscint ó theideal an leabhair *Irish 'Ingleses': the Irish immigrant experience in Argentina, 1840-1920* (2009) le Helen Kelly, go raibh an Béarla ar cheann de na comharthaí aitheantais a bhí ag na hÉireannaigh san Airgintín, i súile mhuintir na hAirgintíne, agus ina súile féin freisin. D'aithin na hÉireannaigh a chuaigh chun na hAirgintíne iad féin mar Bhéarlóirí, agus, ar ndóigh, ba nasc nó ceangal ann féin eatarthu í an teanga sin. Deir Kelly (2009: xv–xvi):

*When examining Irish immigration in Argentina, all studies are confronted with the generic difficulty of distinguishing the Irish from the broader "Inglés" group... The adoption and application of the term "Inglés" by the Irish community was fundamental to its cultural and social development...*

Tá sé seo le sonrú sna foilseacháin a bhunaigh na hÉireannaigh sa tréimhse seo chomh maith: foilseacháin Bhéarla a bhí iontu; ní raibh an Ghaeilge – ná an Spáinnis, go deimhin – le fáil iontu sa tréimhse luath seo. Ach ní hionann sin agus a rá nach raibh blaiseadh den náisiúnachas Éireannach le fáil i roinnt acu, agus roinnt tagairtí don Ghaeilge freisin, go háirithe i mblianta deiridh na naoú haoise déag, in *The Southern Cross* agus in *Fianna* go sonrach.

Is fiú teideal leabhar Kelly a chur i gcomparáid le leabhar Edmundo Murray (a luadh thuas): *Becoming Irlandés: Private Narratives of the Irish Emigration to Argentina*. Pléann Murray ceist na féiniúlachta go mion; dar leis gur ‘Inglés’ a bhí sna hÉireannaigh a chuaigh chun na hAirgintíne i dtosach báire ach nuair a thosaigh cúrsaí náisiúnachais ag teacht chun cinn in Éirinn ag deireadh na naoú haoise déag agus ag tús na fichiú haoise, gur thug na hÉireannaigh droim láimhe leis an mBéarla agus gur iompaigh siad ar an Spáinnis. ‘Irlandés’ ab ea iad faoin tráth sin, dar leis, de shliocht na hÉireann ach ag cur fúthu san Airgintín.

## ***The Standard***

Bhunaigh na deartháireacha Mulhall *The Buenos Aires Standard* sa bhliain 1861; mhair an páipéar go dtí 1959. Tar éis sé mhí, d’athraigh an *Standard* ina nuachtán laethúil, rud a d’fhág gurbh é an chéad nuachtán laethúil Béarla i Meiriceá Theas é. Deir Thomas Murray faoi Michael Mulhall (1919: 210):

*Michael Mulhall was not what we would call today a good nationalist, but in his time he was quite a respectable one. He was a true O’Connellite, and therefore, deeply loyal to “our gracious Queen”, as he used to write. We would call him a shoneen now... That in time the Mulhalls turned the paper into an out and out English organ is not a thing that we should have any wonder for... Dependent on their own efforts, loyalists at heart, and ambitious to get on, they tended daily more and more to the side that gave them most support, till finally their paper came to be the recognised organ of the English community in Buenos Aires.*

Deir Murray faoi dheartháir Michael, Edward, gur ‘well-meaning, amiable man’ ab ea é, ‘but he never could get it into his head that Ireland should be anything but a part of the British Empire’ (1919: 327).

Léiríonn Mícheál de Barra (2009: 205) gur éirigh go maith leis an nuachtán ón tús, agus gur tharla amhlaidh

... ní hambáin i measc lucht labhartha an Bhéarla. Bhíodh *The Standard* á léamh ag cuid mhaith d’inimircigh na dtíortha éagsúla eile agus theastaigh ó na hAirgintínigh rachmasacha bheith eolach ar thíortha an Bhéarla a raibh caipiteal á infheistiú acu sa tír...

