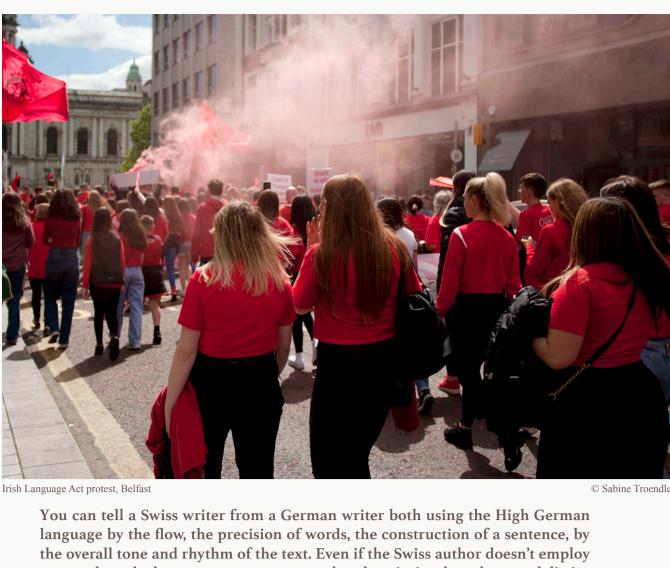
16 Roots "In 2011, the Queen of England, for the first time of a century came for a visit to Dublin and at a banquet in Dublin castle she had to give a speech and she opened up with 'A Uachtarán agus a chairde'. Uachtarán is the word for president. It derives from the word 'uachtar' which means cream. You milk a cow, the cream goes to the top. And the president is at the top. You don't need a separate word for president when you can say 'that one who has risen to the top' by using the word 'cream'."

Colm Mac Aindreasa, child of the Shaw's Road Project and native Irish speaker



© Sabine Troendle, 2022 vernaculars, the language comes across rather descriptive than sharp and distinguished. As if a Swiss story needs more time and space than a German story. Something similar could be said regarding the Irish English, the so called Hiberno-English or Anglo-Irish, where the English language is amalgamating with grammars and narration of the Irish language. "We're not long after finding that you weren't in bed." "Sure didn't I take my own mother's name and never any harm did it to me." "Is he in?

He's not but he bes here every Friday." "That was me sitting in the middle of my dinner." "I went to the shops, so I did." Even if you don't have any Irish, that's how the English here works. A flowery English, found in the works of Irish writers and praised for by the international literary world. It uses imagery, comparison and analogy demanding creativity to express yourself and a broad mind to understand and make sense of what is being said. The English language, in contrast, has a word for everything. Every possible situation, emotion and scenario finds a precise definition, requiring knowledge to let it blossom.

Cultural values and mentalities are reflected in the use of language and you have to understand the underpinning context in order to do translations any justice: "When you translate the Irish word 'Ri' – a Ri in Irish was an administrator of the tribe. A Ri in Irish was elected by the Thuath [the people, the tribe]. The Rí was not a law-maker, he was a law-giver. When you translate the word 'Ri' into English it translates as 'King'. A King, he's royal descent. It's a God-given right to rule. It's the law-giver and the law-maker. Totally different societal and most particularly power relationships. The minute you describe a Rí a King, you change everything. The Rí is given the power that he never had as a Ri but he does have as a King." Jake Mac Siacais, Director of Forbairt Feirste lating Rí to King ignores and devalues the culture embraced by the Rí.

An Irish Rí has got nothing in common with an English King. The concept of a Rí embraces something very different from the concept of a King. Therefore, trans-

Eithne, figure of Irish mythology, Teach Eithne, New Lodge, Belfast. Painting by Danny Devenny. © Sabine Troendle, 2020 Since the Norman invasion into Ireland sometime in the late twelfth century, Ireland's been struggling in one form or the other against exploitation, subjugation and conquest, trying to prevent the overthrow of its social system, its values, and its identity. British imperialism - with its inherent assumption of cultural superiority - did not recognise the Irish as equals and it was the English colonial spree of the fifteenth century and onwards which saw English, Scottish and Welsh farmers being given the good land to strategically subjugate the unruly Irish. All over Ireland, but especially in Ulster, plantations started to emerge on the land that the Irish previously owned and the planters, the now inhabitants, began to introduce a new way of life, a different culture and an alien language. Britain eventually gained control over the whole island of Ireland. It brought in the Penal Laws which outlawed everything Irish and Catholic, everything that didn't conform to the established Church and the Queen's English. It denied Catholics ownership of land and livestock, to vote and to be educated about their religion. Speaking Irish was made illegal, leading to generations of parents not speaking to their children in order to protect them from punishment in school. To succeed in life and progress in the official world, you had to speak English.

