

INVESTIGATING IRISH ANTIQUARIANISM: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC ANTIQUARIAN
CULTURES, 1830-1876

ONE VOLUME

BY

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this thesis is all my own work and that I have not obtained a degree in this university, or elsewhere, on the basis of any of this work.

Signed: Ciaran McDonough

Date:

Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the differences in and similarities between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in Ireland in the period 1830 to 1876. The thesis demonstrates that there were notable differences, which were largely due to matters of religion. It focuses upon a select group of scholars (John O'Donovan, Eugene O'Curry, James Henthorn Todd, William Wilde, George Petrie, Denis Henry Kelly, William Reeves, John Windele, Owen Connellan, James Hardiman, and Robert Shipboy MacAdam) from both religious confessions, who were the most prolific antiquarians of this time, and it examines their works and the contexts in which they were written. Using a new historicist methodology, this thesis highlights trends in antiquarian research, its dissemination, and modes of working and ascribes them to a particular religious community.

This work is organised in three separate parts. In part one, a brief overview of the development of Irish antiquarianism from the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth century is presented in order to illustrate long-standing sectarian differences and their impact upon antiquarian pursuits in the nineteenth century.

Previous scholarship has traditionally categorised the antiquarians studied in this thesis according to ethnicity (Gaelic Irish versus Anglo-Irish). Conversely, part two demonstrates that religion, and not ethnicity, was the greatest dividing social factor in Irish antiquarian circles in the first half of the nineteenth-century. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that emphasis on ethnicity and race only emerged after works had been published relating to that topic from the 1850s. Thus, part two is a comparative study between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in the nineteenth century, focusing particularly on the differences between the two in terms of subject matter and methodology employed.

Part three traces the influence of antiquarian works on Cultural Nationalist ideology and thought at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth. In focusing specifically on the influence of antiquarian works on the images of 'Irishness' advanced by the Cultural

Nationalists during this period, I determine that it was in fact Catholic antiquarian works that had a greater impact on the Cultural Nationalist discourse.

Abbreviations

DIB	<i>Dictionary of Irish Biography</i>
DPJ	<i>Dublin Penny Journal</i>
DUM	<i>Dublin University Magazine</i>
IPJ	<i>Irish Penny Journal</i>
IPM	<i>Irish Penny Magazine</i>
NLI	National Library of Ireland
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
OSL: Meath	<i>Letters Containing Information Relative to the Antiquities of the County of Meath Collected During the Progress of the Ordnance Survey in 1836</i>
QCB	Queen's College, Belfast
QCC	Queen's College, Cork
QCG	Queen's College, Galway
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
UCD	University College, Dublin
UJA	<i>Ulster Journal of Archaeology</i>

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Special thanks much go to the libraries of the National University of Ireland, Galway, particularly Special Collections; Special Collections at University College Dublin; the National Library of Ireland, the Library of the Representative Church Body of Ireland, and the Library of the Royal Irish Academy. Thank you for making archival work so pleasant. I am exceptionally grateful for the permission to be able to cite from antiquarian correspondence held in the repositories listed above.

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My mother, Alison McDonough, has shown me every definition of the word ‘support’ during this enterprise, including a few more that I didn’t know. This work is dedicated to you.

Introduction

The aim of this study is to investigate the differences in and similarities between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in Ireland in the period 1830 to 1876. As will be demonstrated more fully below, 1830 was chosen as it was the year in which John O'Donovan joined the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey and George Petrie published his first article in *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*. 1876 was the year in which David Comyn founded the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, which began the revivalist period of the Irish language. As I argue in chapter four, before this Irish had been seen as an antiquarian subject and not necessarily as a living language. To avoid linking this thesis with one particular scholar, I have not chosen to use dates which can only be aligned with one person. The thesis demonstrates that there were notable differences, which were largely due to matters of religion. It focuses upon a select group of scholars, who were based in Dublin (John O'Donovan (1806-1861), Eugene O'Curry (1794-1862), James Henthorn Todd (1805-1869), William Wilde (1815-1876), George Petrie (1790-1866), Denis Henry Kelly (1797-1877), William Reeves (1815-1892), John Windele (1801-1865), Owen Connellan (1797-1871), James Hardiman (1782-1855), and Robert Shipboy MacAdam (1808-1895)) from both religious confessions, who were the most prolific antiquarians of this time, and it examines their works and the contexts in which they were written. Using a new historicist methodology, this thesis highlights trends in antiquarian research, its dissemination, and modes of working and ascribes them to a particular religious community.

This work is organised in three separate parts. In part one, a brief overview of the development of Irish antiquarianism from the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth century is presented in order to illustrate long-standing sectarian differences and their impact upon the nineteenth century.

Previous scholarship has traditionally categorised the antiquarians studied in this thesis with accordance to ethnicity (Gaelic Irish versus Anglo-Irish). Conversely, part two demonstrates that religion, and not ethnicity, was

the greatest dividing social factor in Irish antiquarian circles in the first half of the nineteenth-century. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that emphasis on ethnicity and race only emerged after works had been published about that topic from the 1850s. Thus, part two is a comparative study between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in the nineteenth century, focusing particularly on the differences between the two in terms of subject matter and methodology employed. It addresses the following questions: Are there differences in the subjects researched by members of the two religious communities? Was there ever collaboration on projects between the two confessions and, if so, did the roles reflect the discrepancies in society between Catholics and members of the Church of Ireland? Did differences in religious beliefs ever stand in the way of research?

Part three traces the influence of antiquarian works on Cultural Nationalist thought at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth. In focusing specifically on the influence of antiquarian works on the images of ‘Irishness’ advanced by the Cultural Nationalists during this period, I determine that it was in fact Catholic antiquarian works that had a greater impact on the Cultural Nationalist discourse.

The period 1830 to 1876 was particularly rich for Irish Antiquarian scholarship, as this is the period when the majority of key scholars – both to this thesis and to Irish antiquarianism in general - were active. The main antiquarian societies formed before 1830, the Ollamh Fodhlean Society (no dates)¹ and the Ibero-Celtic Society (1818), along with Gaelic societies in Dublin (1808) and Cork (1818),² were short-lived, and founding members, such as George Petrie, Edward O’Reilly (1765-1830), and James Hardiman,³ gave their time to other projects. Before 1830, younger scholars, including John O’Donovan, James Henthorn Todd, and William Wilde,⁴ were still completing their schooling. In 1830, John O’Donovan began working for the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey, replacing the recently-deceased Edward O’Reilly.⁵ Petrie had

¹ See p. 69, n. 331 of this thesis for a discussion of this.

² See chapter two for more on these societies.

³ See chapter two for more on these figures and their activities between 1818 and 1830.

⁴ Biographies of the scholars named above are given in Appendix A.

⁵ Art Ó Maolfabhail, ‘Éadbhard Ó Raghallaigh, Seán Ó Donnabháin agus an tSuirbhéireacht Ordanáis’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 91, C, no. 4 (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1991), pp. 73-103

just been voted onto the council of the Royal Irish Academy and published his first article in the *Transactions of Royal Irish Academy*, marking 1830 as the beginning of this fruitful period in Irish antiquarian studies, which was centred around this generation of scholars.⁶ The period ends in 1876 with the foundation of the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language by David Comyn (1854-1907),⁷ which also included the antiquarians John O'Daly and William Maunsell Hennessey as members, along with the scribe Joseph O'Longan,⁸ and a move from antiquarianism to the revival of the Irish language. It was also in the 1870s, after all but a few of the antiquarians had died,⁹ that people largely ceased to refer to antiquarianism, and instead began referring to the different disciplines that had formed the umbrella term 'antiquarianism', such as archaeology, linguistics, and folklore studies. It could be argued that the discipline of Irish antiquarianism died with this generation of antiquarians as scholars after this were referred to by more specific titles rather than that of 'antiquarian'. One such example is the noted philologist Whitley Stokes (1830-1909), who began publishing the bulk of his works after 1877.¹⁰ He had, admittedly, published many articles before this, but he had always seen himself as more of an accurate linguist compared to the Irish scholars that had come before him and he felt he had more in common with the philologists on the continent, who were frequently comparative scholars.¹¹ One exception to this is T. J. Westropp (1860-1922), who is referred to in his *Dictionary of Irish Biography* entry as an 'antiquarian', rather than an 'archaeologist'.¹² Stokes, along with Richard Irvine Best (1872-1959) and Osborn Bergin (1873-1950), who were many years Stokes's junior, formed the next generation of scholars, along with the archaeologist R. A. S. Macalister (1870-1950). Other scholars included William Maunsell Hennessey (1829-1889) and Standish Hayes O'Grady (1832-1915), yet, as they were native Irish speakers, Stokes did not

⁶ See below for a discussion of what I term 'generations' of antiquarians.

⁷ J. J. Doyle (Beirt Fhear), *David Comyn (1854-1907): A Pioneer of the Irish Language Movement* (Cork: Lee Press, after 1926), p. 7.

⁸ Seán Ó Lúing, 'William Maunsell Hennessey' in *Celtic Studies in Europe* by *idem* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2000), pp. 39-76; 58.

⁹ Ferguson and Reeves were still alive.

¹⁰ It is for this reason that while he is mentioned within this thesis, he is not examined thoroughly.

¹¹ Seán Ó Lúing, 'William Maunsell Hennessey', p 45.

¹² Liam Irwin, 'Westropp, Thomas Johnson' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8979>

consider them to be as accurate as Bergin and Best.¹³ William Reeves, however, considered Hennessey to be the “most accomplished Irish scholar of his day.”¹⁴ Rudolf Thomas Siegfried, the German comparative philologist, referred to this continental scientific philology as the “school of Zeuss.”¹⁵

The generation studied in this thesis tried to be more scientific in its approach to history, archaeology,¹⁶ and the Irish language than the one which had gone before it.¹⁷ This desire for accuracy is expressed well in Thomas Davis’s *The Round Towers of Ireland* (most likely written in 1844 or 1845). Davis, when reviewing the literature on the round towers, had this to say about Petrie’s findings:

Accustomed from boyhood to regard these towers as revelations of a gorgeous but otherwise undefined antiquity—dazzled by oriental analogies—finding a refuge in their primeval greatness from the meanness or the misfortunes of our middle ages, we clung to the belief of their Pagan origin. [...] What wonder that we had resented the attempt to cure us of so sweet a frenzy? [...] We plead guilty to having opened Mr. Petrie's work strongly bigoted against his conclusion. Looking now more calmly at the discussion, we are grateful to Mr. Petrie for having driven away an idle fancy. In its stead he has given us new and unlooked-for trophies, and more solid information on Irish antiquities than any of his predecessors.¹⁸

¹³ Ó Lúing, ‘William Maunsell Hennessey’, pp. 44-46.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 39. On his death, Rudolf Siegfried’s copy of *Grammatica Celtica* passed to Hennessey. After Hennessey’s books were sold in 1890, the copy passed to Reeves who inscribed the comment in the book’s ownership history.

¹⁵ See Pól Ó Dochartaigh, “‘A Shadowy but Important Figure’: Rudolf Thomas Siegfried’ in *The Tripartite Life of Whitley Stokes (1830-1909)*, eds., Elizabeth Boyle and Paul Russell (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), pp. 29-43; 38.

¹⁶ See Ciaran McDonough, ‘Irish Archaeology’ in *Encyclopaedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe*, ed., Joep Leerssen, forthcoming, for more details.

¹⁷ Stefan Berger claims that a more scientific approach to historiography was prevalent in Europe from 1850, but, as will be demonstrated below, this approach can be seen in Ireland from as early as the 1830s. See Stefan Berger with Christoph Conrad, *The Past as History: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 140-225.

¹⁸ Thomas Davis, ‘The Round Towers of Ireland’ in *Thomas Davis: Selections from his Prose and Poetry*, ed., T. W. Rolleston (Dublin and London: The Talbot Press, 1910) pp. 106-109; 106–107.

Part of this new, more scientific approach to historical studies was an awareness of the scholarship that had come before as demonstrated by John O'Donovan, who complained that Charles Vallancey, the eighteenth-century antiquarian, celebrated for his fanciful theories, was not a good scholar as he was unaware of John Colgan, the Irish Franciscan friar, and was unable to read *Sanas Cormaic*.¹⁹ O'Donovan had much respect for previous authors, such as James Ussher, Colgan, and even the seventh-century abbot, Adamnán, whom he saw as always being preferable to modern authors, who were much more fanciful in their hypotheses.²⁰ Other antiquarians used the introductions to their longer works to outline a transmission history of a particular manuscript or discuss previous scholarship on the text.²¹ William Reeves used part of the 'preface' to *The Culdees of the British Isles*, published 1864, to outline his methodology:

I made it my business to gather together, in a compact and methodical form, all the scattered evidence upon my subject which I could discover in external as well as domestic records, and by acting the part of literary apparitor to bring up to court, as it were, all the Irish, Scotch, and English witnesses who were qualified to bear testimony – both those who were walking in the open day of print, and those who were hiding in the secret recesses of manuscript retirement; that, on examination had, an impartial public might take the place of judge, sum up evidence, and give judgment accordingly²²

It is this dissatisfaction with previous scholarship which motivated many scholars to carry out their own antiquarian research. Nearly every single

¹⁹ Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom, dated 3rd September 1834 in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Londonderry*, ed., Rev. Michael O'Flanagan (Bray: 1927).

²⁰ Letter from John O'Donovan to George Petrie, dated 29th May 1832. NLI MS 792 George Petrie Collection, Vol. IV, p. 390.

²¹ See, for example, James Henthorn Todd, ed., *Leabhar Imuinn. The Book of Hymns of the Ancient Church of Ireland*, Vol. 1 (Dublin: The Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1855), p. 1; James Henthorn Todd, ed., *Leabhar Breatnach: The Irish Version of the Historia Britonum of Nennius* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1848); William Reeves, ed. and trans., *The Life of St. Columba, Founder of Hy; written by Adaman, Ninth Abbot of that Monastery* (Dublin: The Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1857); and *The Martyrology of Donegal: a Calendar of the Saints of Ireland*, trans. John O'Donovan, eds. James Henthorn Todd and William Reeves (Dublin: The Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1864).

²² William Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands, As They Appear in History: with an Appendix of Evidences* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1864, reprint Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1994), pp. v-vi.

antiquarian work published between 1830 and 1876 mentions that a scholar from the late-eighteenth or early nineteenth-century had made a mistake in his interpretation of the text. O'Donovan begins the introductory remarks to the *Annals of the Four Masters* by criticising the work that Dr Charles O'Connor had carried out on the text, pointing out that "his text [...] is full of errors."²³ In his letters, however, O'Donovan had harsher words about the scholars who had gone before him. In one letter to Thomas Larcom, he claimed that "our Irish writers of the last century have been a set of ignorant and dishonest scribblers without one manly or vigorous idea in their heads."²⁴ He added that "Vallancey, Beauford, Ledwich, Roger O'Connor etc., were all either fools or rogues who were by no means fit (qualified) to demonstrate the truth of ancient or modern history."²⁵ In his next letter to Larcom, O'Donovan added further to this, claiming that, up to that point, there had been two parties of Irish writers. One was "Milesian to the backbone, learned, vain and pompous, but altogether wanting that acumen of intellect, and that intimate acquaintance with facts which qualifies one for an investigation of ancient history."²⁶ The other party was:

English or Scotch, learned, sharp (acute), severe and prejudiced. It was often their employment to turn everything connected with Ireland into ridicule in order that the conquered Milesians might become lessened, not only in the view of their conquerors and other nations, but also in their own estimation. In this they have most admirably succeeded. These latter writers were also unqualified for enquiring into the real state of ancient society in Ireland; many of them have wilfully falsified originals; others have distorted them, and others have been so blinded by prejudices as to draw wrong conclusions.²⁷

²³ John O'Donovan, ed. and trans., *Annals of the Four Masters*, Vol. I (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1848, reprinted 1856, reprinted Dublin: De Búrca Rare Books, 1990), p. vii.

²⁴ Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom, dated 11th August 1836, in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Meath*, ed., Rev. Michael O'Flanagan (Bray: 1928).

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom, dated 15th August 1836 in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Meath*.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

O'Donovan had antiquarians like William Betham (1779-1853), the Ulster King of Arms, in mind when writing this statement. In 1838, in a letter to Larcom he complained about a review Betham had written of a translation of a poem on Aileach made by O'Donovan, along with O'Curry, Connellan, and Thomas O'Connor. O'Donovan first complained about Betham feeling entitled to comment on the translation, as:

[It] has passed the examination of four persons from the four different Provinces of Ireland, in whose native language it is written and who have studied its ancient and modern idioms since they were children.²⁸

If there were fewer scholars like Betham, and Vallancey before him, O'Donovan felt that Irish antiquarianism could be held to the same high levels of scholarship that were already in place in other nations. He claimed that:

If these things [translations from Irish] could be put to the test like Latin and Greek, pretenders like Sir William would soon disappear from the world of letters, and the history and antiquities of Ireland would be examined as those of other nations have been already.²⁹

In another letter to Larcom, he remarked on how much he admired Charles O'Connor of Belanagare (1710-1791), for:

He lived in an age when the Sect to which he belonged were in actual slavery, and he was often afraid to speak out; but when he saw rascality carried too far he broke through all bonds of timidity. Look at his counter-reply and his powerful ridicule of Mac Pherson.³⁰

O'Donovan was clearly impressed with the accuracy of O'Connor's scholarship, especially considering the conditions under which O'Connor laboured and the

²⁸ Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom, dated 15th November 1838, in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Queen's County*, ed., Rev. Michael O'Flanagan (Bray, 1933).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom, dated 10th July 1836, *Ordnance Survey Letters: Meath*.

restrictions imposed upon him as a Catholic. O'Curry also had harsh words for the previous generation of scholars, remarking in a letter to Thomas Davis:

[...] I trust I need not say to you that, I am not now or at any other time actuated by any pedantic, egotistical, supercilious, bombastic, despotic, balderdash motives, nor by any other motive than an honest review that all things of this kind might be as accurately and as honestly done as we should not follow in the track of former dishonest labourers in this field, and that all things of this kind might be as accurately and honestly done as circumstances will permit.³¹

Petrie was also dissatisfied with previous scholarship, complaining that:

We have had historians, who, knowing little or nothing of our antiquities, have given full scope to their imagination, and have substituted the wildest theories for historic truth; and we have had antiquaries, who knew equally little of our history, and who have attempted to illustrate our ancient remains by bold assertion and fanciful conjecture, in the place of unprejudiced enquiry and historical research. The consequence is that both our history and antiquities shared the same fate, and were equally regarded by the literary world as undeserving of attention.³²

As the previous generation of scholars had, with some exceptions, been largely fanciful in their research, this group of antiquarians saw their own contributions to research as a way of repairing the damage caused by those who were not as experienced, logical and scientific in their approach, or purportedly free of bias as they were.

³¹ Letter Eugene O'Curry to Thomas Davis, dated 22nd March 1845, NLI, MS 49, 491/2/459. O'Curry is referring to his remarks on the indexes of *The Spirit of the Nation*. The word 'actuated' was difficult to make out in the text and I am grateful to Drs Rebecca Barr, Bernhard Bauer, John McCafferty, and Professor David Stifter for their help in deciphering it.

³² Cited in William Stokes, *The Life and Labours in Art and Archaeology of George Petrie* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1868), p. 23.

As will be demonstrated below the period 1830 to 1876 was one of flux and change. Therefore, it is inevitable that such events as the Great Famine and Catholic Emancipation, to name but two, would have an impact and influence upon the intellectual, scholarly milieu. This can also be extended to antiquarians and their works. Many of them had focused on medieval Ireland, but this did not leave them unaware about what was happening in the present. Where there was an impact upon the various antiquarian works published during this period, it has been mentioned in the respective chapter.

It should be highlighted that, with the exception of John Windele, who was based in Cork, Robert Shipboy MacAdam, who was based in Belfast, James Hardiman, who was based in Galway, and William Reeves, who was based in Ballymena, all of the antiquarians discussed in this thesis worked in Dublin. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, some of the antiquarians had positions in the city - James Henthorn Todd was a librarian and Professor at Trinity College, Dublin; John O'Daly owned a print shop on Anglesea Street from 1845 onwards; and William Wilde was an eye surgeon, who had a practice in the city (which later became St Mark's Ophthalmic Hospital).³³ Other antiquarians who worked with medieval and early modern texts, such as John O'Donovan and Eugene O'Curry, amongst others, benefitted from being close to repositories of such texts like the Royal Irish Academy and the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, along with the lively scribal and Irish language community which was found in Dublin.³⁴

Antiquarianism in Cork in the nineteenth century has been the subject of two studies by Joan Rockwell,³⁵ therefore, will not be discussed in great detail in this thesis. There are no full-length studies to my knowledge of antiquarianism in Galway or in Belfast in the nineteenth century, though aspects

³³ J. B. Lyons, 'Wilde, William Robert Wills' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a9038>

³⁴ See section 2.3 of this thesis for more on this.

³⁵ Joan Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008) and *Antiquarian activity in Cork, 1803-1881*, Unpublished MA Thesis, University College, Cork, 1995.

of antiquarianism in the latter city can be found in *Belfast and the Irish Language*³⁶ and in A. J. Hughes's biography of Robert Shipboy MacAdam.³⁷

1.1 Ireland in the Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century, Ireland was a country that was rapidly changing, particularly in the political sphere. The enactment of the 1800 Act of Union meant that Ireland became part of the United Kingdom, ending the Kingdom of Ireland and dissolving the Parliament in Dublin. The United Irishmen uprising in 1798 and the anti-Catholic sectarianism promoted by the Orange Order, established 1795, had led to the Act of Union.³⁸ Further, Prime Minister William Pitt believed that the Union would safeguard the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland from the purported Catholic threat after the removal of many of the Penal Laws in the 1790s.³⁹ Many Catholics had supported the Act of Union, having been promised that emancipation would follow. This scheme for Catholic Emancipation was abandoned, as King George III was in opposition to it, leaving the Catholics in the same position as before the Union.⁴⁰ From 1801 to 1829, the issue of Catholic emancipation dominated the political scene in Britain and Ireland, supported by certain members of Parliament (all of them necessarily Protestant). They were opposed by conservative Irish Protestants, British public opinion, and the British monarchy, who argued that Catholics had a primary allegiance to the Pope, therefore, they could not be loyal subjects.⁴¹ Protestant fears of Catholic emancipation dated back to the brief reign of James II and his production of an heir. James had attempted to give greater rights to British and Irish Catholics and had landed in Ireland in

³⁶ Ed. Fionntán De Brún (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006). See, in particular, the two chapters by A. J. Hughes on MacAdam and the Ulster Gaelic Society.

