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Teaching Irish History to Irish-Argentine Children at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

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Abstract:

The purpose of this work is to research on the teaching of Irish history to Irish children in Argentina between 1880 and 1922. It examines two Irish history textbooks – *Stories from Irish History: Told for Children* by Mrs. Stephen Gwynn (1904) and the Christian Brothers' *Irish History Reader* (1905) – published in Dublin and in use in two Irish-Argentine educational and religious centres, St. Paul's Passionist School (Capitán Sarmiento) and St. Patrick Catholic Association (Rosario). The special section of the Argentine Gaelic League on the community's Catholic newspaper, *The Southern Cross*, will allow us to analyse and study the educational, pedagogical, cultural and political links between Ireland and Argentina and their strong nationalist connections.

Keywords: Christian Brothers, Irish-Argentine Childhood, Irish History Textbooks, Irish in Argentina, Mary-Louise Gwynn

1. Introduction

A nation's school books wield a great power: they find their way to the remotest districts, and to all classes of people; they are read by the young and they are listened to by the old, and the sentiments they express take deep root. (Christian Brothers, *Irish History Reader* [IHR] 1905, 310)

The teaching of Irish history to Irish-Argentine children at the turn of the twentieth century poses some questions about the way the Irish transmitted to their next generation – born in a new land – the history of Ireland through formal education at school in a Spanish-speaking country. One aspect to consider are the political and pedagogical ideas behind their decisions at a time when both Ireland and Argentina were nations searching to consolidate their identities. Another important aspect is the selection

of textbooks for their Irish schools which were only available in the River Plate through the few bookshops in Buenos Aires that imported English books for the elite and the English-speaking community. The criteria for this selection, the contents of the books and their country of origin must be taken into consideration. Did these books come from Ireland, from other Irish diasporic communities (the United States, Canada, Australia) or were they written in Argentina? Finally, on account of the period considered, we should attempt to establish if the teaching of Irish history in Argentina reflected the nationalist ideals that promoted the defence of a Gaelic identity and of Éire as an independent nation, as it was the case in Ireland at the time. A question of importance, when researching Irish textbooks in Argentina, is the great difficulty in having access to the books or even to the titles of the textbooks: some libraries were dismantled like the library of Colegio San Pablo (St. Paul's), at the Passionist school in Capitán Sarmiento, Province of Buenos Aires. There is no access to the books – if any left – at Holy Cross, the Passionist Church in Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Schools are reluctant to provide information as are private owners of Irish libraries. The library at Colegio San Patricio (Rosario) kindly offered a list of titles but the oldest books are kept apart and access is not possible. An important source of information is *The Southern Cross* (TSC), the newspaper of the Irish community in Argentina since 1875, whose advertisements for the bookstores in Buenos Aires list some titles on education and religion (see Keegan 2020). In his works on the Irish in Argentina Juan José Delaney (2017) gives the names of some books read at school, a good resource when building a corpus of titles of probable use.

In an attempt to make a first approach to the subject of the teaching of Irish history to children in Argentina we will examine two textbooks in use in two Irish schools in the first decades of the twentieth century. These books are *Stories from Irish History: Told for Children* by Mrs. Stephen Gwynn, published by Browne and Nolan for the national education system in 1904, and the Christian Brothers' *Irish History Reader* (IHR), published by M.H. Gill & Son in 1905, both in use for the education of primary pupils in Ireland at the time. In Argentina, Gwynn's book was in use at St. Paul's (Colegio San Pablo), the Passionist school in Capitán Sarmiento, Province of Buenos Aires at least in 1922. Another copy of Gwynn's book was found at the library of St. Patrick's School (Colegio San Patricio) in Rosario, Province of Santa Fe. This library also has a volume of the mentioned Christian Brothers' *Irish History Reader*. Although we are aware that we are working with a small corpus, we will try to answer some of the questions mentioned. It is important to bear in mind that the public for which these books were chosen was small (a group of children, mainly boys, attending Irish Catholic schools whose curriculum included this specific subject). The Irish community in Argentina was also small when compared to the Italian or Spanish communities. We will start by explaining the nationalist context of the Irish-Argentine community between 1880 and 1922 (the figure of William Bulfin, the role of the clergy and *The Southern Cross*). Then we will consider the question of teaching history in Ireland under the National Education System and the place of the Christian Brothers' textbooks in it. Finally, we will have a look at the Irish-Argentine schools where the books were in use and draw some possible conclusions.

2. Education and the Irish

Education has always been a matter of importance to the Irish in Ireland and in the diaspora. Formal education − both for sons and daughters − was considered a "pathway to success" (Fitzpatrick 1994, 489). At the end of the nineteenth century, in the light of the debate around an Irish identity and the writing of an Irish history, there was a major concern about how their children would be taught Ireland's past and culture, its struggles and glorious deeds.

In the English-speaking diasporic communities where the Irish settled[1] (the United States, Canada and Australia) the question of teaching Irish history to the children of the Irish immigrants had turned out to be as problematic as it was in Ireland. In the United States, the Irish Catholic communities of the 1850s encountered discrimination and struggled for decades with the local education boards to have some textbooks replaced in public schools. The Irish Catholic immigrants and their clergy wanted to prevent their children from being imposed what they considered a false narrative of Irish history with a Protestant and English perspective (Keljik 2014, 99; Keegan 2020, 6). The introduction of national education in Canada and Australia followed a process similar to that of Ireland's and it included the use of the same Irish textbooks produced for the Irish national schools, as "part of an emergent imperial rationale aimed at legitimizing British control and establishing a normalized imperial identity" among white settler subjects (Lougheed 2018, 10).

But the small Irish community that settled in Spanish-speaking Argentina around the 1840s faced different problems concerning the education of their descendants. As the pages of *The Southern Cross* – the community's Catholic newspaper – show, they had to decide whether they wanted their children to have an education in Spanish and according to the Argentine education system, which was a matter of special urgency from the 1880s on account of the new education laws. On the other hand, there was the question of their "Irishness"[2] and whether their children would have an Irish education in Argentina.

3. The Irish in Argentina

The Irish arriving in Argentina during the mid-nineteenth century settled mainly in the northern and western areas of the Province of Buenos Aires. Many immigrants worked in the wool industry. Father Anthony Fahy, greatly concerned with their faith and prosperity, was a major influence in shaping the growing community. He arrived in Argentina in 1844 and soon saw to the education in Ireland of twelve Irish chaplains that were sent to attend religious needs of the Irish immigrants in Buenos Aires. In 1856 he had the Sisters of Mercy take over the Irish Hospital and open a convent and two girls' schools in Buenos Aires (the first Mercy settlement in South America) (Ussher 1951). The Irish priests and nuns were to exert a great influence on the community.

By the end of the nineteenth century the Irish in Argentina were consolidated (a good part of them were prosperous), searching for their new identity and climbing social positions. They had established several churches and schools. In 1875 they had their own newspaper,

[1] Of Greek origin, the word diaspora has acquired different meanings. In general it refers to the mass dispersion of a population from its indigenous territories and in particular to the dispersion of the Jews (*Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*). It may also name any deterritorialized nation. The concept became more flexible when adopted by different disciplines. Cruset points out the complex problem of hybrid identities and split loyalties (2015, 48). The Irish communities which settled in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Argentina mainly during the nineteenth century are often referred to as the "Irish diaspora" or "the diasporic communities".