Luaitear baothghalántacht leis an bpáipéar seo go minic, agus is cinnte nár thaitin an bhaothghalántacht chéanna le lucht *The Southern Cross*, páipéar a tháinig ar an saol roinnt blianta i ndiaidh bhunú *The Standard*. In eagrán 16.10.1891 (4) den *Cross*, mar shampla, rinneadh ionsaí ar alt a bhí sa *Standard* an tseachtain roimhe sin den teideal ‘Finis Hiberniae’; scríobh ‘Che Buono’ (William Bulfin) aiste fhada ar *The Southern Cross* inar bhréagnaigh sé alt an *Standard*; dúirt sé:

*In a half column editorial The Standard on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst. wipes out, to its own satisfaction, the Irish nationality from this world. A most amazing feat!...Think of it, sirs. The editorship of a commercial daily here in the Antipodes trains a No. 10 hose charged with Stephens’ ink on to the flame of a nationality 2000 years old, and lo! A swirr and a phizzle! and then – darkness, annihilation! The nationality is extinguished; the hose is coiled up; the thing is done. It is called Finis Hiberniae...*

*Because Ireland loses a great patriot and statesman she collapses, she goes out of existence. In announcing this startling fact (?) The Standard does not strain itself in the least. Quite the contrary. It works off this sublime conception in half a column...*

*According to the Standard Ireland is now only a “geographical expression.” This is a discovery: at least it would seem so. Amongst the initiated, however, Ireland has always been a “geographical expression” but one possessing a most wonderful and illustrious significance... This “geographical expression” meant through long centuries the home of a people who were the teachers and the evangelists of Europe, and ah! Too, of a people who, in later times, were, on account of their unhappy destiny, the byword and wonder of European history.*

*...Yet it has now become, according to the Standard, a thing of the past. Why? Because Charles S. Parnell has died.*

*This is an idea begotten of what? – despair, ignorance, insufficient consideration. Be that as it may, it is a profound error. Parnell has passed away. Irish individuality has not passed away. The loss of Parnell is indeed a sad one... In his death Ireland sustained a terrible loss. She has, however, survived as terrible... To day she is face to face with the loss of Parnell. She will survive it. Parnell will have a successor...*

Luann Kelly freisin (2009: 172) faoi *The Standard*, go raibh ‘The general tone... decidedly imperialist...’, agus má bhreathnaítear ar chéadeagrán *The Standard* féin, maíonn na bunaitheoirí Michael agus Thomas Mulhall gur bunaíodh é

*... not as an emblem of a party or the watchword of rivalry, but as the bond of fellowship between the various members of our Anglo-Celtic race... We have all come from the British Isles and English, Irish, Scotch, and American acknowledge one mother tongue.*

Tá an tagairt seo don Bhéarla mar mháthairtheanga shuntasach agus is léiriú é seo ar mheon agus ar chineál throllach na n-inimirceach a chuaigh as Éirinn chun na hAirgintíne sa tréimhse luath imirce ó Éirinn chun na tíre sin.

## **Bunú *The Southern Cross***

Michael Dineen a bhunaigh an *Southern Cross: The champion of the Irish-Ireland movement in the Argentine*, le cúnamh ó Frank Mulhall (deartháir le Michael agus Edward) ar 16 Eanáir 1875, agus ba é an tAthair Patrick Dillon a bhí ina eagarthóir ar an bpáipéar ag an tús. Deirtear ar an bpáipéar féin:

*Perhaps one of the secrets of its success lies precisely in the fact that this periodical immediately assumed an entirely Argentine identity... another, in having held on throughout the years to a treasure common to both Irish and Argentine cultures, which is undoubtedly the Catholic faith. With such strong foundations, conscious of its mission, this monthly newspaper has defended and tried to spread these principles... Our newspaper covers current affairs as well as cultural and social matters and is the voice of the members of this community... highlighting local items of interest without disregarding significant events in the land of our forefathers and other parts of the world.*

*Hence, this is our duty as Catholics, as Argentines, and as heirs of the Irish culture.*

Tá blas seanfhaiseanta ar an sliocht seo, ach ní bhfuarthas an píosa seo ar chéadeagrán an *Southern Cross*, ná ar sheaneagrán ar bith, ach ar shuíomh reatha na hirise féin ([www.thesoutherncross.com.ar](http://www.thesoutherncross.com.ar)). Is é an méid a leanas a bhí le feiceáil ar chéadeagrán *The Southern Cross*, áit ar pléadh bunú agus aidhmeanna an pháipéir (16 Eanáir, 1875):