³⁷ *Robert Shipboy MacAdam (1808-95): His Life and Gaelic Proverb Collection* (Belfast: Queens University Belfast, 1998).

³⁸ Christine Kinealy, 'Politics and Administration, 1815-70' in *Ireland, 1815 – 1870*, eds., Donnchadh Ó Corráin and Tomás O' Riordan (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011) pp. 19-32; 19; K. Theodore Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800: Conflict and Conformity* (London: Addison Wesley Longman Ltd, 1989), second edition (Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Ltd, 1999), p. 16.

³⁹ Kinealy, 'Politics and Administration', p. 19.

⁴⁰ Kinealy, 'Politics and Administration', pp. 19-20; Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800*, p. 16.

⁴¹ Kinealy, 'Politics and Administration', p. 20.

1689 after the so-called Glorious Revolution in order to be supported by Irish Catholics.⁴² After James's death in 1701, the Act of Settlement was passed in order to ensure British and Irish Protestants could sit on the throne.⁴³ By the time Catholic emancipation came to the fore in the early-nineteenth century, there had long been a fear of it. Daniel O'Connell, the key figure in the campaign for Catholic Emancipation, turned a political issue into a popular movement, ensuring that it could not be ignored.⁴⁴ In 1823 he founded the Catholic Association, which strove to win emancipation and promote the general interests of Catholics. The Catholic clergy were automatically included as members. This helped to strengthen the Association amongst the peasantry, who could afford the modest membership fee of one penny a month, commonly referred to as the 'Catholic Rent'.⁴⁵ O'Connell's strategy of large public or 'monster' meetings led to great exposure and unity in his campaign, which, combined with a disarray in British politics after 1827,⁴⁶ and O'Connell's success in the County Clare by-election in 1828, led to the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829.⁴⁷ O'Connell's campaign had been aided further when Prime Minister Arthur Wellesley, and Sir Robert Peel, the Home Secretary, dropped their opposition to Catholic emancipation, due to the Prime Minister's fears that there could be a civil war if it were not granted.⁴⁸

The period 1830 to 1876 was a tumultuous one in Ireland with frequent instability, controversies, and, occasionally, uprisings. Catholic Emancipation had not solved all the problems that Catholics faced, and the frequently biased system of tithes to the Church of Ireland continued to cause strife. Attempts to reform the system or to lower the amount due, led to the so-called 'Tithe War' of the 1830s and 1840s, which often manifested in agrarian violence.⁴⁹ In 1845 an Act of Parliament founded the Queen's Colleges in Galway, Cork, and

⁴² See Éamonn Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite Cause, 1685–1766* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), for greater detail.

⁴³ See, Andrew C. Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest, 1688-1756* (Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 2006), for more details.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* For the background to O'Connell's campaign, see Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the Famine, 1798-1848* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd, 1972, reprinted 2007), pp. 37-70.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ There were seven different Prime Ministers between 1827 and 1834. Kinealy, 'Politics and Administration', p. 20.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800*, p. 53; Kinealy, 'Politics and Administration', p. 24.

Belfast to provide non-denominational education for Catholics; this was unacceptable to the Catholic clergy in Ireland, who dubbed them ‘Godless Colleges’. John MacHale (1789-1881), Archbishop of Tuam, had already voiced his opposition, on religious grounds, to the introduction of the national school system in 1831, and he did so again over the Colleges (Ireland) Act, and was joined in his opposition by Cardinal Paul Cullen (1803-1878) and Daniel O’Connell.⁵⁰

Among those in favour of the Colleges (Ireland) Act was Thomas Davis, who rose to prominence when he disagreed with Daniel O’Connell over the issue. Although also working to repeal the Act of Union, the Young Ireland group – including Davis – were in favour of greater agitation, even if it involved bloodshed.⁵¹ Through their mouthpiece, *The Nation*, the Young Ireland group argued for independence from England, based on language and racial differences, along with Ireland’s historical claims to sovereignty.⁵² Many of the group were thus familiar with the works of the antiquarians discussed in this study, writing advertisements for some of the works published, and urging readers to buy them.⁵³ Davis had sanctioned bloodshed if it furthered the aims of Young Ireland, yet some members of Young Ireland felt that more should be done. A splinter-group, the Irish Confederation, was formed in 1847 led by John Mitchel (1815-1875).⁵⁴ He urged the starving peasantry not to pay rents or rates, to arm themselves, to ostracise those who would not co-operate, and to resist eviction.⁵⁵ The Confederation was involved in further unrest in 1848 and 1849: ‘the Battle of the Widow McCormack’s cabbage patch’ in July 1848 in Ballingarry, County Tipperary, and an attack on Cappoquin police barracks in September 1849. Donnchadh Ó Corráin refers to it as a ‘farcical’ attempt at revolution, claiming that “it was led by an élite that was out of touch with the people and that did not understand them, or their mental and physical exhaustion.”⁵⁶ Ultimately, Ó Corráin considers the two events “insignificant.”⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Donnchadh Ó Corráin, ‘Paul Cullen’ in *Ireland*, pp. 243-247; 244.

⁵¹ Margaret Fitzpatrick, ‘Thomas Davis’ in *Ireland*, pp. 249-251.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 250.

⁵³ James Quinn, *Young Ireland and the Writing of Irish History* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2015), for greater details of this.

⁵⁴ Donnchadh Ó Corráin, ‘The Great Famine, 1845-9’ in *Ireland*, pp. 58-84; 75.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Despite the rebellion's purported insignificance, the leaders were sentenced to transportation to Van Diemen's Land for treason. The rebellion eventually faded out.⁵⁸ It was one in a series of similar events which took place in 1848 across Europe. Many nationalist organisations founded by scholars were at the helm of the European-wide agitation, resulting in it being dubbed 'the revolution of the intellectuals'.⁵⁹

The event with the greatest impact upon nineteenth-century Ireland was the Great Famine between 1845 and 1849. In Ó Corrain's words, it was "the worst catastrophe in modern European history before the twentieth century."⁶⁰ Its cause was the failure of the potato crop on which around one third of the population depended and the subsequent inadequacy of the government in dealing with this situation.⁶¹ It is unknown exactly how many people died, but the figure is estimated at between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 people. The worst affected were the agricultural labourers, with the poorest being the first to die.⁶² Attempts at relief appeared in the form of public works for those able-bodied enough to perform manual labour, though this provided little relief. It is estimated that over a million people emigrated to Britain, the United States, and Canada.⁶³ Aside from its effect upon the population, the Great Famine also affected the cultural landscape of Ireland. The death or emigration of so many lower class rural dwellers meant that the number of Irish speakers declined dramatically. Many antiquarians began to fear for the future of the language.⁶⁴ There had also been large changes in terms of the population. After 1800, the population rose steadily, only to decline dramatically during the Great Famine

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Lewis Namier, *1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

⁶⁰ Ó Corrain, 'The Great Famine, 1845-9' in *Ireland*, p. 59.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 61-62.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-83.

⁶⁴ See chapter four.

in the late 1840s.⁶⁵ An increase in industry, particularly in Belfast, also saw the population increase sharply.⁶⁶

This rapid decrease in population was one of a number of reasons for the language shift from Irish to English.⁶⁷ The 1851 census was the first to carry a question on language use and it was one of the first official warnings about the declining population of Irish speakers, both monoglot and bilingual.⁶⁸ Other suggested reasons have been the promotion of English as the language of commerce and greater economic success, and the hostility of the Catholic Church to the language. This was linked both to the suppression of popular religion and to the Protestant Bible missions, which aimed to convert Catholics by providing them with materials in Irish.⁶⁹

With regard to antiquarianism, it was not only Irish antiquarians who were prolific during this period; antiquarian research was also conducted in Scotland and in Wales. As was the case in Ireland, many publications were focused on, but not limited to, the medieval period in the respective countries. The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland was founded in Edinburgh in 1780 and

⁶⁵ Joel Mokyr and Cormac Ó Gráda, 'New Developments in Irish Population History, 1700-1850', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Nov., 1984), pp. 473-488. Joel Mokyr estimates the population to have been around 7.8 million people, based on the 1831 census. (Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: a Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800-1850* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) p. 31). Cormac Ó Gráda claims that in some areas, usually in the rural west of Ireland, population figures between 1821 and 1841 increased by as much as 50 %. (Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, second edition, 1993), p. 7). Mokyr estimates that, between 1846 and 1851, around 33 % of the population died. Ó Corráin estimates that between 1 and 1.5 million people died, pointing out that it is impossible to be more precise than this because of poor data. (Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'The Great Famine' in *Ireland*, p. 61). William J. Smyth points out that the 1841 census calculated the population at 8.175 million and that in 1851, this had decreased to 6.55 million. He adds, though, that this does not include what he considers a dramatic under-reporting of figures. He claims that the population in 1846 was likely to have been c. 8.75 million, if not higher. (William J. Smyth, "'Mapping the People": The Growth and Distribution of the Population' in *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-52*, eds. John Crowley, William J. Smyth and Mike Murphy (Cork: Cork University Press, 2012, reprinted 2012), pp. 13-22; 13

⁶⁶ S. J. Connolly, 'Society and Economy, 1815-1870' in *Ireland, 1815 – 1870*, pp. 33-42; 35.

⁶⁷ This issue is examined more fully in chapter four.

⁶⁸ Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, *I mBéal an Bháis: The Great Famine and Language Shift in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Hamden, Connecticut: Ireland's Great Hunger Museum, Quinnipiac University, 2015), pp. 9-10.

⁶⁹ Ó Corráin, 'The Great Famine, 1845-9', pp. 83-84. See also Pádraig de Brún, 'The Irish Society's Bible Teachers, 1818-27', *Éigse*, 19/2 (1983), pp. 281-332; 20 (1984), pp. 34-92; 21 (1986), pp. 72-149; 22 (1987), pp. 54-106; 24 (1990), pp. 71-120; 25 (1991), pp. 113-149; 26 (1992), pp. 131-172. The latter was reprinted as *Scriptural Instruction in the Vernacular: the Irish Society and its Teachers, 1818-27* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 2009).

was the central antiquarian body in Scotland.⁷⁰ It was founded by David Steuart Erskine, the 11th Earl of Buchan “to investigate both antiquities and natural and civil history in general.”⁷¹ The Society began publishing *Archaeologia Scotica* in 1792, which included articles on the archaeology and folklore of Scotland, and on philology.⁷² The publication of this journal was sporadic - volume five was not printed until 1890. The Society also published *Proceedings*, which began in 1851.⁷³ There was interaction between Scottish and Irish antiquarians,⁷⁴ particularly relating to the medieval kingdom of Dál Riata and Petrie’s expertise as an archaeologist and his work in Orkney on the archaeological remains there.⁷⁵ The Iona Club was founded in 1833 by William Forbes Skene (1809-1892), who was an exceptionally prolific Celticist, with an interest in Highland History.⁷⁶ He also published an edition of *The Four Ancient Books of Wales* and *Celtic Scotland: a History of Ancient Alban*. As will be demonstrated in section 3.2, he was a correspondent of several Irish antiquarians.

Similar research was conducted in Wales, though it was focused more on history and language than on archaeology. Archaeology rose to prominence, however, after 1846 when the Cambrian Archaeological Society was founded. Three societies had been formed in the eighteenth century in London with language as their main focus. They were the Honourable and Loyal Society of Antient Britons, founded in 1715, but which faded from existence towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Cymmrodorian, established in 1751 and still in existence, and the Cymreigyddion, founded 1770 to promote the Welsh language and which disappeared in the 1850s.⁷⁷ The 1840s also included a focus

⁷⁰ See, A. S. Bell, ed., *The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition: Essays to Mark the Bicentenary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 1780-1980* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1981).

⁷¹ The Society’s charter (1783) cited in *ibid*, p. 273.

⁷² These have been digitised and are accessible at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/psas/scotica_volumes.cfm.

⁷³ These too have been digitised and are accessible at <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/psas/volumes.cfm>.

⁷⁴ See chapter two.

⁷⁵ See volume 2 of *Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, 1856).

⁷⁶ A. J. G. MacKay, ‘Skene, William Forbes’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25671>, revised W. D. H. Sellar.

⁷⁷ For histories of all the societies, see R. T. Jenkins and Helen Ramage, ‘A History of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorian and of the Gwyneddigion and Cymreigyddion Societies (1751-1951)’, *Y Cymmrodor*, 50 (London: Honourable Society of Cymmrodorian, 1951).

on the historical literature of Wales, which was researched by Thomas Stephens and was published in 1849 as *The Literature of the Kymry*. Stephens was a correspondent of several Irish antiquarians.⁷⁸

These two countries, Scotland and Wales, have been highlighted here specifically, as they share similarities with Ireland. All three countries were part of the United Kingdom at the time, and they were countries in which English was not necessarily the majority language. Yet they are by no means the only European countries in which antiquarian research focused on the medieval period and in which this research was used to forge ideas of a national identity. Chapter three mentions how other countries used the Middle Ages in their research and discusses how Ireland was not alone in forming scholarly societies to facilitate the study of this period. The University of Waterloo Library project on European learned societies is an excellent resource for investigating this further.⁷⁹

1.2 Scholarly Definitions of ‘Antiquarianism’

The terms “antiquarian” and “antiquarianism” are difficult to define and the distinction between antiquarian and historian is one that has been shaped by centuries of debate which, however, have reached no definite conclusion. Momigliano questions our assumed definitions of both of these terms stating:

to many of us the word “antiquary” suggests the notion of a student of the past who is not a historian because: (1) historians write in a chronological order; antiquaries write in a systematic order: (2) historians produce those facts which serve to illustrate or explain a certain situation; antiquaries collect all the items that are connected with a certain subject, whether they help to solve a problem or not.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ See chapter two. For greater discussion of nineteenth-century Welsh antiquarianism, see *Writing a Small Nation's Past: Wales in Comparative Perspective, 1850-1950*, eds., Neil Evans and Huw Pryce (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2013).

⁷⁹ Accessible at <http://www.scholarly-societies.org>.

⁸⁰ Arnaldo Momigliano, ‘Ancient History and the Antiquarian’ in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 13, No. 3/4 (1950), pp. 285-315; 286. This was revised and reprinted in *Studies in Historiography* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 1-39. For more up-to-date

It is frequently assumed that antiquarians and historians are two different sets of scholars, who both happen to look at the past, albeit in different ways, yet Momigliano argues that our notion of the historian's role most likely came from the antiquarian's and "in the nineteenth century it became increasingly evident that there was no longer any justification for making a distinction between antiquarian and historical studies."⁸¹ Rosemary Sweet, however, points out that in eighteenth-century England, historians attempted to keep their work separate from that of the antiquary, as they saw theirs as being more closely connected with the world of philosophical learning and letters, whereas the antiquary's was considered to be more akin to natural history.⁸²

The term "antiquarian" derives from the Latin *antiquarius*. Its first recorded usage was in 1771,⁸³ though the *OED* entry for "antiquary" as an official title (as bestowed by Henry VIII on Thomas Leland) dates back to 1569 and to 1587 when it was used to define a student or collector of antiquities. John Colgan applied the Latin term to describe the role of Míchéal Ó Cleirigh in *Acta Triadis Thaumaturgae*, referring to him as "professione antiquarius".⁸⁴ "Historian", on the other hand, dates back to 1439, according to its *OED* entry. However, to refer back to Momigliano's definition of antiquarian versus historian, antiquarians have been around since the latter part of the fifth century B.C. in Greece.⁸⁵ According to Momigliano, Plato reported in *Hippias maior* that the Sophists had coined a term, "archaeology", to describe genealogies, the traditions regarding the foundations of cities, and lists of eminent people. Momigliano goes on to say that a lot of their research must be linked with modern antiquarian studies.⁸⁶ Much antiquarian interest - particularly in the

treatment of the difference between antiquarian and historian, see Momigliano, 'The Rise of Antiquarian Research', *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Oxford: The University of California Press, 1990) pp. 54-79; 61; Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth Century Britain*, chapter one (London: Hambledon and London, 2004); and, by the same author, "Antiquarianism and history", <http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/antiquarianism.html> (accessed 18/11/2014).

⁸¹ Momigliano, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian', p. 286.

⁸² Sweet, *Antiquaries*, p. 2.

⁸³ S.v. *Oxford English Dictionary* entry,

<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/8809?redirectedFrom=antiquarian&>.

⁸⁴ Cited in *Annals of the Four Masters*, ed. and trans., John O'Donovan 'Introduction', Vol. I, p. xxiv (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1848, reprinted 1854, reprinted 1856, reprinted Dublin: De Búrca, 1990).

⁸⁵ Momigliano, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian', p. 287.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

seventeenth century - focused on genealogies, as well as foundation myths and eminent historical/mythological figures, though the latter might be considered more chronicling than antiquarianism, Irish antiquarianism, both Catholic Gaelic Irish and Protestant Anglo-Irish, may indeed have emerged from this discipline.

Of course, disciplines changed over time and antiquarianism as a subject was not immune to this. Momigliano states that:

In the eighteenth century a new humanism competed with the traditional one. It was organized in learned societies instead of being centred in the universities; it was fostered by gentlemen rather than by schoolmasters. [...] What is more important, men slowly became aware that they could find beauty and emotion of a new kind if they simply looked at their parish church or at the neighbouring castle – just as they could find poetry if they listened to the songs and stories of isolated farmers. The Grecian, the Celtic and the Gothic revivals, spreading from England to Europe, sealed the triumph of a leisured class which was indifferent to religious controversy, uninterested in grammatical niceties, and craved for strong emotions in art, to counterbalance the peace and security of its own existence. [...] Such, if I am not mistaken, is the conventional view of the Age of the Antiquaries.⁸⁷

This was the conventional view of an antiquarian in Europe, and in Ireland, a typical view of a Protestant one. This view was epitomised in Walter Scott's novel, *The Antiquary* (1816). This novel promoted the idea of a gentleman scholar who was enthusiastic about local archaeological ruins and finds, but was not trained in how to interpret them. The connection between antiquarianism and material remains has existed for centuries⁸⁸ and is central to most definitions today. In 2013, a book titled *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, was published which sought to investigate antiquarianism across geographical

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 285.

⁸⁸ See Stuart Piggott, 'Antiquarian Thought in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Ruins in a Landscape: Essays in Antiquarianism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976), p. 3, who traces the word 'antiquary' as a collector and elucidator of material finds back to 1690 in English.

spaces and periods of time.⁸⁹ Most of the definitions of antiquarianism in the entries refer to this connection between scholarship and material remains. As Alain Schnapp highlights:

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the antiquarian was a key link between past and present. It was the historian's job to comment on texts; the antiquarian looked after material remains, collecting and interpreting objects and monuments.⁹⁰

Schnapp emphasises that the term 'antiquarian' seems condescending, reflecting the amateurism associated, however unfairly, with the term. He adds that historians have retained that term for their profession over the centuries, while antiquarians have become known by other terms: art historians, archaeologists, and ethnologists, for example.⁹¹ Schnapp also points out that, since Momigliano's article, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian',⁹² there has been an agreement among scholars of the field that the "antiquarian is essential to an understanding of Western intellectual history."⁹³ Paul-Alain Beaulieu, however, defines antiquarianism as "the study and revival of the past,"⁹⁴ whereas Willeke Wendrich declares antiquarianism to be "an interest in the tangible remains of the past, the study of objects, and the urge to collect and preserve them."⁹⁵ He also claims that this is more important to antiquarians than investigating past lives or past events.⁹⁶ Hans-Rudolf Meier argues that antiquarians were even more specialised, demonstrating that in the mid-sixth century, *antiquarii* feature in written sources as specialists of old books.⁹⁷ William Stenhouse states that early modern antiquaries were philologists and

⁸⁹ Edited by Alain Schnapp with Lothar von Falkenhausen, Peter N. Miller, and Tim Murray (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013).

⁹⁰ Alain Schnapp, 'The Roots of Antiquarianism', trans. Chris Miller, in *ibid*, pp. 1-10; 1.

⁹¹ *Ibid*.

⁹² Cited above.

⁹³ Schnapp, 'Roots of Antiquarianism', p. 2.

⁹⁴ Paul-Alain Beaulieu, 'Mesopotamian Antiquarianism from Sumer to Babylon', in *World Antiquarianism*, pp. 121-135; 121.

⁹⁵ Willeke Wendrich, 'Antiquarianism in Egypt: the Importance of Re', in *ibid*, pp. 140-159.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

⁹⁷ Hans-Rudolf Meier, 'The Medieval and Early Modern World and the Material Past' in *ibid*, pp. 249-272; 249.

collectors, interested in words and things.⁹⁸ He highlights that antiquarianism in the early modern period could be political, as most dynasties across Europe “derived some sort of legitimacy from the past, [therefore,] their leaders needed, or feared the antiquaries.”⁹⁹ In the eighteenth century, Giovanna Ceserani claims that antiquarianism was linked to objects or things of the past.¹⁰⁰

It is possible to gain a good understanding of what antiquarianism came to be in nineteenth-century Ireland by tracing its development in England. Stuart Piggott links antiquarianism with archaeology and traces its development back to the sixteenth century. He sees the work of scholars investigating material remains as “supplementing and complementary to the historical documents.”¹⁰¹ Philippa Levine describes the zeal of antiquarians in the nineteenth century for collecting,¹⁰² though, unlike Piggott, she distinguishes between archaeologist and antiquarian. She categorises the latter term as an amateur.¹⁰³ Piggott is highly critical of Levine’s work, claiming that “with the antiquaries and the archaeologists she is clearly not at home, and her treatment of this part of her subject is inadequate and misleading.”¹⁰⁴ Rosemary Sweet contradicts Piggott’s view of British antiquaries, claiming that scholarly attention paid to antiquaries in the eighteenth century has “seldom reflected their contributions to historical methodology or the construction of a national past, or their role in establishing any disciplines apart from that of archaeology.”¹⁰⁵ Sweet also states that there is little difference between the work of an antiquary and the work of a historian, highlighting that, in her opinion, “the antiquary of the eighteenth century probably had more in common with the professional historian of the twenty-first century, in terms of methodology, approach to sources and the struggle to

⁹⁸ William Stenhouse, ‘The Renaissance Foundations of European Antiquarianism’ in *ibid*, pp. 295-316; 311

⁹⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁰ Giovanna Ceserani, ‘Antiquarian Transformations in Eighteenth-Century Europe’ in *ibid*, pp. 317-342; 327.

