

Irish Ideologies:

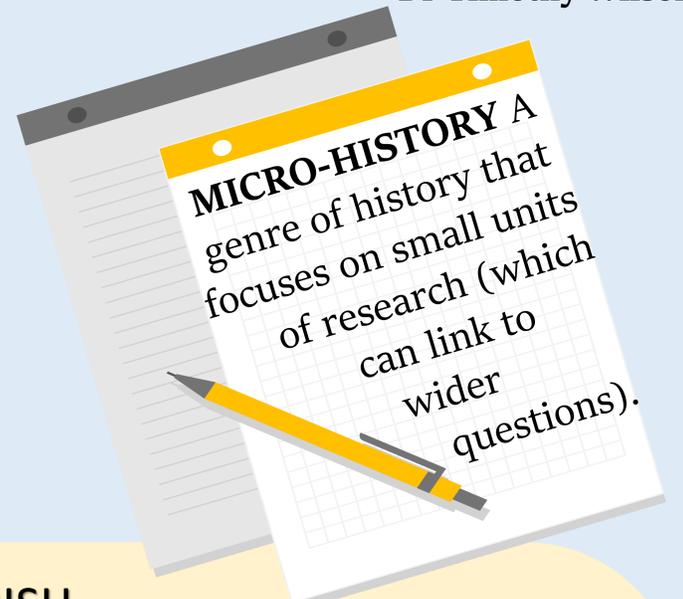
An historical analysis of words

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THE IDEA

Use the carefully-selected words of two key documents of 1910s Ireland to analyse **Nationalism** and **Unionism** as **ideologies**.

- The Irish Proclamation (1916)
- Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant, and Ulster Women's Declaration (1912)



ULSTER'S COVENANT AND DECLARATION

Role of Women:

Over 230,000 women signing the Declaration is ground-breaking for a time when women did not have the vote.

Motivation for opposition:

The text primarily mentions economic factors, as North-East Ulster's trade boomed under the Union. Ulster Unionists worried that a predominately agricultural South would not protect their industrial interests.

Role of Religion:

Fear that 'Home Rule' would be 'Rome Rule'; that the Roman Catholic Church would have control over Ireland. Religious imagery is used to capitalise on the idea that a good Protestant was also a good Unionist.

THE IRISH PROCLAMATION

FINDINGS

Spiritual Elements:

The text invokes 'dead generations', a phrase left vague to carry emotional resonance as listeners could imagine those who they knew or admired.

Moreover this links the Rising to the past, portraying it not as sudden and opportunistic, but as a seed gestating for centuries.

Inclusivity:

The document addresses both 'Irishmen and Irishwomen'. The text claims the new government would grant suffrage to all men and women – significantly progressive, considering women in the UK did not get suffrage until 1918.

CONCLUSIONS

These documents have proved to be rich sources in this study of Irish micro-history. Through using the words and phrases of the texts, I have been able to answer wider questions about individual experience in 1910s Ireland.

What's next? Moving beyond these two texts, I have created a website to continue this historical pursuit, looking at other speeches and pieces of literature from all over the world. The QR link to this website can be found below.

Sources

'Proclamation of the Irish Republic', Compiled by Martin Melaugh and Fionnuala McKenna, 24th April 1916, CAIN, < <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/issues/politics/docs/pir24416.htm> > [accessed 01/09/2021]
'Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant' and 'The Ulster Women's Declaration' in Connell, Joseph E.A. Jr., 'The 1912 Ulster Covenant', *History Ireland*, 20: 5 (2012), < <https://www.historyireland.com/20th-century-contemporary-history/the-1912-ulster-covenant-by-joseph-e-a-connell-jr/> > [accessed 01/09/2021]