© Sabine Troendle, 2018 Penal Cross, Catholics' secret mass stone, Co Monaghan

FARS OF COLLUSION

100 YEARS OF JOB DISCRIMINATION 100 Years of Police Brutality

Falls. West Belfast

100 YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT

The Great Hunger or the so called Famine –

the Irish people starved." Sinead O'Connor, Lyrics from 'Famine'

HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

LOO YEARS OF ORANGE SUPREMACY 100 Years of Torture 100 Y

100 YEARS OF INTERNMENT 100 YEARS OF SPECIAL POWERS

"There was no famine, the Irish people were only allowed to eat potatoes, all of the other food, meat, fish and vegetables were shipped out of the country under armed guard to England while

The Great Hunger from 1845 to 1849 was being used to full capacity to coerce the Irish into renouncing their identity. Soup kitchens were denying food to Catholics unless they converted to Protestantism. Convert to Protestantism or starve. Renounce your identity or starve. Speak English

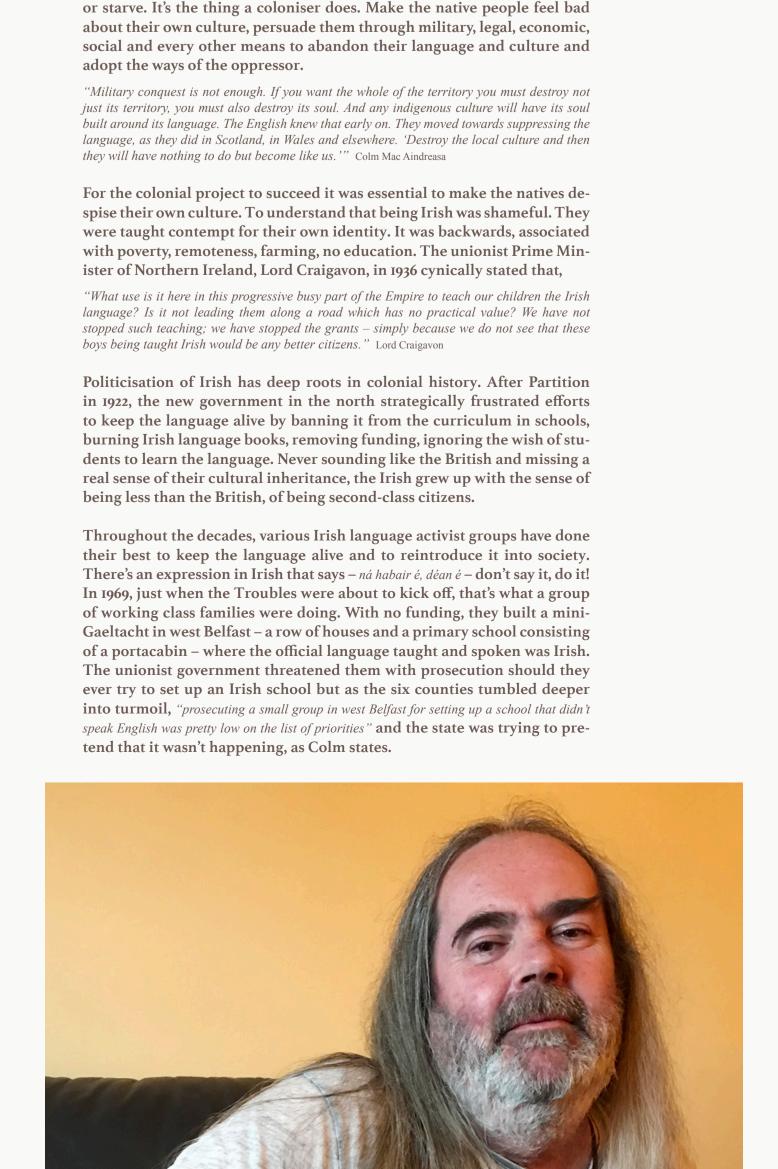
STATE SPONSORED DEATH SQUADS

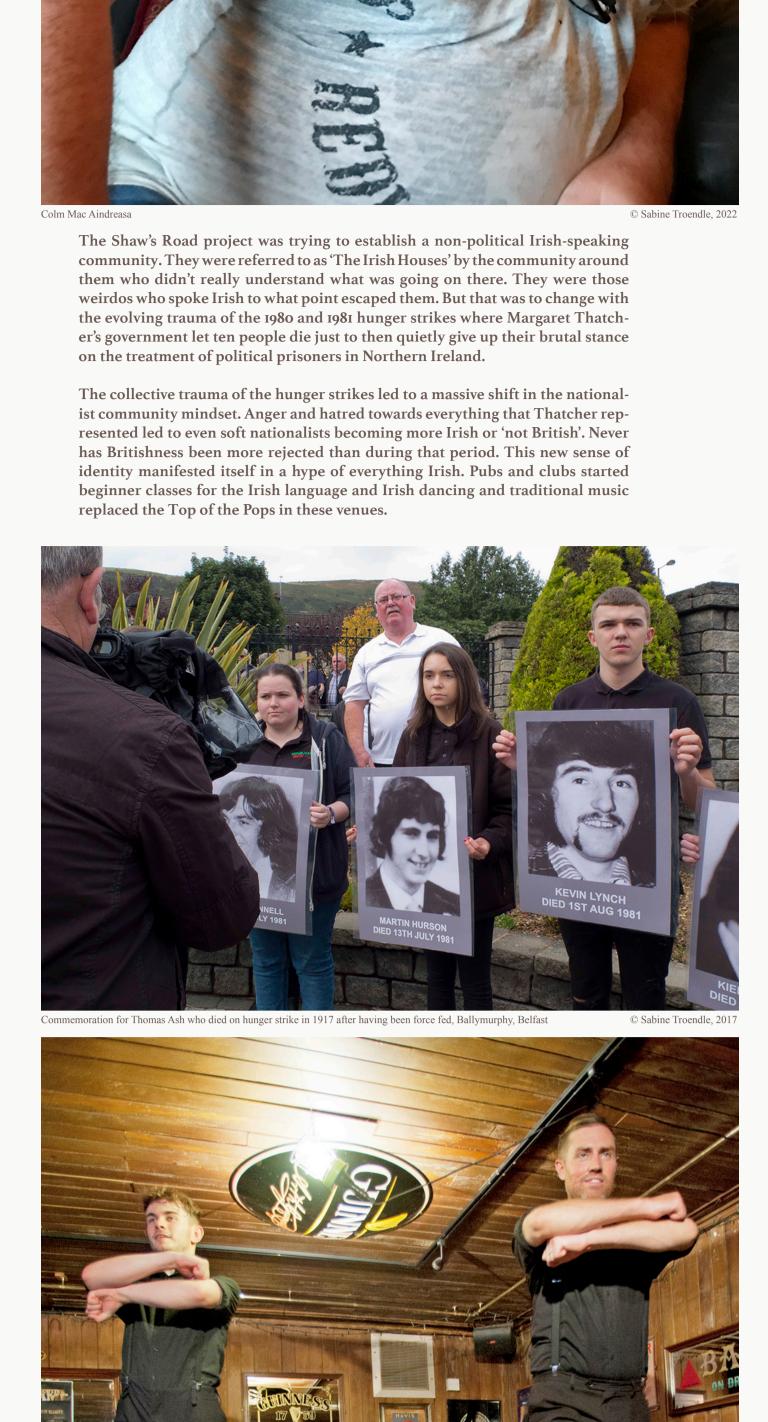
MACY 100 YEARS OF GERRYMANDERING 100 YEARS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS DENIED