¹⁰¹ Piggott, ‘Antiquarian Thought in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’, *Ruins in a Landscape*, p. 2. *Ruins in a Landscape* traces the development of antiquarian thought in England up to the end of the eighteenth century. For another history of antiquarian thought and the development of it in Britain, see T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950).

¹⁰² Philippa Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 14.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ Stuart Piggott, ‘Review of *The Amateur and the Professional*’, *Antiquity*, Vol. 60, 230 (1986), p. 236.

¹⁰⁵ Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries*, p. xv.

reconcile erudition with style” than the authors of the narratives of national histories did.¹⁰⁶

In an Irish-language context, antiquarianism is a cognate term for *seanchas*, and antiquarian for *seanchaidhe*. *Seanchas* is the study of history and tradition and the earliest attestation of the word is in the late eighth-century Würzburg Glosses,¹⁰⁷ though its Latin cognate, *peritia*, appears in the late seventh-century text Muirchú’s preface to this Life of St Patrick.¹⁰⁸ As Francis John Byrne has shown, *peritia* came to correspond with historical and genealogical *seanchas*.¹⁰⁹ The term *seanchaidhe* can be traced back more than a millennium to the probably tenth-century Middle Irish poem (or series of poems) *Saltair na Rann*.¹¹⁰ But, even earlier, it is ascribed to people in the *Annals of the Four Masters* from the year 884 onwards.¹¹¹ Ireland had a very long and well defined historical tradition. It is not possible, therefore, to speak of a beginning of an interest in *seanchas* amongst the Gaelic Irish as it had very early become a part of Irish literature. *Seanchaidhe/seanchaí* translates as “an antiquary, historian or genealogist, a story-teller or shanachie, one who traces relationships, one versed in folk-lore, etc;”¹¹² “custodian of tradition, historian, reciter of ancient lore; traditional story-teller;”¹¹³ These definitions fit what nineteenth-century Irish antiquarians were doing, showing the multi-faceted nature of their endeavours. It is based on the adjective *sean* “old”. The Irish word *ársaitheoir*, derived from *ársa*, ‘ancient’, is also translated as antiquarian.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. xiv.

¹⁰⁷ S.v. entry ‘senchas’ in *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, dil.ie/37124.

¹⁰⁸ Francis John Byrne, “‘Senchas’: The Nature of Gaelic Historical Tradition’, *Historical Studies* IX (Belfast: 1974), pp. 137-160; 138.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*.

¹¹⁰ S.v. entry ‘senchaid’ in *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, dil.ie/37122. For the dating of the poem, see Gearóid Mac Eoin, ‘The date and authorship of *Saltair na rann*’, *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*, 28 (1961), pp. 51-67. See also Mona Jakob, *Rhyming pairs in the early middle Irish biblical epic Saltair na Rann: survey and analysis of phonological and graphic patterns*, unpublished PhD thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2013, pp. 46-64, for more on the discussion of dating the text.

¹¹¹ O’Donovan, *Annals of the Four Masters*, Vol. 1, p. 534. The entry for 884.5 reads “Colcu, mac Connacáin, abb Cinn Ettich, ollamh aurlabhraidh, & senchaidh as deach ro bhuí i n-Erinn ina réimhes.”

¹¹² Patrick S. Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla* (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1904, reprinted 1996), p. 625, column 2.

¹¹³ Niall Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir Gaeilge - Béarla* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Gúm, 2010), p. 1076, column 1 – also found in www.focloir.ie.

¹¹⁴ See Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla*, p. 40, column 2; Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir Gaeilge – Béarla*, p. 61, column 2; and Tomás de Bhaldraithe, *English – Irish Dictionary* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Gúm, 2009), p. 27, column 2.

The question of how to define Irish antiquarian activities through the centuries is one that has perplexed scholars for years. There is no one single definition, as there are scholars whose antiquarian researches do not necessarily fit every specification. Clare O'Halloran highlights some unsatisfactory definitions of Irish antiquarianism from previous scholarship, which defined antiquarianism thus:

It involved the study of the *remote* past, mainly the pre-Christian and early Christian eras; and that it was primarily concerned with collection and cataloguing rather than interpretation, which was usually considered to be the historian's art.¹¹⁵

O'Halloran goes on to explain that although antiquarianism originally involved the antique period, it changed in Britain, at least, to involve “the pre-classical era, concerning the origins of the people of Britain, right up to the high Middle ages, with a focus on the Gothic style of architecture.”¹¹⁶ O'Halloran does not attempt a definition of Irish antiquarianism, choosing instead to highlight the focus of the works in the period she studies (c.1750 to 1800).¹¹⁷ Aside from the debate about what antiquarianism is versus what historical writing is, what the eighteenth and, particularly, nineteenth century scholars termed “antiquarianism” today falls under many branches of the arts and social sciences, which many would not consider having anything to do with the historical past. The gathering of folklore and songs was considered an antiquarian endeavour, yet the items gathered may have been contemporary and not historical, and in some cases, there was no interest in their historical background. Amongst the antiquarians studied in this project, there seems to be no conscious decision to set a boundary between what was fit for study and what was not. John O'Donovan's *Grammar of the Irish Language*, published 1845, for example, was considered by him to be only of interest to antiquaries, despite it being a work purporting to deal with the modern form of the language (though,

¹¹⁵ Clare O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, C. 1750-1800* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004), pp. 1-2.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 3.

given the criticism that the examples cited date no later than the seventeenth century, this is debatable).¹¹⁸ As chapter four demonstrates, the interest by antiquarians in the Irish language led to what I term the ‘antiquarianisation’ of Irish, turning it, in many people’s opinion, from a living language into one with no future prospects.

Joep Leersson also refrains from giving a clear definition of antiquarianism, equating it instead with historical and linguistic study and with the formation of the discipline of archaeology, in *Remembrance and Imagination*.¹¹⁹ His publication on the development of an Irish self-image before 1800, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*,¹²⁰ also does not define antiquarianism, linking it to historical study.

This thesis treats antiquarianism as the study of the past, frequently of the early medieval era, and does not distinguish the antiquarian from the historian. By ‘study of the past’ this work also includes activities linked to historical research, for example, collecting manuscripts of historical importance and translating works from Old, Middle, and Classical Irish in order to be able to investigate the past more fully. Even in 1832, John O’Donovan had begun worrying about the future of the Irish language.¹²¹ This meant that the language itself, along with oral lore and songs could become subjects suitable for antiquarian study as shortly they would be as historical as Old and Middle Irish.

1.3 Previous Scholarship on Antiquarianism

As Clare O’Halloran points out, the amount of secondary literature on Irish antiquarianism is not large. For the topic of antiquarianism in general, Ann de Valera’s unpublished M.A. thesis¹²² and Clare O’Halloran’s *Golden Ages*

¹¹⁸ Letter to William Reeves, dated 26 July 1845. UCD Special Collections, IE/UCD/SC/JO’D/5.

¹¹⁹ Joep Leersson, *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), pp. 70-75.

¹²⁰ Joep Leersson, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996).

¹²¹ Letter John O’Donovan to James Hardiman, dated 31st January 1832, RIA, MS 12 N 12, number 5. O’Donovan writes that “it is a consolation to Irishmen that everlasting monuments have by you been erected in honour of their enlightened ancestors.”

¹²² *Antiquarian and Historical Investigations in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, University College, Dublin, 1978.

and Barbarous Nations focus on antiquarian investigation in the eighteenth century. They thoroughly examine how political thought and current events in the latter half of the eighteenth century in Ireland impacted upon the writing of history during this period. Joep Leerssen's *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael* investigates how antiquarian research conducted during this period helped to develop an Irish self-image. Leerssen argues that the Anglo-Irish adoption of Gaelic Ireland was integral to their identity, as they began to refer to it in the first person. Lesa Ní Mhunghaile has provided new insights into contact between the Gaelic world and the antiquarian in 'Anglo-Irish Antiquarianism and the Transformation of Irish Identity, 1750-1800' (2008),¹²³ 'Bilingualism, Print Culture in Irish and the Public Sphere, 1700-c.1830' (2012),¹²⁴ and *Ré Órga na nGael* (2013).¹²⁵ Leerssen's *Remembrance and Imagination* focuses on the nineteenth century, but again examines how antiquarian research helped to forge a self-image. Leerssen examines the rise of cultural nationalism in nineteenth-century Ireland, arguing that the cultivation of a glorious past and an idyllic peasantry are central to Irish thought in the nineteenth century. Joan Rockley's 2008 monograph, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, examines antiquarians and archaeology, but limits its scope to Cork.¹²⁶ Other works are centred upon aspects of nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism, rather than the subject as a whole and are examined throughout this thesis. One of particular note is Damien Murray's *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies, 1840-80*,¹²⁷ which focuses on the learned societies operational during this period. Patricia Boyne's 1977 PhD thesis, *The Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*,¹²⁸ assessed the impact that the work of George Petrie, John O'Donovan, and Eugene O'Curry had upon nineteenth-century writers, from their contemporaries to the later

¹²³ Lesa Ní Mhunghaile 'Anglo-Irish Antiquarianism and the Transformation of Irish Identity, 1750-1800' in *Anglo-Irish Identities, 1571-1845*, eds., David A. Malone and Jill Marie Bradbury (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2008), pp. 181-198.

¹²⁴ Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, 'Bilingualism, Print Culture in Irish and the Public Sphere, 1700-c.1830' in *Irish and English: Essays on the Irish Linguistic and Cultural Frontier, 1600-1900*, eds., James Kelly and Ciarán Mac Murchaidh (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), pp. 218-242.

¹²⁵ Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, *Ré Órga na nGael* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar Tta, 2013).

¹²⁶ Joan Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008).

¹²⁷ (Maynooth: The Department of Old and Middle Irish, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2001).

¹²⁸ University College, Dublin. See chapter four for an assessment of this work.

authors of the Irish Literary Revival. Some of this work has been updated by Cóilín Parsons, who looks at how the Ordnance Survey of Ireland influenced modern Irish literature.¹²⁹ With regard to the Ordnance Survey, J. H. Andrews, Gillian Doherty, and Stiofán Ó Cadhla have published works on this subject between 1975 and 2007.¹³⁰ Jamie Blake Knox has examined how some Church of Ireland clergymen wrote Irish church history, focusing on how some had agendas to promote the Anglican Church as the true Church of the Irish.¹³¹ Other scholars have demonstrated that some nationalist groups, particularly Young Ireland, were influenced by notions of Ireland's supposed historical sovereignty as evidenced by antiquarian research, and used historical writings to help further their claims to an independent Ireland.¹³² Robert Somerville-Woodward has shown how antiquarians in the nineteenth century were instrumental in helping to develop an Irish language consciousness.¹³³ There have also been recent publications on historical writings in Ireland and these include Raymond Gillespie's chapter on 'Editing and Publishing Historical Documents in Nineteenth-century Ireland' in *Print Culture and Intellectual Life in Ireland, 1660-1941*¹³⁴ as well as Mark Williams and Stephen Paul Forrest's 2010 edited publication, *Constructing the Past: Writing Irish History, 1600 - 1800*.¹³⁵

In recent years, there have been many publications examining the European context of nineteenth-century historical writing, particularly those focusing on the medieval period and those centred around the uses of history in nation building and to further nationalist claims. Of particular note are *The Past as History: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern*

¹²⁹ Cóilín Parsons, *The Ordnance Survey and Modern Irish Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹³⁰ Gillian Doherty, *The Irish Ordnance Survey: History, Culture and Memory* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004/2006); J. H. Andrews, *A Paper Landscape: The Ordnance Survey in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975; re-issue, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001); and Stiofán Ó Cadhla, *Civilizing Ireland: Ordnance Survey, 1824-1842: Ethnography, Cartography, Translation* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007).

¹³¹ 'Facts or Fiction?' *The Church of Ireland's Writing of Irish Church History*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2014.

¹³² Tom Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1981) and James Quinn, *Young Ireland and the Writing of Irish History* (Dublin: University College, Dublin Press, 2015).

¹³³ 'Language without a Mouth': *The Development of an Irish language Consciousness, c.1820-1878*, unpublished PhD thesis, University College, Dublin, 1998.

¹³⁴ In *Print Culture and Intellectual Life in Ireland 1660-1941: Essays in Honour of Michael Adams*, eds., Martin Fanning and Raymond Gillespie (Dublin: The Woodfield Press, 2006), pp. 74-94.

¹³⁵ (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010).

Europe,¹³⁶ *Manufacturing Middle Ages: Entangled History of Medievalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe*,¹³⁷ and *The Uses of the Middle Ages in Modern European States: History, Nationhood and the Search for Origins*.¹³⁸ The last-mentioned contains a chapter on Ireland, ‘Transmission and Translation of Medieval Irish Sources in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries’ by Bernadette Cunningham, making it particularly useful for this investigation. In this chapter, Cunningham demonstrates the use of medieval Irish documents and their antiquarian translations in strengthening an Irish identity in the nineteenth century. Cunningham uses O’Donovan’s edition and translation of *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, by the Four Masters* as a case study.

This thesis is one of the few full-length studies of nineteenth-century antiquarianism in general and the only one to treat of the differences in antiquarian cultures between Protestant and Catholic antiquarians in the period 1830 to 1876. Leerssen’s previous work on nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism has divided Irish antiquarians along ethnic lines, referring to the Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Irish. By using a religious rather than an ethnic dichotomy, this thesis seeks to address nineteenth-century antiquarian culture in a way that has not been done before. In using this framework, it also allows for some antiquarians who were Gaelic Irish but Protestant to be accounted for. As well as this, this framework allows us to assess if these antiquarians follow certain norms in Protestant antiquarian cultures, or if their background and Catholic descent mean that they were more likely to follow Catholic ones.

1.4 Terminology

1.4.1 Anglo-Irish

Although this project is divided upon religious confession, at times the term ‘Anglo-Irish’ is used. The Anglo-Irish were the descendants of the so-

¹³⁶ *Opus* cited above.

¹³⁷ Edited by Patrick J. Geary and Gábor Klaniczay (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

¹³⁸ Edited by R. J. W. Evans and Guy P. Marchal (Basingstoke: Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

called ‘New English’ – the post-Reformation colonists of Ireland. This term is contrasted with the ‘Old English’, who were the Catholic descendants of the medieval settlers.¹³⁹ Modern scholars have referred to this group in two ways: They have either termed them ‘Anglo-Irish’ or they have called them the ‘Ascendancy’, sometimes the ‘Anglo-Irish Ascendancy’. When referring to this social group in the nineteenth century, these are contested terms. There is also no agreed term to refer to this section of the Irish population in the eighteenth century;¹⁴⁰ some scholars prefer ‘Anglo-Irish Ascendancy’, whereas others prefer ‘Protestant Ascendancy’. James Kelly prefers the latter, highlighting the failure of the term ‘Anglo-Irish Ascendancy’ to give the sense of importance to religion that was in effect. He argues that those involved in popularising and advancing the concept of ‘Protestant Ascendancy’ in the 1780s frequently invoked anti-Catholic propaganda to obtain support for their views.¹⁴¹ While I do not disagree with Kelly, for reasons of consistency, I shall employ the term ‘Anglo-Irish’ in the first chapter.

For the rest of the thesis, the term ‘Anglo-Irish’ shall be used, in preference to ‘Ascendancy’ and ‘Protestant Ascendancy’. This is for several reasons. Firstly, as was mentioned above, the nineteenth century saw the relaxation of the Penal Laws, meaning that the Protestants could no longer use religion to keep Catholics in lowly positions. Anti-Catholic bias did not disappear,¹⁴² but it could no longer legally be enforced. As the circumstances for the Protestant Ascendancy had changed after the 1830s, it cannot be

¹³⁹ See, for example, Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 146.

¹⁴⁰ For a full discussion of Anglo-Irish Identity in the eighteenth century, see Kelly, ‘The Genesis of “Protestant Ascendancy”’, *op. cit.* below ; Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism*, pp. 171-181; W.J. McCormack, *Ascendancy and Tradition in Anglo-Irish Literary Tradition from 1789 to 1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 61-96; A.P.W. Malcolmson, *John Foster: The Politics of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978); Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), pp. 167-194; Thomas Bartlett, ‘Chapter Five: European Enlightenment, English Perceptions and Irish Politics, 1750-75’, *The Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation: the Catholic Question, 1690-1830* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1992); and J. L. McCracken, ‘Protestant Ascendancy and the Rise of Colonial Nationalism’ in *A New History of Ireland, IV: Eighteenth-Century Ireland, 1691-1800*, eds. T. W. Moody and W. E. Vaughan, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, revised and reprinted Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 105-122.

¹⁴¹ James Kelly, ‘The Genesis of ‘Protestant Ascendancy’: The Rightboy Disturbances of the 1780s and their Impact upon Protestant Opinion’, in *Parliament, Politics and People: Essays in Eighteenth-Century Irish History*, ed., Gerard O’Brien (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), pp. 93-128; 126.

¹⁴² See, for example, the many articles in the *Dublin University Magazine* which helped to fuel this.

considered correct to refer to its members in the same terms as before.¹⁴³ Seamus Deane uses the term ‘Anglo-Irish Ascendancy’, as it reflects the situation that Irish Protestants found themselves in – straddling two worlds, without fully belonging to either.¹⁴⁴ The suitability of the word ‘Ascendancy’, however, is called into question. As Thomas Bartlett argues, from 1790, the Ascendancy was actually in a descendancy and was losing its elite position through concessions to Catholics.¹⁴⁵ Colin Kidd argues that Protestant interest in Gaelic culture helped to foster a growing sense of religious tolerance.¹⁴⁶

The second reason is to do with claims of nationality and a developing interest in the discipline of ethnography. As Oliver MacDonagh argues, after 1800, most Protestants had reverted back to a conscious dependency on Britain, making them again ‘outer Britons’.¹⁴⁷ Many of the Protestant antiquarians at the time were interested in human remains and argued in their works, as chapter four demonstrates, for separate Celtic and Anglo-Saxon races. The authors¹⁴⁸ of these works placed themselves in the Anglo-Saxon category. It is this growing awareness of purported racial and ethnographical differences in the nineteenth century which somewhat replaced the religious identity so important to eighteenth-century Protestants. MacDonagh points out that in the nineteenth century, domicile had become one of the deciding factors in the adoption of a nationality,¹⁴⁹ though as Terence de Vere White demonstrates in his attempt to define ‘the Anglo-Irish’, this was not always enough. His sometimes quite personal account of Anglo-Irish identity contains terms such as “Irish but not what you would call Irish” and “not an aboriginal Celt.”¹⁵⁰ This indicates that there was more to identity than domicile. Language was one aspect, though as several Anglo-Irish scholars learned to speak Irish, this does not make it particularly fixed. Religion, however, continued to play a vital and divisive role

¹⁴³ For example, Bartlett’s comment that after 1830, the Catholic question became the Irish question. *The Rise and Fall of the Irish Nation*, p. 347.

¹⁴⁴ *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 21.

¹⁴⁵ Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 206-267

¹⁴⁶ Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism*, pp. 174-175.

¹⁴⁷ Oliver MacDonagh, *States of Mind: a Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict, 1780-1980* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), p. 17.

¹⁴⁸ William Wilde and John Grattan.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 18.

¹⁵⁰ Terence de Vere White, *The Anglo-Irish: The Men and Women Who Were Involved in a Confluence of Cultures that Spanned 200 Years* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1972), pp. 31-32

in identity formation, as highlighted by Hoppen,¹⁵¹ - therefore this thesis focuses on it.¹⁵²

The third reason for preferring the term ‘Anglo-Irish’ is that it is how Samuel Ferguson referred to himself and fellow members of his community in his writings.¹⁵³

1.4.2 Scholar versus Antiquarian

In modern scholarship, it has been common to refer to antiquarians either as ‘antiquarians’ or as ‘scholars’.¹⁵⁴ Using the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* as an example, most antiquarians who worked on the Irish language are referred to as scholars, whereas those who were more interested in archaeology are referred to as ‘antiquarians’. With this distinction, there is the implication that scholars are professionals, while antiquarians are amateurs. None of the antiquarians studied in this thesis had any professional training; they either had an interest which they explored and in which they became proficient, or they had a background in this area or were native speakers of Irish. Despite this fact, scholars can still be considered either competent or incompetent, based upon their methodology and how fanciful their conclusions were. With regard to the teaching of history, Mary O’Dowd highlights that the subject was perceived as a controversial subject from a religious and political point of view, so, when the Queen’s Colleges were founded, history was taught as part of English, and none of the lecturers teaching history ever published on the subject.¹⁵⁵ The first chairs of history in Ireland were not created until the

¹⁵¹ Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800*, p. 77.

¹⁵² For discussion on the Anglo-Irish in the nineteenth century, see Oliver MacDonagh, *States of Mind*, pp. 17-18; 27-33; Terence de Vere White, *The Anglo-Irish*; Michael McConville, *Ascendancy to Oblivion: The Story of the Anglo-Irish* (London: Quartet Books, 1986); and Hoppen, *Ireland since 1800*, pp. 77-78.

¹⁵³ See, for example, ‘Hardiman’s Irish Minstrelsy – No. I’, *Dublin University Magazine*, vol. III (April 1834).

¹⁵⁴ See, for example, the respective entries in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* of the scholars studied in this thesis. Note the various terms used to describe the role of the nineteenth-century Irish antiquarian.

