

Fecha de recepción: 21 septiembre 2019

Fecha de aceptación: 16 octubre 2019

Fecha de publicación: 9 febrero 2020

URL: <https://oceanide.es/index.php/o12020/article/view/37/180>

Oceanide número 13, ISSN 1989-6328

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37668/oceanide.v13i.37>

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# Language and music in Galicia and Ireland in the early 20th century

## Resumen

Se pretende con este trabajo hacer una aproximación contrastiva a la situación del gallego y del gaélico irlandés en el primer tercio del siglo XX y también a la música tradicional. Se trata de una época muy importante para Galicia y para Irlanda en el aspecto cultural, político y social. No se podría entender la actualidad de ambos países si no se tiene en cuenta ese crucial período.

Palabras clave:

cultura popular; gaélico; gallego; música; tradición

## Abstract

This study takes a contrastive approach to the situation of Galician and Irish Gaelic in the first third of the twentieth century, and to traditional music in particular. It is a period of significant interest in both Galiza and Ireland in terms of the cultural, political and social climate. Indeed, the current situations of the two countries can hardly be understood without taking these crucial years into consideration.

Keywords:

popular culture; Gaelic language; Galician language; music; tradition

In his inaugural speech as Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of A Coruña (2000), as proposed by Professor Dr. Antonio Raúl de Toro Santos, the Nobel Laureate for Literature Séamus Heaney (1939–2013) stated that for Ireland, Galiza did not signify the end of the earth or *finisterrae*, as represented in many European cultures, but rather that it was the beginning of civilization. Indeed, a reading of *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* or *Leabhar Gabhála na hÉireann*, written in the eleventh century, provides a mythological account of how the island opens many doors of its history when its colonists set out from the north-west of the Iberian Peninsula, namely present-day Galiza. In the Galician national anthem itself, written by Eduardo Pondal (1835–1917) and with music by Pascual Veiga (1842–1906), explicit reference is made to this mythical past and to the Celtic King Breoghain; the descendants of the latter, according to *Leabhar Gabhála na hÉireann* (Sainero 1988, 142–62), decided to conquer Ireland by embarking from the ancient Galician city of Brigantia (A Coruña).

Memory of those old contacts seem to have been maintained at least in some educated circles and in certain documented sources. Thus, the intellectual Plácido Castro (2017, 16) was welcomed in Dublin in 1928 by Professor Eoin Mac Neill, historian, former minister and hero of Irish independence, to ponder these old links: “¡Canto me alegro de recibir a unha persoa que vén de Galicia! É vostede da terra dos nosos devanceiros!” (How glad I am to receive a person who comes from Galiza! You are from the land of our ancestors!), the host commented to his Galician guest. Also, the legend, which possibly came to be known in Galiza through social gatherings held in the late 19th century in Uxío Carré Aldao’s bookstore “A Cova Céltica” (The Celtic Cave), is collected in some modern Galician anthologies, according to Carré Alvarellos (1983, 154–5), who observes that “fue como los celtas de Galicia llevaron a Irlanda su civilización” (this was how the Celts of Galiza took their civilization to Ireland).

However, other than myths, the truth is that the historical connections between the two countries, which go beyond mere coincidences in terms of certain traditions or particular manifestations of popular culture, extend the scope of ancient narratives and reach to the present day, as indeed some contemporary studies have noted (Keating 1990; Alonso Romero 1996; Souto 2014). There is even a melody, “The South Wind”, quite popular in pub sessions, which in some form was sung on the very boats that in the High Middle Ages sailed from Galician ports to the coasts of Ireland, Cornwall, Brittany and Wales. And it is not difficult to see how international trade relations were established through these maritime routes: such a journey would have involved just a few days’ sailing, whereas traveling from Brigantia to the centre of the Iberian Peninsula at the time would have taken five weeks or more.

Our own language and traditional music, two symbols with a strong charge of identity, and inherited as such from the era of Romanticism, will be the means through which we take a contrastive approach to the situation in both countries in the first third of the twentieth century. This is a period of vital importance for both nations and, in our opinion, their respective current realities cannot be understood without taking into account those years. It was a time characterised in Ireland by the process that led to the proclamation of independence from Great Britain in 1922 in the territories of three of the four ancient kingdoms: Connaught,

Leinster and Munster. Such a process was followed closely in Galiza by the intellectual elites; shortly before Ireland became independent, Antón Vilar Ponte wrote “Lembranza. Elexía do bon irlandés”, a composition in which the following words can be read as reflecting a truce in the middle of the “Anglo-Irish War” or *Cogadh na Saoirse*: “A tempestade brúa encol da illa verde. As árbores mais outivas, as mais lanzaes, andan a caeren apouvigadas polo furacán [...]. ¡A illa necesita navegare, seguire a ruta dourada qu’os bardos lle trazaron! ¡Sinte que, pra vivire a sua vida, precisa arredárese da soma!” (The storm haunts the green island. The most vicious trees, the most spear-yielding, are going to fall in the wake of the hurricane [...]. The island needs to navigate, follow the golden route that the bards have traced! It feels that, in order to live its life, it will need to be surrounded by shadow!) (*Nós* 1921, 6, 2).