*The Argentine Republic has extended the Irish immigrant the warm hand of friendship... In no part of the world is the Irishman more respected and esteemed than in the province of Buenos Ayres; and in no part of the world, in the same space of time, have Irish settlers made such large fortunes. The Irish population in this Republic may be set down at 26,000 souls. They possess in this province 200 leagues of land... or 1,800 miles, or 1,500,000 acres. Almost all of this land is of the very best quality... We can safely say that the Irishmen in this province are worth... 5,000,000 sterling...*

*... "The Southern Cross" will diligently and carefully watch over the interests of the Irish in the River Plate.*

*Until now the Irish, although wealthy and respectable, and intelligent, have had no organ of the press which they could call their own. We have endeavoured to supply this great want...*

*Many may wish to know our principles. We shall announce them briefly in the words of the present Lord Mayor of Dublin – "we are first Catholics, then Irishmen" ...*

## Caitliceachas na nÉireannach-Airgintíneach agus *The Southern Cross*

Luann McKenna (1992: 77) gurbh iad na ceannaithe i dtosach a d'imir tionchar sóisialta ar na hÉireannaigh a chuaigh chun na hAirgintíne ar imirce ach faoi dheireadh na naoú haoise déag, bhain tábhacht mhór leis an eaglais Chaitliceach i gcás an tionchair shóisialta seo. Bhí an tAthair Anthony Fahey ar dhuine de na sagairt Éireannacha ba thábhachtaí in Buenos Aires sa tréimhse seo, agus rinne sé an-iarracht tacú leis an bpobal Éireannach san Airgintín – ag moladh dóibh Éireannaigh eile a phósadh, agus ag cuidiú leo obair a aimsiú ar a dteacht chun na hAirgintíne. (Féach Kelly (2009: 99-101) agus Murray, E. (2006: 19–20)).

Bhí blaiseadh an-láidir Caitliceach le sonrú ar eagráin uile *The Southern Cross*: faighimid sleachta as Tréadlitreacha na nEaspag Caitliceach in Éirinn go rialta agus i mí Feabhra 1875 (Iml.1, uimh. 6, 18.02.1875, 3), tá alt faoi ‘*The Archbishop of Tuam*’, John McHale, ina ndeirtear:

*... Let us remember that he has wrought and toiled for an entire half-century in the multifold offices of his high and arduous dignity; let us bear in mind that his episcopacy extends over the stormiest and saddest epoch in the later history of Ireland... John of Tuam survives, the last, and, with one exception, the greatest of that deathless band whose triumph began with Emancipation...*

Is íorónta an ní é nach luaitear an Ghaeilge anseo ar chor ar bith i bhfianaise a thábhachtaí is a bhí McHale i gcaomhnú agus i gcur chun cinn na Gaeilge in Éirinn féin.

Is fiú súil a chaitheamh ar an gcur síos ar cheiliúradh Lá Fhéile Pádraig a bhí ar *The Southern Cross* i 1875 (Iml.1, uimh. 11, 25.03.1875, 2):

*Mr. J.J. Barry, of the Southern Cross, rose and proposed the health of the Queen. Although Ireland suffered much from the bungling of an Imperial Parliament, although she passed long, sad years of fearful persecution, although the English Government was not what Irishmen wished it to be, yet in Ireland the name of Queen Victoria is respected and revered. She is remarkable for her domestic virtues, and for a kind and generous heart. Could she heal all the wounds of Ireland, could she remove the cause of discontent in Ireland, she would immediately do so. She loves her Irish subjects, but finds it difficult, for many reasons, to make that love practical...*

Tá an dearcadh seo ag teacht le dearcadh coimeádach thromlach na nÉireannach san Airgintín. Is mór, áfach, idir seo agus dearcadh Bulfin, mar a léiríodh é san alt a luadh thuas agus a foilsíodh ar *The Southern Cross* cúig bliana déag ní ba dheireanaí.

