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**WHAT EVENTS AND PEOPLE WERE IMPORTANT IN CREATING IRISH  
NATIONHOOD, AND WHY?**  
**Bakalářská práce**

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vlastnoruční podpis

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## **List of Abbreviations**

EU	European Union
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IRB	Irish Republican Brotherhood
MP	member of parliament
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
UNO	United Nations Organization
USA	United States of America
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

## **Abstract**

The bachelor project deals with the important events and people that helped to create Irish nationhood. The project includes those events which had a great impact on the history of Ireland.

## **Abstrakt**

Bakalářská práce pojednává o důležitých událostech a významných osobnostech, které se podílely na utváření irské národnosti. Práce zahrnuje události, které měly vliv na historii Irska.

## Introduction

I chose to write about Ireland, because in my opinion this country is full of beauty, mystery and traditions. At school we usually learn about its geography, nature, climate, political system and interesting places. We also have to study its history and some of the important events which happened during various periods. However, I never knew how and why it happened. Moreover, I never thought about it in a detail. Therefore, this Bachelor project has become a good opportunity to learn more about Irish history.

The question number one is: „Why is the land geographically divided into two countries?“ And the second one, nevertheless maybe more important, is: „What events and people were important in shaping the Irish nationhood, and why?“ In my opinion, the whole history of Ireland was influenced mainly by the location of the land. In the following chapters I am going to try to answer the above mentioned questions.

Firstly, I would like to write a few words about the first settlers of Ireland. In my opinion, it is important to know the beginning of their history and the way of life of the first inhabitants to understand the whole history.



# 1. Prehistory

## 1.1 The Celts

The number one question in Irish history is: „Who were the first settlers?“ Nobody knows when people first came to Ireland, but Irish people have a lot of legends about it. It is believed that the first settlers came around 7,000 BC in middle stone-age period. They were mainly hunters. (Bridge, 2007)

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs (1995, p. 17), around 3,000 BC Ireland was settled by people who were farmers and who raised animals.

The arrival of the Celts had the greatest impact on Ireland. The Celts came from central Europe and belonged to the great Indo-European family. They soon dominated Ireland and established culture called La Tène. Although, Ireland was not unified politically, the whole land used one language. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 17)

According to Helpforenglish (2007, online), a very special position in the Celtic society belonged to the highly respected priestly class called Druids who performed sacrifices and rituals to predict the future. Although, they could not read and write, they memorized all the religious teaching, tribal laws, medicine, history and so on.

Ireland was in contact with the Roman Empire very often in order to attack it and they also wanted their slaves. That is why, British called them „Gael“ which means „wild name.“ (Bridge, 2007)

The Roman missionaries succeeded in converting most of the people of Ireland into Christians in the 5th century. One of these missionaries, who is now the patron saint of Ireland, was called Saint Patrick. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 19)

## 1.2 The Vikings

Around 800 AD pagan sea-pirates started raiding the rich Celtic monasteries. They are known as Vikings who were looking for slaves and mainly for

gold. The monasteries, as the centres of wealth, were the main target of their attacks. They burned books and made horrible attacks. This way Vikings greatly contributed to the decline of the monastic tradition.

Despite their wild nature and horrible violence, they were good traders and developed commerce in medieval Ireland. This time is known as the age of renaissance and progress in Ireland when culture and arts prospered.

(The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995)

### **1.3 The Normans**

This trend of progress was interrupted when the Norman feudal knights arrived in 1167-70. They descended from the Vikings, but settled in the north of France, known as the land of the Norsemen. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 22)

The Normans had a great impact on the country, because there were many kingdoms in Ireland at that time and there was no central government. The land was politically divided. The Normans were better politicians and therefore were able to develop the same type of parliament and law as the English. The Normans adopted the Irish language and became Irish themselves. But native Irish people refused to accept this and wanted to re-establish the native kingship. (Bridge, 2007)

## **2. Early Modern Period**

### **2.1 Tudor Conquest of Ireland**

At the beginning of my thesis I asked the question: „Why is the land divided into two countries?“ And here we are getting back to my question and to the problem that separated the nation in two. I suppose that the problems started in the sixteenth century.

According to Skrentny (2001, p. 9), the Irish history was made mainly by the conflicts between Catholics and Protestants and between the Irish and the British.

Very important events happened in the 16th century when Henry VIII became the king of Ireland and the Tudor monarchs started a conquest of Ireland. The English Government made great efforts in order to impose Protestantism in Ireland. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 23)

Hayes-McCoy (1996, p. 130) says that Henry's reign meant a big change in policy towards Ireland, because he wanted to gain the power over the whole island.

As Hayes-McCoy states Henry VII, as well as his heirs, was afraid that his domestic rivals or enemies from abroad would use Ireland as a base for threatening their position on the throne. The final reason for conquering Ireland was so called „imperial expansion“ which in fact meant economical dominance over the country and its colonization.

Henry VIII broke contacts with the Pope, because he refused to annul his marriage with Catherine of Aragon who was not able to give Henry a male heir. So the Tudor monarch broke away from the authority of Roman Catholic Church and Henry VIII became the Supreme Head of the Church of England. This event is known as the English Reformation. (Royal. gov. uk, 2008, online)

In the 16th century new settlers, mainly Protestants, came to Ireland and Henry VIII started a series of military campaigns against the Gaelic Irish. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 23)

Hayes-McCoy (1996, p. 134) is of the same opinion as The Department of Foreign Affairs (1995, p. 23) and adds that the main goal of Henry VIII was to join Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Irish into one class and to destroy the old Gaelic world.

