



Genesis of the Rising 1912-1916: A Transformation of Nationalist Opinion (Irish Studies)

Christopher M. Kennedy



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The Easter Rising of 1916 had a lasting effect upon Ireland, with many viewing it as a watershed in the history of modern Ireland and concurring with Yeats that a «terrible beauty was born». Seeking to clarify the state of nationalist opinion in the period before the Rising, *Genesis of the Rising* is as much an undertaking in social psychology as it is a social and political history. It strives to debunk many longstanding theories, most significantly the turning of the tide thesis, which asserts that British blunders in the wake of the failed Rising turned the tide in public opinion toward the course envisioned by the Rebels. *Genesis of the Rising* contends that as early as 1912, with the introduction of the Third Home Rule Bill, through the start of the Great War, and right up to Easter 1916, the tide in nationalist opinion had been turning, albeit silently, and that the Rising was a catalytic force that accelerated an already ongoing process. It reveals a dichotomy in nationalist opinion between covert views and misleading, overt opinion when it suggests that it was the Rising and the executions that subsequently forced nationalist opinion to show its true colors. In effect, the tide had begun to turn long before Easter 1916; and constitutional nationalism, as represented by the Third Home Rule Bill and the Irish Parliamentary Party, was giving way to some aspect of physical-force nationalism.



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