[2] Irishness is defined as "the fact or quality of being Irish" (Merriam Webster Dictionary). It is a dynamic concept, hard to define for its changing nature. What makes somebody Irish? For nineteenth-century emigrants living in the Irish communities around the world this meant building a new identity in a new land while keeping features of Irish culture and transmitting them to their children (now Irish-Americans, Irish-Australians, Irish-Canadians, Irish-Argentines) at home, at church and at school. It implied "a lengthy process", the process of becoming somebody different, as Edmundo Murray explains in his book, precisely called *Becoming Irlandés: Private Narratives of the Irish Emigration to Argentina, 1844-1912*: "The emigrants from Ireland who became English and then became Argentines, eventually became Irish. At the present time they celebrate St.Patrick's Day conspicuously, drink beer, decorate their houses with shamrocks, and prefer tea and scones to the traditional mate with bizcochitos […]" (2006, 6).

The Southern Cross, founded by Canon Patrick Joseph Dillon, which had a Catholic and Irish perspective. At the time, Argentina was consolidating as a nation, receiving large numbers of European immigrants and undergoing important demographic and social transformations which required new laws. The 1880s and 1890s were the decades in which a new social discourse and new policies on childhood were produced in the country. Education meant not only instruction but also inserting the child into a new system. As in many other countries, the child was considered a future citizen that needed to be educated under the law. Children of poor immigrants were under scrutiny, considered not only at risk but also potentially risky for society (Frigerio 2008, 5; Keegan 2020, 8). In the 1870s and 1880s lay education was spreading in Europe. *The Southern Cross* reflected its worries about what they called "Godless education". In 1884 *Ley 1420*, the law for free, lay and obligatory education for children from six to fourteen years old, was passed in Argentina amid intense debates between liberals and Catholics in Parliament and during the Congress of Pedagogues (1882), closely followed by the Irish-Argentine newspaper. The law had a great and long-standing impact on society and in the shaping of an Argentine identity. The policy carried out in Argentina from 1880 to 1910 was intended to prevent social disintegration vis à vis massive immigration mainly from Italy and Spain. As the First Centenary of the Argentine Revolution (1910) approached, the debates about nationality and a national education increased. The new national law enforced the teaching of Argentine history and geography and of Spanish as a "national language", making instruction uniform for all pupils, especially the children of the large number of arriving immigrants (Keegan 2020, 9).

At the turn of the twentieth century, William Bulfin, writer, journalist, editor and later owner of *The Southern Cross*, expresses in the paper his belief that encouraging Irish-Argentine children − boys and girls alike − to learn the Spanish language and the history and geography of their birthland as well as the history of Ireland and the Gaelic language will only produce better human beings and better citizens (TSC, 4 January 1901).

4. Irish History for Irish-Argentine Children

The teaching of Irish history to Irish-Argentine children is a matter that has hardly been dealt with in Argentina and involves aspects of identity, memory and education. Textbooks are valuable instruments that shed light on the political as well as pedagogic function of education at a certain period. What kind of books were available for Irish readers (adults and children) in Spanish-speaking Argentina around 1880? There was a significant import of books and periodicals in the English language to the River Plate during the nineteenth century. Half a dozen bookshops advertised weekly their imported books (all in English) on *The Southern Cross* since its first number in 1875. The number of bookstores increased around 1900 along with a market for consuming goods. The titles included periodicals, religious books, novels, history books, poetry and song books, and several texts for the religious and formal instruction of children. On the list we find readers, spelling books, grammars, geographies, arithmetic books (among them, the Christian Brothers Series, the Young Catholic readers, Colville's Readers, McCullock's, *The British Reading Book*, Mavor's *Spelling Book*, Carpenter's, Sullivan's, Connon's, Fenning's, Markham's, the *Victoria Spelling Book*, the *British Spelling Book*, Plunkett's Catechism, etc.) (Keegan 2020, 15).

It is evident from this source that the Christian Brothers' Readers were imported to Argentina at least from 1875 but it is most likely they had been available before, probably through Father Fahy's and the chaplains' advice. At the time, the Congregation of the Christian Brothers had not yet settled in Argentina. They opened their school, Colegio Cardenal Newman, much

later, in 1948. But as the advertisements show, their instruction books were available in the country. In fact, the Brothers' books were exported from Ireland to their schools in the Irish diaspora around the world (the United States and Australia in particular) through the growing market of English books that accompanied the expansion of the British Empire during the nineteenth century (Molloy 2010; Barr, Carey 2015). There was an important flow of English goods to the River Plate during the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Edmundo Murray describes Argentina as "an informal colony of the British Empire in which everything, except probably meat and hide, came from the British Isles" (2006, 6).

The list from *The Southern Cross* also included juvenile books and novels by popular authors (Jules Verne, Louise M. Alcott, Maria Edgeworth, Hans Christian Andersen, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Walter Scott, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, Thomas Mayne Reid and Fenimore Cooper). Interestingly, a magazine of nationalist orientation for the young was also on sale: "*Young Ireland*, an Irish magazine of entertainment and instruction" – as the title read –, which included poems, stories, selected chapters from books, and most importantly, texts on Irish history. *Young Ireland* was "issued by [the newspaper] *The Nation* to provide an Irish alternative to children's literature produced in London" (Keegan 2020, 11). We cannot state the number of copies that were actually sold but we can assure that this type of material, written by nationalists with the purpose of developing in the young readers an interest in Irish history and culture, was available in the River Plate around 1880.

On his book on the language and the literature of the Irish-Argentine, Juan José Delaney lists some titles and authors that were at hand in libraries of the Passionists, in Capitán Sarmiento and in the Holy Cross Church and retreat (this now dismantled): books on theology and philosophy, lives of saints, books on poetry (Alfred Tennyson, Thomas Moore, William Wordsworth, Oliver Goldsmith) and Victorian novels (Brontë Sisters, William Thackeray and Charles Dickens), Irish authors (Sean O'Faolain, P.H. Pearse, Cormac Ó Gráda, etc.), books on folktales, dances, ballads, Edmund Curtis's *A History of Ireland*, and several more. He also mentions "Royal Readers" (Christian Brothers School Books) and Mary-Louisa Gwynn's *Stories from Irish History (for children)* (Delaney 2017, 35). The Royal Readers were produced in the United Kingdom to comply with the increasing demand for instructional books after the Elementary Education Act (1870) that established schooling of all children between the ages of 5 and 12 in England and Wales. In 1877, Nelson & Sons launched the "Royal Readers"and "Royal School" series (Harper Collins Publishers 2021). In contrast, the Christian Brothers Series were produced in Ireland for the Brothers' schools after the national school system was established in Ireland in 1831.They contained plenty of readings on Irish culture, Irish literature and Irish history, and were nationalist in their tone and approach. Delaney includes the "Royal Readers (Christian Brothers Schools Readers)" in a list of "texts commonly used in the Irish-Argentine educational institutions up to the beginning of the last [twentieth] century, a legacy that had much to do with the formation of more than one Irish-Porteño generation" (Delaney 2017, 35)[3].

Although research regarding the import of books in different languages to the River Plate during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has been carried out in Argentina (Furlong 1944; de los Ángeles Serrano 1984; Costa 2009), none of them dealt with the particular market that provided textbooks for the use of Irish schools, especially those related to the teaching of Irish history (Keegan 2020). Delaney mentioned the topic in his work on the linguistical assimilation

[3] Inhabitants of the city of Buenos Aires are called "porteños" on account of the city port (puerto).

of the Irish-Argentine (2017). The texts in English were intended for the small English-speaking community in Argentina that included not only the Irish but also the English and the Scottish.