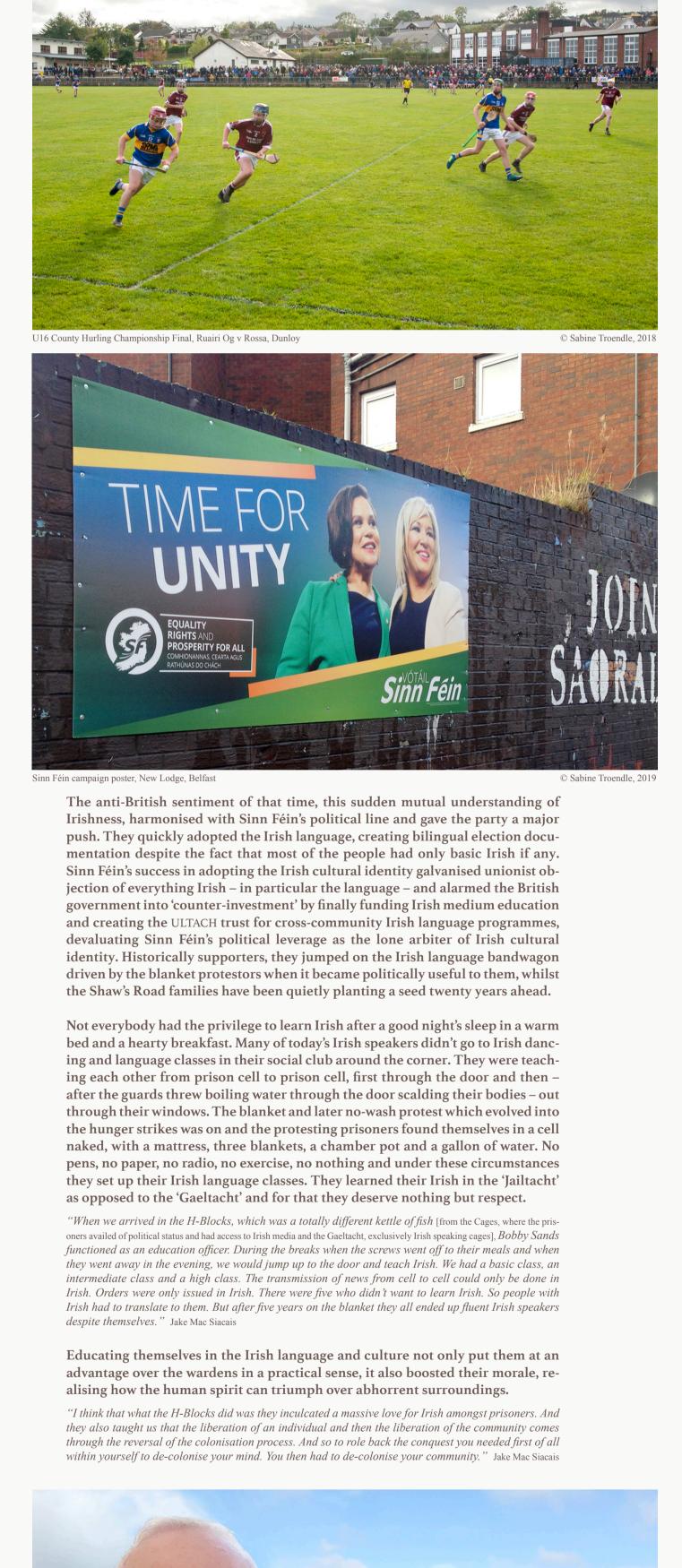
100 YEARS OF COLONIALISM

OF LANGUAGE DISCRIMINATION

© Sabine Troendle, 2021







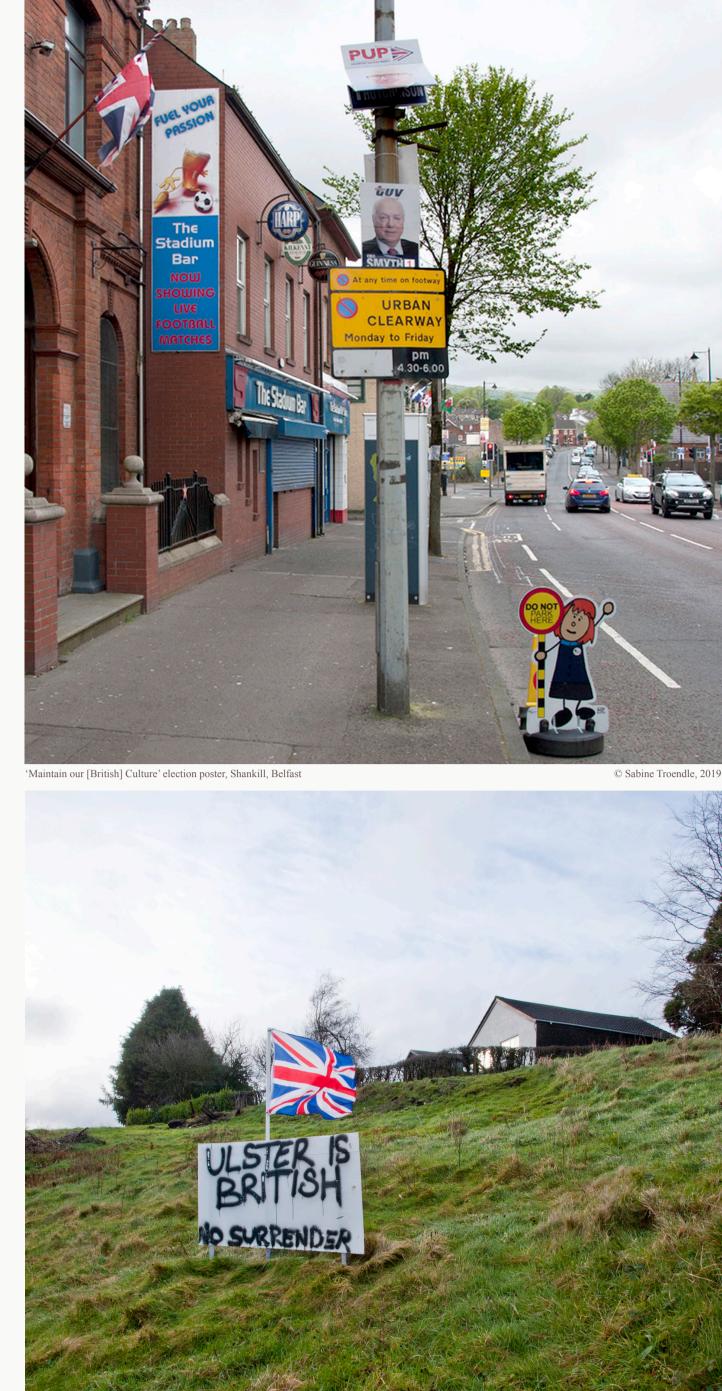
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The Belfast Story, Maddens Bar, Belfast



The Irish language has a widespread symbolic significance in the nationalist community whereas unionism - especially on a political level - shows nothing but contempt for the language and culture. The Arlene Fosters (feeding the crocodiles) and Gregory Campbells (Curry my yoghurt) of this world appear to be uneducated and ignorant not knowing their own background. Was it not the Protestants, the Anglo-Irish of the 19th century, who did most to try to revive the Irish language. Was it not the Reverend Rutledge Kane, Grand Master of the Orange Order, taking up the post of secretary of the Gaelic League to promote the Irish culture in the face of its massive decline. Did not the Gusty Spences, David Ervines and Billy Hutchinsons of the loyalist prisoners learn the Irish from their republican counterparts, acknowledging an Irish element to their identity. Was it not in 2011 their own monarch, Queen Elizabeth, beginning her speech in Dublin Castle in Irish – A Uachtarán agus a chairde, President and friends. A number of Orangemen are fluent in Irish. The Irish language wasn't politicised by Irish speakers, it was politicised by the unionist state of the late 1890s when they started to disassociate themselves from rural Ireland exchanging their 'loyal Irishness' - Irish people

loyal to the monarchy – with 'Britishness' – people of cultural supremacy.

VOTE BUNTING Maintain Culture, Heritage Identity!