¹⁵⁵ Mary O’Dowd, ‘Ireland’ in *The Atlas of European Historiography*, eds., Ilaria Porcini and Lutz Raphael *Historiography: The Making of a Profession, 1800-2005* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 172-176; 172.

formation of the National University of Ireland in 1908.¹⁵⁶ As there was no formal teaching at university level in historical studies, it seems unfair to deem one group of scholars as professionals. This thesis will use the term ‘scholar’ and ‘antiquarian’ interchangeably for the reason that it is modern scholarship that has distinguished between the two terms; the antiquarians themselves referred to themselves as ‘antiquarians’.¹⁵⁷

1.5 Methodology

This thesis is a comparative study of the discipline of antiquarianism and its development and influence upon the area of cultural nationalism. It, therefore, draws upon a Historicist methodological framework. According to Paul Hamilton, “Historicism is a critical movement insisting on the prime importance of historical context to the interpretation of texts of all kinds.”¹⁵⁸ The strict application of a critical theoretical framework to this thesis would not be useful in attempting to answer the research question. However, as the aim of this work is to set the antiquarian texts studied in their social, political, and historical contexts, the frameworks of Historicism and its successor, New Historicism,¹⁵⁹ have, therefore, been considered advantageous to draw upon in order to achieve this aim. This work is arranged thematically and not chronologically.

A historical timeframe was first considered in which to examine the antiquarian works and the biographies of the antiquarians themselves in order to clarify who was active in this period. The works considered are published works, both in book form and in the journals of the various learned societies operating in the time period. Magazines and penny journals were also examined for antiquarian content. The key determiner for inclusion in this thesis was if it had been written by an antiquarian. As *The Freeman’s Journal* and *The Nation*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ For example, John O’Donovan’s letter to William Reeves, dated 26 July 1845, IE/UCD/SC/JO’D/5.

¹⁵⁸ Paul Hamilton, *Historicism*, (London: Routledge, 1996, second edition 2003), pp. 1-2.

¹⁵⁹ See Hayden White, *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1973/1993) for a greater discussion of New Historicism.

newspapers contained only items relating to antiquarianism in the form of reviews or encouragement to buy the works, they were not included. Some items from *The Nation* have been included in chapter four to demonstrate the use of antiquarian works in the development of a national idea. James Quinn's 2015 publication, *Young Ireland and the Writing of Irish History*, deals with this extensively.¹⁶⁰ The *Dublin University Magazine* is only briefly mentioned, as in the forty-five year period (i.e. 1833-18877) in which it was published,¹⁶¹ there were fewer than ten articles which focused on antiquarianism. Including reviews of works and obituaries of antiquarians, this number only rises to seventeen in total. The antiquarians were then categorised into their respective religious communities and their works were placed alongside them. The works were then examined to see if there were connections between the type of work, i.e. archaeological, linguistic, ecclesiastical - and so on - and which religious community its author belonged to. This enabled me to draw conclusions about differences in the subject matter studied by Protestant and Catholic antiquarians more clearly. The next step was to investigate membership of the various learned societies identified as being operational during the period 1830 to 1876. Again, the antiquarians were divided into their respective religious communities. I then drew conclusions about whether members of a particular religious community belonged to a certain antiquarian society. For this, contemporary membership lists, as well as Damien Murray's book on Irish learned societies, which expanded upon the membership lists, were consulted. To address the question of chapter four – how antiquarian works influenced the Cultural Nationalism movement at the end of the nineteenth century in Ireland and whether the work of one particular confession could be determined to have more of an impact than the other – works by well known Cultural Nationalists were examined to determine which antiquarians were being read, and which antiquarians were influential in this movement. My choice was also guided by the availability of secondary literature on the primary texts. Once influences had been spotted, they were linked to their author and his religious background.

¹⁶⁰ Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2015. See especially pp. 27-35.

¹⁶¹ 1833 to 1877. It lasted for ninety volumes, which contained five hundred and forty two numbers, (one per calendar month and six numbers in a volume,) in total.

Again, attempts were made to identify trends and repeated references to particular authors.

Chapter one gives the historical background to this thesis, examining how, with the interest of ‘New English’ authors in the seventeenth century, a dichotomy between Catholic and Protestant antiquarian was created, one which lasted to the nineteenth century. The chapter considers the differences in the antiquarian works and the motivations for engagement with antiquarianism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It discusses how some topics of antiquarian research still featured in nineteenth-century research and suggests why this might be so.

Chapter two examines the interactions between Protestant and Catholic scholars in the nineteenth century. It focuses on learned societies and how sectarian debates were supposedly forbidden in their meetings. The chapter debates whether this was the case. It looks at disagreements and disputes between antiquarians and assesses whether they were due to sectarian reasons or differences in scholarship. It then goes on to investigate the impact of Protestant and Catholic scholars abroad and examines why foreign antiquarians were interested in Irish antiquities and corresponding with Irish antiquarians.

Chapter three compares and contrasts the subjects of nineteenth-century antiquarian research, allocating the type of research conducted to one of the two religious confessions. It theorises about why medieval Ireland was of such interest to scholars and what could be gained from research into it.

Chapter four investigates how Cultural Nationalists at the end of the nineteenth-century and beginning of the twentieth used the antiquarian texts and looks at what aspects of Irish identity they mined from them. It begins by reviewing the various definitions of nationalism put forward by modern scholars, assessing their suitability for application in an Irish context. The chapter then goes on to examine the key traits of ‘Irishness’ (the Irish language, the idea of an Irish ‘race’ and the creation of an Irish literature) outlined in the Nationalist texts and investigates the antiquarian works which inspired their inclusion. It also reviews the importance of Catholicism to later Cultural Nationalist thought, and compares this with the development of Protestantism over the course of the period. The chapter then concludes whether the

antiquarian works of Protestant or of Catholic scholars had the greater impact upon the Cultural Nationalists.

Each chapter has its own conclusion; however, the overall thesis conclusion argues that there are clear differences between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in the period 1830 to 1876, which have been highlighted in this work. The conclusion reinforces one of the underlying themes of this thesis - that religion caused the greatest divide in society over ethnic identity. It assesses how this work has contributed to scholarship on Irish antiquarianism. The conclusion then suggests some areas which still require further study, for example, more detailed study on various antiquarians and their works.

**Chapter One: Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Irish
Antiquarianism**

This chapter will provide a context for the study of nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism by tracing its development during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and examining the differences between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures during this period. This part of the thesis also highlights some texts and subjects which remained influential in the nineteenth century. These include Geoffrey Keating's (c.1569-c.1644)¹⁶² *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (c. 1634) and Irish ecclesiastical history. Irish Protestants first began to demonstrate an interest in antiquarianism during the seventeenth century and later came to dominate the field. It is important, therefore, to trace this development in order to fully understand the motivations and patterns of research that distinguish the Protestant and Catholic communities in the nineteenth century.

The chapter begins by outlining the definitions of Irish antiquarianism given by the scholars themselves in their published works. Key research themes in the antiquarian works published during this period are investigated as well as the motivation for their publication. The chapter will also focus on how the scholars carried out their research in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Throughout the chapter, special attention will be paid to the differences between Catholic and Protestant antiquarians, both in their choice of subject matter and in the question of whether they carried out their research in the context of learned societies or through solitary study. The chapter will also highlight interactions between the two religious confessions and the scholarship that came about as a result of that contact.

¹⁶² For an in-depth account of Keating's life and his works and of the society from which they emerged, see Bernadette Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating: History, Myth and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004). See also, Breandán Ó Buachalla, 'Annála Ríochta Éireann is Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: An Comhthéacs Comhaimseartha', *Studia Hibernica* 22/23 (1982-3), pp. 59-105.

2.1 Antiquarianism as defined by the Antiquarians

A large portion of seventeenth-century antiquarian investigation consisted of the examination of Irish ecclesiastical history. Clare O'Halloran's discussion on the unsatisfactory definitions of antiquarianism¹⁶³ stated that most scholarly output in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from both Catholics and Protestants, centred largely on the remote past, mainly the pre-Christian and early Christian eras. In this instance, however, Protestant engagement with antiquarian research was greatly centred on the early Christian past.

Prior to the seventeenth century,¹⁶⁴ historical scholarship was divided between Gaelic Irish scholars, who continued the tradition of *seanchas* described in the introduction to this thesis, and Old and New English and English scholars, who followed the new humanist historical scholarship.¹⁶⁵ Among the latter group are the English scholar Edmund Campion (1540-1581),¹⁶⁶ author of *A Historie of Ireland Written in the Yeare 1571* (published in 1633 by James Ware) and *Two Bokes of the Histories of Ireland*,¹⁶⁷ and the Welsh writer Meredith Hanmer (1543-1604), author of *The Chronicle of Ireland Collected by Meredith Hanmer in the Yeare 1571* (also published in 1633 by Ware). Also included in this group was the Dubliner, Richard Stanihurst (1547-1618),¹⁶⁸ author of 'A plain and perfect description of Ireland', which was published in Raphael Holinshed's edited collection, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (first edition 1577, second 1586).¹⁶⁹ Stanihurst also

¹⁶³ See p. 22 of this thesis for the definition and a discussion of this.

¹⁶⁴ I am exceptionally grateful to Professor Alan Ford for his advice about the following section.

¹⁶⁵ For more on humanist historiography, see Anthony Grafton, *What was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Salvador Ryan discusses the need for Catholic ecclesiastical historians to follow the humanist methodology in the post-Reformation period in 'Reconstructing Irish Catholic History after the Reformation' in *Sacred History: Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, eds., Katherine Van Liere, Simon Ditchfield, and Howard Louthan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 186-208; 186. The use of this methodology in the seventeenth century is also discussed further below.

¹⁶⁶ See Gerard Kilroy, *Edmund Campion: A Scholarly Life* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2015)

¹⁶⁷ Edited by A. F. Vossen (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1963)

¹⁶⁸ For more on Stanihurst, see Colm Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst: The Dubliner, 1547-1618* (Blackrock, Co. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1981).

¹⁶⁹ It is worth pointing out that a third edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles* was published in 1808. For further discussion on the *Chronicles*, see Annabel Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) and Paulina Kewes et al, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Holinshed's Chronicles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). For a more in-depth study of

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published *De rebus in Hibernia gestis libri quattuor* in 1584, which sympathised with the Gaelic Irish¹⁷⁰ and *De vita S. Patricii libri duo* in 1587. The former, however, inspired rebuttals from Keating and Stephen White.¹⁷¹

As will be discussed below in greater detail and using examples, the motivation for engagement with antiquarianism in the seventeenth century was religious belief and the vindication of the two confessions found in Ireland after the Reformation – Catholicism and Anglicanism. The impact of the Reformation did not only affect Irish religious figures in Ireland; it was also felt by Irish people on the continent. One of the later results of Britain's adoption of the reformed faith of Henry VIII was its implementation upon the Kingdom of Ireland. In 1568 the Roman Mass was banned in Ireland, leading to numerous Catholic aristocrats and members of the gentry forging links with Europe, along with the need for Catholic higher education.¹⁷² There was, however, a flourishing Catholic intellectual culture in Ireland at the same time.¹⁷³ One of the results of this European contact was the forging of centres of Irish learning, usually Franciscan in nature, all over the continent.¹⁷⁴ For the purpose of this thesis, one particular Irish College of note is St. Anthony's in Louvain, now Leuven, in Belgium. It was founded in 1607, after permission was given to the provincial, Fr. Florence Conry (Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire) by Philip III of Spain in 1606.¹⁷⁵ The Franciscans had felt a need for a new centre of training and

Stanihurst's contributions to Holinshed's *Chronicles*, see Colm Lennon, 'Ireland', pp. 663-678, in the latter.

¹⁷⁰ See Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst*, pp. 88-123 in particular, for a study of Stanihurst and his view of the Gaelic Irish. See also John Barry, 'Derricke and Stanihurst: a Dialogue', in *Making Ireland Roman: Irish Neo-Latin Writers and the Republic of Letters*, eds., Jason Harris and Keith Sidwell (Cork: Cork University Press, 2009), pp. 36-47; 44-45; and John Barry and Hiram Morgan, eds., *Great Deeds in Ireland: Richard Stanihurst's De Rebus in Hibernia Gestis* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2013).

¹⁷¹ Ryan, 'Reconstructing Irish History', pp. 190-191.

¹⁷² Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700* (London: Allen Lane, 2003), p. 396.

¹⁷³ See Bernadette Cunningham, 'Catholic Intellectual Culture in Early Modern Ireland' in *Christianities in the Early Modern Celtic World*, eds. Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin and Robert Armstrong (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 151-163.

¹⁷⁴ See, for example, Tomás Ó Fiaich, *The Irish Colleges in France* (Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1990); T. J. Walsh, *The Irish Continental College Movement: The Colleges at Bordeaux, Toulouse, and Lille* (Dublin and Cork: Golden Eagle Books, 1973) – pp. 9-87 deal with the other colleges than those mentioned in the title; Monica Henchy, 'The Irish College at Salamanca', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 70, No. 278/279 (Summer/Autumn 1981), pp. 220-227; and Patrick Conlan, *St Isidore's College, Rome* (Rome: Istituto Pio XI, 1982).

¹⁷⁵ Brendan Jennings OFM, 'St Anthony's College at Louvain' in *Mícheál Ó Cléirigh, His Associates and St Anthony's College, Louvain*, ed. Nollaig Ó Muraíle (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), pp. 23-27; 24.

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learning, after the destruction of the monastery in Donegal in 1601.¹⁷⁶ Louvain became known as one of the centres of the Counter-Reformation – a movement to reclaim Europe from the Protestants and to protect Catholic teachings and culture. The College published many devotional and catechical texts in Irish in order to teach doctrine to Irish-speakers on the continent and back in Ireland.¹⁷⁷ St. Anthony's also focused upon the lives of saints, as a means of protecting that aspect of Catholicism from the Reformation. As Cunningham describes, the focus by scholars at the College upon the history of early Christian Ireland provided the broader context necessary in order to engage with the saints.¹⁷⁸ One can also trace the later vindication of Catholics against allegations of barbarity and incivility under the Penal Laws in the late-seventeenth to the early-nineteenth centuries back to Louvain. The link of the Established Church and civility had been forged in the late-sixteenth century, as planters used English law and the church to “provide the infrastructure for social engineering.”¹⁷⁹

Protestants antiquarians were also motivated by religion. The Reformation was considered to have ‘purified’ and reformed the Church of practices not found in the Bible, such as indulgences.¹⁸⁰ The Christian Humanists focused their research on what they viewed as a golden age, which they located in the early church. They argued that the New Testament and the writings of the Church Fathers were the key to spiritual regeneration and salvation.¹⁸¹ In order to spread this message and the word of God to as many people as possible, Protestants encouraged the use of the vernacular so that their message could be understood by all. However, as we have seen above, Irish

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷⁷ Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, p. 129.

¹⁷⁸ Bernadette Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four Masters: Irish History, Kingship and Society in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010/2014), p. 28.

¹⁷⁹ Raymond Gillespie, ‘The Problems of Plantations: Material Culture and Social Change in Early Modern Ireland’ in *Plantation Ireland: Settlement and Material Culture, c. 1550-c. 1700*, eds., James Lyttleton and Colin Rynne (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), 43-60; 49. See also, Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: The Irish Aristocracy in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 100. For more on English civility in Ireland, see Carla Lessing, *Promoting ‘English civility’ in Tudor Ireland: Ideology and the Rhetoric of Difference*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2016.

¹⁸⁰ Martin D. W. Jones, *The Counter Reformation: Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 49. See also, Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 111-185.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 30.

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Catholic religious figures also later utilised the vernacular in instructive texts. One of the motivations for Protestants to engage with antiquarianism was to construct a pathway that stretched back, past Catholicism, to the early Church, when, as was mentioned above, true Christianity could be found. This idea is discussed in greater detail in chapter four.¹⁸²

Protestant involvement in Irish antiquarianism began in the late-sixteenth century with John Hooker's edition of Giraldus Cambrensis's *Expugnatio Hiberniae* in the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1586). This publication led to refutations of Giraldus's claims, and those in his other work, *Topographia Hiberniae*, and demonstrations of Irish civility and piety, which are discussed in greater detail below. There was greater involvement from Protestant scholars in the seventeenth century, which led to the development of competing traditions of scholarship in Ireland. In the case of the Protestants, one of the main reasons for their engagement with Irish antiquarianism was to legitimise the Protestant religion in Ireland through investigations into the early Irish Church. Early Protestant scholars included James Ussher (1581-1656) and James Ware (1594-1666). Ussher, in particular can be described as an ardent supporter of the Protestant cause, as he used his research into Irish church history to promote his own Calvinist agenda and to attempt to legitimise the Church of Ireland as the true successor to the Church established by St Patrick.¹⁸³

¹⁸² For a full discussion of religion in the early modern period, see Raymond Gillespie, *Devoted People: Belief and Religion in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

¹⁸³ See Alan Ford, 'James Ussher', *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, ed. S. J. Connolly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 606 and *idem*, 'Shaping History: James Ussher and the Church of Ireland', in *The Church of Ireland and its Past: History, Interpretation and Identity*, eds., Mark Empey, Alan Ford and Miriam Moffitt (Dublin: Four Courts Press, forthcoming in 2017) – I would like to thank Alan for making this available to me before publication. R. Buick Knox's 1967 study of Ussher contains very little information about Ussher's interest in the early Irish church, and is limited to a single paragraph upon the topic. (R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher: Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: Cardiff University Press, 1967), pp. 103-104). Jack Cunningham claims that Ussher was trying to prove that the Church of Ireland originated from Patrick and not from England. Cunningham clarifies that, according to Ussher, Patrick was a missionary at a time when the Roman Church was still full of integrity and that Patrick was unaware that it would ever fall. (Jack Cunningham, *James Ussher and John Bramhall: The Theology and Politics of Two Irish Ecclesiastics of the Seventeenth Century* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), p. 102). For a full account of Protestant seventeenth-century historiography, see Ford, 'The Irish Historical Renaissance and the Shaping of Protestant History', in *The Origins of Sectarianism in Early Modern Ireland*, eds., Alan Ford and John McCafferty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 127-157. For Ussher's works, see James Ussher, *The Whole Works of James Ussher*, ed. Charles Elrington and William Reeves, 18 Vols. (Dublin: Hodges, Smith, and Co, 1847-64).

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Catholic scholars were also motivated by religion, aiming to counter-act Protestant claims to the ownership of the early Irish church. The Galway priest John Lynch (1599-1677) published *Cambrensis eversus* in 1662 to argue for the “antiquity and continuity of the Catholic faith.”¹⁸⁴ As the title suggests, Lynch’s aim in publishing this work was to discredit Giraldus’s arguments, particularly regarding those about the ignorance of Irish Catholics of elements of their faith.¹⁸⁵ Prior to Lynch, the Jesuit Stephen White (1575-1646) had attempted to defend Irish civility with his 1610 publication, *Apologia pro Hibernia*,¹⁸⁶ as did Geoffrey Keating, who is discussed in greater depth below.¹⁸⁷ There were also many publications which dealt with Irish hagiography, for example, David Rothe’s *Brigida Thaumaturga* (1620) and Luke Wadding’s *Annals Minorum*, a history of the Franciscans, published in eight volumes between 1625 and 1634,¹⁸⁸ to mention just two works.¹⁸⁹ Bernadette Cunningham highlights that the hagiographical works produced by St Anthony’s College in Louvain under the editorship of John Colgan were “on a scale equivalent to the volumes being produced by the Bollandists at the same time.”¹⁹⁰ Colgan assumed the editorship after the death of Hugh Ward.¹⁹¹

It has been useful to give a brief outline of the types of materials covered by seventeenth-century Irish antiquarian study in order to discuss how the scholars themselves defined their works and how they produced them. Central to the works of both religious communities was the study of numerous primary sources in order to strengthen central arguments. Using Ussher as an example, both Alan Ford, and Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, have demonstrated the breadth of Ussher’s primary sources, which included Cummián’s treatise on Easter¹⁹² and manuscripts pertaining to Irish matters

¹⁸⁴ Ryan, ‘Reconstructing Irish Catholic History’, p. 194.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. 195.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 190-191.

¹⁸⁷ Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, pp. 114-115.

¹⁸⁸ Leersson, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, pp. 264-265.

¹⁸⁹ See Alan Ford, ‘Martyrdom, History and Memory in Early Modern Ireland’, in *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, ed., Ian McBride (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 43-66, for more on hagiographies and martyrologies.

¹⁹⁰ Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four*, p. 38. See *ibid* for more on the Bollandists and their influence on Irish hagiography.

¹⁹¹ Pádraig A. Breatnach, ‘An Irish Bollandus: Fr Hugh Ward and the Louvain Hagiographical Enterprise’, *Éigse XXXI* (1999), pp. 1-30; 19.

¹⁹² Ford, ‘Shaping History’.

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sourced in England.¹⁹³ The emphasis on presenting primary sources was to counteract works which were held to be based on opinion, for example, Giraldus's works, and instead to promote those works which purported to be based upon truths, no matter how, occasionally, inconvenient. This is discussed further below in a seventeenth-century context, and, as chapter three demonstrates, was central to antiquarian works in the nineteenth. The presentation of facts without forced opinions aided readers in forming their own conclusions, which, as Jason Harris demonstrates, some authors, such as Stephen White, explicitly stated as being the intended consequence of their works.¹⁹⁴ Keating was very explicit in what he aimed to do in his works and what he thought historical scholarship should be, and this will now be examined in depth.

Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* is one of the most celebrated works to emerge from the seventeenth century. In his extensive introduction, Keating stated his reasons for writing the work, mainly his dissatisfaction with previous histories of Ireland, especially those by the "New English". He also critically discussed these works, identifying what their antiquarian scholarship did not cover:

Saoilim gurab tré fhonómhad chuireas Hanmer Cath Fionntrágha síos ag fochuidmheadh go fallsa fá na seanchadhaibh, ionnus go gcuirfeadh i gcéill do'n léagthóir nach fuil tabhacht i seanchus Éireann acht mar chath Fionntrágha. Gidheadh, is follus nach fuil agus nach raibhe meas stáire fírinne ag na seanchadhaibh ar chath Fionntrágha, acht gurab dearbh leo gurab fínnseul filidheachta do cumadh mar chaitheamh

¹⁹³ Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, 'James Ussher and his Irish Manuscripts', *Studia Hibernica*, 33 (2004/2005), pp. 81-99; 82.