## Ceist na teanga agus *The Southern Cross*

Maíonn Kelly (2009: 175–6):

*... The Southern Cross transformed itself, over its first three decades, from being a non-controversial publication into representing the at times partisan and controversial interests of a distinct community... This shift in political consciousness, defined by what was now the pro-British Standard and the Irish-Argentine Southern Cross, coincided with the nationalist debate within Argentina. Under pressure from native nationalising forces and against the rising culture of linguistic concern, the Irish community began to emerge from its early “Inglés” submergence. In addressing the issue of language and the acquisition of Spanish, The Southern Cross was initially as measured as The Standard, both viewing the native vernacular in practical and rational terms. But by the late 1880s a subtle divergence began to appear...*

In *The Southern Cross* féin (10.11.1887: 4) dúradh:

*The language we speak is one of the chains, which binds us to the past, and a word expressed in our native language will often recall a bygone scene that might otherwise be buried in oblivion... The Italians teach their children Italian in the schools, and they grow up Italians in heart and soul... But the Irish learn English; and we know the consequences. The knowledge of Spanish should not lessen our attachment to Irish nationality. In fact it is doubtful whether the preservation of the English language among us tends to inspire a love for Ireland...*

Is léiriú é seo ar an athrú meoin i measc na nGael a pléadh ag tús an ailt seo agus a phléann Edmundo Murray go mion. Mar a mhíononn Kelly (2009: 177–8):

*Paradoxically, whereas Welsh ethnicity was reaffirmed through the preservation of the Welsh language, an assertion of Irish ethnicity could only be achieved through casting off the English vernacular and acquiring Spanish. In contrast to the Welsh, any assertion of a distinct Irish identity, separate from the “Inglés” group, was dependent upon a cultural and linguistic fusion with native Argentine forces... In relation to the Spanish language, it was not so much its acquisition that separated the Irish from the “Inglés” position, but rather the political symbolism that rejection of English represented.*



### William Bulfin ('Che Buono', 1863–1910)

Baineann tábhacht ar leith le William Bulfin ('Che Buono') i scéal na hiriseoireachta san Airgintín, agus is duine é a raibh aithne ag muintir na hÉireann air freisin le linn na hAthbheochana, de bharr go mbíodh sé ag scríobh ar fhoilseacháin Athbheochana in Éirinn féin sa tréimhse seo, i dtréimhseacháin de chuid Airt Uí Ghríofa go háirithe. Tá cáil ar Bulfin freisin as a leabhar *Rambles in Éirinn* (1907) agus as an aistriúchán a rinne Eoghan Ó Neachtain ní ba dheireanaí i 1936 air.

Rinne an Píarsach an moladh thíos faoi *The Southern Cross*: 'Níl in Éirinn páipéar a rinne an oiread ar son na Gaeilge agus a rinne an *Southern Star* (sic). Níl páipéar in Éirinn is féidir a chur i gcomórtas leis' (<https://www.ainm.ie/Bio.aspx?ID=599>). Ba é an ráiteas seo a spreag suim sna nuachtáin a bhí ag na hÉireannaigh san Airgintín i gcás údar an ailt seo i dtosach agus faoin ábhar Gaeilge / faoin nGaeilge a d'fhéadfadh a bheith iontu. Ach, faoi mar atá léirithe thuas, ní raibh áit lárnach ag an nGaeilge, ná fiú ag imeachtaí Gaeilge, ná imeachtaí an Chonartha, ar *The Southern Cross*. Is tábhachtaí, b'fhéidir, ceangal Bulfin le hArt Ó Gríofa; deir Tom Garvin (1987: 113) faoin nGríofach:

*... Griffith... was scarcely typical of the separatists. He was not very taken by linguistic revivalism and certainly was sceptical about the idea of basing the new Ireland on rural society; he wanted an industrialized Ireland, built up behind tariff barriers... A common and perhaps accurate criticism of Griffith was that what he really wanted was not a resurgent Gaelic Ireland, but Sacsá nua darab' ainm Éire... or a Gaelic Manchester...*

Ní fhéadfaí a mhaíomh nach raibh suim ag Bulfin i gcúrsaí teanga, ach seans gur mhó a shuim i gcúrsaí geilleagair agus trádála le slánú agus le dul chun cinn na hÉireann agus na nÉireannach a dheimhniú.