For the first time, the Irish political system was overthrown and the entire country was under a strong English central Government. The change of the monarch did not mean the change of the religion. English Government intended to impose Protestantism in Ireland which did not succeed. The only exception was Ulster where the new settlers were Scottish Presbyterians. They formed a political group disaffected from the Government. Gaelic Irish rebelled against the Government. English policy focused only on the Ulster war which was very important for the Tudor monarchs in order to finish a conquest of Ireland. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 23)

In Hayes-McCoy's opinion (1996, p. 138), a very important person in this war was Hugh O'Neill. Thanks to him Gaelic Irish succeeded for a long time.

Unfortunately, in the last war they were defeated. The Tudor policy won and it meant the end of the old Gaelic world.

The last monarch of the Tudor dynasty was Elizabeth I who was called the greatest English monarch due to her great ruling abilities. She managed to bring the country into progress, development and improvements in education, culture and art. Thanks to her, a university in Dublin was founded. In addition to this, a lot of young catholic people went on continent to study in catholic seminars. (Hayes-McCoy, 1996, p. 137)

According to Mundo (2008, online), the problems in Northern Ireland started when the English gave the confiscated land in Ireland to the new English and Scottish settlers. They knew very well that the land was the source of their power. The arrival of new settlers meant a big change in the life of Ulster people.

As you can see, all the problems really started when the Tudor Monarchs conquered the land. In my opinion, it sparked the fights between Catholics and Protestants. On the other hand, Elizabeth I had a great impact on Ireland. She helped to improve cultural life and to build a university in Ireland. In the following periods the problems between Catholics and Protestants continued. In addition, these disputes were followed by wealth and land difficulties.

## **2.2 Oliwer Cromwell**

The further colonization of Ireland took place under the commands of Oliver Cromwell and his army. The new colonists, who came to the region, were Protestants and they were given the land, property and political power. Former owners of the land were banished to poorer areas of the country. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995)

The colonization of the land was not as difficult as in Ulster, because this time only landlords were changed, but the land was cultivated by the same people. So this way Protestants were given wealth and power. (Mundo, 2008, online)

Oliver Cromwell became a Lord Protector who undertook a very brutal military conquest and he also played an important role in the execution of the king

Charles I. He was also the man who helped England to create a republic. (Bbc.co.uk, 2012, online)

### **2.3 William of Orange**

When Catholic King James II ascended the throne, the situation changed for a while. He was quite unpopular in England, Scotland and among the Ulster Scots, because they were afraid of his pro-Catholic stance and therefore Protestants did not back him and supported his son-in-law, William of Orange, to challenge him for the throne. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995)

William of Orange defeated Catholic King James II in the Battle of Boyone and by that time a new era, when Protestants had political and economic power, started. (Infoplease, 2008, online)

The victory at the Boyone in 1690 left the Irish Catholics without any political help and the Protestant ascendancy could follow. (The Department of Foreign Affairs remarks, 1995)

The war was ended by the Treaty of Limerick, but Protestants did not agree with it and wanted more severe punishment. (Mundo, 2008, online)

This opinion is shared by Lambert (2012, online), who adds that English did not honour the Treaty at Limerick at all.

## **3. 18th Century**

### **3.1 The Penal Legislation againts Catholics**

During the eighteenth century Catholics were believed to be a big threat to the monarchy, because of their support of the Stuarts who wanted to regain the English throne. That is why the Government passed a severe code of penal legislations againts Catholics. This way the Protestant ascendancy went on.

Thanks to the American War of Independence, Irish policy changed. According to American example the Irish parliament was granted independence. Ireland became a separate kingdom which shared a monarch together with England. Only the administration in Dublin was appointed by the King. The penal legislation against Catholics was gradually repealed.

The French Revolution influenced the politics in Ireland as well. The main ideas of this Revolution were concerned with equality and liberty. Thanks to it in 1791 the Society of the United Irishmen was founded. Its members consisted mainly of Presbyterians from the north and their main goal was to unite Protestants, including Presbyterians, with Catholics. They rebelled to break the link between Ireland and England. However, because of the bad organisation, they were suppressed. After this event the London Government united the British and Irish parliaments. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 23)

The fights between Catholics and Protestants continued on. A lawyer called Theobald Wolfe Tone, who was a Protestant, wanted to start a similar revolution to the one in France. He asked Catholics to help him to establish a democratic republic. He required emancipation and wanted French to help him. In the end, the revolution started in 1798, but was not successful. (Mundo, 2008, online)

It was not successful, because it was not organized well and despite French help it was suppressed. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 25)

On the 1st of January 1800 the Act of Union, which formed a new country by uniting England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland, was passed. All regional parliaments were abolished and everything was ruled from London parliament. The Irish could not pass laws. (Mundo, 2008, online)

## **4. Modern Ireland**

### **4.1 Daniel O'Connell**

Ireland lost its own Parliament and so Irish MPs were only a small minority which had to sit in the Westminster parliament in London. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 25)

According to Whyte (1996), Ireland could not decide about themselves and their future. They were represented only by 100 MPs. The biggest problem in Ireland was the lack of land for agriculture. The number of inhabitants was increasing and people were dependent on agriculture. But Parliament members were not interested in this problem. They had to solve the problems with Catholics who wanted some concessions for themselves. Most of the penal legislation was cancelled and therefore they could have their own schools and the right to vote. But they were not allowed to do more important jobs in the state sphere. Despite persistent agitation, Westminster was not willing to assure the increase of the employment possibilities. By that time a Catholic barrister, Daniel O'Connell appeared on the scene and had a great impact on the life in Ireland. He could become a barrister thanks to the law which was passed in 1792 and which allowed Catholics to do this kind of job. His political career was wild and various.

