

# FORUM

University of Edinburgh  
Postgraduate Journal of Culture and the Arts  
Issue 09 | Autumn 2009

<b>Title</b>	Irish voices for Irish visions: Gael Linn's documentary film projects
<b>Author</b>	Heather Macdougall
<b>Publication</b>	FORUM: University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Journal of Culture and the Arts
<b>Issue Number</b>	09
<b>Issue Date</b>	Autumn 2009
<b>Publication Date</b>	12/12/2009
<b>Editors</b>	Lena Wanggren & Ally Crockford

*FORUM claims non-exclusive rights to reproduce this article electronically (in full or in part) and to publish this work in any such media current or later developed. The author retains all rights, including the right to be identified as the author wherever and whenever this article is published, and the right to use all or part of the article and abstracts, with or without revision or modification in compilations or other publications. Any latter publication shall recognise FORUM as the original publisher.*

## **Irish voices for Irish visions: Gael Linn's documentary film projects**

Heather Macdougall (Concordia University, Montreal)

For over five decades, the organization Gael Linn has been at the forefront of the Irish language revival; historically, it has also been a leader in using modern media as part of a multi-faceted approach to keeping the indigenous language alive. At a time when the national government was reluctant to invest in new technologies, Gael Linn used Irish-language radio and film production as part of a nationalist project that sought to familiarise Ireland with its own history as well as its contemporary development. For instance, it produced a series of newsreels called *Amharc Éireann (A View of Ireland)*, which were distributed regularly between the years 1956 and 1964. Moreover, it also sponsored George Morrison's two Irish-language historical documentaries: *Mise Éire (I Am Ireland)* (1959), which tells the story of the Irish revolutionary period leading up to the 1916 Rising and the 1918 general election which confirmed the majority's support of republican ideals, and *Saoirse? (Freedom?)* (1961), which chronicles the volatile period from 1919 to 1922, including the Anglo-Irish treaty – partitioning the island and establishing the Free State – as well as the split in the Irish national movement which precipitated a devastating civil war. These two films are significant for a number of reasons; for example, they employed what was then a very innovative cinematic technique of compiling archival footage, still photographs, and newspaper headlines. More relevant for our purposes here, however, is that they were the first feature-length films to be narrated completely in the Irish language (also referred to as Irish Gaelic). The recent re-release of these films provides a convenient point from which to revisit the question of Irish-language cinema as an authentic voice for the representation of Irish history.

This paper seeks to analyse three important documentary film projects of Gael Linn – the *Amharc Éireann* newsreel series, *Mise Éire* and *Saoirse?* – in terms of the connection that they create between Irish-language cinema and the ideologies of Irish nationalism. Since Gael Linn was founded in 1953 in direct response to a perceived failure on the part of the newly independent Irish state to revive the Irish language, I will begin with a very short overview of the Irish government's efforts in this direction,

followed by an examination of the goals and objectives of Gael Linn when it was founded, before moving on to an analysis of the film projects.

### **The language in the new state**

The modern revival efforts for Irish are usually traced back to Douglas Hyde and his founding of the Gaelic League in 1893. Hyde, an Anglo-Irish Protestant and future President of Ireland (1938-45), was committed to restoring the language, but he did not seek to associate the linguistic movement with a push for political autonomy. The younger members who joined the League, however, soon politicised its mandate and the language did become one of the main justifications of the violent push for independence (Cronin 81). This focus on an indigenous national language was consistent with nineteenth-century models of nationalism that were prevalent across Europe. Maria Tymoczko and Colin Ireland comment on the irony of this development: “Just when nationalism demanded the possession of a national language for nationhood [...] Irish was on the wane in Ireland, threatening the legitimacy of Ireland’s demand for sovereignty” (5-6).

Nevertheless, once independence was eventually achieved, Irish was constitutionally inscribed as “the national language” and “the first official language” in the young state, with English granted status only as “a second official language” (*Constitution of Ireland*, Article 8). The fact that the majority of the newly-christened state’s inhabitants could barely string together a sentence in their ancestral tongue didn’t matter: it was *their* language.