5. Bulfin and The Southern Cross

What was the social and historical context of the Irish in Argentina at the time when these textbooks were in use? William Bulfin (1863-1910) was a remarkable figure that spread his influence on the Irish-Argentine community during the turn of the twentieth century. He was an active Irish nationalist with important and numerous connections to Ireland's political and cultural scene and concerned with education. Born into a prosperous family from Birr, he was sent to Argentina (1884-1885) where he worked in the country, learning about the life of the gauchos and the Irish-Argentine of low and high classes, later developing a career as a writer and journalist and often drawing on his youth experiences. In Buenos Aires he wrote for *The Southern Cross* under director Michael Dineen. Bulfin later became the editor (1896-1910) and owner of *The Southern Cross*, improving its circulation and attracting more publicity. From its pages Bulfin helped consolidate the links between Ireland and the Irish in Argentina spreading ideas about nationalism, the Gaelic League and Gaelic sports. He also devoted plenty of space to Catholic matters and the community's religious activities, reflecting the growth of the Passionist and Pallottine orders in Argentina. Many priests, namely Fr. Edmund Flannery and John Morgan Seehy, were, like Bulfin, strong nationalists (Keogh 2016, 75).

In Buenos Aires, William Bulfin married Irish Annie O'Rourke, who came from a strong Irish nationalist family. They had a son, Eamon, and five girls (Mary, Anita, Aileen and Cathleen ("Kid"), who later married Seán MacBride). The first two children were born in Argentina. Finding the city not healthy for young children and concerned about their education, they decided that Annie would move to Ireland and Bulfin would continue working in *The Southern Cross* in Buenos Aires for some time. He travelled back and forth. In this way, Bulfin was in close contact with Ireland's political and cultural activity.

A strong defender of Irish language and culture, in 1899 he founded the Gaelic League Branch in Argentina, whose activities were held in different towns of the Province of Buenos Aires and announced and reported on the pages of *The Southern Cross*. Priests were also involved in the progress of the Gaelic League. Santiago M. Ussher, an important member of the Irish Catholic Association, who in 1932 presided the delegation that attended the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin, was also president of the League on many occasions. His works on the life of Fr. Fahy, and the history of the Irish chaplains and the Sisters of Mercy in Argentina have preserved an important part of the community's past (97). Fr. Richard Gearty was also a prominent nationalist and a member of the Gaelic League. He arrived in 1895 and worked for some time with Fr. John M. Seehy in Rosario (*ibidem*). Fr. Samuel O'Reilly (1840-1917), chaplain at Chivilcoy, was also a strong nationalist (98).

Bulfin considered physical activity an important part of a child's education and was a keen promoter of hurling and Irish games in Argentina along with many of the Passionist and Pallottine priests. The priests introduced the Irish games in the Irish Catholic schools. The Irish Catholic Association presided by Fr. Flannery gave Bulfin permission to use their fields for hurling matches on non-working days. *The Southern Cross* gave considerable space to the activities of the G.A.A., the Gaelic Athletic Association (101). Through its pages, the readers could learn the basics of the games. The first Gaelic football club was founded in the town of Lobos (Province of Buenos Aires) in 1892. Bulfin also helped found the Buenos Aires Hurling Club (*ibidem*).

Under William Bulfin's direction, *The Southern Cross* shifted the focus towards the situation in Ireland and the Gaelic League. The paper devoted its second page to the League. This especial section included poems, debated translations, articles and scholarly pieces on the Irish language as well as updated information on the teaching of Gaelic in the growing diasporic communities around the world. Through constant comments and editorials Bulfin never lost a chance to make the Irish aware of the importance of teaching the younger generations the history and language of their ancestors (Keegan 2020). The paper's former editor, Michael Dineen, a native speaker, had promoted and encouraged the use of Irish in the newspaper. Nationalist Patrick McManus, founder of Fianna magazine, also gave his support to the cause of Irish Gaelic (Keogh 2016, 102).

The Gaelic League in Argentina was founded in 1899 presided by Eugene O' Curry's son John. For twenty years, it offered Gaelic lessons, awarded prizes to school students for their proficiency in Irish history, published its own paper (*Tír agus Tanga*), promoted annual festivals (*Oireachtas*) and collected money to support the Gaelic League in Ireland. Bulfin was in contact with many nationalist leaders (146). Douglas Hyde and other League leaders recognized the importance of Bulfin's work in the Argentine community. In 1902 he was elected delegate to Dublin's *Oireachtas* and was honour guest at a dinner presided by Eoin MacNeill where he met Pádraig Pearse. Bulfin and Pearse would exchange correspondence and become friends (104).

On the newspaper, Bulfin promoted prizes for Irish-Argentine students excelling in Irish history in Irish schools that taught the subject, and he encouraged other institutions, especially convent girls' schools, to follow the example and take a keen interest in the teaching of Irish history as well as Argentine history to Irish-Argentine children. The winners received an amount of money to buy books awarded by the League in Dublin (TSC, 4 January 1901). The Prize Committee was composed by Revd. L.E. MacDonnell, Santiago M. Ussher and the editor of the newspaper. The paper published letters from the different schools informing of their numbers of classes studying Irish history and urged parents to see to a matter that "has been too long neglected amongst us, and not only here but at home" (*ibidem*).

In *The Southern Cross* we find evidence of the concern of the teaching of Irish history as early as 1881. At the end of that year, *The Southern Cross* advertised the opening of Michael Dinnen's school, St Patrick's College in the town of San Pedro, Fr. Edmund Flannery's chaplaincy. Its curriculum offered the study of the history of Ireland as well as that of the Argentine Republic. Fr. Flannery had been proposed to supervise the religious instruction of the students (TSC, 23 December 1881) so he was in direct contact with them. On 29 September 1901, *The Southern Cross* published a letter from the Prefect of Studies at St Patrick's College, in the town of Mercedes (an Irish settlement), where Irish history was taught in two classes. After a blessing in Irish, he thanked Bulfin for the proposal to award prizes and stated: "This patriotic act will be a further incentive to the Irish-Argentine student, to bring him, more and more, into contact with the wise and the learned, the intrepid and the martyred sires of the Emerald isle" (TSC, 29 September 1901). The Sisters of Mercy also informed that four of their classes had Irish history so some girls also studied the subject.

The Bulfin children were educated in Ireland. When Pádraig Pearse opened St. Enda's in 1908, a school focused on the study of Irish and Irish culture, whose curriculum differed from the rest of Ireland's schools, the Bulfins immediately decided to enrol their son Eamon. Many renowned nationalists were sending their sons to St. Enda's. Eamon was the second on the school enrolment list. The first was Stephen and Mary Louise Gwynn's son, Denis. Denis and Eamon were schoolmates. The school magazine photographs show them acting in a school play attended by Bulfin, Gwynn and many other important nationalist leaders. This is a detail that

may let us think the Bulfins and the Gwynns were at least acquaintances sharing similar views on education and politics. It is possible that Bulfin, interested in education, may have got to know Mrs. Gwynn's Irish history book for children through the very author. Also, historian Mary Hayden, Mrs. Gwynn's close friend, was a lecturer at St. Enda's (Ferriter, 2009).

William Bulfin returned to Ireland in 1909 and died at home on 1 February 1910. He was 46 years old. His son Eamon (1892-1968) was part of "The Dogs" (a group of former pupils living at St. Enda's while studying at the university and close to Pádraig Pearse) and later participated in the Easter Rising. Although sentenced to death, he saved his life and was deported to Buenos Aires in 1919 on account of being an Argentine citizen (Keogh 2016, 203).