Jake Mac Siacais

Larne

'Language Rights ~ Human Rights' Irish Language Act protest, Belfast

Sinn Féin's growing popularity during the painful and violent period of the hunger strikes in the early 1980s, aggravated unionists' proclamation that Irishness meant Sinn Féin, who of course to their mind was a terrorist organisation. To this day, unionism parallels Irishness and the Irish language with republicanism and republicanism with terrorism, though, finally, that narrative is being contested

"Irish was never the affront I took it to be. It was my culture that supplanted Irish, burying it in the peremptory administration of imperial bureaucracies and commerce. I cannot relate to the dislocation and alienation that native speakers must have experienced. Yet, I do recognise the loss. I do feel the narrowness of my inheritance. Irish is not my language, but it's part of my story, too. In opposing the Irish

Political unionism's deep hatred for the Irish language, claiming it undermines their Britishness (any form of expressing Irish identity is a threat to British cultural hegemony), discriminates against them, turns them into second-class citizens – that age-old fear of the unknown and terrible lack of generosity denies their community to embrace an identity that belongs to everybody and enrichens a society altogether. Ignorance only feeds uncertainty and insecurity and today's

Irish Language activist and unionist Linda Ervine, sister in law of the late loyalist paramilitary turning politician David Ervine, runs TURAS, an Irish language project on the Newtownards Road, in the heart of Protestant east Belfast. TURAS upholds the ethos that the Irish language is not a threat to the unionist identity or antithetical to Britishness but rather a contribution to the linguistic diversity of these islands, part of a continuum of Celtic languages such as Scottish Gaelic and Welsh. It brings people together and Linda is adamant that this is the perfect medium for reconciliation. The message seems to catch on, it's said that the fastest-growing cohort of Irish language learners is now amongst Protestants.

from within the unionist community as well.

language, we oppose a part of ourselves." Richard Irvine, Teacher

grassroots unionism knows.

Irish Language Act protest, Belfast © Sabine Troendle, 2022 It has taken an awful lot to move towards a situation whereas the Irish identity as a whole has a good chance to become legally recognised. It's yet to be seen how it's all going to play out, but on May 25, 2022, the IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE (NORTH-ERN IRELAND) BILL was introduced in Westminster. It will grant the Irish language as well as the Ulster Scots official status in the north of Ireland, as did the GAELIC

LANGUAGE ACT 2005 in Scotland and the 1993 WELSH LANGUAGE ACT in Wales.

births, deaths, marriages and wills in Irish and if it does succeed -

The repeal of the ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (LANGUAGE) ACT (IRELAND) dating from 1737 will allow Irish to be used in the Stormont Assembly and to register

"This could be an historic day when being Irish is no longer a crime, I will be allowed to speak Irish in court. It legitimises the language and therefore me and my identity which did not exist prior to now. People have been arrested and prosecuted for refusing to speak English with police and in court in the past. I've had full legal status as a speaker of English but as an Irish speaker that aspect of my identity

has always been legally denied me until now. I hope we have finally taken that last step to re-legitimising Irishness in this country." Colm Mac Aindreasa An estimated 17,000 people took part in this May's Irish language protest march. Over 7,000 children are enrolled in Irish medium schools and the boys and girls who live in today's 22 houses on the Shaw's Road don't see themselves as special, living in the Gaeltacht, it's just a home home where they speak their language which happens to be Irish. In a way, that's what the Shaw's Road project was all about from the start: normalising the language and accepting it as part of life. More and more people in these parts of the world understand that.

An extra THANK YOU goes to Colm Mac Aindreasa and Jake Mac Siacais for their generous time and unique insight into aspects of their lives as a native Irish speaker growing up in Belfast's own Gaeltacht and a former prisoner discovering the love for the Irish language in prison. Choyaa, The Orange Order's complex relationship with the Irish Language, Slugger O'Toole, 12 January 2020 Niall Comer, posted on FB by Cormack Buzz Ó Briain, 24 December 2019 Colm Mac Aindreasa, Interview on 25 May 2022 Jake Mac Siacais, Interview on 27 May 2022 Scéal Phobal Bhóthar Seoighe – The Irish Houses, BBC iPlayer, 16 March 2020 Andrew Walsh, From hope to hatred - Voices of the Falls Curfew, 2013 Jaira Wilsey, Surnames in Northern Ireland: A key to history and identity, 2013 CBC News, Guardian, Irish Central, Irish Examiner, Irish News, Irish Times, Rebelnews

KNEECAP

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCdTTm-hwRs