In 1823 Daniel O'Connell established the Catholic Association which wanted the full liberty for Catholics and soon it became a great political mass-movement. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 25)

As Whyte says (1996), O'Connell wanted to win favor of the majority of the population, not only the richest. How did he plan to manage this? At first he gained the help of the Catholic Church and then he established a one pound fee which was paid every month. Everybody could afford to pay the fee and thanks to it the Catholics were given more seats in four counties. He succeeded in forcing the London parliament to grant Catholic Emancipation. All the disabilities against Catholics were removed.

O'Connell became the most popular figure in the country. He wanted the repeal of the Act of Union and the restoration of the Irish parliament. That is why he set up the Repeal Association which worked the same way as the Catholic Association. Their characteristic features were mass demonstrations and meetings.

O'Connell believed in thousands of people demonstrating against the Parliament. However, it was not enough and London Government resisted. The rally in Dublin was banned and it meant the end of the repeal campaign. O'Connell lost his fight. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 25)

In my opinion, all these events helped to form a new political movement in 1840s. This group was made up by Radical politicians who formed a movement called Young Ireland.

Thomas Davis, who was one of the most famous leaders of the movement, introduced the concept of nationality which applied to everyone who lived in Ireland, no matter of which creed or origin he or she was. Even though their attempt to organise an insurrection failed, other generations were strongly influenced by their ideas. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995)

Whyte (1996) agrees that this movement had a great impact on the future generations, because the ideas influenced them a lot. He also adds that among other influential people belonged for example John Mitchel who wanted a complete separation of Ireland and England and he was not afraid of using force.

## **4.2 A big famine**

In Green's opinion (1996), in the eighteenth century Ireland was not the poorest country in the world by far. Ireland had quite good conditions. What was the matter then? Both economy and society had many failings. Large landowners wanted to equal much richer farmers in England. This led to very high standards of living when tenants could not rely on the contribution from their landowners. The situation was worse mainly due to the fact that Ireland was subordinate to England. The war against France had a severe and great impact on the economy. The war in Europe lasted twenty years and during this period the warning signs of failing economy were not recognized. The price of corn during the war was rapidly increasing. Local farmers had to supply the food for the army which depended on the potato supplies as the main source of food. After the war an agrarian unemployment was caused by the change from tillage to pasture. It caused a big unemployment and more and more people emigrated to the United States of America or Great Britain. By 1841 the population, who depended on agriculture, rapidly increased. Supplies for people were dependent on the potato crop.

According to Bloy (2002, online), the final stroke came in early autumn of 1845 when the potato crop was infected by a blight. All these consequences led to a critical situation on the agrarian market. And though there was food on the market that people could buy, Irish peasants were not able to buy it, because they did not



earn enough money from their harvest production. Moreover, the wheat, meat and dairy products were exported to England to make a profit to the rich farmers.

As Green says (1996), the Prime Minister Robert Peel named a committee in order to explore the blight and he also organized material help. He was also afraid of increasing prices and so in order to prevent starvation, he bought corn in the USA. There were many volunteers who worked for various organizations and helped people in the streets. They gave them some soup and tried to raise some money to help the poorest people. The worst situation was in February 1847 when the winter was really cruel and all over the land people suffered from fever.

The satisfaction with the political situation worsened. Irish people were angry with English people, because they did nothing to help them. The problems between landowners and tenants became a big agrarian conflict. Farmers were affected by declining prices of agricultural products.

We can only presume whether the above mentioned situation was the main fuse to a lengthy conflict of the Irish and the British, but it was definitely the most significant one.

### **4.3 The Fenians**

In 1858, a secret society called the Irish Republican Brotherhood, well-known as the Fenians, was founded. It was a secret society whose leaders were James Stephens and John O'Leary. The members, who were mainly Catholics, rejected constitutional attempts, because they considered them as unproductive. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 27)

Moody (1996, p. 213) points out that they had a great support both on the home ground and from citizens in the New Ireland which was founded thanks to emigration in America and Britain. It was the main difference in comparison to previous movements. The American Irish had a special task to supply the organization with weapons. The Fenians planned an uprising which failed mainly due to the conflicts among American Fenians. As the result the weapons were not

sent and so the uprising had to be postponed. It was a big shame, because it had a great opportunity to succeed.

At last the IRB staged an armed uprising in 1867, but it was put down. However, the IRB continued in existence. (The Department of Foreign Affairs 1995, p. 27)

#### **4.4 The Land League and Home Rule**

Moody (1996, p. 210) remarks that after the famine in the latter half of the nineteenth century, there appeared two very important questions.

He says that the first question relates to the national independence. The problem was solved by constitutional or parliamentary efforts and also campaigns were characteristic for this period. The constitutional mainstream was represented by the Irish Tenant League which was founded in the 1850s and the autonomous mainstream was led by Isaac Butt who started the Home Rule Party. His party wanted to repeal the Act of Union and to regain the Parliament in Ireland which would be independent on the main Parliament in London. They really wanted the independence from Britain for the whole island.

Moody (1996) also says that the second question deals with the land. The farmers started to get better after the famine mainly due to the fact of rising price of food. However, their landlords reacted by raising taxes and in addition to that, the harvest in 1877 – 1879 was poor. That is why many farmers could not pay their rent and became homeless. Most of these evicted farmers with their leader, Michael Davitt, started to form a new land-reform movement. Their aim was to reduce the power of landlords and they also wanted each peasant to have his own land.