The new Irish government sought to remedy this situation and gaelicise the nation, primarily through the education system. Despite enormous and sustained investment by the state, however, the progress in reversing or even slowing down the linguistic shift in the decades following independence was decidedly modest. In an essay on language planning in Ireland, Michael Cronin highlights six key areas where poor direction or neglect have “seriously jeopardised the language’s chances of survival” (82). Among other points, he condemns the state for not employing new media technology as it became available for the purposes of promoting the language. He notes that there was no Irish-language radio station until 1972, and when he was writing in 1933, plans for a

television station were underway but somewhat uncertain and, in his opinion, decades overdue, (the Irish-language television station TG4 did not begin broadcasting until a few years later).

Deleted: . (T

Deleted: .

The founding of the state-sponsored Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge (the national steering council for Irish-language communities) in 1943 provided a reason for optimism. In a policy statement prepared in 1947, the new body outlined seven recommendations, including the necessity of film and other media in the Irish language (Ó Móráin 40-1). Three years later, it published a booklet specifically on the role of cinema, *Films in Irish*, which, among other suggestions, advocated dubbing foreign-produced material into Irish since there was so little domestic production (White 109). Despite the Comhdháil's endorsement of cinema as an aspect of national life crucial to the promotion of the language, however, the government continued to turn down requests for film subsidies.

This is the context in which Gael Linn was founded. The failure on the part of the state to take full advantage of modern technologies for the promotion of the language, as well as the dismal results of a language movement overly dependent on the formal education system, inspired a number of Irish enthusiasts to form a new organization which would demonstrate to the government a more effective path for language revitalization.

### **Founding of Gael Linn**

Gael Linn was, in many respects, a protest organization. Its founder, Dónall Ó Móráin, noted that the language movement had stalled because many of its early leaders “were executed or killed in action and most of those who survived forsook the cultural for the political movement” (37). In his view, the government mistakenly believed that independence assured a Gaelic future and seriously underestimated “the extent of State action which would be necessary to achieve the language ideal” (37). In frustration at the reluctance of the government to fund the Comhdháil's recommended projects, and in the absence of any “source other than the State from which to get even a fraction of the money necessary” (41), Ó Móráin proposed a novel idea at a meeting of an inter-university Gaelic organization. His plan was to raise funds through an initiative based on

the football pools that were popular in the UK, but tied, instead, to the scores of Gaelic games.

Thus was born Gael Linn, whose name can appropriately be translated as either “Gaelic with us” or “Gaelic pool”. The profits from the pool were invested into projects to promote the Irish language and culture. In order to publicise the results of the pools, Gael Linn secured a weekly radio spot during which the organization also broadcast traditional Irish music and Irish-language news reports. The content of the radio broadcasts can be seen to presage both the organization’s later establishment of a music publishing division – still an important and vibrant branch of the business – and its production of Irish-language newsreels. More generally, it also demonstrates Gael Linn’s embrace of modern technology for the benefit of the language.

The pools soon became popular throughout the country. Although Ó Móráin describes the early profits as “very small” (42), there was enough money raised to set up a scholarship scheme to send individual students to the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking regions) for several months at a time for an immersion experience. This was the first project funded by Gael Linn. The second was the production of Irish-language newsreels for national distribution.

### ***Amharc Éireann: Gael Linn’s first film project***

Before the founding of Gael Linn, says the organisation’s current CEO Antoine Ó Coilleain, “there was no association of Irish with film or recordings ... [Gael Linn] brought Irish culture to the cities, and to Dublin in particular” (quoted in Foley 2003a, 30). Indeed, recognition of the importance of cinema was a foundational aspect of the Gael Linn project, as mentioned above. The organization’s film work began with the production of a series of Irish-language non-fiction short films from 1956 to 1964. These films began as monthly, single-item short documentary films, and by 1959 became weekly, multi-item newsreels. Máiréad Pratschke explains that by using the Irish language in film, Gael Linn was linking the language to “a form of modern media associated with popular entertainment and success” and were attempting “to eliminate the link between the Irish language and rural poverty in the public consciousness” (38). While the medium may have been modern, it should nonetheless be noted that the

