

1916

1. An Irish Revolution?
 - a. 1913-32?, 1916-21?; 1919-23?
 - b. Was it popular?
 - i. Patchy nature of support for Independence, IRB, and Sinn Féin
 - (1) “1916 was made by a minority of a minority”
 - ii. Irish Volunteers and Irish Citizen Army had long been marching
 - iii. Thousands had volunteered to fight on Britain’s side in WWI
 - (1) First to receive the VC were received at home with heroes’ welcome, 1915
 - iv. Home Rule on the books by 1914, and Home Rule popular
 - c. Pearse and blood-sacrifice
 - i. “we may mistakes in the beginning and shoot the wrong people; but bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing.”
 - ii. rejected at first by James Connolly (a former Marxian international socialist leader) and other pragmatists
 - (1) Connolly had formed the Irish Citizens Army
 - iii. mystic Catholicism, despite pluralist window dressing: Irish soul as Catholic and Gaelic
 - d. Pragmatists insist on German aid first
 - i. German’s promised a vague 20,000 rifles “by” Easter Sunday
 - (1) landing with Roger Casement foiled
 - ii. Pragmatists lose out in planning (even within the IRB which had infiltrated the Irish Volunteers)
 - (1) “I do not think the Rising week was an appropriate time for the issue of memoranda couched in poetic phrases, nor of actions worked out in similar fashion. Looking at it from inside...it had the air of a Greek tragedy about it” (Collins).
2. Rising:
 - a. Plan to take over strategic points and approaches, such as railway stations and army barracks
 - i. Secret planning hidden from Eoin MacNeill, President of the Irish Volunteers
 - ii. Ultimately focused on Jacob’s Biscuit Factory, the four Courts, and the GPO
 - b. About 1,200 men active in Dublin rising
 - i. Government had only 2,500 troops in Dublin area
 - ii. Government reinforcements pour in on Monday
 - iii. Government troops showered with chocolate and fruit by women
 - iv. Government troops later attack some civilians
 - c. By the end of the week GPO and center of Dublin shelled by the English
 - i. (Connolly had thought capitalists would not destroy property)

- ii. 450 killed (at least 260 civilians), 2,614 wounded; 116 soldiers and 16 policemen killed.
 - d. Pearse surrenders on Saturday
- 3. Reaction: martial law; DORA, reprisals
 - a. Less than a week
 - i. 450 killed
 - ii. 2,500 injured
 - iii. Majority were civilians
 - b. 90 death sentences; all but 15 commuted and those shot
 - i. Between 2 and 17 May 1916
 - ii. reaction turns even moderate Irish against any connection with British
 - c. Beginning of “a manifestation of violence as politics” (Charles Townshend)
 - i. hunger strikes (Thomas Ashe, September 1917; Terence MacSwiney, October 1920)
- 4. Back to home rule?
 - a. 1917-18 Irish Convention about Home Rule;
 - i. resistance of Ulster
 - ii. only conclusion is to exclude 6-county Ulster
 - b. Home Rule movement in 1917 at same time as entry of USA into WWI
 - i. moot because of Irish conscription crisis (1918)
- 5. Victory of Sinn Fein
 - a. at first not over the British but over the Irish Parliamentary Party
 - b. new Sinn Fein, broad front
 - i. Oct. 1917, 1,200 clubs; 250,000 members; by 1918 dominant like Parnell’s Irish Parliamentary Party in early 1880s
 - ii. de Valera as the new Parnell
 - (1) IRB reorganized with Michael Collins as effectively guerrilla supremo (about 27 years old)
 - (2) independence first; constitutional debate afterwards
 - (3) victorious in parliamentary elections, 1918
 - (a) lots of IRB intimidation
 - (b) voters voting “5 or 6 times at least” in rural areas
 - c. by 1919 the Irish revolution was established fact
 - i. Sinn Féin went from 7 to 73 seats; Irish National (Home Rule) Party from 68 to 6. Ulster Unionists 28.
 - ii. Sinn Féin did not take up seats in Westminster and Constituted self as Dáil Éireann (parliament of Ireland)
- 6. Meaning
 - a. Yeats