Bhí Bulfin ar dhuine de na daoine a bhí i láthair nuair a bunaíodh craobh de Chonradh na Gaeilge in Buenos Aires sa bhliain 1899. John Curry, mac le hEoghan Ó Comhraí, a bhí ina chathaoirleach ar an gcraobh seo, agus Patrick McManus an chéad rúnaí a bhí ar an gcraobh. Bhí Patrick McManus pósta le deirfiúr bhean Bulfin, agus bhí baint aige siúd le foilseachán Éireannach eile – *Fianna* – a tháinig ar an bhfód in Buenos Aires i 1910, agus a phléitear thíos. Mar sin, bhí craobh den Chonradh in Buenos Aires ar an saol sé bliana i ndiaidh bhunú an Chonartha in Éirinn agus tá a fhios againn gur chuidigh craobh Buenos Aires go mór leis an bpríomheagraíocht i mBaile Átha Cliath. Deir Patrick Callan: '*the parent organization in Ireland benefited from regular contributions from Argentina during the first decade of the century*' (1982: 394).

Is i nDoirín an Locha in aice le Biorra, Co. Uíbh Fhailí, a rugadh William Bulfin; d'fhreastail sé ar 'Scoil Bhráithre na Toirbhirte i mBiorra ar an Acadamh Clasaiceach agus ar an gCairt-scoil Ríoga i mBeannchar... Chaith sé tamall freisin i Scoil Ghramadaí na Gaillimhe' (de Barra: 256). In eagrán comórtha de *The Southern Cross*, tá cur síos fada Spáinnise ar Bulfin.<sup>1</sup> Dúradh ansin gurbh é Bulfin a thug isteach an iománaíocht go

1 Tá an t-údar buíoch den Dr Pilar Alderete-Díez as a cúnaimh leis an aistriúchán ón Spáinnis.

dtí an Airgintín<sup>2</sup>, agus dúradh gur bhronn an Pápa Pio X an *Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* air sa bhliain 1906 de bharr a chuid seirbhísí don eaglais Chaitliceach. Tá tábhacht leis an tagairt seo don Chaitliceachas, mar, faoi mar a luadh thuas, ba pháipéar Caitliceach amach is amach a bhí in *The Southern Cross*.

Deir an t-eagrán comórtha freisin go raibh Bulfin ina eagarthóir ar *The Southern Cross* idir 1896 agus 1906, cé go raibh sé ag obair mar chomheagarthóir ar an bpáipéar ar feadh ceithre bliana déag nó mar sin roimhe sin, in éineacht leis an Athair Patrick Dillon. Cheannaigh Bulfin féin an páipéar ina dhiaidh sin. Deir Thomas Murray gur ‘*under his control that the Southern Cross first began to show anything like sturdy Irish national spirit...*’ (1919: 297), agus dar le Kelly (2009: 162) go raibh:

*... political events in the homeland... inciting Irish nationalistic sentiment in Argentina, gradually reopening Old World divisions that the collective “Inglés” identity had been outwardly successful in camouflaging. By the late 1800s, the Irish community was faced with the acute dilemma of responding to nationalising forces within Argentina whilst sustaining its own distinct sense of nationalism. In either case this would not be easily achieved... Since the Irish were complicit in forming an “inglés” ethnic synthesis, the creation of an embryonic Irish-Argentine consciousness whereby Irish and native sensibilities were satisfied would entail a clear severance from the past “Inglés” ideal. Although feasible, this was complicated not only by the powerful forces of native Argentine nationalism, but also by the fragmented nature of the Irish community itself.*



**Figióir 1: Eagrán comórtha céad bliain de *The Southern Cross***

2 Deir de Barra (2009: 262) gur fhoilsigh Bulfin ‘rialacha na hiomána agus léaráidí pháirc na himeartha in *The Southern Cross*.’