In Galiza, by turn, these years are distinguished, from a cultural and political perspective, by advances in the organisation of nationalism (Irmandades da Fala 1916; Asembleia Nazionalista de Lugo 1918; Partido Galeguista 1931; *A Nosa Terra* 1916; *Nós* 1920; Seminario de Estudos Galegos 1923; etc.). This progression would deepen the sense of a country as an entity with its own idiosyncrasies and with the right to determine its own destiny, which, thanks to the work of all these groups, would lead to the passing of the Statute of Autonomy in 1936. For reasons of space, we will not go into the relations between the Irish and Galician nationalist movements (such as the contacts between the intellectuals of *Nós* and *Sinn Féin*, which will have to be explored elsewhere); the pages of *A Nosa Terra* and *Nós* provide very good illustrations of those connections and the degree of mutual knowledge that existed between the two nations at the time.

## Language and music in Galiza and Ireland

### *Gaelic, Gailge, Galego*

When someone native to Dublin, Derry, Cork or Aran hears that the Galician word *galega/o* is quite close to how the word *Irish* is said in Galician (*gailge*), their first reaction is one of surprise. This is perhaps not unlike the surprise expressed by Edith, a character in Ramón Otero Pedrayo’s novel *Devalar*, when she repeats the names of some Celtic countries: “Gales, Gallia, Galiza... Eu xogaba co istas palabras como unha nena sabida rubindo ás Prateirías. A Europa céltiga, atrántica” (Wales, Gaul, Galiza ... I used to play with these words, like a cultured little girl going up to Prateirías Square) (Otero Pedrayo 1935, 106). Such coincidences and literary quotations notwithstanding, one cannot forget that for an explanation of the toponym *Galiza* it is customary to begin with an ancient Celtic or pre-Celtic base *\*kal-* (Cabeza Quiles 2008, 299–304), which came first from the Greek *Kallaikia* and was later incorporated into Latin in the form *Gallaecia*, the origin of the present name with the sound of the initial velar consonant [k] > [g].

In this respect, there have been discussions as to what types of Celtic languages were spoken in the northwest of the peninsular in the 4th and 5th centuries BCE, when the territory was known as *Ophiusa*: whether they were linked to Gaulish, if they formed a separate branch, etc. (Villar 1996, 484–514; Hubert 1988, 37–77; Haywood 2009, 15–16; 28–9; etc.). Although there is no unanimous agreement here (and neither is their full consensus as to the importance of the Celtic civilization in Galiza), one active

theory relates them to the Goidelic family of languages (Sainero 1984, 20–1), which includes Gaelic from Ireland, from Scotland, and from the Isle of Man (also known as *Manx*), the latter having become extinct in the 1940s. We note that words frequently attributed to the Celtic substrate in present-day Galician (*carballo*, *camba* and *cambeiro*, *canga*, *codeso*, *coio* or *croio*, *cómaro* or *cómaro*, *con* ‘stone’, etc.), and many toponyms also of presumably Celtic origins (*Cambre*, *Camboño*, *Cances*, *Canduas*, *Canzobre*, *Callobre*, *Coebre*, etc.) have the sound [k] in initial position, a characteristic feature of Goidelic languages, consisting of the maintenance of the [k] or [kʷ] of ancient Proto-Indoeuropean; meanwhile, the Celtic languages of the Brittonic branch, that is, Welsh, Cornish and Breton, underwent a conversion [k] > [p] (cf. Irish Gaelic *ceathair* / Welsh *pedwar* / Cornish *peswar* / Breton *pevar*, ‘four’).

Galician and Gaelic, then, are hetero-familiar Indo-European languages, being structurally very distant. Both had moments of great splendour, and both saw the development of extraordinary literatures that are the subject of study worldwide today. In the High Middle Ages, Irish Gaelic became one of the oldest written records of Europe after the Greek and Roman periods, and at the same time the first form of writing to formally separate words (Riordan 2014, xv–xxiii). In turn, Galician literature, in the Late Middle Ages, enjoyed an artistic production at the same level of sophistication as other European languages at the time, such as Provençal, with a diversity of genres and a notable artistic-aesthetic brilliance. The emergence of the literary culture of Galiza in the nineteenth century allows us to speak once again of such excellence, with notable literary figures such as Rosalía de Castro (1837–1885), Eduardo Pondal (1835–1917) and Curros Enríquez (1851–1908); there are no equivalent figures in Ireland, in that literature in the Gaelic language had not yet produced works comparable in stature to those of Irish authors writing in English, such as Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), William Butler Yeats (1865–1939), John Millington Synge (1871–1909) and James Joyce (1882–1941) (cf. Vicente Risco’s interesting article “A moderna literatura irlandesa” (Modern Irish Literature), in *Nós* February 15, 1916, 26, 5–9; March 15, 1926, 27, 4–12; April 15, 1926, 28, 2–5; also Baggioni 2004, 316).