6. Teaching Irish History to Children

Narrating history to children is never an innocent or apolitical decision in that the narrator takes a position to establish a story that necessarily highlights some events and omits others, offering a vision that the child considers legitimized by the adult. The situation in colonized countries – as in the case of Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century – is particularly complex: the account of their history offered in schools to children reflects the point of view of the colonizing nation. Colonized countries feel compelled to narrate their story from their own understanding of events. This also accounts for the high percentage of historical fiction in Ireland, especially in children's literature (by the turn of the twentieth century a quarter of the total production for young readers was being devoted to historical fiction (these novels dealing with the Great Famine, the Independence war, emigration, the Troubles, etc.; Keenan 1996, 69; Whyte 2011).

Children are often seen as instruments to introduce changes in a colonized society and produce new social attitudes (Lougheed 2018). At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth in Ireland, politics exercised a notable influence on pedagogy. As Lougheed remarks about the Irish national school readers, the books produced, published and circulated in Ireland for the national education system since 1831,

> [T]he Irish textbooks were designed to unify children of different religions in the classroom, shift knowledge of the Irish child and create a citizen of the Empire rather than an Irish citizen. In this way Ireland would be dissolved as a separate entity in the mind of the child and relocated as part of the imperial centre. (2018, 9)

These school readers were so deprived of Irish content that they were used for educational purposes in other outposts of the British Empire, including Canada and Australia (*ibidem*). The Empire appeared as a family and Ireland was the wayward child, ignorant of the language, the laws, the habits and the rules of life in society, who needed to be civilized by English education. "[T]he project of *regenerating* Ireland relied intimately on the project of educating the new *generations* of Irish children" (Condon 2000, 54). Educational reform was recommended to promote a definitive change in the habits and moral of the new generations. In contrast, the Christian Brothers' books, drawing on nationalist sources, offered children the idea that "there was in existence an Ireland with its own language, customs, laws, physical features and its own history". They intended to give children "the sense that they had a country of their own [Ireland] and a separate cultural identity different and apart from England" (55).

Considering children's literary culture in Ireland in the light of the imperialist and nationalist discourses around 1900, not only textbooks but also juvenile periodicals and fiction reflected the attempts to gain children – boys in particular – either to the Empire or to the nationalist cause (*ibidem*). Nationalists were highly concerned with publications from London that circulated

among the Irish youth which praised Empire heroes and conveyed "English values" (Congáil 2011, 37). In the last decades of the nineteenth century England had established Ireland as a new market for consumer goods, making the Irish children more exposed to English culture (Condon 2000, 56; Congáil 2011, 43). This included an important amount of literature for the young that was often of low quality and, most worrying for nationalists, highlighted the values of British culture and its "civilizing mission". Adventure novels in far Empire outposts and heroes saving "savages" for civilization made nationalists fear that Irish children would become "children of the Empire" through the influence of this low-quality literature, driving the next generation of Irish away from the cause of independence (Congáil 2011, 41).

7. A Textbook for Teaching Irish History to Irish-Argentine Children

At the turn of the twentieth century, education for the children of the Irish in Argentina developed in a small but growing number of schools, in a context of strong nationalism and admiration for the Gaelic language and Gaelic sports. The study of Irish history was highlighted in some institutions and encouraged by *The Southern Cross* and nationalist priests. In 1922 boys attending St. Paul's, the school of the Passionist Fathers in Capitán Sarmiento (north-east of the Province of Buenos Aires) were taught Irish history through the book *Stories from Irish History: Told for Children* by Mrs. Stephen Gwynn. Some 185 km away in the city of Rosario (Province of Santa Fe) on the Paraná River, St. Patrick's Catholic Association held a copy of Mrs. Gwynn's book as well as the Christian Brothers' *Irish History Reader* intended for the fourth and fifth standards in Ireland (ten to twelve-year-old boys). Both St. Paul's in Capitán Sarmiento and St. Patrick's in Rosario were centres of educational, religious and social activities for the Irish in Argentina. However small, this evidence shows that books for teaching Irish history to children and published in Ireland circulated at least in some schools and among the clergy in Argentina. As we will see, children had access to them and they were expected to use them as textbooks. We should remark on the nationalist perspective of the books.

Let us consider the Irish religious institutions where the mentioned books were found, St. Paul's (Capitán Sarmiento), and St. Patrick's and St. Patrick's Catholic Association (Rosario).

7.1 Capitán Sarmiento

Irish priests and nuns were respected and had influence on the community. The Passionist and the Pallottine fathers (St. Patrick Schools in Mercedes and in Buenos Aires) supported the nationalist cause.

The Congregation of the Passionist Fathers arrived in Argentina in 1884. Their members were from Ireland and the United States or were Irish-Argentine. They settled in Capitán Sarmiento, 150 km north of the city of Buenos Aires and were very active and close to the Irish in the area. Fr. Victor Carolan**,** who had helped William Bulfin and his brother Peter upon their arrival, spent fourteen years in Argentina until his death in 1898. He was responsible for transforming the original site of the Passionist church of St. Paul's in Capitán Sarmiento into a modern monastic complex (Keogh 2016, 94) through the generous donations of local Irish families to the congregation. In 1898 St. Paul's, a splendid neogothic chapel, was inaugurated. In January 1900 Fr. Juan María Macklin, dean of St. Paul's Seminary, founded St. Paul's School with the aim of educating the sons of the many Irish living in the area who lacked an educational institution. St. Paul's became an important spiritual and educational centre that congregated the Irish and their descendants. At St. Paul's School, Gwynn's Irish history book was in use in 1922.

At St. Paul's lessons were held in the old chapel of St. Patrick. From 1905, under Headmaster Fr. Guillermo Cushing, the school took in boarders. The school followed the official curriculum for the schools of the Province of Buenos Aires but classes were in English and in Spanish. In 1908 it had a total number of a hundred and seven students (day school and boarders). Most of the children would ride from the nearby estancias to attend classes. The school had sports areas and an artificial lake where children could enjoy a swim. The practice of hurling, the ancient Irish game, encouraged in Ireland by the G.A.A. (Gaelic Athletic Association), was specially promoted at Capitán Sarmiento. It is likely that the first games of hurling in Argentina might have taken place at St Paul's (Cruset 2015, 168). Irish nationalists believed Gaelic games for the youth served three purposes: introducing an Irish pastime among the young, developing a child's body and character, and building social bonds for future "virile citizens and soldiers of the Irish nation" (Hay 2015, 8). Under a nationalist perspective the practice of Gaelic sports was linked to the study of Irish culture (Irish language, Irish history, Irish music and dances). It was vital that children were introduced to Irish historical literature and tales of Irish heroes (Condon 2000, 58). In 1922 the Passionists opened an Apostolic School for students with a religious vocation. Many students from St. Paul's would later be part of the Apostolic College (Taurozzi 2006,100). In 1922, the year in which Mrs. Gwynn's book was in use, St. Paul's school headmaster was Fr. Anselmo Gaynor, a former student born in San Antonio de Areco in 1899 (103). The school closed in the 1960s due in part to the migration of Irish families to urban centres. In the same year of 1900 Fr. Bartolomé Maag founded "La Unión San Pablo" (St Paul's Union) with the purpose of preserving Irish traditions through social, religious and sporting activities. Members were to be Irish or Irish descendants (not necessarily) and over fifteen years old (104). The Passionist Fathers were responsible for the coordination of the activities in Capitán Sarmiento and in Carmen de Areco, they were their chaplains and spiritual guides (105).