Nuair a bhásaigh Bulfin scríobh ‘Sceilg’ (Seán Ó Ceallaigh) an méid seo faoi sa *Claidheamh Soluis*: ‘*The Gaelic League loses in him a great champion of their ideals and the Irish of Argentine their leader*’ (5 Feabhra 1910), ach ar leathanaigh *The Southern Cross* ba mhínic do Bulfin ag plé cúrsaí eacnamaíochta agus ag cur chun cinn fealsúnacht eacnamaíochta a bhí ag teacht le dearcadh Airt Uí Ghríofa ar chúrsaí geilleagair. Rinne sé bolscaireacht ar son Shinn Féin san Airgintín, agus tá tagairtí do ‘*Irish Ireland*’ (fealsúnacht a raibh baint ag Ó Gríofa leis agus a d’fhorbair D.P. Moran<sup>3</sup>) le feiceáil go rialta ina chuid scríbhinní. Deir Thomas Murray faoi (1919: 327):

*No-one else had ever united so many of our people under a really self-respecting, self-asserting, Irish-Argentine banner as he had. The guiding influence with him was that spirit which the Gaelic League had aroused, and which is clearly expressed, for those who are touched by that spirit, in the three words, **an Irish Ireland**...*

Phléigh Bulfin cúrsaí trádála agus tábhacht na marcanna trádála Éireannacha, agus chuir sé béim ar athbheochan agus ar fhorbairt na heacnamaíochta i bhforbairt na hÉireann trí chéile. Mar sin, cé gur féidir léargas éigin a fháil ar thuairimí Bulfin i leith na Gaeilge, ní léir aon bheachtú iomlán ar na tuairimí seo ar leathanaigh *The Southern Cross*. Bhásaigh Bulfin i nDoire an Locha den fhiabhras réamatach sa bhliain 1910.

## **Fianna**

Patrick McManus a bhunaigh *Fianna: An occasional review devoted to Irish Argentine interests* sa bhliain 1910 agus mhair sé go dtí 1917. Bhunaigh sé é de bharr gur chuir galldú na n-imirceach Éireannach san Airgintín isteach air, agus chuir sé go láidir ina choinne sin. Ní bhíodh aon Ghaeilge le fáil ar leathanaigh na hirise, áfach, cé gur chainteoir Gaeilge a bhí in McManus, ach phléití cúrsaí polaitíochta na hÉireann san iris go minic. Luann de Barra (2009: 283) go raibh McManus ‘ar dhuine de na baill ba dhíograisí de Chonradh na Gaeilge’ in Buenos Aires. Deir de Barra (284) faoi *Fianna*:

...iris a raibh thart ar 120 leathanach inti, a bhíodh an-cháinteach maidir le polasaithe rialtas na Breataine i leith na hÉireann... Pléadh inti freisin ceisteanna a bhí ag coipeadh le blianta roimhe sin faoi screab na measúlachta a bhí cruinnithe ag an bpobal Éireannach a bhí deighilte faoin am sin de réir aicme, saibhris agus polaitíochta... Bhí Mac Mánaís go mór i gcoinne galldú Gaeil Rio de la Plata. Bhí iarrachtaí ar bun ag

3 In léirmheas ar *Rambles in Eirinn* sa *Geographical Journal* a scríobhadh i 1931 – tugtar ‘*extreme Irish-Irelander*’ ar Bulfin (71) agus ‘*On political questions he employed an intelligent and fertile though prejudiced mind*’.

an am an Béarla a choinneáil mar theanga labhartha na coilíneachta Briotanaí i mBuenos Aires agus é a chur chun cinn an oiread agus ab fhéidir. Chuireadh sé isteach go mór ar dhaoine áirithe go raibh an dream óg ag impó ar an Spáinnis...