¹⁹⁴ Jason Harris, 'A Case Study in Rhetorical Composition: Stephen White's Two *Apologiae* for Ireland', *Making Ireland Roman*, pp. 126-153; 129. White writes: "Tu vero, humanissime lector, si vis et vacat haec nostra legere, rogatum volo, ut neque mihi dicenti, neque Gyraldo contradicenti assensum accomodes; sed si placet, meis probationibus (quando videris esse plenas ac probas) et vestris oculis fidem habeas. (White, *Apologia pro Ibernica*, ed. Matthew Kelly (Dublin: John O'Daly, 1849), pp. 77-78). Harris translates this as: "Truly, most cultivated reader, if you wish and have leisure to read these our writings, I wish to ask you to give your assent neither to me pronouncing nor to Giraldus contradicting; rather, if you please, place your trust in my proofs (when you find them full and sound) and in the evidence of your own eyes."

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aimsire é. An freagradh ceudna do-bheirim ar gach sceul eile d'á gcuireann síos ar an bh-Féinn.

I think that it is mockingly Hanmer inserts the battle of Ventry, deceitfully ridiculing the antiquaries, so that he might give the reader to understand that there is no validity in the history of Ireland, but like the battle of Ventry. However, it is clear that the 'shanachies' do not, and did not, regard the battle of Ventry as a true history, but they are assured that it is a poetical romance, which was invented as a pastime. The same answer I give to every other story he recounts concerning the Fianna.¹⁹⁵

Keating here has opened up an academic discourse between the two groups working in antiquarianism in seventeenth-century Ireland. In *Foras Feasa*, he describes the qualities needed to make a *staraighe*, which he paraphrases from Polydore Vergil's text of 1499, *De inventoribus rerum*. The first rule is that the historian should not write any falsehoods and the second is that the historian should not fail to include everything that is true in order to avoid hostility in his writing.¹⁹⁶ He used the terms *seanchaidhe* and *staraighe* interchangeably throughout *Foras Feasa*. Keating frequently made reference to the three groups of people which made up his contemporary Ireland: the Gaoidhil, the Sean-Ghail [‘Old English’], and the Nua-Ghail [‘New English’].

Keating saw his work as a study which would open further discourse and which would also be mirrored by antiquarian works in later centuries:

Saoilim nach fuil léagthóir comhthrom soshásuighthe lé' mbeanann fromhadh do dhéanamh ar sheanchus Éireann, acht neach bhus riarach ó n-a ndubhramar i san díonbhrollach so: agus dá dteagmhadh nach lór leis gach sásadh d'á dtugaim uaim, is tar mo dhícheall-sa do rachadh. Uime sin, gabhaim cead aige, agus gabhadh agam, má thárla dham dul do'n tslighe i n-aoinnídh d'á n-abraim i san leabhar so, óir má atá aoinnídh inbhéime ann, ní ó mhailís acht ó aineolas atá.

¹⁹⁵ Geoffrey Keating, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*. Irish version and translation taken from David Comyn, *Foras Feasa Ar Éirinn le Seathrún Ceitinn*, Vol. I (London: Irish Texts Society, 1902), pp. 51-52.

¹⁹⁶ Keating, *Foras Feasa*, p. 54; Sarah Connell, “No Room In History”: *Genre and Identity in British and Irish National Histories, 1541-1691*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Northeastern University, 2014, p. 61; Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, pp. 98-99.

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I think that there is not a reader, impartial and open to conviction, whom it concerns to make a scrutiny into the antiquity of Ireland, but such as will be pleased with what we have said in this introduction: and if it should happen that he deems insufficient every explanation which I have given, it is beyond my ability he should go. Wherefore, I take leave of him, and let him excuse me, if it happen to me to go out of the way in anything I may say in this book, for if there be anything blameworthy in it, it is not from malice it is there, but from want of knowledge.¹⁹⁷

Keating's motivation to engage with antiquarianism, then, emerged out of a desire to vindicate Gaelic civility and particularly in the cause of the Counter-Reformation.

Protestant writers' interpretation of "antiquarianism" is also interesting and revealing. Ussher wrote in the 'reader's notes' at the beginning of *A Discourse on the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish* that "my intention herein [is] to deal fairly, and not to desire the concealing of any thing, that may tend to the true discovery of the state of former times; whether it may seem to make for me, or against me."¹⁹⁸ Much like Keating, Ussher saw antiquarianism as an academic discipline, stating that:

although my principal intention in this discourse, was to produce such evidences as might show the argument that was between our ancestors and us in matter of religion, and to leave the instances which might be alleged for the contrary to them, unto whom the maintaining of that part did properly belong: yet I have upon occasion touched upon that part also, and brought to light some things, which I met withal in such hidden antiquities, as in all likelihood would not have come unto their notice, without my discovery.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Keating, *Foras Feasa in Comyn, Foras Feasa*, pp. 94-95.

¹⁹⁸ James Ussher, *A Discourse on the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British* (London: John Jones, 1687/1815), p. lxxv.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. lxxiv.

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It is clear that the antiquarians of the seventeenth century, both Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Irish, saw their role as investigating the past in order to support their respective religious claims. In the case of Ussher, this included an attempt to show that the early Irish church had a proto-Protestant character. In the case of Keating, he sought to counter claims made by English and New English scholars. Such claims frequently alluded to Irish barbarity but Keating also used his works to defend Catholicism. In this period, Irish-language antiquarianism can be seen as an emerging discipline that developed from the Gaelic tradition of genealogies, hagiographies, and annal writing to encompass historiography.

Moving to the eighteenth century, it is in this period that writers, both Catholic and Protestant, who followed in this tradition purported to be interested in historical research for the sake of historical research and also for their own personal interest. Their point in carrying out this work, according to them was to record the past for posterity; to investigate literary history, in which they had an interest; and to examine the older forms of the Irish language, because, at the end of the century, historical comparative linguistics was just beginning to emerge as a discipline. Of course, not everyone adhered to this and some, including Charles Vallancey and Thomas Leland, proved that they had quasi-political agendas; to prove respectively the civility or the barbarity of the ancient Irish.

Like Momigliano, in her discussion of eighteenth-century Irish antiquarianism, Ann de Valera, sees no great difference between the terms “antiquarian” and “historian”.²⁰⁰ She suggests, however, that a historian was sometimes concerned with one historical event or point in time, whereas antiquarians “collected” as many facts about a people as they could in order to analyse them. This agrees with O’Halloran’s view that antiquarians were greatly concerned with collection. The introduction to the first volume of the journal *Archaeologia* in 1770 stated that:

The arrangement and proper use of fact is history; not a mere narrative taken up at random, and embellished with poetic diction, but a regular

²⁰⁰ Ann de Valera, *Antiquarian and Historical Investigations in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, p.1.

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and elaborate inquiry into every ancient record and proof that can elucidate or establish them... The most indistinct collection has this merit, that it supplies materials for those who have sagacity or leisure to extract, from the common mass, whatever may answer useful purposes. Here begins the province of the antiquary, who will never be deemed an unserviceable member of the community, whilst curiosity, or the love of truth subsists....²⁰¹

It is clear that antiquarians saw themselves as collectors and as elucidators of the past. Antiquarian activity in the following century echoes this. In this period, great emphasis was placed on the collection and translation of manuscripts, folklore, songs, and religious texts in order to better “understand” and “explain” the Gaelic Irish population to an English, or at least English-speaking, readership. As stated before, antiquarianism was largely concerned with antiquities, but not exclusively so, and more often than not, contemporary studies were drawn upon in antiquarian works. Another eighteenth-century author states that:

The antiquary will so describe the community, whose acts are the subject of history, in the site and circumstances of the country which it inhabits, in its mode of possessing, and in its manner of living on it; he will give a detail of its wants, and of its resources, both in nature and art, he will describe the component and acting parts, so mark its organization, its vegetative and animal procreation, its growth, its utmost defects, its diseases, and all the accidents which give occasion to the working of its natural or violent decrease; that every spring of movement, every accident, act, and operation, the cause and the reason, the end and effect of all, will be equally known to the reader, as though he was living amidst them under their influence.²⁰²

²⁰¹ *Archaeologia*, Vol. 1 (London 1770) Introduction cited in de Valera, *Antiquarian and Historical Investigations in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 2.

²⁰² Thomas Pownall, *A Treatise on the Study of Antiquities as a Commentary to Historical Learning* (London, 1782) cited in de Valera, *Antiquarian and Historical Investigations in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 3.

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Pownall goes on to state that:

Without this knowledge we may read history, but it will be the story of a creature little known to us. We have all read the Persian, Aegyptian, Grecian, and Roman history; but will the best versed in these matters satisfy himself that he has any such habile idea either of these people and their system, as above required? Will he when I ask for information be able to tell precisely what was the state, what the supply and consumption of this state, while their labour was confined solely, or principally, to the earth? Why such and such possessions of lands, waters and things became necessary to them? How they occupied and maintained them? How the interior springs and exterior moments arose and acted under these circumstances....²⁰³

De Valera points out that the above definitions (one from *Archaeologia* and one from Pownall) are both from English sources where it may have been more important to list the extra meanings that antiquarian had over historian.²⁰⁴ In an Irish context, the definitions of antiquarianism that are given by the Irish antiquarians themselves in their works also reflect the multi-faceted nature of the discipline. In the ‘Preface’ to *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, Charles Vallancey (1731-1812) defines antiquarianism as being the study of “the language, laws, religion and customs of the people [of a nation], compared with those of other nations.”²⁰⁵ He also defines Irish antiquarianism as consisting of material subjects relating to Ireland²⁰⁶ and this focus on material remains is also shared by the modern scholar Rosemary Sweet, who places this focus in an eighteenth-century British context.²⁰⁷ For Thomas Leland (1722-1785), antiquarian study involved the consultation of written records.²⁰⁸ For Catholic antiquarians like Charles O’Conor (1710-1791),²⁰⁹ it was much in the same vein

²⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 3.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 3.

²⁰⁵ Charles Vallancey, *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, num. XIII, Vol. IV, p. iv.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. xii.

²⁰⁷ Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquaries*, pp. xv-xvi; 1-2.

²⁰⁸ Thomas Leland, *The History of Ireland from the Invasion of Henry II with a Preliminary Discourse on the Antient State of that Kingdom* (London: Nourse; Longman and Robinson, 1773) p. vi.

²⁰⁹ For more on O’Conor, see Luke Gibbons and Kieran O’Conor, eds., *Charles O’Conor of Ballinagare, 1710-1791: Life and Works* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2015) and Diarmaid Ó Catháin,

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as it was for Leland – written records dealing with “antient language and literature.”²¹⁰

As we shall see, modern scholarship seems to always refer to all antiquarian works in the nineteenth century as “antiquarian”, yet not all of those engaged in antiquarian activities are referred to as antiquarians. It seems to be that the Protestant Anglo-Irish writers are referred to as antiquarian, whereas the Catholic Gaelic Irish writers, such as O’Donovan and O’Curry, are referred to as scholars.²¹¹ Critics have not satisfactorily addressed the reason for this distinction, but one possibility is that scholars have been divided according to what aspects of antiquarianism they were involved in. The Protestant scholars of the nineteenth century were mainly involved in archaeological investigations as well as folklore collection, and when they were involved in literary projects it was chiefly as supervisors and co-authors. On the other hand, the Catholics were engaged almost exclusively in literary enterprises and it is perhaps for this reason that the distinction emerges. Such ‘literary enterprises’ include the copying of manuscripts and the editing and publication of texts. The antiquarians themselves saw no distinction and referred to themselves, almost exclusively, as antiquarians. Even those who have been dubbed scholars by later critics, referred to the antiquarians who had gone before them as “scholars”, even when the person to whom O’Donovan is referring is Vallancey.²¹² It could also be that people viewed Catholic antiquarians as continuing the Catholic scholastic tradition, which had begun in the Middle Ages and was still extant in the seventeenth-century as places such as Louvain. The Irish had been well-represented in Catholic scholarship, which continued despite the Reformation.²¹³

‘Charles O’Conor of Belanagare: Antiquary and Irish Scholar’, *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 119 (1989), pp. 136-163.

²¹⁰ Charles O’Conor, *Dissertations on the history of Ireland: To which is subjoined, a dissertation on the Irish colonies established in Britain. With some remarks on Mr. MacPherson's translation of Fingal and Temora* (Dublin: G Faulkner, 1766), p. iv.

²¹¹ See the respective *Dictionary of Irish Biography* entries and section 1.4.2 of this thesis.

²¹² See, for example, John O’Donovan’s letter JOD A 5, UCD Special Collections. See p. 27 of this thesis for a full discussion of the distinction between ‘antiquarian’ and ‘scholar’.

²¹³ For more on Catholic Irish scholasticism, see Ruairi Ó hUiginn, ‘Scholars, Schools and Scholasticism: Aspects of the Irish Language and Medieval Learning’ in *The Irish Contribution to European Scholastic Thought*, eds., James McEvoy and Michael Dunne (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), pp. 127-136; and Liam Chambers, ‘Irish Catholics and Aristotelian Scholastic Philosophy in Early Modern France, c.1600-c.1750’ in *eadem*, pp. 212-230.

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An attempt has been made above to define antiquarianism, but looking at the types of antiquarian works produced in the seventeenth century, both printed and in manuscripts, helps to further refine this definition.²¹⁴ As already mentioned in reference to Keating and Ussher, there was a religious element, which inspired the seventeenth-century antiquarians to engage with their subject. After the Protestant scholars had become engaged with antiquarianism, some Catholic writers, such as Geoffrey Keating, adopted politico-religious agendas in their works. Many wrote pieces which had counter-Reformation aims or sought to make the Catholic narrative dominant in the field of Irish historical writing.²¹⁵ One author who wrote histories as Catholic propaganda is Philip O'Sullivan Beare (c.1590-1636), a writer of Catholic histories of Ireland and a life of St. Patrick.²¹⁶ As Clare Carroll highlights, he drew heavily on Spanish Counter-Reformation historiography, particularly in *Historiae Catholicae Ibernicae Compendium* (Lisbon, 1621).²¹⁷

For the Protestants, it was mainly an attempt to legitimise the Church of Ireland by proving that the early Irish church had little in common with the contemporary Church of Rome. Alan Ford argues that, along with other Protestant and Catholic scholars, such as Ware and John Colgan (c.1592-

²¹⁴ Russell K. Alspach gives a good introduction to historical writing from the sixteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century in *Irish Poetry from the English Invasion to 1798* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1943), pp. 59-122, as does James F. Kenney in *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical. An Introduction and Guide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929, reprint Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1968), pp. 37-61. More recent publications covering historical writing in this period include Andrew Hadfield's chapter 'Historical Writing, 1550-1660', pp. 250-263 and Bernadette Cunningham's chapter 'Historical Writing, 1660-1750', pp. 264-281, both in *The Irish Book in English, 1550-1800*, eds., Raymond Gillespie and Andrew Hadfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and Alan Harrison, chapter 2 'Gaelic Dublin in the Eighteenth Century' *The Dean's Friend: Anthony Raymond 1675-1726, Jonathan Swift and the Irish Language* (Dublin: De Búrca, 1999), particularly, pp. 54-57.

²¹⁵ For example, Keating's aim with *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* to counter-attack pro-English descriptions of Ireland, cited in Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, p. 275 and Connell, *No Room In History*, p. 30; p. 60; For Keating's Counter-Reformation aims, see Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, p. 31.

²¹⁶ See Hiram Morgan, 'Making Ireland Spanish': the Political Writings of Philip O'Sullivan Beare in *Making Ireland Roman*, pp. 86-108.

²¹⁷ Clare Carroll, 'Irish and Spanish Cultural Relations in the Work of O'Sullivan Beare' in *Political Ideology in Ireland, 1541-1641*, ed., Hiram Morgan (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), pp. 229-253, cited in Morgan, 'Making Ireland Spanish', p. 86.

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1658),²¹⁸ James Ussher contributed greatly to the study of the early Irish church and of St Patrick. However, he used his 1623 publication, *A Discourse on the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British*, to construct a legitimate parentage for the Church of Ireland, aiming to prove that it was “the heir of a largely Protestant Celtic Christianity.”²¹⁹ Ford attributes this desire to Ussher’s firm Calvinism. His beliefs were hostile to both Catholicism and the alleged abandonment of the doctrine of predestination by a supposed ‘Arminian’ party within the Church of England. As a firm Calvinist, he devoted much of his scholarly energies seeking to refute Catholic doctrine in great detail.²²⁰ Ussher became the Archbishop of Armagh in 1625 and was a nephew of Richard Stanihurst, mentioned above.

Some key themes in seventeenth-century Irish antiquarian works included genealogy, archaeology, the origins of the Irish, the refutation of previous English and New English writers, such as Hanmer and Camden, linking the Irish to barbarism, and the compilation of historical documents, to which annals are attached. However, religion was the subject that dominated antiquarian writing in this period. This included the promotion of Protestantism as being the historical church of Ireland and, in opposition to this, a number of hagiographies and other historical writings with a strong Counter-Reformation message were published. As mentioned above, Ussher, Keating, and O’Sullivan Beare were the most prominent writers examining religion in Ireland. Keating also examined the origin myths of the Irish in *Foras Feasa*, which drew heavily on the late-medieval pseudo-history, *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*.²²¹ Roderick O’Flaherty argued for Phoenician origins for the Irish in his 1685 publication, *Ogygia seu rerum Hibernicarum chronologia*.²²² James Ware was very much interested in physical remains in Ireland, particularly round towers, and wrote about them in his 1654 publication, *De Hibernia et Antiquitatibus eius, Disquisitiones*.²²³

²¹⁸ See Bernadette Cunningham, ‘John Colgan as Historian’ in *Irish Europe, 1600-1650: Writing and Learning*, eds., Raymond Gillespie and Ruairí Ó hUiginn (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013), pp. 121-134, for more on Colgan.

²¹⁹ Alan Ford, ‘James Ussher’ in *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, p. 606.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, pp. 65-67. For more on LGÉ, see John Carey, ‘Lebor Gabála and the Legendary History of Ireland’ in *Medieval Celtic Literature and Society*, ed., Helen Fulton (Dublin: Four Courts, 2005).

²²² Kenney, *Sources*, p. 46.

²²³ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, pp. 41-44.

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As Alan Harrison and John Waddell have pointed out, historical writers in the seventeenth century were greatly influenced by a new, more scientific approach to historiography, which sought to collect facts and to question the validity of primary sources.²²⁴ Though most works are admittedly more or less partisan, the influence of this new style of scholarship can be seen. Many scholars were active in collecting source-materials for their works, and, in the process, forming scholarly networks, which meant that there were more people involved in the empirical testing of source materials.²²⁵ Many Irish scholars, such as Ware, Narcissus Marsh, and the Molyneux family, were also influenced by British and continental scholars, such as Edward Lhwyd²²⁶ and the Danish antiquary Olaus Wormius,²²⁷ which resulted in different styles of historiography being adopted from the Gaelic historical tradition.

By ridiculing their beliefs and traditions, some British scholars, such as Hanmer, intended to refute previous Irish chroniclers.²²⁸ Keating draws attention to this when he states his reasons for writing *Foras Feasa* as being to remedy the inaccuracies propagated by English writers, such as Giraldus Cambrensis, Meredith Hanmer, Edmund Spenser, and even Richard Stanihurst.²²⁹ The Protestant writers may have had Hanmer's agenda of ridiculing the mixing of mythology with historical writing in Irish-language publications in mind, yet they were not outwardly sectarian in their antiquarian works (their religious works aside). They were certainly not opposed to working with Catholics when it suited their needs and purposes. Both Ussher and Ware received help from Catholic scholars; Ware from Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh

²²⁴ Harrison, *The Dean's Friend*, pp. 55-57; Waddell, pp. 41.

²²⁵ Elizabethanne Boran discusses Ussher's scholarly networks around his manuscript collection in 'Ussher and the Collection of Manuscripts in Early Modern Europe', *Making Ireland Latin*, pp. 176-194; Mark Empey focuses on Ware's networks in 'Select Documents: Sir James Ware's Bibliographic Lists', *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxix, no. 153 (May 2014), pp. 112-125; and Harrison highlights the influence of the Franciscans at Louvain on what he calls a "more systematic historiography." *The Dean's Friend*, p. 54.

²²⁶ Harrison, *The Dean's Friend*, p. 56

²²⁷ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 41

²²⁸ See, for example, Keating's claim that Hanmer inserted the Battle of Ventry into his work in order to belittle Irish historical scholarship by providing "evidence" that is was based on myths. See p. 36 of this thesis.

²²⁹ Bernadette Cunningham, 'Geoffrey Keating' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a4417>. Keating dismissed the other authors in the introduction to *Foras Feasa*.

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(c.1600-1671) as an amanuensis in the late 1660s,²³⁰ and Ussher indirectly from Micheál Ó Cléirigh (c.1590-1643), and directly from the fellow Franciscan, Father Brendan O Connor.²³¹ Whilst Ussher was more interested in creating a story using early medieval Irish history to fulfil his need for evidence to promote the antiquity of the Anglican Church in Ireland, and thus, its links to the Apostles and the ‘true’ faith,²³² his works still can be called antiquarian. As a scholar who combined history with theology and memory, Raymond Gillespie suggests that Ussher could be compared with Keating, whose work was similarly compiled.²³³ Ware seems to have had more of an interest in historiography, but one can argue that there was an agenda in his works. O’Halloran posits that “in his researches, Ware put himself at the meeting point of native and colonist viewpoints, though understandably his sympathies lay more with the latter.”²³⁴ He wrote histories of the archbishops of Tuam and Cashel and of the Cistercian order in Ireland, *Vitae archiepiscoporum Cassiensiensium et Tuamensium duobus expressae commentariolis. Quibus adjicitur historia coenobiorum Cisterciensium Hiberniae* (1636), but is more widely known for his *De Hibernia et Antiquitatibus eius Disquisitiones* (1654). One of the main themes of the latter book was the origin myths of Ireland – a topic which would feature again in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century antiquarian writings, and which is described more fully in the following paragraph. As some of the annals treated of the origin of the Gaeil, this, therefore, became a topic for study. *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, which listed all of the invasions Ireland supposedly underwent in prehistoric times, should also be included as a source for the origin myths.