The greatest British statesman of that time, W. E. Gladstone, being an IRB's admirer, started a new programme called „Equity for Ireland.“ Thanks to his two reforms a new period in the history of the union started. One of the most important things was the Church Act which separated Anglican Church of Ireland from the state and deprived the Church of the state allowance. According to Gladstone

all churches were to be equal. In 1870, he passed his Land Act which meant the first attempt of the British Parliament to solve the problem for tenants' sake. (Moody, 1996)

" The strained relations between landlords and their tenant farmers were a constant social and political difficulty. " (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 27)

#### **4.5 Charles Stewart Parnell**

Moody (1996, p. 216) writes that by that time Parnell appeared on the political scene. He had conservative opinions and outstanding authoritative skills. A lot of Fenians joined him and Michael Davitt wanted him to become one of the Fenians.

Parnell became the president of the National Land League which was founded by Michael Davitt. The members of this league required fair rent and free sale. They also wanted to reduce eviction and fixity of tenure. The Land League chose a great tactic how to achieve this. They decided to boycott any peasant who moved into a farm which belonged to the farmer who had been evicted. By forcing the new peasant to leave, the landlord got no rent. It resulted into a great national campaign mass agitation from 1879 to 1882 which ended as a big success. They succeeded in forcing the British Government to pass a series of Land Acts. These Acts abolished the old landlord system and gave the people who were working on the land the ownership. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 27)

Moody (1996, p. 221) claims that this event was sometimes called The Land War and it was the greatest movement in the history of Ireland. The result of the law reduced landlords' interests and therefore they started to sell the land to tenant farmers. Parnell believed in 'Irish Nationalism' which said that a Nation could be forged out of the people living in Ireland. In the election of 1885 Parnell agitated for the Home Rule. The aim of the Home Rulers was to repeal the Act of Union and to have their own Parliament in Ireland. His party swept the country outside eastern Ulster.

By that time many groups were created in Ireland. One of them was called the 'Irish Unionists' and they appeared on the scene to fight against the Home Rule movement. The members were mainly Protestants. They thought that the Act of Union was the best thing for Ireland and wanted to retain it. Another group was created by 'Irish Republicans' who wanted self-governing republic in Ireland. The last group was called 'Irish Nationalists'. They did not care about independence a lot, but their main interest was placed in nationhood.

#### **4.6 The First Home Rule**

Gladstone, the British Prime Minister, believed that he could solve the problems in Ireland by giving Ireland back their local Parliament. And therefore he introduced a Bill in Parliament to grant Home Rule. But this Home Rule was not successful in 1886 as well as the second one in 1894. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 27)

Moody (1996, p. 223) remarks that it was refused mainly by the right-wing Whigs represented by Lord Hartington and left-wing Radicals represented by Joseph Chamberlain. Despite the failure of the attempt, the year 1886 meant a big landmark in Anglo-Irish history. Nationalistic Ireland realised that their enemy is not the whole Britain, because most Liberals supported the self-government. To prevent the Home Rule the Irish Unionists introduced a group called the 'Irish Unionist Alliance.'

#### **4.7 The Gaelic League**

After the death of Parnell, the Home Rule campaign was lost. However, in the period of about thirty years, there was a great emergence of cultural nationalism. The first phase started when the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), whose aim was to promote sports, was formed. In 1893 Douglas Hyde and Eion MacNeill founded the Gaelic League. The main aim of this League was to revive the Irish language and culture. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995)

According to McCartney (1996), the Gaelic League had a great impact on Irish people who gave up the right to use their native language. The members of the Gaelic League refused to copy the British in language, music, culture, ideas and so

on. Thanks to its members, all social classes were influenced by the idea of cultural nationalism. The League organized various historical and language groups and also many theatre groups were founded. They even established that the death of St. Patrick was celebrated as the national holiday. Both national industry and education was developed by that time. About 1 300 native basic schools were founded which helped to increase intellectual, social and moral level of all people.

#### **4.8 Sinn Féin**

At the same time, a new political party was founded by Arthur Griffith. The party became well known as Sinn Féin – „we ourselves.“ This political party, together with the IRB, influenced the Gaelic League a lot. The policy of Sinn Féin preferred passive resistance and its members wanted Irish MPs to be withdraw from Westminster. Their main aim was to introduce an independent Parliament. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 28)

McCartney (1996) adds that the IRB wanted to do the same thing, but in comparison with the Sinn Féin, they wanted to use force.

He also says that a small group, which had no links with the IRB, was founded. It was formed by unionists and socialists. They appeared on the scene after the Land War after which farmers were quite satisfied, but conditions in big cities were not so advantageous. It resulted in the Dublin dispute of 1913. Mass demonstrations and strikes were organized there to support Unionists. Despite the fact this dispute ended in a draw, these events had a serious impact. The revolutionary atmosphere continued on.

#### **4.9 The Third Home Rule**

McCartney (1996) remarks that the Home Rule campaign was defeated in 1886 and 1893 and until 1906, nothing happened in this problem. It was caused mainly due to the fact that the Unionists had the political power and the Irish Parliamentary Party suffered from contradictions.

At last in 1912, the Liberals tried to introduce another Home Rule in Westminster. Sir Edward Carson founded the Ulster Volunteers who wanted to oppose the Home Rule. In response, a new group called the Irish Volunteers was set up in Dublin to promote the Home Rule. They were largely controlled by the IRB. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 25)

#### **4.10 The Easter Rising**

McCartney (1996) points out that despite quite strong resistance, the attempt to introduce the Third Home Rule Bill brought great success to the Irish Parliamentary Party, led by John Redmond. In 1914, the Home Rule Bill was passed, but its implementation was postponed upon the outset of the war. Ireland remained neutral during the World War I despite the fact Great Britain played a key role in it.