Dar le Laura Izarra (2004: 342) go raibh *Fianna* ‘vehemently anti-British’, agus déanann sí idirdhealú tábhachtach idir *The Southern Cross* agus *Fianna*: bhí iarrachtaí láidre á ndéanamh in *The Southern Cross* cuidiú le daoine socrú síos san Airgintín; bhí ailt ar an bhfoilseachán a chuir comhairle phraiticiúil ar fáil d’inimircigh chun na tíre. (Mar shampla, ar 4/12/1891 (6) feicimid alt faoi ‘How to keep ice in summer’ agus ceann eile faoi ‘The uses of salt’.) Feicimid go leor fógraí, nótaí breithe agus báis – an t-eolas tábhachtach a cheanglaíonn pobal le chéile. Ach in *Fianna*, tá ton an-náisiúnach le sonrú. Má bhí *The Standard* ní ba choimeádaí ná *The Southern Cross*, bhí an *Cross* féin ní ba choimeádaí ná *Fianna* is léir. Bhí fócas ní ba láidre in *Fianna* ar chúrsaí in Éirinn féin, agus bhí téama an náisiúnachais agus an neamhspleáchais le sonrú go láidir ar an bhfoilseachán – ar an bhfilíocht Bhéarla le ‘Ethna Carbery’ (Anna Johnston Mc Manus (1866-1902)) a foilsíodh air, mar shampla amháin.

Dar le Helen Meehan gur chuir McManus airgead ar fáil do scoil an Phiarsaigh i mBaile Átha Cliath – Scoil Éanna – agus don Choimisiún Béaloidis (1998: 53) freisin. Ní féidir, áfach, a mhaíomh go cinnte gur imir an foilseachán *Fianna* aon tionchar ar chúrsaí teanga ná ar chúrsaí náisiúnachais anseo ná san Airgintín.

## Conclúid

Níorbh ionann na himircigh Éireannacha a chuaigh go dtí an Airgintín agus iad siúd a chuaigh ar imirce go tíortha eile sa naoú haois déag – ba Bhéarlóirí iad a dtromlach, agus bhí go leor acu réasúnta maith as, agus d’éirigh go maith leo san Airgintín tríd is tríd. B’eisceachtaí ina measc iad leithéidí William Bulfin agus Patrick McManus a léirigh suim san Athbheochan agus a thacaigh leis an ngluaiseacht teanga – tríd an gConradh san Airgintín agus in Éirinn féin.

Bhí meon coimeádach Caitliceach le sonrú go láidir ar fhoilseacháin uile na nÉireannach san Airgintín. Bhí aicmeachas le sonrú orthu, agus ba léir go raibh na hÉireannaigh a chuaigh chun na hAirgintíne bródúil as an dul chun cinn a rinne siad ansin. Tá blas *bourgeois* ar roinnt den ábhar a foilsíodh i bpreas na nÉireannach san Airgintín, go háirithe in *The Standard*. D’fhéadfaí a mhaíomh, ar ndóigh, gur léiriú iad na foilseacháin ar an gcaidreamh défhiúsach a bhí ann idir an teanga agus an creideamh sa naoú haois déag ó aimsir Daniel O’Connell agus le linn na hAthbheochana féin.

Pléann Laura Izarra ‘*belonging*’ agus ‘*becoming*’ mar aidhmeanna na bhfoilseachán Éireannach *The Southern Cross* agus *Fianna*. Streachailt a bhí ann do na hÉireannaigh socrú síos san Airgintín – thug an ceangal leis na hÉireannaigh eile san Airgintín solás dóibh, ach maidir le roinnt acu, bhí sé ródheacair orthu breathnú siar; ba shocrú síos san Airgintín agus saol a dhéanamh dóibh féin ansin an fheidhm a bhí acu.

Deir Edmundo Murray (2006: 5–6):

*Emigrants were not Irish because they were born in Ireland. They had to undergo a process, both active and passive, which transformed them internally and gradually modified the type and intensity of the values that conformed their cultural reference. Irish emigrants became ingleses when they made the Transatlantic journey and arrived in Argentina...*

Ba ina dhiaidh sin a athraíodh ina n*Argentineses* agus ina nGael-Airgintínigh iad. Sa lá atá inniu ann, áfach:

*... the Irish are very much integrated into Argentinian life. “We are no longer Irish, we are Argentines of Irish descent,” says Guillermo MacLoughlin, the Southern Cross’s 14<sup>th</sup> editor since it was established in 1875 (Geoghegan, 2016).*

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## **Irisí**

*The Buenos Aires Standard* (1861-1959)

*The Southern Cross* (1875)

*Fianna* (1910-1917)