subjects covered in the newsreels did not initially stray too far from traditional views of Irish nationalism. Some of the later newsreels depicted the industrialization of Ireland (both north and south), but many focused on traditional industries such as turf cutting, fishing, or beer brewing. The filmmakers showcased Irish cultural events such as music festivals or dance competitions, while also recording commemorations of republican heroes and martyrs. In concert with Gael Linn's larger goals, the film project was designed to "shame the government into paying more attention to the fate of the Irish language" (Pratschke 17); it is perhaps not surprising, then, that some of the newsreels highlighted the way that the economic and infrastructural needs of rural, Irish-speaking Ireland were being dangerously neglected by the government of the time.

The target audience was decidedly national: the reels were projected in cinemas across the country by the J. Arthur Rank Organisation, and Ó Móráin notes that even in Northern Ireland, where no official distribution was in place, the films were "in very great demand as 16mm issues for showing at concerts, etc" (43). They were not exported off the island, however, and indeed the Irish-language narration would have made them difficult for foreign audiences to follow even where there was enough interest in the content. Looking back on the films now, Sunniva O'Flynn of the Irish Film Archive commends the intention to "rejuvenate the Irish language", while also adding more generally that "the importance of the indigenous newsreel providing images of Ireland for Irish people cannot be overestimated" (quoted in Foley 2003b, 32). Gael Linn's attempt to "introduce Ireland and various aspects of its culture to its own population hitherto divided by geography or ignorance" (Pratschke 21) clearly resonates with Benedict Anderson's theory that popular media can facilitate an imagined community between strangers who happen to inhabit the same geographical territory. The newsreels, then, can be seen as part of a nation-building project that unites a strong, Irish-speaking voice with other aspects of national culture. The series of short documentary films also foreshadows the more politically nationalist content of George Morrison's feature documentaries.

The *Amharc Éireann* series lasted until 1964, when it was felt that the newly established national television service would make the projection of newsreels in cinemas redundant.

### *Mise Éire*

The success of the *Amharc Éireann* series inspired Gael Linn to pursue more ambitious film projects. The organization commissioned George Morrison, who had already been working at finding and preserving early footage of Ireland, to produce a feature-length film about the events leading to the 1916 Easter Rising (an event usually considered to be the catalyst of the ultimately successful push for Irish independence).

The film, a triumphantly nationalistic vision of history entitled *Mise Éire*, was released in 1958. This is significant as it was the same year that Éamon de Valera, who had participated in the Rising, made the transition from Taoiseach (Prime Minister) to President. As his successor Seán Lemass began to take the country in a new direction, it was perhaps a fitting time to celebrate the chapter of Irish history which de Valera, along with many others, had authored. Furthermore, as film scholar Harvey O'Brien notes, the film and its sequel

pandered to the Irish obsession with recent history embodied in the teachings at school and the idolatry practised through commemorative public monuments and plaques since the establishment of the Republic, and provided ample material for national self-definition. They proffered a credible mythology of Ireland's past which shielded the Irish people from the ravages of change during the subsequent traumatic period of social and economic re-definition. (O'Brien 2000, 336)

Michael Gray notes that although the film was not actually commissioned or overseen by the nationalist Fianna Fáil party, who were in power at the time of its production, the end product "was perceived by many Irish people as blatant propaganda by the ruling party" (Gray 77). Besides flattering de Valera and his colleagues, the film also presented a heroic (and unproblematically unified) view of the Irish people themselves and as such was, according to Harvey O'Brien, "a crowd-pleasing portrait of centuries of struggle against English occupation" (2008, 254). Indeed, the introductory scenes establish the tradition of colonial struggle in Ireland, including, for example, the siege of Eniskillen castle and the Battle of the Boyne, in a manner that O'Brien accurately describes as "devoid of any nuances of economy, culture or society ... totally devoid of an awareness of metahistory, or even the parallel history of Northern Ireland" (2000, 337-8).