John Redmond was afraid of losing British support for the Home Rule and that is why he encouraged Irishmen to help them in the war and enlist in the army. The Irish Volunteers led by Patrick Pearse disagreed with his policy and in 1916 together with the Irish Citizen Army led by James Connolly, organized a rebellion against British rule. It happened in 1916 and was called the Easter Rising. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 28)

According to Wesley (1998, online), its members took over important buildings in Dublin, raised the Irish Flag and read The Proclamation of Independence and formation of the Republic of Ireland. These events caused considerable changes in the public opinion. The British decided to execute several of the leaders. They executed even people who were not involved in the Easter Rising. The Irish Parliamentary Party lost its initiative mainly due to its hesitation and so in the general election in 1918, the Party was defeated by Sinn Féin. The representatives from the Sinn Féin now continued as the first Dáil in Dublin. Its leader was Éamon de Valera and Arthur Griffith served as his deputy.

#### **4.11 The War of Independence**

The attempts of the British to smash Sinn Féin was one thing which accelerated the process which led to the War of Independence. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 28)

As Wesley says (1998, online), by that time, after 7 years the Third Home Rule was still under discussion and thus Irish Volunteers decided not to wait longer. In 1919, these Volunteers renamed themselves the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and by this step, the new sphere of history was started. They wanted more than introducing the Home Rule. Its members tried to persuade the government to introduce complete Independence. The war of Independence began when 2 Irish policemen in Tipperary were shot by the members of the IRA. So the war started after the First World War and lasted 2 years. Michael Collins, who was leading the Irish forces against the British attempts, wanted to intensify the war and so 11 British agents were shot dead. As a response, a group of Black and Tans fired into a crowd of people at a Gaelic football match and killed 12 people. This day is known as Bloody Sunday. So during the following two years the relations between the Irish and the British were strongly alienated. In 1920, the government passed the Government of Ireland Act which gave Ireland a Parliament for the Unionists and a Parliament for the Nationalists. Both were responsible to the Parliament in London.

In 1921, twenty-six counties got independence thanks to an Anglo-Irish Treaty. They became the Irish Free State and six Ulster counties remained within the United Kingdom. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 28)

Wesley (1998, online) adds that six Ulster counties ( Londonderry, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Antrim, Down and Armagh) had to be under the Unionist Parliament and they agreed with introducing 'Northern Ireland' in referendum.

They had their own parliament in Belfast. The Prime Minister of new Northern Ireland became Sir James Craig. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 28)

So now the island was definitely divided into two separated countries. The Irish Free State had to improve their economic development after the War of Independence. This task was quite difficult after cutting the Irish Free State from the rest of the island which had industrially developed areas around Belfast. They missed

qualified workers, industrial tradition and the worst conditions were in the sphere of education.

In spite of that, according to Lynch (1996, p. 256), the country was recovering quite easily and fast, thanks to the chairman called William T. Cosgrave.

#### **4.12 The Irish Civil War**

An Anglo-Irish Treaty was a compromise, but introducing the Free State caused conflicts and the new Government had to oppose those who did not agree with the Treaty. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 28)

In Wesley's opinion (1998, online), before this Treaty, Sinn Féin with Griffith and de Valéra had been a united party, but after signing it in 1921, the members divided into separatists who wanted independence and their opponents. Éamon de Valera was very angry with Collins who signed the Treaty, because he wanted independence for all 32 counties, not only 6 counties. De Valéra became the leader of the opponents of the Treaty while Arthur Griffith wanted the republic and supported the Treaty. The members of IRA, who supported the Treaty, became the members of the first official Irish Army. In the end, Dáil approved the Treaty, but de Valéra, as the president of the republic, did not agree and together with a large number of the members of Sinn Féin walked out in protest. De Valera as Prime Minister was replaced subsequently by Griffith. The IRA members seized control of the Four-Courts in Dublin and the Irish government mediated with them. In the end, Collins lost his patience and ordered the Irish Army to shell the building. So the Civil War ended by defeating the opponents in May 1923.

The negotiations unfortunately claimed many lives of prominent members struggling for independence. Among them Michael Collins, Arthur Griffith, the first Prime Minister of the new state and Cathal Brugha. (The Department of Foreign Affairs, 1995, p. 30)



#### **4.13 The Irish Free State**

Wesley (1998, online) writes that after Arthur Griffith's death, William T. Cosgrave became the new Prime Minister. The leader of the anti-treaty Republicans Eammon de Valera was against him and the way Cosgrave still swore allegiance to the king of England. That is why de Valera formed a new party in 1927 called Fianna Fail. In 1930, the Free State joined two other Commonwealth nations Canada and South Africa. By that they managed to force Britain to pass a new law. Any law that the UK had passed for them before granting independence was now permitted them to repeal. It meant that they also could repeal the Anglo-Irish Treaty, but Cosgrave was not ready enough to repeal it. By that time, the IRA regrouped again to fight for the independence for all 32 counties.

#### **4.14 New Constitution**

Wesley (1998, online) points out that in 1932, Fianna Fail took over the Free State Government. Its leader Eammon de Valera became Prime Minister whose policy was to break out from the supremacy of the UK. He succeeded in reducing the power of Britain over the Free State. He abolished the right of the King to interfere in affairs which happened in the Irish Free State and he also abolished the land annuities. This meant that Irish farmers did not have to repay the money that British government had loaned them before signing the Anglo-Irish Treaty. In 1937, de Valera introduced a new constitution which replaced the old one and was accepted.