The children of the Irish were often part of social, religious and political activities. In September 1920, St. Paul's Monastery in Capitán Sarmiento celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a large gathering where Irish and Argentine flags could be seen and A Soldier's Song, Ireland's new anthem, was sung. Fr. Fidelis Fowler blessed a Sinn Féin flag (Keogh 2006, 254). In 1921, during the Passionist celebrations in Capitán Sarmiento, children were addressed by Laurence Ginnell, appointed representative of the Irish Republic in Argentina and South America, visiting the Irish-Argentine on fundraising. Upon his arrival Ginnell was greeted by a "well trained Sinn Féin regiment" of young men with fake rifles (310-311). The tone of the Irish history books in use at the schools matches the general political and educational spirit of a large part of the clergy and the Irish during the first decades of the twentieth century in Argentina.

7.2 San Pedro and Rosario

By the end of 1900 only seven of the twelve Irish chaplains educated in Ireland and brought to Argentina by Fr. Fahy were alive: among them, Edmund Flannery in San Pedro and John M. Seehy in Rosario (Landaburu 2006, 130). Both chaplains were hardworking, active leaders and highly respected by the Irish. They were also strong nationalists (Keogh 2016, 95). Fr. Edmund Flannery, born in Cork, was ordained at All Hallows College, Dublin in 1868 and was soon working in Argentina as a chaplain for the Irish community of San Pedro and Santa Lucía and the surrounding areas in the north of the Province of Buenos Aires on the banks of the Paraná River. Under Father Flannery, the Irish in San Pedro and Santa Lucía built the beautiful church of St Patrick's (*ibidem*). In 1883, following the initiative of Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Mgr.

León Aneiros, Flannery helped found the Irish Catholic Association and presided over the institution between 1899 and 1902. The Association has played an important role in the Irish community since then in religious and education areas (74-75). Flannery was highly respected among the Irish and was a close friend of Father Fahy's as well as of William Bulfin's. He was in contact with Fr. John Seehy from the chaplaincy of Rosario, 150 kilometres away. In 1918 *Songs of the Gael in Tongue of the Gall* was published by Conor MacNessa in Buenos Aires. It was a book of Irish poetry in English written by Flannery with Celtic drawings on the cover. A volume of the book can be found at the library of St. Patrick's School in Rosario. Flannery died in Argentina in 1923 (95).

Fr. John Morgan Seehy, born in Tipperary, Ireland, settled in Argentina after his ordination in 1887 and was appointed chaplain of Santa Fe. Living in the city of Rosario, on the banks of the Paraná River, he was responsible for a vast area. In 1892 Fr. Seehy bought some land to build a church and a library and in 1902 he founded St. Patrick's Catholic Association, still in existence, with the aim of propagating Catholic faith and preserving Eire's traditions (75). During 1903 Seehy presided over the Irish Catholic Association (*ibidem*). Many years after, in 1969, the Association founded St. Patrick's School. Its library still holds some volumes that reflect Irish nationalism and the Gaelic League ideals: *The Fair Hills of Ireland* (1906) by Stephen Gwynn, *Songs of the Gael* (1918) by Fr. Edmund Flannery, *Ireland Among the Nations: or, The Faults and Virtues of the Irish Compared with those of Other Races* by James O'Leary in an edition of the Irish National Library, *Celtic Myths and Legends* (1911) by T.W. Rolleston, author involved in the Gaelic League, and *Songs of Ireland* by Michael Joseph Barry, a *Young Irelander*. A native Irish speaker, Seehy used to speak the language with some Irish from Venado Tuerto, an important Irish settlement founded by Eduardo Casey in the Province of Santa Fe in 1884 (Landaburu 2006, 210). Priests had large areas to attend but they were in contact and aware of the situation in the different Irish settlements. Fr. John Seehy died in Rosario in 1949 of an old age.

8. About the Author, Mary-Louise Gwynne

Mary-Louise Gwynne was the author of *Stories on Irish History Told for Children*, the book used at St. Paul's in Capitán Sarmiento. Although she came from a large and prestigious family, information about the life of Mary-Louise Gwynne (or Gwynn) is hard to find. The influence of the Gwynn's family on university life led to Trinity College Dublin (TCD) being dubbed "Gwynnity College" in the early 1900s and deserved an exhibition of the family papers in the Long Room in 2019 (TCD News 2019). A large number of male family members were involved in Trinity's life as high-ranking university officers, professors, scholars, fellows, soldiers, alumni. Moreover, many of the Gwynns were public figures for their achievements in politics, in military engagements and in exploration. However, the exhibition does not include Mary-Louise Gwynn in any of its sections. She is briefly mentioned as the wife and mother of other Gwynns. While it is true that the exhibition is focused mainly on the male members of the family since female acceptance to Trinity College Dublin was opened later, Mary-Louise's life seems to have been outshone by outstanding members of the family (e.g. her husband Stephen Gwynn and her sons Aubrey and Denis).

Mary-Louise Gwynne ("May"), born in 1865, was the second daughter of Reverend James Gwynne and Jane Osborne. At the time, his father was Incumbant of Octagon Chapel at Bath, England. In 1889 she married her first cousin Stephen Lucius Gwynn, an active nationalist and later member of Parliament. He was the son of Reverend John Gwynn (Regius Professor of

Divinity at Trinity College Dublin) and Lucy Josephine O'Brien (daughter of William Smith O'Brien, one of the leaders of the Young Ireland Rising in 1848, convicted to Van Dieman's Land). From 1889, Mary-Louise's married name became Gwynn (The Peerage). The couple had six children. Their second son, Revd. Aubrey O. Gwynn (1892-1983), became a Jesuit priest and a renowned historian. Their third son, Denis R. Gwynn (1893-1973), was professor of modern Irish history at University College Cork. Denis Gwynn is of particular interest to our research since he attended St. Enda's School from the opening year of 1908 along with William Bulfin's eldest son Eamon. It is most likely that the Gwynns and the Bulfins were acquaintances. Although she was the daughter of a Protestant minister, Mary converted to Catholicism in 1902 along with her six children who were educated under her faith. In 1904 her book *Stories on Irish History Told for Children* was published for the national education system. This seems to be the only book Gwynn wrote.

The year of the publication is particularly significant since, four years before (1900), Irish history had been introduced in the school curriculum. Irish language had been admitted earlier, first into the primary school as an optional subject (1879) and later into higher studies thanks to the efforts of its defenders throughout the nineteenth century, namely the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language and the Gaelic League. Irish history had been systematically ignored by the Education Boards (Doherty 1996, 328). Given the lack of Irish content in books for the national schools – with the exception of those of the Christian Brothers –, the inclusion of Irish history in the syllabus was seen as a great achievement by nationalists in a period where the writing of an Irish history was at the centre of a heated debate. Around 1900 the debate on the history of Ireland as an object of study and how it should be transmitted at schools produced numerous academic essays but also popular books on Irish history for adults as well as for children, much needed as textbooks for the new school subject. Nationalist historian Alice Stopford Green believed that the relegated position of Irish history in the national education syllabus imposed by the English was leading children to conclude that Ireland's past was "less important than the rules of English grammar" (*ibidem*). Moreover, the exclusion of Irish history affected teachers' training. The Education Board commissioners feared the knowledge of history could produce reactions to the situation in Ireland and thus sought to regulate the contents of books by close supervision and refused to produce their own textbooks (330). Commercial printers published authorized books, as in the case of Mrs. Gwynn's and the Christian Brothers'. In a context of rising nationalism and the struggle for new educational and professional opportunities, women turned to writing literature, often children's fiction, and history. Their "family support, education, relative affluence and intellectual circles of friends" contributed to the formation of successful female historians (Smith 2006, 1). Mary-Louise Gwynn conforms to the description.