The two languages arrive at the beginning of the twentieth century with characteristics that reveal how they have sometimes taken similar paths, though not always coincidental ones. Both competed in their own territory (as still happens today) with another, very powerful official language, English in Ireland and Spanish in Galiza, both of these imposed by conquerors, settlers and officials, and as such were able to reduce the use of the native language and to place it in a perilous situation in terms of its very survival. The two nations share the beginnings of the Modern Age at a time when their respective languages begin to enter into crisis in their own countries: in the case of Galician, due to the centralist policy developed since the end of the 15th century, first by the Spanish monarchs known as “Catholic Monarchs”, and continued by the Habsburgs, then the Bourbons, without forgetting the interruption of Franco’s fascist dictatorship. In the case of Ireland, the strategy of assimilation was imposed by the Tudor dynasty in the 16th century and maintained by the later British kings and queens of the houses of Stuart, Hannover and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha/Windsor; this strategy had, by the turn of the 17th century, brought an end to the cultural, economic, social and political order of “Gaelic Ireland” or *Éire Ghaelach*, a model of society inherited and consolidated on secular lines since the arrival of the Celtic people on the island.

## Galician, Gaelic and traditional music

But what was the status of the two languages at the beginning of the last century? From the point of view of the number of speakers, there are strong indications to think that, in the case of Galiza, Galician reached high levels of use. At the end of the 19th century, for example, the figure of 90% of monolinguals in Galician has been suggested, taking into account that this corresponded to the traditional peasant population at the time (Calo Lourido et al. 1997, 303). Such an estimate appears to change little in the first years of the following century, and indeed several authors have indicated that, from a total of two and a half million inhabitants, more than two million would have had Galician as their sole or habitual language (Sanmartín Rei 2002, 91–2). This proportion of speakers belonged to the rural, fishing and artisan sectors, which were the social strata in which the language managed to survive after the higher and lower echelons of the Galician nobility sought to adopt Spanish through a form of diglossia, mimicking the language which had been brought to Galiza by state officials and clergy from Castile.

As for the situation of Gaelic, the numbers were not so high. Like Galician, it was used preferentially in rural and fishing communities, which were also able to conserve it under wholly unfavourable conditions. However, the number of speakers in the early twentieth century was around 640,000, of which only 21,000 were monolingual in Gaelic (Hindley 1990, 18–19). In Ireland, one of the consequences of the Great Famine or *An Gorta Mór* (1845–1849), caused by the potato crisis (Galiza would have a comparable crisis in 1853), was that the decline of Gaelic was sharply accentuated. However, in the 19th century it was still the majority language: prior to the *An Gorta Mór*, according to the 1841 census, four million inhabitants had Gaelic as their habitual language from a total of just over eight million (O’Beirne Ranelagh 1994, 118), that is, approximately 50%. The *An Gorta Mór* led to the deaths of about one million people, most of them from the central-western regions of the island where Irish was either the only language spoken or the one of greatest use, these areas known as *Gaeltachtaí*. Thus it was that by the time of the 1851 census, only 23% spoke Gaelic as their habitual language, which is clearly a very notable decline.

It is at this time that melodies now known as traditional were being generated as a response to the potato crisis, such as “Skibbereen”, “White Potatoes”, etc. It is also the time when the language is being replaced by English in some sub-genres of the popular song, at least in certain modes, such as “Irish Tavern Songs”, “Street Ballads” and “Child Ballads”, the latter with considerable English and Scottish influence (Graves 1963). Although we will discuss emigration to the US below, we should point out here that the language of folklore songs performed in North America will, from this time, be mostly English. Thus, the phenomenon of the *sean-nós* pieces is not surprising, sung exclusively in Gaelic as a vindication of national identity (Ó h-Éalaithe 2011).