" It included a number of issues: (a) The Irish Free State was to be renamed "Eire" (b) the Prime Minister was to be renamed the Taoiseach (c) the head of state would be an elected President, not the King (d) [article 2] declared that Eire's boundary consisted of the whole island of Ireland (e) [article 3] declared that the Eire government had the right to pass laws for the whole island although only enforcing them in the 26 counties. " (Wesley, 1998, online)

I suppose that during this period the industrial situation in the Irish Free State improved. As Lynch (1996, p. 258) says the key role of this improvement was

played by state companies or by companies which were promoted by the state. It was a new sort of the Irish Revolution directed by Lemass.

#### **4.15 The World War II**

Wesley (1998, online) mentions that during the World War II, people in Northern Ireland shared a war life with British people while Eire, being aware of being a small country with few military resources, decided to declare neutrality.

In Lynch's opinion (1996, p. 254), Ireland did not want to join Britain in the war, mainly because of the opinion that Britain took part in the division of the island a lot. Therefore, joining them in the war was againsts their beliefs and contrasted with their fight for democratic freedom and national self-determination.

Lynch also claims that due to Irish neutrality, Ireland suffered from a big exodus of people abroad, mainly the United States, unemployment and lack of goods. It was surprising that despite the bad conditions which Irish Free State was in during the World War II, they showed a great deal of solidarity with Northern Ireland when they tried to help them to ease the impact of the war.

People in the North suffered from air attacks, high taxes and various restrictions. (Mundo, 2008, online)

On the other hand, Wesley (1998, online) says that post war development underlined the differences between the South and the North and also some advantages of joining Britain were shown. In Northern Ireland there were built new factories and companies. Social and economic conditions improved a lot. There were built new housing estates and more job opportunities were offered to people. A new industry, aircraft manufacture was set up in Belfast which still exists today. The government's aim was to create free education for all and the right to free medical treatment for everybody as well as in Britain.

On the contrary, Irish Free State had to recover from the war aftermath. In 1948, the Government established a new economic policy under the programme called the Economic Development whose author was T. K. Whitaker. (Lynch, 1996, p. 258)

There was also a need for co-operation between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State due to economic reasons such as the construction of the hydroelectric power station. (Wesley, 1998, online)

#### **4.16 The Birth of the Irish Republic**

The Anglo-Irish Treaty was forgotten and did not mean anything in the Irish policy, now their main aim was to stop the fighting. (Mundo, 2008, online)

In 1948, de Valera was defeated by John Costello in the general election. His aim was to prevent Eire to become a part of the British Commonwealth and to gain a full independence for it. The Commonwealth was afraid of it as well as of the domino effect. On Easter Monday 1949, Costello decided to bring Eire out of the British Commonwealth and proclaimed it a fully independent republic. Eire was given a new name the Republic of Ireland. Costello hoped that this would stop the violence in Ireland, but he was wrong. For Irish Republicans it was not enough, because they wanted the entire island to be the Republic. The British passed the Ireland Act which recognised the existence of the Republic of Ireland and proclaimed the Republic to be singled out the British Commonwealth. Life in the Republic was quite difficult mainly due to the lack of job opportunities. In 1959, de Valera became a new President and Sean Lemass became a new Taoiseach. They tried to rebuild Irish economy and had a plan how to reconstruct agricultural industry. The Republic also joined the European Economic Community which is known as the European Union today. (Wesley, 1998, online)

#### **4.17 Terrence O'Neill**

In Northern Ireland historical animosity between Catholics and Protestants increased. Nationalists and Republicans wanted a united Ireland while Unionists and Loyalists demanded Northern Ireland to remain a part of the United Kingdom.

In 1963, the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland Terrence O'Neill tried to improve the relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. That is why he invited Sean Lemass to discuss the trade and soon after it he visited Dublin. He also wanted to solve the problem between Catholics and Protestants who divided the country between two communities. The Catholic minority complained about discrimination and in order to improve the attitudes of the Catholic minority and Protestant majority, he founded a new non-sectarian university called the University of Ulster. (Wesley, 1998, online)

Terrence O'Neill met Lemass several times and they tried to establish closer relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. (Mundo, 2008, online)

In 1965, an Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement was signed (Lynch, 1996, p. 259) and Ireland even gained its position within UNO.

Considering all facts, it seemed necessary to make a trade agreement between Ireland and Britain mainly due to the fact that Britain is the biggest neighbour of Ireland. It was quite clear that this step helped to improve the economic relations.

On the other hand, Wesley (1998, online) writes that some people did not agree with O'Neill's policy and in 1966, a Unionist Ian Paisley established the Protestant Unionist Party and opposed O'Neill. " In 1967, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association was set up. " (Wesley, 1998, online)

Wesley also found that this Association protected the interests of Catholics and wanted to redress the old grievance. They asked for a fair voting system, general equality for all people in Northern Ireland and also wanted to end the religious discrimination. They were illegal and therefore they were banned. However, O'Neill agreed with some of their demands. In general election in 1969, O'Neill's party won and wanted to introduce so called 'one man one vote' for the next election. But most members from his party did not agree with his idea and forced him to resign.