As a nationalist and women's rights defender, Mary-Louise Gwynn's might have considered the publication of her book adequate and necessary to take a firm position on the issue of Irish children's education at the time. Her family was also particularly interested in history. Her sons Denis and Aubrey were to become historians and writers, and her husband was author of works on history and Ireland. Mary-Louise was a kind of a public figure herself: her circle of friends were women and men involved in the agitated intellectual and political Irish life. In 1915, Gwynn and her close friend, prestigious historian Mary Hayden, lecturer at St. Enda's and friend of P. Pearse, launched in Dublin the Irish Catholic Women Suffrage Association. According to Senia Pašeta, Gwynn and Hayden were "very well-known nationalists who had both been involved in a number of suffrage groups before 1915" (2016, 88). Mary-Louise Gwynn was the Honorary Secretary of the Association, which was non-party, non-militant.

She also contributed to "The Catholic Suffragist", an English journal (Murphy 1997, 554). Mary Teresa Hayden (1862-1942), deeply attached to the Gaelic League, was a historian and women's rights campaigner considered a more moderate nationalist. As advising examiner in history for the Education Board (1907-1912), Hayden, like Gwynn, was also involved in education matters related to history. She was professor of modern Irish history at University College Dublin and co-author with G.A. Moonan of *A Short History of the Irish People from the Earlier Times to 1920* (1921), a textbook considered the "most widely used survey of Irish history in Irish schools until the late 1960s" (Ferriter, 2009).

Presenting the book as written by "Mrs. Stephen Gwynn" and not by Mary Louise Gwynn probably did not please the author but it was common at a time when women were expected to marry and depend on their husbands. In this case, it may have well been a commercial strategy to highlight the name of a renowned public figure – Stephen Gwynn – whose surname (ironically, also her wife's) meant academic prestige and a strong nationalist position. Mary-Louise's husband's, Stephen Gwynn (1864-1950), was a public figure and an active nationalist. He worked as schoolteacher, writer and journalist. In 1904 he entered politics and held the office of Member of Parliament for Galway City between 1906 and 1918. He was a strong supporter of John Redmond and Home Rule. In 1915 – at the age of fifty – he decided to enlist (TCD News 2019). Stephen was a prolific writer, closely involved with the Irish Literary Society, the Irish literary revival and active in the Gaelic League. His works count numerous works of poetry, history, biography and literary criticism. The Library at St. Patrick's School in Rosario holds an illustrated volume of one of his books: *The Fair Hills of Ireland* (1906). Two decades later Stephen also wrote a textbook on Irish History: *The Student History of Ireland* published in 1925. It seems that, due to the nature of Stephen Gwynn's work, much of the family's early life was divided between London and Dublin, which must have given Mary-Louise a glimpse of both worlds when writing her book on Irish history. In the 1920s Stephen and Mary-Louise's marriage showed signs of collapse. Mary-Louise died in 1941. Stephen died in 1950.

9. The Volume of Stories on Irish History Told for Children *by Mary-Louise Gwynn*

The volume of Mrs. Gwynn's book[4] in our possession bears the name of the owner, a thirteen-year-old student, who signed it on the front page, adding "Colegio San Pablo, Capitán Sarmiento" and the date "27th March 1922" (most probably the beginning of the school year, which starts in March in Argentina). The boy's name and the place are repeated on four other pages (in ink and in pencil) in the book. Inside the cover we find the school's oval blue seal that confirms it was in use at St. Paul's: "Escuela San Pablo – Capitán Sarmiento. Bs.As – Padres Pasionistas". Then, on the first four pages we find another blue stamp, stating that the book belonged to the Passionist Fathers' library: "Biblioteca de los Misioneros Padres Pasionistas Argentina-Uruguay", this last seal carrying the Passionist emblem, a heart and a cross. According to the front page, the book was published in Ireland in 1905 ("MDCCCCV") by Browne and Nolan Limited, as a national school edition with a price of 7 pence. On page one we can read that the work was "Sanctioned by the Commissioners of National Education for use in National Schools". The same page also bears the complete title of the book: *Stories from Irish History: Told for Children by Mrs. Stephen Gwynn: With pictures by George Morrow and Arthur*

[4] I am very grateful to Professor Juan José Delaney for the access to the original copy of this book. I am also grateful to Julia Donelly, librarian at Colegio San Patricio (Rosario).

Donnelly, which remarks the fact that it was written and illustrated for a young audience for the teaching of Irish history in primary schools in Ireland at the beginning of the twentieth century.

According to the National Library of Ireland Catalogue the book was first published in 1904. However, the volumes in offer at the NLI are from years 1911, 1922 and 1945 (all from Browne and Nolan and "National School Edition[s]"; National Library of Ireland Catalogue). It appears that the book was used long after the Independence period into the Free State and the Republic. This may indicate that it complied with the standards and the ideological views of the Education Boards in Ireland after the end of the national education system in 1922, and at least until the end of the Second World War (1945 edition). From 1922 the Free State introduced major changes in the education system, establishing a new curriculum based on three main subjects: Irish language, Irish history, Irish geography, under the belief that the learning of the Irish language would facilitate the study of Irish history and geography, and with the aim of creating an Irish Catholic national identity (Doherty 1996; O'Callaghan 2011). This compliance with nationalist views may explain why Gwynn's book was accused of inciting to rebellion and "magnifying Ireland's rebels" in 1917 after the Easer Rising (Bureau of Military History BMH 1913-1921, 178-180).

We can establish that this book, published in 1904 with the purpose of teaching Irish history in Ireland to the primary pupils of Irish national schools, was used for the same pedagogical purpose in an Argentine Catholic school of the Irish community in 1922. This volume provides relevant data that allow us to link the activity of teaching Irish history to children in Ireland at a time when the island was debating its historical identity and vigorously seeking its independence from the British Empire, with the teaching of Irish history within the Irish community in Argentina, which was experiencing assimilation to Argentine culture and also debating on an Irish or Irish-Argentine education for their children and the question of their language (English/Irish/Spanish). The owner's writings on the book are most important in that they confirm the actual use of the book by students at St. Paul's (on pencil: "Queen Elizabeth 1558-1603", p. 88; "James I, 163-163" p. 92, which appears to be the reference to the pages of another book).

Another copy of Gwynn's book was found in an old library belonging to the Irish priests at St. Patrick's School in Rosario (Province of Santa Fe). As mentioned, Fr. John Seehy, one of Fr. Fahy's chaplains, founded St Patrick Catholic Association in 1902, which has now his office and library at St Patrick's School, founded by the Association in 1969. Although few of its students are Irish descendants, the school preserves the Irish traditions: lessons and activities on Irish dances, Irish music and literature and the promotion of Gaelic Football through the G.A.A. in Ireland, graduation tours to Ireland, etc. School celebrations are presided by the Argentine, the Irish and the school's flags. Students wear a grey and green uniform and a school badge with a shamrock and a cross, and on the third Saturday in May the "Day of the Irish Immigrant" is celebrated.

This copy of Gwynn's book was probably part of Father Seehy's collection. We have not been able to establish whether the textbook was used to teach children since the Irish school in Rosario was founded much later. But it may have been used at Sunday school meetings to teach children some aspects of Irish history and instil in them a feeling of pride and nationalism. On the other hand, providing adequate readings to the Irish immigrants had always been a concern among the clergy in Argentina. Circulating libraries were the work of Irish priests in the Province of Buenos Aires for the early community. Largo M. Leahy was also one of Fahy's original chaplains, arrived in Buenos Aires in the 1860s. His working area in the north of Buenos Aires was so vast that it had to be divided in two, Fr. Flannery working on the other part. Fr. Largo Leahy's work was immense, attending to the poor and the dying, creating

a school and "establishing circulating libraries in several chapels in his area" (Chacabuco, Salto, Rojas, etc.) (Landaburu 2006, 139). Therefore, books – valuable goods not always affordable for the immigrants – circulated among the Irish in different chaplaincies. In Landaburu's words, Fr. Largo Leahy was "a passionate nationalist" (*ibidem*) who organized social and sports activities and patriotic meetings.