We find a certain parallel between Irish music and language, and the music and language of Galiza. During the 18th and 19th centuries, many Galicians were forced to move to various parts of the Iberian Peninsula to work in the wheat harvests, these transient workers known as *segadores* (harvesters) or *seitureiros*. Alexander Jardine (1736–1799), in his *Letters from Barbary, France, Spain, Portugal, etc.*, published in 1778, claimed that such work involved close to fifty thousand individuals (Soto Gutiérrez

and Sánchez Pombo 1993, 43). These migrations were not insignificant in cultural and sociological terms, or even regarding musical and linguistic issues. Thus, it has been argued that certain ternary rhythms (3/4, 3/8) of traditional Galician music (*fandangos*, *foliadas*, *maneos*, *xotas*, etc.) were brought to the country by these workers on their return to Galiza. In linguistic terms, there are those who believe that the fashion for using Spanish in Galician singing –a controversial issue, not to the same degree as in the Irish case but one which still arouses strong opinions today– has its origins in this era, when the *seitureiros* returned to their country with stanzas learned in Spanish, or translated into it. Therefore, in 1884 the association “El Folk-Lore Gallego” was founded in A Coruña by leading intellectuals, among them Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851–1921), José Pérez Ballesteros (1833–1918), Salvador Golpe (1850–1909), etc.; among its aims, it sought to study and collect all manifestations of the popular culture (beliefs and superstitions, traditions, literature, music, games, etc.) in order to preserve them for the future. Thus, either through contact with this association, or independently, people such as Casto Sampedro Folgar (1848–1936), José Casal Lois (1845–1912), José Inzenga Castellanos (1828–1891), José Pérez Ballesteros, Juan Antonio Saco Arce (1835–1881), Marcial Valladares (1821–1903), etc. began to collect traditional literature and, as we will see below, occasionally music.

Returning to Ireland, the *An Gorta Mor* led to another million individuals emigrating to various Anglo-Saxon nations, including Australia, Canada, England and, in particular, the US (Ross 2002, 226). These people had to abandon their language, which was generally Gaelic, and learn English in order to “progress” socially and economically in the host countries. Such a practice of abandonment and undervaluation of that which is one’s own was observed by Plácido Castro (2017, 40) in one of the many conversations that this Galician intellectual had with the people of Blasket Island during his stay there in 1928: one of the local leaders, in Castro’s words, “non é partidario do ensino en gaélico. Como case tódolos habitantes desta bisbarra, pensa ante todo na emigración, e para iren a América é indispensable o inglés” (is not a supporter of teaching in Gaelic. Like almost all the inhabitants of this region, he thinks first of all about emigration, and to go to America, English is indispensable). In a different context we might recall that many of the schools created by Galician emigrants returning from American emigration in the early twentieth century had the goal of making children learn Spanish and notions of geography of the destination countries involved, much in line with the attitudes that Plácido Castro described for Blasket Island.

Irish folklore has been partially impregnated with such processes of migration through various formulas. One of these was through songs that, already sung in English (Ó Súilleabháin 2003, 82), make explicit reference to the American exodus, such as “Green Fields of America”, “Paddy’s Lamentation”, “Drill Ye Tarriers, Drill”, “We’re Bound for San Diego”, etc. Another way was through the preservation of traditional tunes that were lost on the island or that ceased to be so popular, but which by contrast managed to survive, sometimes heavily changed, in songs of the genre Country or in the Irish-American colonies, such as the pieces “The Long Black Veil”, “The Bard of Armagh” (known in the US as “The Streets of Laredo”), etc. A further mechanism here was the direct adoption by North American society of traditional melodies from the island for different purposes; such was the case with “The Garry Owen March”, an 18th century piece from the Limerick region and very popular within Irish emigration, which

would become the official march of the 7th US Cavalry Regiment. Finally, a fourth formula was due to the compositions by musicians of Irish origin in the North American territory, giving rise to melodies such as “Give My Regards to Broadway”, “You’ve a Grand Old Flag”, etc. The contemporary group The Chieftains has explored the connections between traditional Irish music and melodies typical of the Country genre on several albums: *Another Country* (1992), *Long Journey Home* (1998), *Down The Old Plank Road (The Nashville Sessions)* (2002) and *Further Down the Old Plank Road* (2003); the results clearly show that such an accommodation of influences is very simple to achieve.