From that point on, the biases of the film are so obvious that they are hardly worth commenting upon. Republican violence is always depicted as a reaction to specific acts of the English, while the reverse is rarely true. Furthermore, regret is expressed at any negative side effects of Republican actions; for example, the burning of the Custom House is accompanied by the following narration: “The volunteers did not set out to destroy a beautiful building; their aim was to destroy the centre of English rule”. By contrast, the narration accompanying the surrender of the GPO states that “the English had reduced the city centre to rubble”. No mention is made, naturally, of the fact that most Dubliners did not at that point support the rebels and would likely have blamed the Volunteers – who instigated the fighting – for this very destruction.

There is an assumption underlying the entire film that all Irish people support independence, and words such as “the people” and “everyone” are used unproblematically to make sweeping statements about nationalist sentiments. The final shots of the film, for example, show headlines proclaiming “Saoirse!” (“Freedom!”) in reference to the election in 1918 of a Sinn Fein majority – that is, republican/nationalist representatives – followed by stirring footage of waves crashing against rocks. The curious absence of the sectarian dimension to the story can perhaps be illuminated by the fact that the director himself was from a Protestant family; his grandparents had been staunch Unionists but his parents converted to Republicanism (Goldstone 80). His film amply demonstrates that his religious affiliation did not prevent him from being as ardent a nationalist as any member of the Catholic community.

Looking back now, the film may seem slow and ideologically heavy-handed, but it is important to remember that the use of archival footage linked by photographs and newspaper headlines was “a format that was novel at the time” (Gray 2007, 77). The style was influenced by the montage techniques of well-known Soviet filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein, whose films date from the 1920s to the mid 1940s. Rather than using new footage as Eisenstein did, however, director George Morrison searched for archival newsreels in collections across Europe. He began this project in 1952 after attending a meeting of the International Federation of Film Archives at Amsterdam, where he became aware of the existence of material relating to Ireland in foreign archives (O’Brien 2000, 340). Realizing that much of this perishable nitrate stock was in danger of

degrading beyond use, or faced being simply discarded, he also successfully lobbied parliament for funds to repatriate the reels and have them properly preserved at the National Library (Doyle 12). This move can be seen as the first step towards Morrison's lifelong dream of establishing a national film archive, which was finally realised in 1992 at the Irish Film Institute. Morrison's work in preserving actuality film (which includes news footage and other non-fiction filming) is perhaps his greatest legacy. Karen Goldstone claims, in fact, that "if Morrison had not set out on his lonely crusade, 90% of the Irish actuality film up to 1920 would probably have disappeared" (88).

Given that synchronised sound-on-film technology was not perfected until the mid-1920s, all of the actuality footage that Morrison reclaimed would naturally have been silent film. The narration was added after the films were compiled and edited, and the choice to narrate the films completely in Irish has attracted much scholarly debate. Jerry White, for example, is critical of the unproblematised use of Irish-language narration for the way that "the complex ideology and history of the decline of the Irish language is smoothed over and obscured" (White 114). White's comment is curious given that the audience would have been well aware that the country was in fact overwhelmingly English-speaking – both at the time of production and of the events depicted – but it does hint at important questions about how viewers would interpret the linguistic aspect.

Interestingly, the film itself does not diegetically explore the language question beyond a very brief mention of the founding of the Gaelic League. It is quite possible that audiences would see *Mise Éire* primarily in the context of the Irish language movement (therefore making the language choice quite obvious and natural), rather than as a deviation from cinematic trends of the time (which perhaps not surprisingly, is the main perspective of film scholars), but the film itself was very much publicised as a Gael Linn production to a nation that was already quite familiar with the *Amharc Éireann* series and Gael Linn's other initiatives in support of the language. Having repeatedly argued on behalf of the language elsewhere, it is perhaps not surprising that the organization did not find it necessary to emphasise it again here.