The creation of an Irish library in Buenos Aires in 1875 was proudly announced in *The Southern Cross* in its first numbers by Canon Patrick Joseph Dillon (TSC January 1875) but he stated the idea had come from Revd. John Baptist Leahy, one of Fahy's original chaplains and brother of Fr. Largo M. Leahy. A writer in his native country, Fr. John Baptist Leahy had arrived in Argentina in 1869 to attend the needs of the growing number of Irish immigrants. Leahy proposed to open a library for the community at *The Southern Cross*'s office. As Irish chaplain, the trustees of the old British Library had given him the money of the sale of the institution with the purpose of founding a new library. Leahy had increased the money and he had used it to buy a stock of books through Fr. Pious Devine, one of the first Irish Passionists priests, arrived in Argentina from the United States in 1874. Leahy handed the stock to the new society hoping that "they would find the selection useful, entertaining and amusing" (TSC, 13 January 1875). Being himself a writer, the selection must have been adequate. The library, called the Irish Library and Reading-Room, was opened on 3 January 1875, and had temporary reading rooms at Corrientes 243 in the centre of the city of Buenos Aires. Some days later the newspaper comments on the importance of the opening "for our English population": "Few wants are more severely felt in town and camp than that of a good selection of books", assuring that "arrangements will be made or the circulation of books of the new library in all accessible quarters" (TSC, 21 January 1875). This shows that the priests were involved in the selection and purchase of books for the Irish. They were concerned that the community − the young in particular − would have "adequate" readings at hand (of moral and religious content), thus avoiding the growing danger of Protestant and freemasonry material, as many comments on the newspaper stated. We should bear in mind that "[f]rom the pulpit or on horseback, priests were always supervising and controlling readings" (Delaney 2017, 35). As an example:

> It is indeed high time for our clergy, to whom we look up as the guardians of public morals, to take special care that the thirst for knowledge and enlightenment […] should be satisfied with what is pure and unadulterated, and not stimulated by the pernicious or positively poisonous. Buenos Ayres, from its remote position may have suffered less than the great cities of Europe and North America from the deluge of cheap, loose literature that streams from the press in such profusion; and yet we see enough in the windows of some of our book-shops to justify our apprehension that materialism and positive obscenity are doing their work of pollution amongst us. (TSC, 21 January 1875)

It is possible that some decades later Gwynn's book and the Christian Brothers' *Irish History Reader* may well have been part of an Irish circulating library to give the community the chance to learn about Ireland's glorious past. It is not likely the priests had kept the books for themselves.

10. An Irish History Book For Children

Stories from Irish History: Told for Children by Mrs. Stephen Guynn: With pictures by George Morrow and Arthur Donnelly comprises twenty-four chapters covering the history of Ireland from the ancient times to the Famine.

The book was published in Dublin in 1904 by Browne and Nolan, printers to the Commissioners of National Education. At the end it includes a three-page chart of the principal

historical dates for each chapter. Historical dates are not mentioned in the chapters, except in very few occasions (e.g.: "until 1782"; Gwynn 1904, 40), giving the narrative the oral flow of a familiar story or a folk tale closer to children's tastes. After the front page and the contents page we find a blessing in Irish. The lines are written in the old Gaelic script common until the mid-twentieth century. The translation would be[5]: "I pray, Lord, that you will put a blessing on the beginning of our book and on ourselves in Ireland, in Scotland and in far off places and bless each of us until the Day of Judgement" (vii).

The story advances clearly, at a good pace, in an intimate tone, making use of oral resources ("I must tell you, children […]", 1; "I told you how the kings […]", 7), giving the audience the impression that they are listening to a story in a circle by the fire. The narrator knows how to capture the reader's attention with an adequate narrative style. There are frequent appeals to the audience, specially using the vocative "children" ("You must remember that […]", "I must explain to you […]"; "I told you about how […]", 94). She also appeals to the children's memory not to forget the glories and sufferings of Ireland ("We must never forget […]", "You must read […]", *ibidem*). Mary-Louise Gwynn constructs an excellent narrator for her young audience. The descriptions are colourful and accurate (e.g.: Irish arms and armour on p. 24). We find some powerful, epic images ("In Waterford, Eva, the daughter of Dermot, was married to Strongbow, while the streets were red with the blood of her countrymen slain fighting against him", 20). She makes good use of suspense ("You shall see in the next story how the tide turned", 79). At the beginning of a new chapter she can steer the audience back to the story ("I told you about how O'Neill had retreated to the North", 94). This style is common not only in children's fiction but also in children's textbooks in Europe after the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the child is no longer seen as a 'small adult'. There is no mention of historical sources on Gwynn's book, even when the author seems to quote, using inverted comas (e.g.: about Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, 42). The portrait of characters is not exactly Manichean, what would have been expected of a book objected by the Unionists and there is no violence in the retelling ("The unlucky English troops […]", 34). The Irish people are presented as a "collective" character, they suffer misery, poverty, sickness, loss. They show love to their chiefs and sadness for the Flight of the Earls, the end of a Catholic Ireland and Brehon Laws (94). About to tell the story of Oliver Cromwell, she warns the young audience: "This chapter will be a very sad one for it will tell of how he brought ruin and misery to Ireland" (108). This aspect might have been more questionable for the objectors.

Paratext is of particular importance in books for children. The book cover depicts a wonderful drawing of an Irish warrior, concentrated on shooting an arrow (the artist's signature is illegible), a most attractive image for a child. Gwynn's book contains nine illustrations in black and white by renowned artists George Morrow and Arthur Donnelly. They represent important moments or figures in Irish history (among them St Patrick, Silken Thomas, Red Hugh, The Flight of the Earls, and Vinegar Hill). They attract children's attention and help build identity.

[5] I want to thank Professor Maureen Murphy for her generosity and translation of this text into English. I am also grateful to Fernando Killian for his translation from Gaelic into Spanish.

11. The Christian Brothers' Textbooks – The Irish History Reader *(1905)*

The Irish National School Readers, intended for use in the Irish national school system, were originally produced and published by the British administration in Dublin under the auspices of the Commissioners of National Education. These textbooks for the education of Irish children in Ireland since 1831 showed little "Irish" content and lacked information on Irish history. In contrast, the textbooks produced by the Christian Brothers for their schools "were thoroughly Irish in content" (Walsh 1986, 11).