Galician music, especially the bagpipes, has also enjoyed some degree of success in certain South American countries as a result of emigration. Famous bagpipers from Galiza, such as Xoán Míguez de Ventosela (1847–1912), Os Soutelo de Montes (1919–1936), Os Trintas de Trives (late 19th to mid-20th century), etc., made a number of tours through various South American countries, achieving considerable acclaim within the Galician colonies of different cities. Musical groups were even formed in the Galician immigrant communities during the first third of the twentieth century in which the bagpipes played a central role; this is the case with the José Posada Cuarteto de Monterrei, a somewhat emblematic group within Galician-Cuban music (Ibáñez 2009). In passing, it should not be forgotten that one of the genres most recently integrated into traditional Galician music, the *rumba*, has its origins in rhythms of the Caribbean island, although the most classic bagpipers, such as Os Tempranos de Eirís (A Coruña), have always refused to incorporate these new rhythmic-melodic figures into their performances because they consider them alien to the essence of the piper tradition. We might note here that Carlos Núñez’s first solo album, *A Irmandade das Estrelas* (The Brotherhood of the Stars) (1996), addresses these connections, particularly in the interpretation of a piece known on both sides of the Atlantic as “Para Vigo me voy”. In *Carlos Núñez e amigos* (Carlos Núñez and friends) (2004) he would again explore these musical links through the musical setting of lyrics from Curros Enríquez’s poem “Cántiga” by José Castro González, “Mestre Chané” (1856–1927): a melody, with different words, which corresponds to the song “Galleguita”, and which narrates the misadventures of a migrant far from his homeland.

Irish musicians, parallel to Galician ones, also enjoyed success in North America and developed their musical careers there, while also working as artisans. In this regard, it is customary to say that the current tuning of the Irish bagpipes or *uilleann pipes* (UP) is due to the Taylor brothers, originally from Drogheda (Ireland) and later settled in the city of Philadelphia. They were responsible for the UP being capable of accompanying other standard classical musical instruments as early as the late nineteenth century. One of the most renowned Irish-American pipers was Patsy Touhey (1865–1923), a native of Galway (Ireland), who emigrated with his family to the USA in 1868. He played with instruments made by the Taylor family and rose to become one of UP’s most accomplished virtuoso performers, and also for being one of the first to record UP music commercially (Mitchell and Small 1986, 15–16). Other renowned bagpipers in North America were Barney Delaney, John Ennis and Charles Mac Sweeney, who would all share the stage and sessions with Patsy Touhey. In addition, Irish folk music has become very popular in some US cities, such as San Francisco, a town that has its own Irish bagpipe club (Ó Súilleabháin 2003, 83; Valley 2011, 723). It should be noted that in the 1850s and 1860s there were approximately one and a

half million people from Ireland in the US, probably one of the reasons for the popularity of Irish music.

Also, compilations of traditional music in Ireland have a relatively long history and publishing tradition (compared to the situation in Galiza) with the first publications dating from the late eighteenth century. Thus, valuable material collected by Edward Bunting (1773–1843) appeared in 1796, 1809 and 1840, and the work of the piper Patrick O’Farrell (ca. 1760–18?) began to be published at the beginning of the 19th century, as was also the case with the *Collection of National Irish Music for the Union Pipes* (c. 1805). In turn, Patrick Weston Joyce (1827–1914) published in 1873 his classic work *Ancient Irish Music*, and Francis O’Neill (1848–1936) published *The Music of Ireland* in 1903, both of these collections becoming pillars of traditional Irish music and remaining so today (Long 2003, 59–60; Vallely 2011, 511–12, 524–6).

In Galiza, by contrast, although there are some melodies dating from the 18th century preserved in cathedral archives, there is no evidence that popular music was compiled prior to Marcial Valladares’s *Ayes de mi País* in 1865; despite being unpublished, some of his melodies would be drawn on by other authors, such as José Inzenga Castellanos in *Cantos y Bailes de Galicia*, 1888, and by Marcial del Adalid (1826–1881) in *Cantares viejos y nuevos de Galicia*, 1877–1882 (Pico Orjais and Rei Sanmartín 2010, 202). Also worthy of note here is the *Cancionero Musical de Galicia* by Casto Sampedro Folgar, which, being compiled between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, and seen as one of the fundamental pillars of Galician traditional music, was published for the first time only in 1942. From this same period we might mention the collection by Ramón de Arana (1858–1939), “Pizzicato”, now unfortunately lost. Also of note in this respect are the songs of blind singers (*os cantos de cego*) collected in the early twentieth century by the cleric Santiago Tafall Abad (1858–1930), although the collector makes them correspond tonally to older melodic models (Sánchez Rei 2006, 80). Given this situation in Galiza, a precarious one compared to that of Ireland, the Seminario de Estudos Galegos (Seminary of Galician Studies) commissioned the scholars Jesus Bal Gay (1905–1993) and Eduardo Martínez Torner (1888–1955) to research and compile traditional music and song. The materials were partially published in the monograph *Terra de Melide* in 1933, although the rest of the linguistic-musical documents survived partially in the *Cancionero gallego* (Galician Songbook), published in two volumes forty years later, in 1973. And we say “partially” because during the Spanish Civil War, insurgents burned a huge quantity of scores and other material that had been collected from throughout the country.