²³⁰ William O’Sullivan, ‘Sir James Ware’ in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8928>.

²³¹ John McCafferty, ‘James Ussher’ in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8774>; Aubrey Gwynn, S. J., ‘Archbishop Ussher and Father Brendan O Connor’ in *Father Luke Wadding: Commemorative Volume*, ed. The Franciscan Fathers (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds Ltd, 1957), pp. 263-283.

²³² John McCafferty, ‘Ussher, James’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8774>.

²³³ Raymond Gillespie, ‘Reframing the Reformation: a review article of James Ussher: Theology, History and Politics in Early Modern Ireland and England by Alan Ford; James Ussher and John Bramhall: The Theology and Politics of two Irish Ecclesiastics of the Seventeenth Century by Jack Cunningham; The Reconstruction of the Church of Ireland: Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian reforms by John McCafferty’, *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 144 (November 2009), pp. 598-603; p. 601.

²³⁴ O’Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, p. 19.

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Ussher and Ware were the main Protestant antiquarians in the seventeenth century, though Richard Cox (1650-1733) also published a work on the history of Ireland, *Hibernia Anglicana*, which argued that the tradition of historical writing in Ireland was non-existent, and that his work filled a large void.²³⁵ By ‘non-existent’, Cox dismissed the medieval chronicle tradition, as well as the works of more recent scholars, citing Keating as an example, as they were written in Irish and, therefore, unintelligible to him. As Sarah Connell points out, by making this claim, Cox was following a strategy used by previous writers to dismiss previous scholarship, thus highlighting the importance of the writer’s own work.²³⁶ *Hibernia Anglicana* was used as support for the re-conquest of Ireland²³⁷ by Cox’s fellow exiles in England, who, like Cox, had fled the appointment of Tyrconnell, a Catholic, as lord deputy in 1688. Cox considered the reconquest of Ireland as a salvation of the Protestant cause.²³⁸ Christopher St Lawrence, the Seventh Baron of Howth, and his compilation of historical writings about this period also were used to argue for a re-conquest of Ireland, though, unlike Cox’s work, it focused on Irish history since the Anglo-Norman Invasion. The so-called *Book of Howth*, as Valerie McGowan-Doyle claims, was utilised by Hanmer, Campion, Ware, and Cox.²³⁹

Aside from Keating, numerous other authors were interested in the origin of the Gaelic Irish. Many works by Catholic writers trace the history of Ireland from the earliest days when it was settled by the first immigrants down to a certain point in the country’s history, usually around the time the author was writing. Those antiquarians interested in the origin myths appear to have been influenced by Keating and *Foras Feasa* in particular. Clare O’Halloran claims that it was Keating who was most responsible for bringing the origin legends of

²³⁵ See Bernadette Cunningham. ‘Seventeenth-century Constructions of the Historical Kingdom of Ireland’ in *Constructing the Past*, pp. 9-26; 11-16, for more on Irish historical writing in this period.

²³⁶ Connell, *No Room in History*, p. 9. Connell gives the example of John Bale’s (1495–1563) dedication to Edward VI from the 1549 *The laboryouse iourney [and] serche of Iohan Leylande, for Englandes antiquitees* begins by asserting that:

“Amonge all the nacions in whome I haue wandered, for the knoweledge of thynges (moste benygne soueraygne) I haue founde none so negligent and vntoward, as I haue found England in the due serch of theyr aunicyent hystoryes, to the syngulare fame and bewtye therof.”

²³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 8.

²³⁸ Ian Montgomery, ‘Richard Cox’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a2128>.

²³⁹ Valerie McGowan-Doyle, *The Book of Howth: The Elizabethan Re-conquest of Ireland and the Old English* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2011), pp. 119-120.

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the Gaelic Irish into “common currency,”²⁴⁰ i.e. through the translations mentioned below, it was made accessible to more people. She notes that, although his history was not published in the original until the twentieth century, it was widely circulated in manuscript.²⁴¹ Aside from in Irish, an English translation was available, as well as a translation into Latin by John Lynch for circulation in the continent.²⁴² O’Halloran suggests that Keating’s departure from the traditional annalistic structure, used previously in hagiography, resulted in *Foras Feasa* having a greater and more immediate impact than the work of the Four Masters. Keating, instead, produced a readable narrative on Ireland up to the twelfth century, using the list of kings of Ireland found in manuscripts such as the Book of Leinster and weaving in historical poems and semi-historical tracts. O’Halloran also attributes the popularity of the text to Keating’s choice of an accessible and modern style of language, whereas Mícheál Ó Cléirigh had retained the archaic and highly stylised Irish of the bardic schools.²⁴³

Roderick O’Flaherty or Ruaidhrí Ó Flaithbheartaigh (1629-1716)²⁴⁴ was another scholar who wrote about the origin myths of Ireland. In his work *Ogygia: seu, rerum Hibernicarum chronologia* (published in 1684), like *Lebor Gabhála*, but with rather more precise ‘dating’, Ó Flaithbheartaigh traced the arrival of the first inhabitant of Ireland back to “Partholan, in Co. Kerry on Wed. 14 May, 312 years after the flood and 1,969 years after the creation.”²⁴⁵ Aside from this piece of pseudo-history, Morley describes the historical aspects of the book as being based on some impressive sources, such as the *Annals of Tigernach*, *Chronicon Scotorum*, *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, *Book of Leinster*,

²⁴⁰ Dermot O’Connor published an English translation of *Foras Feasa* in 1722.

²⁴¹ See Vincent Morley, ‘The Popular Influence of *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century’, in *Irish and English*, pp. 96-115 and in an expanded version in Vincent Morley, *Ó Chéitinn go Raiftearaí: Mar a Cumadh Stair na hÉireann* (Baile Átha Cliath: Coiscéim, 2011). See also the final chapter of Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*.

²⁴² Ryan, ‘Reconstructing Irish History’, p. 194.

²⁴³ O’Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, p.17. Information about circulation of *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* from Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, pp. 173-200. Information about *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* taken from Brian Ó Cuív, ‘The Irish Language in the Early Modern Period’ in *New History of Ireland: Early Modern Ireland, 1534-1691*, Vol. III, eds., T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin and F. J. Byrne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 509-545; 531.

²⁴⁴ For a fuller account of Ó Flaithbheartaigh’s life and works, see the introduction to *Roderick O’Flaherty’s Letters to William Molyneux, Edward Lhwyd, and Samuel Molyneux, 1696-1709*, ed., Richard Sharpe (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2014).

²⁴⁵ Cited in Vincent Morley, ‘Roderick O’Flaherty’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a6754>.

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Book of Uí Maine, *Book of Lecan*, and *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann*, and displaying a sound knowledge of European history.²⁴⁶

The Franciscan laybrother Micheál Ó Cléirigh was another prominent writer who had a massive impact on later nineteenth-century antiquarians, especially because of his work *The Martyrology of Donegal*, and, along with Fearfeasa Ó Maolchonaire, Cú Choigríche Ó Cléirigh, Cú Choigríche Ó Duibhgeannáin, and two other assistants, the work *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann*.²⁴⁷ Ó Cléirigh had been sent to Ireland from St. Anthony's College, Louvain, in 1626 to gather hagiographical materials.²⁴⁸ *Lebor Gabála* was among the works that he and his helpers made corrected copies of, as he believed that the text was “the original fountain of the history of the saints and Kings of Erin, of her nobles and her people.”²⁴⁹ Once their recension was complete, he and his associates began their most famous project, *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann*, commonly known as ‘The Annals of the Four Masters’, which used materials from existing compilations (including their *Lebor Gabála*), as well as recording events down to 1616.²⁵⁰ Bernadette Cunningham refers to *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann* as comprising “many of the essential elements of the Irish *seanchas* tradition.”²⁵¹

It seems that Ó Cléirigh had similar aims to another prominent seventeenth-century antiquarian, the Galway scholar and secular priest, John Lynch (c.1599-1677). These aims were to refute the erroneous descriptions and portrayals of the Gaelic Irish as barbarous and to show them as learned and cultured people with a past of which to be proud. Giraldus Cambrensis's (c.1146-c.1223) *Topographia Hiberniae* was an infamous example of this sort of work, and, as such, it was perhaps inevitable that one writer would engage with and seek to refute that tract. Lynch's book *Cambrensis Eversus* was:

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁷ For a more in-depth study on the so-called ‘Four Masters’ and their compilation of *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann*, see Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four Masters*.

²⁴⁸ For a more in-depth study of Louvain and Irish texts, see Mary Ann Lyons, ‘St Anthony's College, Louvain: Gaelic Texts and Articulating Irish Identity, 1607-1640’ in *Irish Europe*, pp. 21-43.

²⁴⁹ Micheál Ó Cléirigh, ‘Address to the Reader’ in his version of the *Leabhar Gabhála*, quoted in Brendan Jennings, *Michael O Cleirigh: Chief of the Four Masters and his Associates* (Dublin and Cork: 1936), pp. 119-21, cited in O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, p. 16.

²⁵⁰ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, p. 16.

Information about composition of *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann* taken from Bernadette Cunningham, ‘The Culture and Ideology of the Irish Franciscan Historians at Louvain, 1607-1650’ in *Ideology and the Historians*, ed., Ciarán Brady (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1991), pp. 11-30; n. 23, p. 24.

²⁵¹ Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four Masters*, p. 302.

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a defence of Irish history and culture, and attempts to provide a corrective to centuries of hostile descriptions of the Irish, drawing on a wide range of sources in various languages, including *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* ('Compendium of the History of Ireland') by Geoffrey Keating, which Lynch translated or had translated into Latin.²⁵²

This work, like many of the nineteenth-century antiquarian works, treated of the topographical and anthropological aspects of Ireland and the Irish people themselves. Of course, Lynch saw the Protestant settlers as foreigners residing in his country and, therefore, not part of Ireland. In this period it was not problematic, as the New English primarily saw themselves as settlers. It is at the end of the next century that problems arose with definitions of Irishness. It should be noted that Lynch was also aware that the Old English part of the population – to which he himself belonged – was descended from immigrants to Ireland, but he drew attention to the fact that the *Gaeil* had themselves come into Ireland from Spain, so both sections of the population were descended from migrants, the only difference being the number of hundreds of years since each migration occurred.²⁵³

The last significant author of seventeenth-century antiquarianism to be mentioned here is Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh. Mac Fhirbhisigh differs from the others in that he does not have an obvious political agenda in his works – except, perhaps, for the Introduction to his Great Book of Genealogies, (*Leabhar Genealach*)²⁵⁴ in which he is at pains to point out that the Gaelic genealogies are trustworthy in tracing ancestry back to Adam, that later genealogies were reliably preserved, and so on.²⁵⁵ Dubhaltach was descended from hereditary historians, among whom were a number of genealogists, and this may be one of the main reasons why he engaged in antiquarian pursuits.

²⁵² Éamon Ó Ciosáin, 'John Lynch' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a4945>.

²⁵³ Personal correspondence with Nollaig Ó Muraíle, 09/04/2016.

²⁵⁴ This was edited and translated in V Vols. by Nollaig Ó Muraíle (Dublin: De Búrca, 2003)

²⁵⁵ See Nollaig Ó Muraíle, *The Celebrated Antiquary Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh (c. 1600-1671): His Lineage, Life and Learning* (Maynooth: An Sagart, 2002), 169-70.

2.3 Eighteenth-Century Antiquarianism

In a reversal of the situation with seventeenth-century antiquarianism, its eighteenth-century counterpart was heavily represented by Protestant scholars. Many commentators, amongst them Joep Leerssen, have commented on this, pointing out that it may have been necessary to prevent native learning from dying out completely in the wake of the collapse of the Gaelic order. Leerssen claims that the “heritage of the Gaelic cultural tradition was passed on through increasingly non-traditional or even non-Gaelic channels,” and gives examples of works being printed by scholarly societies and employment provided by Anglo-Irish men of letters.²⁵⁶ The same author refers to the Gaelic Ireland of the eighteenth century as the ‘Hidden Ireland’ – a term first used by Daniel Corkery in his celebrated book *The Hidden Ireland* (Dublin, 1924). As will be demonstrated below, however, eighteenth-century Dublin, in particular, was celebrated for its vibrant scribal and literary community, working in the Irish language.²⁵⁷ Lesa Ní Mhunghaile notes that interaction between the Catholic and Protestant communities was greater than Daniel Corkery posited in *Hidden Ireland*, and that a small number of Gaelic scribes and scholars were involved in printing and publishing as well, both in Irish and English. It would appear that the limitation of Gaelic Ireland to the private sphere was not as Leerssen posited in *Hidden Ireland, Public Sphere*.²⁵⁸ As the century progressed, more Catholic scholars began engaging with antiquarianism for various reasons, yet a great deal of output came from their Protestant counterparts. Catholic scholars in the eighteenth century included Charles O’Conor (1710-1791) and Sylvester O’Halloran (1728-1807), while Charles Vallancey (1725?-1812), Edward Ledwich (1737?-1823), Joseph Cooper Walker (1762-1810), and Walter Harris (1686-1761) were among the foremost Protestant antiquarians.

Starting at the beginning of the century and focusing on the collection of historical material, Ann De Valera argues for three periods of antiquarian

²⁵⁶ Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, p. 315.

²⁵⁷ See n. 303 on p. 63 of this thesis.

²⁵⁸ Ní Mhunghaile, ‘Bilingualism, Print Culture in Irish and the Public Sphere’, pp. 218-223. Joep Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland, Public Sphere* (Galway: Centre for Irish Studies, 2002), p. 31.

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output in the eighteenth century. According to her, the second period was from 1738 to 1760 and consisted of document-based research, mainly focused around the antiquarians Charles O’Conor of Belanagare and Walter Harris²⁵⁹ and it also saw the creation of one of the first antiquarian societies in Ireland, the Physico-Historical Society (more on this below). The third period was from circa 1760 until the end of the century and it is in this period that one can see great similarities with the antiquarianism of the nineteenth century.²⁶⁰ This is best evidenced in the use of native sources and native help, for example, Charles Vallancey’s collaboration with Charles O’Conor or Joseph Cooper Walker and Charlotte Brooke engaging the services of Theophilus O’Flanagan (1762-1814).²⁶¹

Similar to the previous century, among the most prevalent topics in antiquarian research were origin myths of the Gaelic people and the purported history of Ireland since the first settlers arrived here. On the side of the Catholic scholars, there were some, such as Charles O’Conor, who were involved in collecting and transcribing/translating manuscripts. Protestant scholars were also engaged in historiographical projects and the collection of older literature, as for example, Charlotte Brooke (1750-1760 - 1793),²⁶² who collected songs and poems for her collection, *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, and who also engaged with origin myths.²⁶³ The majority of scholars, however, were occupied with origin myths, particularly in regard to the origins of the Irish language. The question of origins was particularly pertinent for Protestants in the late eighteenth century, as it was indicative of the importance of ancestry and identity for them. By searching for the origins of those inhabiting Ireland, Protestants could link themselves to Ireland through their scholarship. This was

²⁵⁹ For more on Walter Harris, see Diarmaid Ó Catháin, ‘Walter Harris and *The whole works of Sir James Ware*’, in *Pathfinders to the Past: The Antiquarian Road to Irish Historical Writing, 1640-1960*, eds., Próinséas Ní Chatháin and Siobhán Fitzpatrick (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), pp. 14-29, and Eoin Magennis, ‘A “Beleagured Protestant?”: Walter Harris and the Writing of “Fiction Unmasked” in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *Eighteenth-century Ireland/Iris an dá Chultúr*, Vol. 13 (1998), pp. 86-111.

²⁶⁰ de Valera, *Antiquarian and Historical Investigations in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 9-10; see also Ní Mhunghaile, ‘Anglo-Irish Antiquarianism’, p. 182.

²⁶¹ Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, p. 70.

²⁶² There are discrepancies between Brooke’s biographers regarding the year of her birth, which has been placed between 1740 and 1760. See Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, ed., *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2009), p. xxiii.

²⁶³ Charlotte Brooke, *Reliques of Irish Poetry*, p. 27.

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helped by the differing theories, which held that the Irish came from the east – either the lands of the Goths or further east in Armenia or Scythia.²⁶⁴ It was hoped by some Catholic scholars, such as Charles O’Conor, that this interest would help to defend the status of Gaelic tradition against Enlightenment scepticism and the direct challenge of James MacPherson, whose *Ossian* poems led to a romanticisation of the Celt.²⁶⁵ The Enlightenment scholar John Pinkerton was particularly noted for ridiculing the Irish origin myths contained in *Lebor Gabhála* and *Foras Feasa*. The Protestant contributions to the origins debate only reflected their own specific cultural and political needs and, ultimately, proved counter-productive in defending tradition.²⁶⁶ This can be seen particularly in the way that Vallancey’s unsatisfactory scholarship left him open to ridicule, which meant that the Scandian and Gothic origins proposed by his opponents (Ledwich and Beauford) seemed more realistic.²⁶⁷

Aside from the antiquity of Ireland, other key themes in eighteenth-century antiquarian research included the development of the Church of Ireland and the Irish Rebellion of 1641.²⁶⁸ The 1641 insurrection marked what Cunningham terms “the beginning of an increasingly partisan approach to Irish history.”²⁶⁹ Cunningham points out that it became a regular feature in Protestant histories of Ireland and was frequently invoked to emphasise the untrustworthiness of Catholics.²⁷⁰ Catholic scholars used 1641 and the atrocities

²⁶⁴ Vallancey, *A Vindication of the Ancient History of Ireland* (Dublin: Luke White, 1786), pp. i, vii-xii. See also, Maxim Fomin, ‘Armenia in Ireland: Indo-European Cognates, Medieval Legends and Pseudo-Historical Accounts’ in *Ireland and Armenia: Studies in Language, History and Narrative*, eds., Maxim Fomin et al (Washington D. C.: Institute for the Study of Man, 2012), pp. 85-112; 85-106; and Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2004), p. 93. Lennon points out that in 1887, Canon Ulick Bourke repeated the Scythian and Armenian origin of the Irish in *Pre-Christian Ireland*. (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1887), p. 1 (Lennon, p. 93).

²⁶⁵ Fergus O’Ferrall, ‘Scholar and Gentleman’, *Dublin Review of Books*, Issue 69 (July 2015), <http://www.dr.b.ie/essays/scholar-and-gentleman> (accessed 12 March 2017). See also Luke Gibbons and Kieran O’Conor, ‘introduction’, pp. 19-27; 25-26; Olga Tsapina, “‘Daring to Remember What They Have Dared to Forget’: Dr Charles O’Conor’s *Memoirs of the Life and Writing of Charles O’Conor of Belanagare (1796)*”, pp. 133-164; 157; and Mícheál Mac Craith, ‘Charles O’Conor of Ballinagare and the Ossian Controversy’, pp. 165-185; 169; all in *Charles O’Conor of Belanagare*, eds., Luke Gibbons and Kieran O’Conor (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2015)

²⁶⁶ O’Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, pp. 41-57.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 57.

²⁶⁸ Cunningham, ‘Historical Writing, 1660-1750’, pp. 268-271. For greater discussion of the 1641 rebellion itself, see Mícheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer, eds., *Ireland: 1641. Contexts and Reactions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), particularly, Aidan Clarke, ‘The “1641 massacres”’, pp. 37-51.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 267-268.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 268.

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inflicted upon their community, particularly the incident at Islandmagee, as a counter-narrative to the official Protestant-sanctioned account.²⁷¹ As Walter Love notes, the reference to two rival origins of the Irish (Scandian and Phoenician) frequently led to a clash between Protestant and Catholic.²⁷² John Gibney expands upon this and states that when the ancient past could be turned into a sectarian debate, then it was almost inevitable that more recent history would also be.²⁷³ As Clare O'Halloran points out, such debates were sharpened throughout the century by the inclusion of "wars and rebellions" of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Naturally, 1641 was included in this narrative.²⁷⁴ Writings about 1641 featured less prominently in historical writings in the nineteenth century, though it was very briefly mentioned in James Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*.²⁷⁵ 1641 also appeared in the writings of Daniel O'Connell, Charles Gavan Duffy, and works of fiction,²⁷⁶ most notably Thomas Moore's *Memoirs of Captain Rock*.²⁷⁷ Official collectors from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland were frequently reliant on oral information out in the field and 1641 was mentioned in sources. The tragedy at Islandmagee was duly discussed in the memoir for Antrim,²⁷⁸ which gives a 'traditional account' of the Slaughterford Bridge incident.²⁷⁹ It is the only massacre which is the subject of a general query²⁸⁰ - the others are only mentioned if the subject arises during the Survey. There is no account of the massacre in the Ordnance Survey letters as there are no such letters for County Antrim. The tragedy of Portadown is not mentioned in either the memoirs or in the letters. The tragedy of Newry is the subject of a

²⁷¹ John Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year: The 1641 Rebellion in Irish History and Memory* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), pp. 81-82.

²⁷² Walter D. Love, 'The Hibernian Antiquarian Society: A Forgotten Predecessor to the Royal Irish Academy', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 51, No. 203 (Autumn, 1962), pp. 419-431; 424.

²⁷³ Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year*, p. 82.

²⁷⁴ Clare O'Halloran, 'Historical Writings, 1690-1890', in *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature*, eds. Margaret Kelleher and Philip O'Leary, 2 Volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1; pp. 599-632; 599, cited in Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year*, p. 82.

²⁷⁵ James Hardiman, *Irish Minstrelsy or the Bardic Remains of Ireland* (London: Joseph Robbins, 1831), p. xxx.

²⁷⁶ Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year*, pp. 105-114

²⁷⁷ Thomas Moore, *Memoirs of Captain Rock: The Celebrated Irish Chieftain with some Account of his Ancestors* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1824, third edition 1824), pp. 80-94.