The film, like the *Amharc Éireann* newsreels, can therefore be seen to promote a normalised view of the language as the true voice of Irish Ireland, while Gael Linn was

well aware that an Irish-speaking nation was a distant goal rather than a contemporary reality. White again comments on the disjunction between the confident Irish-language narration and the reality of an anglicised nation by suggesting that the English-language newspaper headlines shown in the film demonstrate that the use of the Irish language “was historically incongruent with the central events of the struggle as such” (116). While it is certainly true that Irish was in decline – though not in complete disuse – by 1916, Martin Doyle puts forward a more convincing explanation for the use of English newspaper headlines. He proposes that it was a cinematic device chosen intentionally “so as not to alienate non-Irish speakers” in a film that was presented without subtitles yet targeted to a broad national audience (Doyle 12). Martin McLoone, furthermore, points out that exhibitors often had to hand out a written summary of the narration to accompany the film; even so, he argues, the films exacerbate the view of Irish as a “private discourse” of nationalism, and the choice of language “severely curtailed the impact that the films could have made, especially in Britain and America, where they have a particular cultural resonance” (17).

In fact, Gael Linn refused for decades to release subtitled versions of the film in any language, thereby effectively making any international distribution impossible. Given the subject matter of the film (and particularly the anti-English bias), it is difficult to determine whether this stance was a purely ideological one related to the language question, or if it in fact had more to do with reserving these nationalist images for domestic consumption only. The re-release of the films onto DVD for home viewing, as will be discussed below, was therefore particularly significant as it also allowed for optional English subtitles, finally making the films available to a much wider audience.

### *Saoirse?*

After the success of *Mise Éire*, George Morrison repeated his documentary formula for a treatment of the years between the election of Sinn Féin (1918) and the start of the Civil War (1922). The reception this time, however, was decidedly less enthusiastic. Michael Gray points out that *Saoirse?* “failed to captivate the cinemagoers of Ireland the way that the doomed heroic struggle of *Mise Éire* had done a year earlier” (Gray 2008, 70). Harvey O’Brien, for his part, puts the contrast in much starker terms:

while *Mise Éire* was “released to such aplomb in 1959 that it became the official history of the Irish state for more than a generation afterward”, he describes *Saoirse?* as “a cinematic *bête noir* in Irish film history” (2008, 254). The divergent audience responses to two films which followed the same aesthetic formula and were shaped by the same director is instructive in understanding how the Irish public remembers two different periods in its own history. O’Brien reiterates this point, stating that “it is still hard to escape the fact that [*Saoirse?*] is formally, stylistically, and emotionally much the same film as its predecessor: only the history is different” (2008, 254).

Like *Mise Éire*, *Saoirse?* includes beautifully restored archival footage. In fact, the second film is in many ways aesthetically superior: the technology for recording moving images was continually being improved and becoming more easily available throughout the 1910s and 1920s, so Morrison presumably had more original footage from which to choose. Michael Gray commends the film for showing both Éamon de Valera and Michael Collins “at the peak of their oratory powers addressing street rallies” (2008, 70), and certainly any student of Irish history cannot help but be impressed as these two iconic figures come to life on screen.

Here, however, is where the language issue becomes particularly interesting in a film made by an organization dedicated to promoting Irish. These scenes, like all the others, are accompanied by an Irish-language voice-over, which in this case reads out transcripts of the speeches. The purported quotations are in fact translations, and although this is never explicitly stated, at some points it is clear to see that the leaders are mouthing the words contained in the English-language subtitles rather than those in the Irish narration. In other words, the actual voices of the protagonists are elided in favour of the voice of a narrator speaking a different language. Synchronous sound-film recordings were technologically impossible at the time of the events, as mentioned above, but the recording of sound onto phonograph discs, by contrast, was well established by the 1920s and so it seems curious that apparently no effort was made to find and include archival sound material along with the painstakingly restored visual artifacts. The erasure of the original English words belies the implied claim that the Irish-speaking narrator is an authentic voice of Irish history, and it therefore also calls into question an ideology which positions the Irish language as the authentic voice of the nation.