#### Other linguistic questions

During the 19th century, both nations saw a cultural and political reassessment and vindication of their language and identity. This is what is known in Ireland as the “Gaelic Revival” or *Athbheochan na Gaeilge*, a movement that embraced all aspects of Gaelic culture, and which is usually dated to the year 1830 with the birth of the Ulster Gaelic Society. In 1893 saw the emergence of the Gaelic League or *Conradh Na Gaeilge*, focussing on Irish language, plus traditional music and dance. Founded by the aforementioned Eoin Mac Neill and Douglas Hyde, its presence was felt even in the Irish colonies of the US. Galiza, by turn, saw in this period the “Rexurdimento” (Resurgence), the fresh winds of national regeneration –like the Irish movement *Athbheochan na Gaeilge*– which was fundamentally urban, eclectic

in its arguments in defence of Galician language and culture, and championed by well-educated bourgeois minorities who sought the cultural decolonisation of Galiza (Sánchez Rei 2006, 15–22); this blossoming of the defence of the country’s signs of identity dates from the second half of the 19th century, namely from the publication of *Cantares Gallegos* by Rosalía de Castro in 1863, the foundational work of contemporary Galician literature.

A difference that can be observed between the two countries in their respective vindications of their languages leads us to talk about geographical issues in the use of these languages in the early 20th century. First of all, we should note that both nations share the fact that their own language saw a notable reduction of use in urban environments, where English predominated in Ireland and Spanish in Galiza. But Gaelic and Galician are very different in terms of use. Whereas Galician was used by the majority throughout the country, in both towns and the rural world, as well as on the outskirts of larger towns and cities, Gaelic became strong in certain regions, such as in the *Gaeltachtaí*, as noted above; there were no areas in Galiza, then, of language maintenance like those that existed in Ireland, and thus Galician was used horizontally throughout the territory.

From the perspective of the identification of dialectal varieties, at the time that we are dealing with, the proposed division of the Galician territory found in the *Gramática gallega* (Galician Grammar) (1868) by Juan Antonio Saco Arce continued to be taken as valid. It took as its starting point the existence of a southern variety and another northern one, today a wholly outdated view. The differences between the two modalities, however, did not impede comprehension between inhabitants of different regions of Galiza, although detractors of the *Rexurdimento* frequently stressed a supposed linguistic diversity which could hinder mutual intelligibility (Freixeiro Mato *et al.* 2005, 632–5). In the Irish case, both then and now, it is customary to speak of three main dialects with significant differences between them, and which at times could even impede inter-comprehension: the varieties of the north (Ulster), the centre (Connacht), and the south of the country (Munster). On a personal level, we recall how at a meeting held at the University of Cork, there were students of standard Gaelic who communicated with each other and with their teachers in this variety, but who had some difficulties in understanding northern speakers.

In the first quarter of the 20th century, neither Galician nor Gaelic had a codification of the standard. In the case of Galician, the need for one had been felt since the end of the 19th century, when during the *Rexurdimento* there began to appear in some media and in certain paratexts calls for a relatively unified variety in order to banish from the literary language certain dialectal variants, Spanishisms and vulgarisms (Freixeiro Mato *et al.* 2005, 627–728). In Galicia in the early twentieth century, with the creation of the Irmandades da Fala (Brotherhood of Galician Language) in 1916 and with the group of intellectuals centred around the magazine *Nós*, Manuel Lugo Freire’s *Gramática do idioma galego* (Grammar of the Galician Language), first published in 1922 and in a second edition in 1931, was promoted as a reference work (*A Nosa Terra*, May 31, 1922, 164, 5; *A Nosa Terra*, July 1, 1922, 166, 3; *A Nosa Terra*, October 1, 1931, 288, 6; *etc.*). However, as with other work of a similar nature, it did not have the necessary implementation and social reach; and in epistemological terms, it went no further than Saco Arce’s *Gramática* of 1868 and even in some respects was wholly indebted to this previous work.

Irish, by turn, also lacked a supradialectal variety to serve as a reference model. The figures of Father O’Leary and the sailor O’Criomhainn are often cited as representing attempts during the 1920s and 1930s to develop of a master variety from the rural dialects of the Munster region (Baggioni 2004, 315). However, the standard of Gaelic, or *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*, would not be publicly known until 1958, although efforts had been made to disseminate it since the end of the previous decade. In those years, specifically in 1950, we find a certain chronological coincidence with the Galician situation, in that the publisher Galaxia established at this time spelling rules for use within its own publications, which, with the passage of time, would eventually lay the foundations for the standard currently in force today, formally approved and adopted in 1982.