#### **4.18 The War between the Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland**

In 1969, the worst rioting in Northern Ireland happened as the response to the failure on the Civil Rights movement. It became more and more concerned

with Republicanism rather than with Civil Rights. Also the IRA, which did not appear on the scene for a few years, decided for a non-violent response. It resulted when Catholics rioted in Derry for three days. This is known as the 'Battle of the Bogside,' when mainly Catholics were driven from their homes, seven people were killed and about one hundred people were wounded. The Civil Rights movement was collapsing into the Civil War. The British realised that and the UK Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, sent the British Army to Derry and Belfast and ordered to establish 'one man one vote' and some other things in order to establish better community relations. Thanks to him the Civil Rights movement shut down. (Wesley, 1998, online)

However, many people started to ask for a united Ireland again. The IRA preferred the non-violent strategy. On the other hand, there were some people from Catholic community who formed the 'Provisional IRA.' Their aim was to destroy the economy and they did not want to be a part of the UK. The Irish Government helped them to get money and they could start their campaign. In response, to protect the Protestant community, the Loyalist UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) used violence against Catholics and the Irish Republic.

Ian Paisley won a seat at Stormont in April 1970. This seat served only to underline the split between the moderates and the extremists within Unionism. By that time, some parties like the Alliance Party and the Social Democratic and Labour Party were formed. The Alliance Party tried to make peace between the two communities and the second party (SDLP) supported the Nationalist community in Northern Ireland.

The army and RUC wanted to arrest people who were the main leaders of the terrorist organisations. So they introduced Internment to prevent further violence and murders. In the end, this action only supported terrorism again. In 1972, a movement which was anti-Internment was organized in Derry. This event was known as 'Bloody Sunday' and caused new rioting. British soldiers killed 13 people in Derry, which started a huge outrage and the British embassy in Dublin was burnt down. These events caused no-confidence of Faulkner policy and that is why the British dissolved the parliament in Northern Ireland and everything was ruled from London until establishing a new system of government. Most of the Unionists were angry with that and they formed a terrorist group called the Ulster Defence Association which tried to protect the Protestant people. The IRA also increased

their campaign of bombing and started to kill Catholics. It resulted on 21st July in 1972, when the IRA killed 11 people and about 130 people were injured. This day became known as 'Bloody Friday.'

In March 1973, the British announced their wish to change the way their land was governed. They required Unionists and Nationalists to share power, but many Unionists did not agree with it and left the party. To oppose the power sharing they formed the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party. (Wesley, 1998, online)

An accession to EU in 1973, meant for people of Ireland a big change in their life conditions. They could improve conditions in education thanks to the school reform. There were also many improvements which were visible mainly in agriculture. (Mundo, 2008, online)

#### **4.19 The Sunningdale Agreement**

According to Wesley (1998, online), in 1973, all the representatives from Northern Ireland who supported the power sharing from the Republic of Ireland and London met at Sunningdale to discuss the relations between the two states. In December 1973, the Sunningdale Agreement was signed and in January 1974, the overall governing Executive of Northern Ireland was established. However, the Executive caused several problems, because some things were not clear. The Unionists who were anti-power sharing did not agree with the agreement that the Republic of Ireland had the right to have a say in Northern Ireland. The Unionists joined the Ulster Workers' Council and started a general strike called 'General Workers' Strike' to persuade the Assembly to abolish the Sunningdale Agreement. The situation was really serious, because power stations and factories were closed and nobody could travel because of the strikers blocking the roads. In the end, Faulkner realised the horrible economic situation and tried to negotiate with the strikers. After the collapse of The Executive, Northern Ireland was ruled again directly from London.

During 1970s, terrorism, murdering, sniper attacks, bombs and land mines continued. There were also several attempts to solve the situation and to find settlement. In 1976, the group called Peace People expressed their desire for peace.

#### **4.20 The Hunger Strikes**

Wesley (1998, online) found that in 1981 and 1982, Republican prisoners decided to go on a hunger strike and refused food. The aim was to re-instate the Special Category status. The strikers were supported a lot, but Margaret Thatcher as the British Prime Minister was tough and ten strikers died of starvation. The IRA made use of this event and increased its violence.

#### **4.21 The Anglo-Irish Agreement**

The United Kingdom realised that the situation should be stopped as it became more severe. So in 1985, they started secret negotiations with the Irish Government.

"The Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed by the Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) Garret FitzGerald and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on 15 November 1985 at Hillsborough, the former residence of the Governor General of Northern Ireland. The Agreement consists of thirteen articles dealing with the status of Northern Ireland, the Intergovernmental Conference, political, security and legal matters, cross-border co-operation and interparliamentary relations. " (Morton, 2012, online)

After a number of protests, when the Unionist MPs resigned, because they did not want a foreign country to have the right to a say in Northern Ireland and after several campaigns mainly against Catholics, Margaret Thatcher won the General Election in 1988. And soon after that, Unionists had to admit that their campaign failed.

#### **4.22 Attempts at Talks**

Between 1988 and 1992, there were created all-party talks in Northern Ireland which were divided into three strands. They concerned the Government in Northern Ireland and relations between the UK and Ireland and the last concerned North-South

relations. These talks began in 1991, but nothing could be solved without the presence of terrorist groups which were believed to be causing the violence. But these groups did not want to be involved in such discussions. The situation changed when the leader of the SDLP, John Hume, negotiated with the President of Sinn Féin, Gerry Adams. In the end, the Hume-Adams Initiative was presented to both governments. (Wesley, 1998, online)

#### **4.23 Peace Process**

According to Wesley (1998, online), in late 1993, the conditions were quite good to start a new peace process. All the terrorist groups had their own political representatives. The two governments met and were prepared to negotiate. It resulted in the Downing Street Declaration.

" The UK declared that they had 'no selfish, strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland,' accepted that a united Ireland was possible if a majority so desired and promised to work towards an agreement. " (Wesley, 1998, online)

It was agreed that united Ireland could come into existence only on condition of majority consent.