²⁷⁸ Gibney, *The Shadow of a Year*, pp. 107-108; *Ordnance Survey Memoirs: Antrim*, pp. 65-66.

²⁷⁹ Angélique Day and Patrick McWilliams, eds., *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland: Parishes of County Antrim III; 1833, 1835, 1839-1840 – Larne and Island Magee* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies in association with the Royal Irish Academy, 1991), pp. 65-66.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 104.

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paragraph in the memoirs for County Down,²⁸¹ but is not mentioned in the letters. Lisburn is, however, as O'Donovan consulted an account of the burning of the town in the Parish register.²⁸² A local account was also the reason why the tragedy at Dungiven was mentioned in the memoir for County Londonderry,²⁸³ though there is also a mention of 1641 in a section on local traditions.²⁸⁴

The religion of the ancient Irish was also a matter for argument in eighteenth-century historical writing. St Patrick was a popular, but contentious figure in Irish historical writing, who was used by Protestant writers to argue against the relaxation of the penal laws and to charge some with popery.²⁸⁵ This made some Catholic writers wary of emphasising Patrick's Catholicity and led some, including Charles O'Connor, to emphasise Ireland's pagan past.²⁸⁶ This would be a prominent theme in the nineteenth century.²⁸⁷ Writings describing the archaeology of Ireland were also a theme, with Walter Harris and Charles Smith producing a survey of the antiquities and history of County Down in 1744,²⁸⁸ while Vallancey and Ledwich were involved in the examination of Irish antiquities.²⁸⁹

As mentioned above, though purportedly investigating the past out of historical interest, Protestant scholars frequently had their own agendas when publishing their findings. This is clearly seen in the example of Ledwich's attempts to portray Ireland as a barbaric, primitive society through the publication of his *Antiquities of Ireland* (1790; 2nd ed. 1804) and Vallancey's attempts to show how educated the ancient Irish were, now that the Protestant

²⁸¹ Angélique Day and Patrick McWilliams, eds., *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland: Parishes of County Down I; 1834-6 – South Down* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies in association with the Royal Irish Academy, 1990), p. 65.

²⁸² Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom dated 22nd March 1834 in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Down*, ed., Rev. Michael O'Flanagan (Bray, 1928).

²⁸³ Angélique Day and Patrick McWilliams, eds., *Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland: Parishes of County Londonderry IV; 1824,1833-35 – Roe Valley Upper – Dungiven* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies in association with the Royal Irish Academy, 1992), p. 34.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 59.

²⁸⁵ Clare O'Halloran, "'The Island of Saints and Scholars': Views of the Early Church and Sectarian Politics in Late-Eighteenth Century Ireland', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an Dá Chultúr*, Vol. 5 (1990), pp. 7-20; 12.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 13.

²⁸⁷ See chapter two of this thesis.

²⁸⁸ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 57.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 82-83.

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ascendancy had begun to identify as Irish.²⁹⁰ It is in the eighteenth century that we find one of the few antiquarians to come from neither the Catholic nor Church of Ireland communities, the Presbyterian William Crawford of Strabane (c.1740-1800). Norman Vance describes Crawford's antiquarian works, particularly his 1783 *History of Ireland*, as being more closely related to the Swiftian patriotic ideal, that is, ideas of improvement which would benefit the public.²⁹¹ There are also close affinities with "gentlemanly Catholic antiquarianism" as practised by O'Connor and Sylvester O'Halloran (1728-1807).²⁹² The involvement of Catholic scholars also had political undertones, as they used Ireland's past to campaign for greater rights for Catholic subjects.²⁹³

One could perhaps attribute the upsurge in the publication of materials relating to Irish history from de Valera's 'third period' to the creation of more learned societies. The motivations for engagement with antiquarianism also changed in this period. The Church of Ireland had been well established in Ireland as the state religion and Protestant scholars saw little reason to try to prove its historical authenticity; hence they sought new antiquarian projects, particularly those which linked themselves not to religion but to the land. There had been a change in the attitude of the descendants of the *Nua-Ghaill*, who were neither Irish (in the sense of Gaelic) nor English. According to Clare O'Halloran, being Anglo-Irish meant that they could "claim the rights both of loyal English subjects (on the basis of their Protestantism and their role in guarding the Protestant, English interest in an unruly country)" while simultaneously claiming the rights of "citizens of the Kingdom of Ireland, whose interests are at variance with those of Britain in matters of trade and industry."²⁹⁴ Towards the end of the eighteenth century, this attitude changed, with Ascendancy members emphasising more the Irish part of their dual title of

²⁹⁰ For more on this, see Ní Mhughhaile 'Anglo-Irish Antiquarianism', pp. 184-7.

²⁹¹ See Joep Leerssen, 'Anglo-Irish Patriotism and Its European Context: Notes towards a Reassessment', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an Dá Chultúr*, 3 (1988), pp. 7-24. For more on antiquarianism as improvement, see Toby Barnard, *Improving Ireland? Projectors, prophets and profiteers, 1641-1786* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), pp. 89-119.

²⁹² Norman Vance, 'Volunteer Thought: William Crawford of Strabane' in *Political Discourse in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, eds., D. George Boyce, Robert Eccleshall and Vincent Geoghegan (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 257-269.

²⁹³ Claire Lyons, *Sylvester O'Halloran's General History (1778): Irish Historiography and the Late Eighteenth-Century British Empire*, unpublished PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2011, p. 2.

²⁹⁴ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, p. 296.

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‘Anglo-Irish’, and perhaps now, in light of what they felt was an almost shared heritage, they felt an exploration into that past was warranted. As Leerssen explains, Ireland had always been seen as a Gaelic country with a Gaelic past. This meant that English-derived culture in Ireland was a matter of “cultural adulteration”. In the late-eighteenth century, Gaelic cultural affiliation was central to the national identity amongst the Anglo-Irish.²⁹⁵ This is seen in some miscellanies of translations from Irish language primary source material, in which Protestant scholars have used terms such as “my country.”²⁹⁶ A shared interest in origin myths and the history of Ireland since its legendary settlement by the Milesians (and their predecessors, followers of Parthalón, Clanna Neimhidh, Fir Bholg, and Tuatha Dé Danaan) is quite understandable in the light of the above statement.

Whilst Catholic antiquarians mainly occupied themselves with writing histories, for example, Sylvester O’Halloran’s *An introduction to the Study of the Antiquities of Ireland, Ierne Defended*, and *A General History of Ireland* and O’Conor’s *Dissertations on the Antient History of Ireland*, Protestant scholars concerned themselves more with the origins of the Irish language, along with archaeology. Charles Vallancey (1731-1812) also edited and published a Journal, *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, which furnished a platform for his own unorthodox, even eccentric, views on the subject.²⁹⁷ Historical linguistics was in its infancy in the eighteenth century and it was not until 1786 that Sir William Jones suggested a methodology:

The Sanscrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek; more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a

²⁹⁵ Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, p. 376.

²⁹⁶ See, for example, Charlotte Brooke’s use of the term in the introduction to *Relics of Irish Poetry*, op. cit. (p. vii) and Joseph Cooper Walker’s use of ‘my countrymen’ in the introduction to *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (Dublin: Luke White, 1786), p. v. For more on Cooper Walker, see Lesa Ní Mhunchaile, *Ré Órga nan Gael* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar Tta, 2013); *idem* ‘Joseph Cooper Walker’s Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards (1786): Significance and Impact’, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, 23 (2003), pp. 232-248; *idem* ‘Joseph Cooper walker, James MacPherson agus Melchiorre Cesarotti’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Irish an Dá Chultúr*, vol. 17 (2002), pp. 79-98, and *idem* *Joseph Cooper Walker (1761-1810): Beatha agus Saothar ‘Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards’*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2001.

²⁹⁷ The first edition was published in 1774, though the title-page erroneously states 1770. (Personal correspondence with Nollaig Ó Muraíle, 09/04/2016).

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stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothick and the Celtick, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanscrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family.²⁹⁸

Most of the works of Vallancey and Ledwich, who were the main antiquarians involved in the origins of the Irish language debate, predate Jones's advice on how to study philology. As neither of them was a particularly gifted linguist, the result of their investigations was the emergence of various suggestions for the origin of Irish, from Algonquin, Sanskrit, and Arabic²⁹⁹ to Scandinavian origins.³⁰⁰ One possible reason for the interest in Irish was the status awarded to the language after scholars such as Edward Lhuyd had begun researching it, making it worthy of study.³⁰¹ For more practical reasons, a knowledge of Irish helped to unlock sources which had hitherto been inaccessible.³⁰² The antiquarians were looking at the historical past of the language, yet in the next century, Irish itself had become an antiquarian topic, as events during the nineteenth century seemed to help Irish on its way to its grave. This view was even shared by native speakers, such as John O'Donovan.

When looking at eighteenth-century Irish antiquarianism, one factor which frequently appears is the use of learned societies for conducting and disseminating research. Although collaborations between Gaelic Irish and Protestant scholars had been taking place since the seventeenth century, it was the eighteenth century which firmly established the notion of the learned society as a suitable medium for antiquarian investigation and this continued throughout the nineteenth century with the founding of many more antiquarian and

²⁹⁸ Sir William Jones, Speech to Asiatick Society in *The Works of Sir William Jones*, ed. A[nna]. M[arie]. J[ones] (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1799), pp. 19-34; 26.

²⁹⁹ Neal Garnham, Entry on "Charles Vallancey" in *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, p. 608.

³⁰⁰ Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, p. 348.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 291-293.

³⁰² Personal correspondence with Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, 27/02/2017.

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archaeological societies. As Alan Harrison remarks, in the eighteenth century, the societies were based in Dublin for good reason: it was the epicentre. The first reason he gives is that Dublin was home to a great many libraries and repositories of manuscripts. The second is that, as the capital city, Dublin was home to a great number of Irish scholars from all over the country. Scholars from the various provinces could meet and exchange manuscripts and ideas with each other. They could also have a chance to see the great medieval compendia and add them to their own repertoire.³⁰³ Harrison highlights the existence of a community of Irish scribes in Dublin in the early eighteenth century.³⁰⁴ The Dublin Philosophical Society had been established in 1683 by William Molyneux and had history and antiquarianism among its core subjects.³⁰⁵ Molyneux was an acquaintance and correspondent of Roderick O'Flaherty.³⁰⁶ The first learned society founded in the eighteenth-century was formed by a group of gentlemen, headed by Lord Southwell, who came together in 1744 to form *The Physico-Historical Society*, with the intention of saving and preserving manuscripts and other paraphernalia relating to Ireland.³⁰⁷ It ran until 1752.³⁰⁸ This was followed by the antiquarian 'Select Committee' of the Dublin Society (later the Royal Dublin Society), 1772-74.³⁰⁹ We know from correspondence between Charles Vallancey and Charles O'Connor that Vallancey had been instrumental in the formation of the Dublin Society,³¹⁰ and this is confirmed by Thomas Leland in his own letter to O'Connor.³¹¹ Along with the Irish scholar and Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, John Carpenter, O'Connor was invited to become an honorary member, eventually getting elected to the Select Committee.³¹² This point was highlighted by Fr. Charles O'Connor, S.J.,

³⁰³ Harrison, *The Dean's Friend*, pp. 23-24.

³⁰⁴ See Harrison, *The Dean's Friend*, pp. 24-66.

³⁰⁵ William Wilde, 'Memoir of the Dublin Philosophical Society of 1683', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 3 (1844 - 1847), pp. 160- 176. See also, K. Theodore Hoppen, ed., *Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society, 1683-1708*, 2 volumes (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2008).

³⁰⁶ See n. 244 above for more on their correspondence.

³⁰⁷ Charles O'Connor, S.J., 'Origins of the Royal Irish Academy', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 38, No. 151 (Sept., 1949), pp. 325-337; 326. See also, Eoin Magennis, "'A Land of Milk and Honey": The Physico-Historical Society, Improvement and the Surveys of Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, Vol. 102C, No. 6 (2002), pp. 199-217; 199-200.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ Love, 'The Hibernian Antiquarian Society', p. 419.

³¹⁰ RIA., MS. B. 1. 2, cited in O'Connor, S. J., p. 330.

³¹¹ RIA., MS. B. 1. 2, cited in O'Connor, S. J., p. 331.

³¹² O'Connor, 'Origins of the Royal Irish Academy', p. 332.

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who points out, “that the Committee should so rise above the religious prejudices of the time as to include two Catholics amongst its members, one of whom was the Archbishop of Dublin, is a mark of the single-minded zeal by which they were animated.”³¹³

Interest in the Committee gradually waned, however, and by 1774, it had more or less ceased functioning. This did not, however, signify that interest in Irish antiquities had also decreased. Vallancey wrote to O’Conor in February 1779 informing him that Colonel Burton [later William Conyngham] was “extremely desirous of reviving our former little Society of Antiquaries.”³¹⁴ Out of this wish for a society to continue, the Hibernian Antiquarian Society emerged in 1779. Its members included Vallancey, Edward Ledwich (1738-1823), O’Conor, Burton, the Reverend Mervyn Archdall, author of *Monasticon Hibernicum*, Dr. Thomas Ellis, and William Beauford, a friend of Ledwich’s.³¹⁵ The names Vallancey and Ledwich are well known to scholars of eighteenth-century Irish historiography for many reasons; amongst these is their debate over the origins of the Irish people. Vallancey argued for a Phoenician origin; Ledwich for a Scandian. This of course led to arguments amongst the remaining members, who sided with either Vallancey or Ledwich³¹⁶ and eventually, in 1783, the Society was dissolved.³¹⁷ The failure of two learned societies, in which he had been involved did not seem to discourage Vallancey from being one of the founding members of another one, the Royal Irish Academy. Although this society was founded in the eighteenth century (1785), its importance for antiquarian scholars in the nineteenth century means that it will be discussed in the next chapter.³¹⁸

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ RIA., MS. B. 1. 2, cited in O’Conor, S. J., p. 333.

³¹⁵ Love, ‘The Hibernian Antiquarian Society’, p. 421.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 423-29.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 429.

³¹⁸ This view is also shared by the editor, James H. Murphy, of *The Irish Book in English, 1800-1891*, Vol. IV, who includes in this volume the chapter ‘The Royal Irish Academy and Antiquarianism’ by Elizabeth Tilley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 463-476.

Conclusion

This chapter examined how Irish antiquarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries defined antiquarianism. The preceding chapter (introduction to the thesis) outlined how contemporary scholars have defined what constitutes antiquarian study and this chapter aimed to build upon this by examining the various accounts given in the antiquarian works published during this period. As has been argued, both in the introduction and in this chapter, antiquarianism is a multi-faceted discipline. Though it can also involve more contemporaneous matters as well, it remains largely based around historical study. This chapter has also demonstrated that some texts such as *Foras Feasa* not only had an impact and an audience in the period that they were written, but they would continue to influence scholarship over the next two centuries. The same can also be said for certain topics of research. The question of what motivates a person to engage with antiquarian scholarship has proven to be fascinating in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the seventeenth, antiquarian research partially consisted of a battle of religious confessions; Protestants tried to prove the legitimacy of theirs by proving that the early Irish church was Protestant in nature, sometimes using the figure of St. Patrick to demonstrate this. Catholics tried to assert their right to autonomy by providing lists of kings and origin myths, showing how the kingdom of Ireland had existed long before the English invasion. They also claimed to show an unbroken line of succession from St. Patrick, highlighting the Catholicity of Ireland. Of course, not all antiquarians were drawn into the religious debates; *seanchas* had been around for far longer than the differing confessions had. In the eighteenth century, as has been demonstrated, Catholic scholars such as Sylvester O'Halloran and Charles O'Connor had attempted to use their research into Irish history to invite support for Catholic emancipation and the repeal of the Penal Laws which excluded them from official positions. The two antiquarians also had the "defence of Irish civility"³¹⁹ in mind when writing their works. For Protestant antiquarians, the research into the past was a way for them to find a link to Ireland. As several scholars, among them Leerssen, have claimed, the

³¹⁹ Lyons, *Sylvester O'Halloran*, p. 2.

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Anglo-Irish had no fixed sense of identity, feeling themselves to be neither English nor Irish, as Irish was equated with Gaeldom. Choosing to identify as Irish, there was a need to understand this Gaelic past in order to feel a stronger sense of belonging.

In order to better understand nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism, it is important to gain as clear an understanding as possible of the history of antiquarianism in Ireland and the motivations for engaging with it. Clare O'Halloran and Lesa Ní Mhunghaile have examined the differences between Catholic and Protestant antiquarian cultures in the eighteenth century. Scholars such as Brendan Bradshaw, Raymond Gillespie, and Bernadette Cunningham, have also focused on this dichotomy in the seventeenth century by examining the Counter-Reformation texts written by Irish scholars, particularly those emerging from Louvain.³²⁰ Understanding this history makes analysis of the differences between Catholic and Protestant antiquarian cultures much easier and, by examining motivations for engagement with antiquarianism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it gives historical precedent for the motivations in the nineteenth century. This also means that these differing motivations can be compared and contrasted. The following chapter looks at the differences between Catholic and Protestant scholars in the nineteenth century, focusing on the various learned societies in which research was carried out and what debates there were between scholars of the two confessions. It will also examine whether these debates were caused by religious differences or if the arguments were due to differences in scholarship.

³²⁰ See, for example, Brendan Bradshaw, 'The English Reformation and Identity Formation in Ireland and Wales', in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, eds., Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 43-111, particularly, pp. 102-103; Cunningham, *The Annals of the Four Masters*, p. 23; pp. 27-28; and Raymond Gillespie, 'The Irish Franciscans, 1600-1700' in *The Irish Franciscans, 1534-1990*, eds., Edel Bhreathnach, Joseph Mac Mahon OFM and John McCafferty (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), pp. 45-76; particularly p. 58.

Chapter Two: Interactions between Antiquarians

This chapter examines the interactions between Protestant and Catholic antiquarians in the period 1830 to 1876.³²¹ The chapter will also examine the contact between Irish antiquarians and those abroad, attempting to determine whether Protestant or Catholic writers had the greater impact outside of Ireland, as reflected in the familiarity of foreign scholars with their works. The focus of this chapter is not to trace the development of Irish antiquarianism in the nineteenth century, which has already been done by Joep Leerssen in *Remembrance and Imagination* and Damien Murray in *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies, 1840-80*. It is, rather, to highlight the differences in antiquarian cultures between Protestant and Catholic scholars, a topic which was not looked at in this depth by either of these scholars.

Previous scholarship by critics such as Leerssen has divided antiquarians during this period according to ethnicity, labelling scholars either Gaelic Irish or Anglo-Irish. While this approach is clear, this thesis has chosen to separate scholars into different religious confessions. This has added a new dimension to previous scholarship, taking into account scholars such as Dennis Henry Kelly and Owen Connellan, who were Gaelic Irish, but converts to Protestantism in the case of the latter and from a family who had converted, in the case of the former. Using the previous framework, these scholars would have been included with their fellow Gaelic Irish contemporaries, John O'Donovan and Eugene O'Curry, but this would not have taken any notice of the influence their religion had upon them and their work. As chapter one has demonstrated, a person's religion was exceptionally important in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century antiquarian circles, frequently indicating what a person would study and whose work they would support. This chapter and chapter three will demonstrate that religion was just as divisive in antiquarianism in the period 1830 to 1876, as it had been previously. This makes the separation of scholars into their respective religious communities desirable for the purpose of this study. Other recent scholarship has either focused on one antiquarian in

³²¹ See Appendix A for biographies of the antiquarians mentioned in this chapter.

particular,³²² or has focused on one aspect of antiquarian culture.³²³ This chapter will give a broader overview of the interactions between antiquarians in nineteenth-century Ireland to fully examine the differences between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures and will particularly focus on debates between antiquarians, highlighting reasons for any animosity that arose. It will begin by reviewing antiquarian societies, focusing on what type of society members of the respective confessions were more likely to join.

3.1 Antiquarian Societies

Some antiquarian research in the eighteenth century had been conducted under the patronage of learned societies, such as the Dublin Philosophical Society and the Royal Irish Academy.³²⁴ Although few in number, they had provided a space for like-minded scholars to meet and they also provided an audience for research to be presented, mainly through presentations to fellow members and also in the journals published by the societies. This was apparently of great benefit to general scholarship and to the scholars themselves; in the introduction to his index of learned societies operational in the British Isles in the nineteenth century, the Rev. A. Hume stated that “[learned societies] are of great importance to their own members,”³²⁵ claiming that they offered “the companionship with men of similar tastes and habits, and perhaps of the same general pursuits.”³²⁶ Hume also praised societies for their libraries, which gave members the opportunity to consult rare books related to their field of inquiry, and the exchanging of transactions between the various societies, further disseminating research.³²⁷ Some Irish societies in the eighteenth century had

³²² For example, Patricia Boyne, *John O'Donovan (1806-1861): A Biography* (Kilkenny: Boethius, 1987); Elizabeth Boyle and Paul Russell, eds., *The Tripartite Life of Whitley Stokes (1830–1909)* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011); and Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Whitley Stokes (1830–1909): The Lost Celtic Notebooks Rediscovered* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011).

³²³ For example, Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*.

³²⁴ See chapter two for more on this.

³²⁵ Reverend A. Hume, *The Learned Societies and Printing Clubs of the United Kingdom: Being an account of their respective origin, history, objects, and constitution: with full details respecting membership, fees, their published Works and Transactions, Notices of their Periods and Places of Meeting, &c.* (London: Spottiswood and Shaw, 1847/1853), p. 12.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

admitted Catholic members, but they remained largely Protestant in nature. In the nineteenth century, this changed and both the number of antiquarian societies and their Catholic membership increased. This section gives a brief history of the various societies in operation during the nineteenth century before addressing how antiquarians from both religious communities interacted within the learned societies.

