Damien Murray, *Irish Nationalists in Boston. Catholicism and Conflict, 1900–1928*.

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There are several books on the Irish nationalist movement in America, most recently, David Brundage's *Irish Nationalism in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798–1916* (Oxford, 2016). So parts of Murray's story reads as familiar, but his is not a book about Irish nationalism alone. Murray combines a familiar nationalist framework with an intensive local study to bring out the relationship between Boston politicians, Boston Irish nationalists, and the Boston elite to discern the development of Irish ethnic identity and the role of Catholic teaching in Boston and Irish nationalist outlook on reform. He also examines the influence of international events, seeking to "facilitate a new appreciation of how overseas events shaped social and political relations in Boston" (p. x).

Murray charts the periodic development of Irish nationalism in Boston from earlier activism dominated by business and professional leaders who feared alienating Protestant elites before World War I to the development of more assertive agendas, which also embraced social reform (p. 9). During the heyday of the United Irish League of America (which was headquartered in Boston), local nationalist leaders sought better relations with Yankee elites. Murray also argues that despite scholarly interpretations which traced the rise of cultural nationalism in Ireland to the failure of the Irish Parliamentary Party to secure home rule at the end of the nineteenth century, constitutional politics continued to "be productive" and have appeal (p. 36). The Boston case illustrates continued support for the IPP.

The Home Rule movement in Boston, as led by the United League of America attracted and was dominated by local businessmen and middle-class Irish born and Irish American men. As a rule the organization did little to appeal to working class Irish in the city because they feared alienating their non-Irish neighbors. However, a new generation of less accommodating politicians arose in the twentieth century, including John Fitzgerald and James Michael Curley. Events in Ireland during World War I, as well as changes in leadership and strategy in the United States, meant that the influence of UILA leaders and Boston's Irish business and professional class declined (p. 64).

One of the central, and unique, aspects of Murray's study is his merger of Irish nationalist politics with the agenda of the Catholic Church as envisioned by Boston's influential Cardinal, William O'Connell, who was able to unite support for Irish nationalism with his own concerns about the influence of socialism (p. 93). Within the local context of the Boston Police Strike and the May Day riot (which occurred during a Socialist led parade in Roxbury, MA), Murray

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demonstrates that Cardinal O'Connell navigated the anti-Catholic tensions of the era to unite Irish ethnic identity with a Catholic anti-socialism during the Red Scare. However, despite the unifying potential of Irish nationalism, Murray also reveals how the police strike demonstrated division in the Irish American community.

The last two chapters focus on Eamon de Valera's influence in Boston, the split between the Friends of Irish Freedom and de Valera's supporters, and the role of the America Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (founded in 1920). Since the FOIF was headquartered in New York, the feud between John Devoy, Daniel Cohalan, and de Valera (which has been examined elsewhere) is not the focus of the chapter, but more context on the national strategies and feuds would help to explain Boston's differing context and Murray's contribution here. In this final phase of the nationalist movement, Murray focuses on efforts to "associate Irish-American nationalism with wider democratic ideals" (p. 147). While this diversity of voices emerged throughout the country as left-leaning Irish citizens and Irish Americans rise to challenge the dominance of the Friends of Irish Freedom, the focus on Boston allows Murray to introduce a new cast of characters to the history of Irish nationalism.

Although primarily a history of powerful and influential men, Murray does include the voices of the traditionally dispossessed, including women. Murray credits the success of the AARIR with the support of women and those who sought to promote "a Catholic vision of the welfare state" (p. 148). He asserts that Irish nationalism came to be associated with "democratic reform and humanitarian efforts" (p. 172). One of the pleasures of reading a study like this is meeting local activists, including women, who have received little attention elsewhere until recently, including women who played an important role in the Irish language movement like Mary J. Donovan, and Boston women who protested with the American Women Pickets in Washington, D.C. Furthermore, Murray documents the participation in and popularity of the AARIR for women in the post-World War I era (p. 184). The sheer numbers of women who were involved in and even led branches of the AARIR is an important addition to the history of Irish nationalism in the US.

Murray concludes his study with an examination of the decline of Irish nationalism in the 1920s. Disagreements over the treaty and the creation of an Irish Free State led to the rapid decline of the AARIR (and the FOIF), but the Twenties also revealed tensions between native born middle-class Irish and blue collar Irish immigrants (p. 204). Whereas Boston's Irish elite were likely to support the Free State, left-leaning progressives, including many women, protested against it (p. 207). But the Irish nationalist movement also revealed divisions between Catholics and Protestants in Boston. Murray's examination

of the decade (and not just the Anglo-Irish War) reveals the longer term consequences of the movement. These, Murray argues, “contributed to an intensification of Yankee and Irish Catholic identities” that also manifested in further clashes during a time of intensifying nativism which culminated in immigration restriction.

Murray has written a thoughtful and intensively researched study of Boston. He introduces a number of new players on the local level to the history of Irish nationalism and examines the development of Irish and Catholic identities in Boston during the early twentieth century. Through these events he also points to several trends that are part of a larger national story including the formation of Catholic identity, the increasing influence of women, and the critiques of the Irish American left.

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