

IRISH NEWSPAPERS AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 generated debate in the Irish Free State over how (or whether) the emerging nation should intervene in the conflict. Examination of the debate reveals a deeper discourse surrounding the Irish Free State's role as a small but independent power in Europe and a discussion over what kind of nation that should be.

Newspapers were among the chief sites of discourse on the subject of Ireland's role in the Spanish Civil War. This discourse was influenced by the newspapers' alignments to specific political and ecclesiastical institutions in Ireland; thus, the debate over how the Irish Free State should proceed in its policy on Spain became a debate on what that policy would say about Irish National Identity.

This thesis examines that debate as it took place in four newspapers: the *Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Irish Worker*, and the *Irish Press*. These newspapers had competing audiences and ideologies, and each had a different take on the Spanish Civil War that, in turn, shaped their perceptions of Irish national identity.