#### **4.24 Good Friday Agreement**

In 1997, the new UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, wanted to do something with the never ending process so he announced the beginning of the all-party talks and no matter if Sinn Féin was present or not. This helped to start the violence again. In the end, in October 1997, the Unionist parties agreed with negotiating. So the process of negotiating started however, it continued very slowly. In order to accelerate it, the chairman George Mitchel announced that the agreement should be made by Thursday, 9 April 1998. Although the talks did not go well and sometimes Tony Blair and President Clinton had to intervene, at last on Good Friday,



they reached the agreement. Thanks to this agreement, Ireland abolished the articles from the Constitution which were concerned with the unification of Ireland.  
(Wesley, 1998, online)

## 5. Conclusion

As we know, there were many things and events which had a great impact on the history of Ireland. Also many personalities influenced the creating of Irish nationhood. The varied development caused that nowadays we can see a great number of different sights and monuments all over the land from various periods of time. I would like to make a brief summary of the whole work.

The first question: „Why is the land divided into two countries?“ is really difficult to answer. I suppose that a key role was played mainly by a big neighbour of Ireland – Great Britain. It is not easy to be objective in this question, but Britain always wanted Ireland to be under its dominion. In my opinion, everything started in the 17th century when the Tudor monarchs began a conquest of Ireland. As a result, Ireland was divided between Catholics and Protestants. Since then, many wars and conflicts between Catholics and Protestants have happened. Also, the conflicts due to the wealth and land, which followed, were also very important in the history of Ireland.

Ireland at that time was divided into those who wanted independence and those who wanted to be a part of Great Britain. The result of all these problems was the War of Independence in 1919 - 1921 after which twenty-six counties got independence thanks to an Anglo-Irish Treaty. They became the Irish Free State and six Ulster counties remained within the United Kingdom. After that, the land was officially divided into two countries and my first question is therefore answered.

The second question: „What events and people were important in creating Irish nationhood, and why?“ is being answered nearly during all my work. Among the most important people belonged Daniel O’Connell, the members of the Fenians such as James Stephens and John O’Leary. Another important person was Isaac Butt who started the Home Rule Party. I can also mention Collins who signed an Anglo-Irish Treaty. As for important events, the Irish were influenced by the Easter Rising, the War of Independence, the Irish Civil War, the two world wars, Bloody Friday, Bloody Sunday and in the end by the period which was called the Troubles. This period was held during 1968 - 1998 when the Catholics (Nationalists) and Republicans tried to join Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. Their opponents

were mainly Protestants (Unionists). This conflict was ended by the Good Friday Agreement.

In the end, I would like to write a few words about the Republic of Ireland. In the period between 1966–1982, the Republic of Ireland went through many changes. Mainly the sphere of industrial and social life was improved. In Whyte's opinion (1996, p. 271), the prosperity of the country increased as a result of two events. One of them was the entry of the Republic to EU and its financial support. The second event was based on abolition of the customs barriers which led into an increase in a new export trade.

Ireland stood on strong Catholic principles, which meant that they censored some of the books, the sale of contraception was banned, the divorces were not permitted and I could go on and on. But during the period of 1966 – 1982, the ordinary life of Irish people changed. Girls could undergo the abortion in England, couples started to live together, not being married and also the sphere of education got better. But the traditional life connected with church still remained.

The superiority of Catholicism has a great impact on a conservative character of the land. Only 3% of inhabitants are Protestants. (Irsko-info, 2006, online)

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## Résumé

Jaké události a osobnosti byly důležité při utváření irské národnosti, a proč?

What events and people were important in creating Irish nationhood, and why?

Nela Bednářová

Závěrečná práce je zaměřena na jednotlivé události v historii Irska, které ovlivnily dějiny této země a podílely se na utváření irské národnosti. V práci jsou zahrnuty také významné osobnosti, které se podílely na utváření národního cítění, bojovali za práva této země, či nějakým způsobem zasáhly do dějin irského národa.

Postupně se dočítáme o různých událostech, které se za doby jejich pobytu odehrály. Zjišťujeme, že většina sporů v této zemi je zapříčiněna touhou po moci, nadvládě a bohatství. Největším problémem se však zdá být otázka náboženství, která přetrvává po mnoho století a z velké většiny přispěla k rozdělení ostrova na dvě části.

## Annotation

### Anotace

<b>Jméno a příjmení:</b>	Nela Bednářová
<b>Katedra nebo ústav:</b>	Katedra anglického jazyka
<b>Vedoucí práce:</b>	PhDr. Světlana Obenausová, MLitt, Ph. D.
<b>Rok obhajoby:</b>	2012
<b>Název práce:</b>	Jaké události a osobnosti byly důležité při utváření irské národnosti, a proč?
<b>Název v angličtině:</b>	What events and people were important in creating Irish nationhood, and why?
<b>Anotace práce:</b>	Bakalářská práce pojednává o důležitých událostech a významných osobnostech, které se podílely na utváření irské národnosti. Práce zahrnuje události, které měly vliv na historii Irska.
<b>Klíčová slova:</b>	Protestanti, Katolíci, Nacionalisté, Unionisté, Irská Republika, Severní Irsko, Válka za nezávislost, samospráva, hladomor
<b>Anotace v angličtině:</b>	The bachelor project deals with the important events and people that helped to create Irish nationhood. The project includes those events which had a great impact on the history of Ireland.
<b>Klíčová slova v angličtině:</b>	Protestants, Catholics, Nationalists, Unionists, The Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, The War of Independence, Home Rule, famine
<b>Přílohy vázané v práci:</b>	0
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