The crowd scenes are also interesting in the contrast they create between Collins and de Valera. The divide created by the signing of the treaty is depicted as a difference of personality more than of ideology between the two leaders. O'Brien describes the "not accidental" favouring of the contemporary president in the film, noting that the footage of de Valera's public addresses "evokes memories of similar footage of Lenin and Hitler in the propaganda films which had accompanied their respective rises to power" (2000, 342). Collins, by contrast, is depicted as a "sad, lonely man" whose crowd scenes are plagued by "arguing or protesting individuals" (O'Brien 2000, 342).

Maintaining some semblance of objectivity, while never an issue in the intentionally nationalist *Mise Éire*, was in fact a major difficulty in the production of *Saoirse??.* One particularly controversial scene documents the Free State army firing on Republican volunteers who were occupying the Four Courts in Dublin, thereby destroying the historic building. The Free State soldiers are depicted here as puppets of the English government; the narrator remarks that the British supplied the guns "but they wanted the Irish to fire the bullets". On this subject, Morrison has commented on the difference in political background between himself and Gael Linn chairman Dónall Ó Móráin, who requested that the Four Courts scene be omitted: "You must remember that Ó Móráin's family background is a Free State one ... My own family on both sides was republican" (quoted in Doyle 12). Furthermore, the destruction of the national records at the Four Courts surely had a special resonance for a dedicated archivist.

The material of this second film would naturally have been more uncomfortable for an Irish audience in which the divisions of the civil war were still felt. Moreover, glorifying the deaths of the heroes of Irish freedom becomes much more problematic when the killers as well as the victims are Irish. As Harvey O'Brien perceptively notes, "the ghosts of the Empire are passive martyrs, but the ghosts of the Civil War are nobody's fault but our own" (2008, 254).

The audience's lack of interest may also retrospectively point to a certain amount of tokenism in the praise of the first film; while *Mise Éire* was the first feature-length film in the Irish language, and was therefore applauded for breaking important ground for both the language and the film industry, the sequel essentially offered no new innovations in that respect. One may even wonder, for example, what percentage of the reviewers

and audience members who effusively praised the first film actually understood any of it. Critic David Nowlan created some amount of controversy after publishing an unflattering appraisal of *Saoirse?* in the *Irish Times*, and was forced to defend his own position by speaking out against “the narrow, nationalistic and parochial extreme of having to praise all native products simply because they are Irish”. He continued by appealing to the nation to “develop some sense of proportion in the essentially international world into which we are moving” (quoted in Rockett 88).

### **The re-release of the films for home viewing**

In 2003, the fiftieth anniversary of Gael Linn sparked a retrospective exhibition of the organisation’s works at the Irish Film Centre in Dublin. Sunniva O’Flynn, curator of the Irish Film Archive, organised a two-day festival which included screenings of many of the *Amharc Éireann* newsreels as well as some of the group’s other documentaries, in a celebratory tribute to the enormous contribution of Gael Linn to the indigenous film industry in Ireland. The re-release of Morrison’s two documentary films on DVD (with optional English subtitles), however, may have more to do with the changing political climate than with the celebration of Gael Linn’s anniversary or even the technological advancements that facilitated the restoration and subtitling of the films. To understand the timing of the DVD release, it is important to consider the legacy of the 1916 rising.

Michael Gray notes that it is not surprising that the subtitled re-release of *Mise Éire* did not occur earlier, given the wider trends around remembering the Easter Rising and other aspects of the Republic’s birth. For example, he notes, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Rising was not the object of much public commemoration. By contrast, the ninetieth anniversary in 2006 was “celebrated by the Irish government with greater fanfare than any other during the previous four decades” (77). He looks north for an explanation, affirming that “the escalating violence in Northern Ireland in the last thirty years of the twentieth century had dampened the nation’s enthusiasm for dead heroes who chose armed conflict over political resolution” (77). Indeed, there are many events depicted in both films that, to modern viewers, share clear and sometimes uncomfortable parallels with more recent events in the north, including bombings, assassinations, unstable ceasefires, and hunger strikes. Furthermore, for those who

espouse an all-island Ireland, the triumphant tone of the films rang hollow while unrest in Northern Ireland signalled the incomplete nature of the republican project. With the signing of the Good Friday agreement, however, and what appears to be a steady ceasefire on both sides, it becomes easier to consider the events of 1916 separately from the immediate concerns of the nation.