At the same time, the current Irish standard is essentially based on the Munster dialects, and hence has a monodialectal base, a situation which is quite common in other linguistic contexts: we might think here of Italian (based on the Tuscan dialect used by writers such as Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio), of Portuguese (which takes its starting point the speech of the Lisbon region, reflecting the economic and political power of the capital), of French (based on Parisian varieties, again due to the socio-political and economic importance of the region). However, the development of the Galician standard or cultured variety has gone through various phases and personal tendencies until a variety with a polydialectal basis has been formed, without corresponding exactly to any territory: the plurals of oxytonic words ending in *-n*, for example, correspond to the western dialects (cf. *traizón > traizóns*; etc.), whereas the equivalents for oxytonic words ending in *-l* come from the eastern regions (cf. *animal > animais*; etc.). In this long process, there were those at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries who called for a certain region or locality to be the essential base of the standard variety, such as the city of Compostela, the eastern mountain ranges, the Viveiro area, etc. (Sánchez Rei 2014, 89–104), although no such basic monodialectal criterion for the configuration of the standardized language has ever been adopted.

As for relations with other varieties of the same language system, Gaelic in Ireland allowed, in certain very specific circumstances, as still happens today, a certain degree of understanding with Scottish Gaelic, currently spoken by some 60,000 people in the north of Scotland, with the Gaelic preserved in Cape Breton (Canada), as well as potentially with *Manx* (now extinct). Galician, by turn, facilitated understanding with over 200 million speakers of the Lusophone world, to which it belongs in its own right. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the early 20th century intellectuals like Manuel Murguía (1833–1923), Johán Vicente Viqueira (1886–1924) and many others stressed the cultural, identity and international potential of the Galician language. Murguía, for example, in his famous opening speech to the *Xogos Florais de Tui* (Tui Floral Games) of 1891, stated that Galician was “o nobre idioma que do outro lado de ese río [o Miño] é léngua oficial que serve a máis de vinte millóns de homes e ten unha literatura representada polos nomes gloriosos de Camoens e Vieira, de Garret e de Herculano” (Freixeiro Mato *et al.* 2005, 79); (the noble language that on the other side of that river [the Miño] is the official language that serves more than twenty million men and has a literature represented by the glorious names of Camoens and Vieira, of Garret and Herculano). Viqueira, in turn, also insisted that Galician belongs to the same language system as Portuguese: “A nosa fala non ten de ser só un meio para falarmos aos labregos, aínda que isto é

dinísimo si se lles fala de libertade para espertalos e facelos libres. A nosa fala ten que chegar a expresar a infinda riqueza da nosa alma galega e ten que encher aquela misión internacional de relacións c’os países de língua portuguesa” (Sánchez Rei 2014, 140); (Our speech does not have to be just a means of talking to farmers, even though this is very dignified if you are talking to them about freedom, to awaken them and make them free. Our speech has to come to express the infinite wealth of our Galician soul and has to fulfil that international mission of relations with the Portuguese-speaking countries).

On other lines, processes of colonisation bring with them the will of new leaders to qualify and name the land. From the beginnings of the Modern Age, we have witnessed how the historical toponyms of Galiza and Ireland began to be replaced or hybridized by Spanish and English, a process that remained until the beginning of the 20th century and which indeed persists, to different degrees, today. In fact, we will see that the barbarisation of place names takes multiple forms, something which we explore in depth in a separate study (Sánchez Rei 2016, 107–111; Ferreiro 1997, 48–53, and Stenson 2008, 61–3).

First, settlers may decide to replace historical toponyms with others, without there being any link to the economic, orographic or social reality of the territory. It is undoubtedly the greatest example of colonial arrogance, and it affects mainly (but not only) minor toponyms: thus, old names such as *A Ramalleira*, *Agra de Cances*, *O Regueiro*, etc., in the industrial area of A Coruña-Bens, were re-baptised in the second half of the 20th century as *Calle Guttemberg*, in the former case, and *Calle Gambinus*, in the latter two. In Ireland, *Cill Mhantáin*, *Cathair na Mart* and *Loch Garman* were transformed into *Wicklow*, *Westport* and *Wexford*, respectively.

Secondly, there is a process by which a new version in the foreign language is made. For this, certain semantic equivalences between the two languages are taken into consideration, if there are any (*átha / ford*, *nova / nueva*, *ponte / puente*, etc.). Thus we have examples such as *A Aldea do Muíño* which became *\*Aldea del Molino*, *Sobrado dos Monxes* which was converted into *\*Sobrado de los Monjes*, *Valadouro* changed to *\*Valle de Oro*, *Vilanova* transformed into *\*Villanueva*, etc. In the case of Ireland, identical practices can be found: *An Charraig Dhubh* became *Blackrock*, *Atha Cuilinn* was turned into *Hollyford*, *Ath an Mhuilinn* rendered *Milford*, *Baile an Droichid* became *Bridgetown*, *Caislean Nua* was changed to *Newcastle*, etc. In strictly semantic terms, the meaning, in cases of both Irish and Galician, is maintained.