The Christian Brothers soon joined the new national school system but after four years decided to leave, "feeling it was the 'lion's den' for Irish Catholic nationalists" (Condon 2000, 55). Their textbooks were famous for the bulk of knowledge contained in them and were "welcomed from many sources for their attention to Irish history" (Walsh 1986, 9). Their books reflected the nationalism of Grattan and O'Connell (12). As mentioned, the Brothers produced their own textbooks in which they tried to transmit the idea that Ireland existed as a nation – an entity separated from England – with its own language, laws and customs, and therefore, a separate cultural identity (Walsh 1986, 19; Condon 2000, 54). The Brothers' books included many selections from Irish orators, poets and essayists and had a different approach to Irish life and values. Passages of the Brothers' books were critical of the British rule in India and North America which "helped to create the feeling that injustices had occurred, that Ireland had been wronged by Britain" (Walsh 1986, 14). After the revision of textbooks in 1873, lessons of specific Irish interest were included in the syllabus and the Brothers started publishing Irish history books for pupils: *Outlines of Irish History* (1885) and the Irish History Reader (IHR) (1905). Although the Brothers' books had been questioned over their Irish historical narrative as early as 1825, these publications were much more nationalistic than the previous ones (Walsh 1986). For example, in the preface to the 1905 IHR the teachers are told that pupils "must be taught that Irishmen claiming the right to make their own laws, should never rest content until their native parliament is restored; and that Ireland looks to them, when grown to man's estate, to act the part of true men in furthering the sacred cause of nationhood" (ii). The book ends with an exhortation to readers: "Learn its [Ireland's] language, cultivate its music, cherish its traditions, use its products and promote its manufactures" (IHR 1905, 340). This advice could have been part of any of William Bulfin's editorials in *The Southern Cross*. Lorcan Walsh points out that it was not the overt nationalistic content of the books which was significant but the fact that it was the compilers' Irishness, their own knowledge of Irish life and culture which pervaded the texts. This was the major contrast to National Board books (Walsh 1986, 18). The books proclaimed that Ireland had a past and its own identity and that people had to fight to maintain these distinctions (19).

According to the preface, the Christian Brothers' IHR, published by M.H. Gill & Son in Dublin in 1905, was intended as an "extra Reader" for pupils of the fourth and fifth standards, e.g. ten to twelve-year-old boys (v). The book deals with centuries of Irish History, from the first inhabitants on the island to the Fenian movement, Parnell and Home Rule. It focused on "the chief events" in Irish history, "grouped for the most part around the names of great Irishmen". Its purpose was to "keep brightly flaming the torch of love of country kindled at the hearth of every Irish home" (IHR 1905, 15). But the tone, the style and the narrative are very different from Gwynn's book.

Along its 340 pages there are no illustrations, in the book or on the cover. There are no appeals to the young reader (no vocative "children"). The vocabulary, the length and complexity of the sentences suggests the book was intended for older readers or maybe for the instruction of

the teachers themselves, in urgent need to broaden their knowledge of the subject at the time. This seems the case with fragments regarding the importance of textbooks (310) and the latest changes in the national education system (311). But school books were often read at home by the family who on many occasions did not possess any other reading material. Thus, this may have been taken into account by the Brothers as a way of extending Irish culture to a wider audience. The same can be applied to the reading habits of the Irish in Argentina.

An older reader is also suggested by the number of quotes from academic work and authors (The Four Masters, Giraldus Cambrensis, Hyde's *Literary History of Ireland*, A. M. Sullivan, John Mitchel, etc.). Regarding their political approach, this reader is also much less ambiguous than Gwynn's as to its statements on the hard consequences of the British government on the island and in its explicit questioning of the views of the quoted English historians. Poems and literary fragments by nationalist writers − with a short notice on their life − are numerous (Thomas Davis, Gerald Griffin, John O'Hagan, *The Nation*, etc.). In all, the book holds an incredible amount of information for which the Brothers books were well-known. It is our opinion that this book must have been in the library in Rosario for the interest of adult readers as well as for the instruction of novices and priests, who may later have transmitted the story of Ireland to a younger audience. But the presence of this book in the library allows us to infer other titles of similar nationalist content. The Christian Brothers' *Irish Historical Reader* (1905) must have been chosen in Argentina precisely for its Irishness and nationalist approach.

12. Military Archives

Mrs. Gwynn's Irish history book for children was attacked by the unionists soon after the Easter Rising in 1916. According to the Military Archives of Ireland in the Bureau of Historical Military History (BMH) in the period following the Rebellion, there were many attacks from the Unionist side regarding the teaching of Irish history in national schools as anti-British. They accused schoolteachers of preaching sedition – and even the National Education Department, "held accountable for the mere fact of teaching Irish History" (BMH 1913-1921, 178-180). The National Commissioners strongly rejected the accusation.

The general belief was that, as the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, Dr. Mahaffey, considered, "[t]here has been throughout the national schools a propaganda of hatred to England on the part of the schoolmasters living on the salary of the Imperial government" and "the rising was largely inspired in the national schools" by the careful instilling of revolutionary principles (BMH 1913-1921, 180). Commenting on a text from the *Church of Ireland Gazette* (26 December 1916) the archives state: "In the course of a long dissertation a strong attack is made particularly on Mrs. Stephen Gwynn's *Stories from Irish History* and the Christian Brothers' *Irish History Readers*" (BMH 1913-1921, 179). Since both books were available and in use in (at least) two Irish schools in Argentina (St. Paul's, Capitán Sarmiento and St. Patrick's, Rosario), the mention seems particularly relevant to our study.

The *Gazette* complained about the "magnifying of Ireland's rebels – Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Wolfe Tone, Emmett and the Fenians" to the point of proposing to "eliminate Irish history books from the curriculum", arguing lack of time in the school hours and incapacity of the teachers (*ibidem*). The archives report that the discussion "of the effect of teaching Irish history was continuous in that period" (180). Certain school managers (from the Presbyterian and Church of Ireland denominations) had objected to some books which led to an order from the Board of Commissioners to revise all sanctioned books in search of "sentences likely to excite religious or political bitterness". If objected by even one member of the Board, books were

not allowed. At least two 'History Readers' were withdrawn having been found objectionable (*ibidem*). It is worth remarking that the books used in Argentina for the teaching of Irish history may be those attacked by the unionists for the 'seditious' Rising and objected to by the Education Board of Commissioners.

13. Conclusion

We have examined two textbooks for the teaching of Irish history to Irish children in a Spanish-speaking country that, however very distant from Ireland, was intimately connected to its fervent cultural scene and turbulent politics at the turn of the twentieth century. Both Ireland and Argentina were consolidating their identities, both reflecting on their history and on their language. William Bulfin's figure was central to this period in Argentina for his strong beliefs and close connections to Ireland, specially through the Gaelic League and its branch in Buenos Aires. *The Southern Cross* was a powerful instrument to spread the nationalist ideals, a task in which Bulfin was supported by a large part of the Catholic clergy and of the Irish Catholic Association. Long after Bulfin's death *The Southern Cross* intensified its nationalism during the Independence War (1919-1921) (Keogh 2016, 249).

The priests were respected and had influence on the community and supported the nationalist cause. Adequate reading material for the young was one of their main concerns. Holy Cross, the splendid Passionist church in the city of Buenos Aires, was the centre of nationalist activities and sermons against the atrocities of the war. The same happened in Capitán Sarmiento, place to the Passionist seminary and St Paul's school (254). Commenting on the religious celebrations of the Irish-Argentine communities in the "camp", Dermot Keogh (2016) remarks that the content of the songs, poems, representations and iconography was Irish, Catholic and nationalist (14). This was the atmosphere that surrounded the education of children at the Irish schools in Argentina in the last decades of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century. Thus, it is not surprising that textbooks with a nationalist perspective were in use for teaching such a delicate subject to their heart as that of Irish history.

Our choice of the two books examined was based on our luck to find them and not on the fact that the books were precisely those attacked and blamed by the unionists for the "seditious" Rising and objected to by the Education Board of Commissioners. Still, the accusation against the books remains an interesting fact. Indeed, the books may have been chosen by the priests in Rosario and Capitán Sarmiento precisely for this reason.

It is our opinion that further research should be carried out and expanded in the significant libraries of the community, namely those in schools and religious institutions. This would contribute to a deeper knowledge of the life of the Irish in Argentina and to the needed preservation of their bibliographic heritage. Research would also shed light on the import of books in the English language to Argentina in the nineteenth century.

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