### **Conclusion**

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to criticise the films, as O'Brien does, for their "simplification of culturally complex issues in favour of the construction of a historical mythology of the nation amenable to the needs of its sponsors" (2000, 338). Despite any controversy surrounding their ideological perspectives, however, George Morrison's films have left a very important legacy for the Irish film industry. Not only did the films clearly demonstrate that the Irish language was amply suitable to the medium of cinema, and that there was an appetite among the Irish people for domestically-produced films, but the critical success of the films' production techniques also helped to build confidence in an indigenous film industry. The fact that Gael Linn has decided to release the films for home viewing on DVD is in keeping with their ongoing mandate to take full advantage of modern technology for the dissemination of the Irish language. The optional subtitling which now accompanies the films may also signal a new openness to critical engagement with the films by a wider non-national audience. Nearly half a century after their initial release, *Mise Éire* and *Saoirse?* – two significant milestones in Irish documentary cinema – still provide a fascinating window into Ireland's cinematic and political history for both national and international viewers.

### **Works Cited**

*Constitution of Ireland/Bunreacht na hÉireann* [1937]. Available on the website for the Department of the Taoiseacht. Consulted 25 Nov. 2008.  
<<http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?docID=243>>

- Cronin, Michael. "The Irish Language: Past and present." *Van Taal tot Taal* 37.2 (1993): 80-83.
- Doyle, Martin. "Reel hero of Irish history." *Irish Times* 4 Jan 2008: 12.
- Foley, Catherine. "Caoga bliain ag fas: the first half century." *Irish Times* 21 May 2003: 30.
- . "Reeling back over the years." *Irish Times* 21 May 2003: 32.
- Gray, Michael. "*Mise Éire* [Review essay]." *Cineaste* 32.2 (2007): 77.
- . "*Saoirse?* [Review essay]." *Cineaste* 33.2 (2008): 69-70.
- Goldstone, Katrina. "George Morrison--the Father of Irish Film." *World of Hibernia* 6.4 (2001): 88
- McLoone, Martin. *Irish Film: The Emergence of a Contemporary Cinema*. London: British Film Institute, 2000.
- Mise Éire*. Dir. George Morrison. Gael Linn, 1959. DVD Gael Linn, 2006.
- O'Brien, Harvey. "Ghosts of Empire: *Mitchell and Kenyon in Ireland* and *Saoirse?* on DVD." *Estudios Irlandeses* 3 (2008): 252-254.
- . "Projecting the past: historical documentary in Ireland." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 20.3 (2000): 335-50.
- Ó Móráin, Dónall. "Gael Linn: Principle and practice." *Threshold* 3.3 (1958): 37-48.
- Pratschke, B. Mairead. "A look at Irish-Ireland: Gael-Linn's *Amharc Eireann* films, 1956-64." *New Hibernia Review/Iris Eireannach Nua* 9:3 (2005): 17-38.
- Rockett, Kevin. "Documentaries." *Cinema and Ireland*. Eds. Kevin Rockett, Luke Gibbons and John Hill. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988.
- Saoirse?*. Dir. George Morrison. Gael Linn, 1961. DVD Gael Linn, 2007.

Tymoczko, Maria and Colin Ireland. "Language and Identity in Twentieth-Century Ireland." *Éire-Ireland* 38.1-2 (2003): 4-22.

White, Jerry. "Translating Ireland back into Éire: Gael Linn and film making in Irish." *Éire-Ireland* 38.1-2 (2003): 106-122.