Thirdly, a mixture of languages can be made which, unlike the previous cases, lacks semantic content in either language, since it is a translation in which only a certain element of the toponym is modified. This, in Galiza, we have versions such as *\*Otero de Rey* (through *Outeiro de Rei*; in Spanish *Altozano de Rey* ‘small hill of the King’), *\*Puenteareas* (instead of *Pontearreas*; in Spanish *Puentearenas*, ‘bridge of sand’), etc. Parallel cases are documented in Ireland: *Áth an Staing* was altered to *Stoneyford*, a hybrid that presents the adaptation of the Celtic element *Staing > Stoney* and the Anglo Saxon form *ford*; *Baile an Chaisleáin* was modified to *Ballycastle*, a mixture containing an adapted Gaelic part *Bally* (< *Baile*) and an English one (*Castle*); etc.

A fourth possibility is to alter certain phonetic and morphological traits based on inaccurate equivalences. The product, as in the previous case, is a hybrid that has no meaning in either

language: this happens in Galicia with \**Fontanes* for *Fontáns* or *Fontaos*, \**Niñones* instead of *Niñóns*, \**Seijas* for *Seixas*, \**Teijeiro* instead of *Teixeiro*, etc.; it is also the case with the translation of the toponym article in examples such as \**La Devesa* for *A Devesa* (standard Spanish *La Dehesa*), \**La Fonsagrada* for *A Fonsagrada*, etc. In Ireland similar procedures can be found: *An Baile Glas* was anglicised into *Ballyglass*, maintaining the two Gaelic elements but with an English pronunciation; *Baile Átha Buí* was rendered as *Athboy*, losing its first constituent and retaining the others; *Baile Easa Dara* converted to *Ballysadare* or *Ballisodare*, with the original elements; *Droichead Átha* becoming *Drogheda*; *Muilleann a'Bata* transformed into *Mullinavat*; etc.

Finally, a fifth process, more a type of toponymic alienation, consists of the orthographic adaptation of the name, a modification that generally does not involve changes in pronunciation, but which results in a graphic form other than the traditional one. Such a practice affects countless examples in Galiza: \**A Grela* for *Agrela*, \**Magoy* instead of *Magoi*, \**La Goa* for *Lagoa*, \**La Machán* rather than *Lamachán*, \**Fingoy* for *Fingoi*, \**Tuy* instead of *Tui*, etc. It is a procedure that, in Galician, given its structural proximity to Spanish, becomes more frequent than in the Irish case. However, one example that could be noted for the Irish situation is the removal of the accent in some British versions of place names: *Clochán na Carraige* for *Clochán na Carraige*, *Dun Eoghanachta* instead of *Dún Eoghanachta*, *Dun Laoghaire* for *Dún Laoghaire*, etc.

## Conclusions

Some countries on the European Atlantic seaboard, such as Galiza and Ireland, have for centuries maintained cultural and commercial relations, whose origins are lost to the long and winding paths of history. Today, these territories constitute two national realities with their evident idiosyncrasies, but which nevertheless share some common elements regarding the preservation of their language, the value of their music, and the strength of both of these in terms of identity. Thus, in the preceding pages we have sought to take a contrastive approach to the state of the Galician and Gaelic languages at the beginning of the 20th century, as well as to traditional music, in a momentous era for the historical and political future of the two countries. As a product of the respective historical journeys involved, the sociolinguistic and cultural differences we observe depend fundamentally on the number of speakers, the degree of internal dialectalisation, the possibility of inter-comprehension with other varieties of the same language system or with neighbouring languages, etc. These divergent aspects, however, do not prevent us from addressing comparable issues for two cultures that fought in this period, and which indeed continue to struggle a hundred years later, so as not to disappear in the very territory in which they were born: we refer here to the urgent need for the social projection and valorisation of the language, in the absence of official institutional status at the highest levels, the absence of a cultured standard or variety in the written sphere, the Anglicisation in Ireland and Spanishisation in Galiza of traditional toponyms as a product of colonisation, the importance of music both in the country itself and in the host countries of emigrants, etc.

Hopefully, to paraphrase the opening lines of the present study, the two languages will once more attain the assurance of regaining their normalcy in a *Leabhar Gabhála* that will include the social victories of battles that remain to be fought to reach those goals.

And also hopefully that humanity is not unnecessarily orphaned with respect to two languages which, paraphrasing the work of Guy Deustcher (2011), represent two ways of perceiving the world and which thus contribute, within the framework of ecolinguism, to a rich cultural, ethnographic and linguistic diversity of the planet.

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- Título:  
Lengua y música en Galicia e Irlanda en los inicios del siglo XX
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