The Royal Irish Academy had been founded in 1785 and although it had admitted the Catholic scholars Sylvester O'Halloran and Charles O'Connor as members by 1788, it remained a largely Protestant society. Membership of the Royal Irish Academy was through nomination and election, which meant that membership was due to excellence in a chosen field rather than societal standing or the payment of membership fees. Eugene O'Curry was admitted as a member on the 13th June 1853 due to his "profound erudition in Celtic language, literature and antiquities."³²⁸ John O'Donovan was admitted to membership of the Academy on the 11th January 1847 due to his *Grammar of the Irish Language* and his editorial work on "many archaeological tracts."³²⁹ O'Curry and O'Donovan were in a minority of Catholic Academy members, a situation which would remain throughout the nineteenth century. In volume two of *Tracts Relating to Ireland printed for the Irish Archaeological Society* (Dublin, 1843), James Hardiman is listed as being a member, having been elected to membership before O'Donovan and O'Curry.³³⁰

The Ibero-Celtic Society, founded 1818, was one of the first antiquarian societies to be established in the nineteenth century. There had been some societies formed before this date, such as Edward O'Reilly's Ollamh Fodhlean Society (no dates)³³¹ and the Gaelic Societies of Dublin (1808) and Cork (1818).³³² However none of these societies existed for very long and only

³²⁸ Royal Irish Academy, Certificate of Candidate. Digitised copy accessed through RIA Library manuscript catalogue on 06/05/2016).

³²⁹ *Ibid.*

³³⁰ There is currently no certificate for James Hardiman in the RIA's digital repository, most likely because it has not yet been digitised. Membership lists from the RIA's inception to the present day are yet to be released to the public.

³³¹ None of the works on late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century antiquarianism have provided dates for this society (O'Halloran, Leerssen, and Somerville-Woodward). None of O'Reilly's biographies (*DIB*, *ODNB*, and *Beathaisnéis*) have given dates either.

³³² Robert Somerville-Woodward, 'The Dublin Ossianic Society, 1853-63' in *The Remaking of Modern Ireland 1750-1950: Beckett Prize Essays in Irish History*, ed., Raymond Gillespie (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), pp. 138-163; 138.

the Dublin Gaelic Society and the Ibero-Celtic Society had produced a volume of transactions each.³³³ The Ibero-Celtic Society had been founded by Philip Barron and included George Petrie, Sir William Betham, James Hardiman, and Edward O'Reilly among its members.³³⁴ Like the Royal Irish Academy, members had to be proposed and elected to membership, but the Ibero-Celtic Society also charged subscription rates of a guinea on top of this.³³⁵ There was a gap of twenty two years between the founding of the Ibero-Celtic Society and the Irish Archaeological Society. During this period, Edward O'Reilly died (1830) and George Petrie was employed by the topographical section of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland. James Hardiman was employed in the Public Record Office between 1811 and 1830, though he published three books upon antiquarian matters between 1820 and 1830.

The Irish Archaeological Society began operating in 1840 and was established by Lord Dunraven, George Petrie, and James Henthorn Todd.³³⁶ Members also had to be elected to this society and pay a subscription of four pounds in their first year, which would drop to one pound per annum subsequently.³³⁷ The decision to charge subscription fees was made in order that the Society would not be financially reliant upon sales of their publications and, therefore, forced to compromise on the quality of their scholarship in order to make publications more aligned to "popular taste."³³⁸ The Society merged with the Celtic Society in 1854 due to financial difficulties.³³⁹

The Celtic Society was founded in 1845 by John O'Daly, who served as assistant secretary on the council. His fellow council members included William Wilde, Charles Gavan Duffy, John Mitchel, Samuel Ferguson, the Reverend William Reeves, the Reverend Charles Graves and James Hardiman.³⁴⁰ The

³³³ *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, Volume 1 (Dublin: 1808).

³³⁴ Edward O'Reilly, *Transactions of the Ibero-Celtic Society*, Volume 1, part 1 (Dublin: 1820).

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, n. 191, p. 297. Todd's entry in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* gives O'Donovan and O'Curry as founder members with him.

<http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8577>. This is echoed by Somerville-Woodward, 'The Dublin Ossianic Society', p. 138.

³³⁷ *Tracts Relating to Ireland printed for the Irish Archaeological Society*, Volume 1 (Dublin: 1841), p. 7.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³³⁹ Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*, p. 36. Leerssen claims it was in 1853, *Remembrance and Imagination*, n. 2, p. 273.

³⁴⁰ *Miscellany of the Celtic Society* (Dublin: 1849), ed., John O'Donovan.

merge with the Irish Archaeological Society led to disagreements between members, many of whom, such as John O'Daly, had joined the Celtic Society rather than the Archaeological Society due to the perceived elitism of the latter.³⁴¹ The Society released their last publication in 1880, indicating that it must have ceased operating around this time.³⁴² It had survived for 35 years, which was longer than many societies managed.

The Kilkenny Archaeological Society (1849) was the only antiquarian society which was not based in Dublin. One of its first secretaries was the Reverend James Graves and it included John O'Donovan and John Windele among its members. Transactions of the Society were published annually and O'Donovan contributed regularly to them. The Society never disbanded, but instead moved to Dublin in 1890 and became the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, which is still operational today.

The Ossianic Society was founded in 1853 in Dublin by John O'Daly. O'Daly had left the Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society due to what he considered its elitism, though O'Daly's personal enmity towards Eugene O'Curry could also have been a factor.³⁴³ The Ossianic Society was meant to rectify the errors prevalent in the Archaeological and Celtic Society, namely elitism and the lack of interest in Irish as a living language.³⁴⁴ David Greene states that "the Ossianic Society [...] represents a weakening of the aristocratic element and the emergence of men who had an interest in the living language."³⁴⁵ The Society only existed for nine years, but, according to Somerville-Woodward, its legacy far outlasted the years it was operational:

If the Ossianic Society had achieved anything it was to show that their literature, the stories of the Fianna both ancient and modern, had as much value as, for example, the Life of St. Columba or the Liber Hymnorum brought before the public by the Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society. The tales of the Fianna, like the Irish language itself, had

³⁴¹ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, pp. 138-139.

³⁴² Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Antiquarian Societies*, p. 135.

³⁴³ Somerville-Woodward, 'The Dublin Ossianic Society', pp. 142-143.

³⁴⁴ Somerville-Woodward, *The Language without a Mouth*, p. 146.

³⁴⁵ David Greene, 'The Founding of the Gaelic League', in *The Gaelic League Idea*, ed., S. Ó Tuama (Cork: The Mercier Press, 1972), pp. 9-19; 14.

evolved, and were evolving still, from benchmarks of illiteracy and ignorance, to badges of pride and patriotism. The tales of poverty had now, in the space of no more than thirty years, become the new tools of a new education. The Ossianic Society's part in this process was not inconsiderable.³⁴⁶

Though Catholic members of the Royal Irish Academy were still in a minority, compared to the Protestant members, in other societies there was an increase in Catholic members. The growing number of Catholic members led to greater interaction between the antiquarians from the two confessions, therefore, the learned societies made concerted efforts to ensure that any political or religious debates did not impact upon their work. Many societies attempted to enforce this by having a rule against any form of debate that was religious or political in nature. The Ibero-Celtic Society, for example, claimed that religious or political debates were “foreign to the objects of the institution” and were therefore not permitted at all.³⁴⁷ The Kilkenny Archaeological Society echoed this rule and its wording in the rules of their society, adding that these debates could “disturb the harmony which was essential to its [the Society’s] success.”³⁴⁸ It is not known whether these rules were broken, as the correspondence between antiquarians that was consulted makes no mention of any debates which were political or religious in nature. Robert Somerville-Woodward, however, claims that the rules had almost become a mantra with little thought given to its possible implications or with the idea of any adherence to it.³⁴⁹ John O’Donovan claimed that he had no idea that sectarianism could cause such problems until he was in the County of Down, stating “I had not the least idea that religion would cause such rancour between people until I came here [Belfast].”³⁵⁰ This suggests that O’Donovan had never encountered sectarianism in Dublin, though it could indicate that instances of it were less overt than in a place such as Belfast. As will be shown, debates did take place³⁵¹

³⁴⁶ Somerville-Woodward, ‘The Dublin Ossianic Society’, p. 158.

³⁴⁷ *Transactions of the Ibero-Celtic Society*, 1, ed. Edward O’Reilly (1820).

³⁴⁸ *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, vol. 1 (Dublin: 1849-1851), p. 4.

³⁴⁹ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, p. 138, n. 100.

³⁵⁰ Letter John O’Donovan to Thomas Larcom dated 15th March 1834 in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Down*.

³⁵¹ See below for further details.

but they were divided along geographical lines, with a group of antiquarians in Cork³⁵² and John O'Daly in Dublin, arguing with the Dublin-based antiquarians about whether certain artefacts from medieval Ireland were Pagan or Christian in nature. In its first report in 1850, members of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society congratulate themselves on achieving their goal of harmony among members:

All ranks, classes, and creeds will be found united as on common and neutral ground; harmony and good feeling have been the characteristics of its meetings, and the papers read on such occasions, the information elicited, and the objects of antiquity exhibited, appear to have excited an interest which has extended beyond the immediate locality of the Society.³⁵³

The harmony between Protestant and Catholic members of antiquarian societies was commented upon by Percy Ellen Frederick Smythe, Viscount Strangford, who stated that:

Yet the modern Hibernologists, if we may be such a word, stand not only foremost, but stand unapproached as a co-operative and working body of archaeologists among the antiquarian societies of the empire. It may be strange, but it is no less true, that they are equal to the best Germans in massiveness and depth of erudition, in width of view, and severity of criticism. This is true of Protestant and Catholic alike – and if there is one thing that gives more unmixed satisfaction and than the method and result of their work, it is the spectacle of Protestant and Catholic here labouring harmoniously together upon the common ground of their country's past. There is nothing like them in any other Celtic country,

³⁵² For a full account of antiquarian activity in Cork, see Joan Rockley, *Antiquarian Activity in Cork*, Unpublished MA Thesis, University College, Cork, 1995 and Joan Rockley, *Towards an Understanding of the Development of Antiquarian and Archaeological Thought and Practice in Cork up to 1870*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University College, Cork, 2000.

³⁵³ *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, vol. 1, p. 5.

and there is nothing like them in England, where there is no school, and where antiquarians work piecemeal and separately.³⁵⁴

Not all societies were as fortunate as the Kilkenny Archaeological Society and were able to report that there was harmony amongst their members. As was mentioned above,³⁵⁵ the Ossianic Society, as well as the Celtic Society, had been founded due to a dissatisfaction with the Irish Archaeological Society. O'Daly was one of the founding members of the Celtic Society because he disapproved of the elitism of the Archaeological Society. He particularly disagreed with the entrance costs of the latter³⁵⁶ and saw the Archaeological Society as a rival to the Celtic.³⁵⁷ Before the merging of the Archaeological and Celtic Societies in 1854, O'Daly had formed the Ossianic Society in 1853. This new society attracted many of the members of the Celtic Society and this sometimes caused tension between the two groups.³⁵⁸ These arguments were centred around Eugene O'Curry, John O'Daly, and Owen Connellan and appear to have been personal rather than political or sectarian.³⁵⁹ O'Daly and Connellan accused O'Curry of denying them access to manuscripts held in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, where he was librarian. Connellan reported one denial of access to O'Daly, who then began attacking O'Curry in his correspondence,

³⁵⁴ Letter from Viscount Strangford to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, dated January 1866, reprinted in *Original Letters and Papers of the Late Viscount Strangford upon Philological and Kindred Subjects*, ed., Viscountess Strangford (London: Trübner & Co., 1878), pp. 12-14, cited in Ó Cróinín, *Whitley Stokes*, p. 10.

³⁵⁵ See p. 71 of this thesis.

³⁵⁶ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, p. 138.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 135.

³⁵⁸ This section examines only correspondence when it concerns two or more antiquarians writing to a third party about a matter in which all are involved. This is to avoid citing correspondence which is only centred around disagreements of a personal nature. Occasionally, these letters refer to an antiquarian's scholarship, but the cause of the disagreement is personal. An example of this is O'Donovan's letters to Larcom during the course of the Ordnance Survey regarding Eugene O'Curry. O'Donovan frequently attacked O'Curry's scholarship and his suitability for the work, yet the frequency of these attacks and the length of them suggests that there was a disagreement of a more personal nature between the two. (Letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom dated 16th October 1834, *Ordnance Survey Letters: Fermanagh*, ed., Rev. Michael O'Flanagan (Bray: 1928) and letter John O'Donovan to Thomas Larcom dated 21st May 1835, *Ordnance Survey Letters: Armagh and Monaghan* ed., Rev. Michael Flanagan (Bray: 1927). It should be pointed out that these letters date from before O'Curry's appointment to the Topographical Section and that this appointment was recommended by O'Donovan. (Fergus Kelly, 'Eugene O'Curry', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20531>).

³⁵⁹ See below for further details.

referring to him as “the bear”.³⁶⁰ Connellan also complained of Clibborn, who controlled access to the library, and who accused Windele of having stolen one half of the *Book of Lismore*.³⁶¹ Connellan, therefore, tried to coincide his visits to the Academy Library with the absence or sickness of O’Curry.³⁶²

O’Daly did not believe that the two societies could exist harmoniously and was determined for his society to be victorious.³⁶³ The Ossianic Society would eventually fade out of existence and Somerville-Woodward attributes the Society’s failure to publish *Táin Bó Cuailgne* as one of the reasons why the Society disbanded. The Society made an announcement of its publication in 1856. However, six years later it still had not been printed. In order to preserve their reputation and lest it publish a manuscript which would not have stood up to scholarly criticism, the Society instead quietly disbanded.³⁶⁴

This was the second time that Owen Connellan had become involved in disputes which were enacted in correspondence. As noted above, in the 1830s and 1840s a series of arguments had taken place between scholars with regard to certain archaeological remains, namely round towers and ogham inscriptions. One side argued for a Christian origin, the other for a Pagan. In 1830 the Royal Irish Academy sought submissions for a prize on essay on the ‘Origins and Uses of the Round Towers’. George Petrie chose the topic and served as one of the adjudicators,³⁶⁵ which may have upset the other contestants who did not serve as judges.³⁶⁶ Despite the closing date for the competition being extended to June 1832, there were only three or, possibly, five entries.³⁶⁷ The two main contenders for the prize were George Petrie, who argued for a Christian and native origin, and Henry O’Brien, who argued for a Pagan and Oriental. Petrie was the winner of the competition and was awarded the gold medal. Despite the

³⁶⁰ John O’Daly to John Windele, 30th August 1855. RIA MS. 4. B. 15 [735-736]. See also Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, pp. 151-153.

³⁶¹ Letter Owen Connellan to John Windele, dated 23rd August 1853, Windele Collection, RIA 12/L/12/53.

³⁶² Letter Owen Connellan to John Windele, dated 20th October 1859, Windele Collection, RIA 12/L/11/10 (vi).

³⁶³ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, p. 153.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

³⁶⁵ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 92.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, p. 113 and Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 92.

high level of interest in his paper, it was not published until 1845.³⁶⁸ Petrie may have won the competition, but this did not mean that everybody accepted his views. The Cork-based antiquarian, John Windele, became a central figure in this debate about the origin of round towers and would also become heavily involved in the arguments on the dating of Ogham. Windele believed that the towers were Pagan and Phoenician in origin and based his arguments on the similarity between Irish round towers and some towers found on Sardinia, a former Phoenician colony in his opinion. He was himself to be advised by Sir William Betham, another ‘Paganist’, who at the time was collecting material for his *Etruria-Celtica* (1842). This publication argued that the Etruscans and Ibero-Celts were the same people and that they had both been Phoenician colonies.³⁶⁹ Windele was supported in his arguments for a Pagan origin by only two members of the Royal Irish Academy: Betham, and John D’Alton, who had also been an adjudicator for the competition.³⁷⁰ Robert Shipboy MacAdam of Belfast also supported Windele, though he acknowledged that Petrie deserved all praise and honour for his work.³⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, many of Petrie’s fellow members of the Academy, including John O’Donovan, James Henthorn Todd, William Reeves, and the Earl of Dunraven, supported his claim for a Christian origin and showed themselves willing to argue on his behalf with the largely Cork-based antiquarians. John O’Donovan claimed that “Doctor Petrie [...] will convert you from the errors of Paganism”³⁷² and William Reeves stated in a letter to Windele in 1857 that he was unable to agree with him about the round towers.³⁷³ The date of these letters, which is long after Petrie’s essay has been published imply that O’Donovan and Reeves felt that the ‘Paganists’ had not read Petrie carefully enough, as they believed that Petrie’s essay was conclusive.

The debate over the origins of Ogham was a long one which was also enacted out in correspondence between antiquarians. Again, Windele argued for a Pagan origin and was contradicted by George Petrie and Charles Graves, who argued for a Christian one. Petrie was originally supported by O’Donovan.

³⁶⁸ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 92.

³⁶⁹ William Betham, *Etruria-Celtica* (Dublin: 1842), title page.

³⁷⁰ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 93.

³⁷¹ Letter Robert MacAdam to John Windele, RIA MS 4 B 5, 119b.

³⁷² Letter John O’Donovan to John Windele, March 1850, RIA MS 4 B 9, 606-7.

³⁷³ Letter William Reeves to John Windele, RIA MS 4 B 17, 937.

However, by 1845, O'Donovan had begun to champion Windele's view, though he did not agree with Windele's claim that it originated in the East.³⁷⁴ In 1850, Windele published an article in the *Journal of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society* claiming that he would prove his view to be the correct one and that Graves was mistaken in his. Graves offered a reply the following year in the same journal arguing that Ogham was more recent than Windele believed and that it had been constructed by people familiar with the Roman and Runic alphabets.³⁷⁵ MacAdam had asked Windele to write an article on Ogham in 1852, but he later specified that Windele should only provide some examples of inscriptions, as he did not wish to repeat in the pages of the *Journal of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society* the argument previously conducted in the pages of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*.³⁷⁶ The debate gradually ceased to be an issue in antiquarian circles after that. Time had also played a part in cooling the tempers of those involved and in 1860, O'Donovan wrote to Windele to express his regrets about the "coolness between the antiquarians of Dublin and Cork."³⁷⁷ The arguments over access to manuscripts in the Academy Library was still a contentious issue and O'Donovan felt the need to highlight to Windele and the other Cork antiquarians that he was bound by the same rules regarding access to the manuscripts.³⁷⁸

Rather than political and religious debates, which were prohibited by the rules of most of the learned societies in the nineteenth century, it would appear that the most contentious issue for members was centred on the question of who was actually a scholar and who was merely interested in being a member. O'Daly, as we have seen, had left the Archaeological Society and formed the Celtic because he perceived the former to be a club for gentlemen who espoused opinions about Irish history and the Irish language which were not necessarily particularly learned. He felt that the Archaeological Society valued elitism and the high subscription fees this could attract more than it did actual scholarship. O'Daly could also perhaps see a different sense of elitism in the Royal Irish

³⁷⁴ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 103.

³⁷⁵ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 105.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁷ Letter John O'Donovan to John Windele, dated 18th August 1860, RIA Windele Collection, 4/B/20/83.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

Academy, feeling that Eugene O'Curry denied members of the Ossianic Society access to manuscripts as their level of scholarship did not match his own. The debates outlined above were likewise based on perceived levels of scholarship. The Dublin-based antiquarians saw themselves as basing their theories on rigorous scholarship and the evidence provided and believed that the Cork-based antiquarians, Windele and O'Daly in particular, seemed to steadfastly base their views on a desire to claim greater antiquity for Ogham and round towers than was correct. The so-called 'Paganists' no doubt believed that their views were the correct ones and that they had the requisite evidence for this, but this desire was more prominent in their scholarship than tangible evidence. As Murray has argued, many European Nationalists in the first half of the nineteenth century traced the beginnings of their nations' civilisation back to remote antiquity.³⁷⁹ By arguing for Pagan origins, as Vallancey had in the eighteenth century, O'Daly, Windele, et al were positing an advanced culture in Ireland before the coming of Christianity, the Danes and the Anglo-Normans.³⁸⁰ For Windele, this was important, as:

The respectability of any nation is best evinced by its holding title to a high and cloudy antiquity; the greater the difficulty of tracing its origin, the higher the honours, and that national family which can best evade the researches of the enquirer into origins, has surely the best claim on the reverence of mankind in general.³⁸¹

Owen Connellan expressed this view in a letter to Windele in 1845, stating:

I am happy to learn of your recent discoveries of Ogham inscriptions as there cannot be a stronger evidence of the existence of letters in this country before the introduction of Christianity in opposition to the opinions of the shallow writers who would make us believe that till then

³⁷⁹ Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*, p. 26.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ John Windele, 'The Origins of the O's and the Macs' in *Bolster's Quarterly Magazine*, No. 5, Vol. II, ed., John Windele (January 1827), pp. 1-13; 1.

we have been a race of unlettered barbarians, but such native proofs as you have brought to light are incontrovertible evidences.³⁸²

It is interesting to note that there did not seem to be a majority of one religion which supported one theory. As might be supposed, the Anglican clergymen supported Christian origins, but the real dividing factor was geography. With some exceptions, the Cork antiquarians argued for Pagan origins and the Dublin antiquarians for Christian. Even with more Catholics as members of learned societies in the nineteenth century than had been in the eighteenth, there still did not appear to have been much disagreement over contemporary issues between the two confessions. What disagreements there were appear to have been confined to the remote, pre-Christian past with no confession choosing a particular side. There was one exception to this, where the disagreement can be seen as being, at least partly, based upon religious issues, regarding the ownership of Gaelic Irish culture. Samuel Ferguson's review of James Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy* in the *Dublin University Magazine* (printed in four instalments between April and November 1834) can be viewed as a challenge to Hardiman's claim that Gaelic culture was exclusively Catholic. Much of Hardiman's preface to *Irish Minstrelsy or Bardic Remains of Ireland with English Poetical Translation* (1831) argued for a reconsideration of the portrayal of Irish people and the Irish language as rude, uneducated, and barbarous. He argued that:

The bards were 'mere Irish'. They thought and spoke and wrote in Irish. They were, invariably Catholics, patriots, and jacobites. Even their broad Celtic surnames they disdained to submit to the polish of Saxon refinement. Hence they have been erroneously considered, and by many educated of their country are still considered, as rude rural rhymsters, without any claim to either talents or learning.³⁸³

³⁸² Letter Owen Connellan to John Windele, November 1845, RIA MS 12 L, 52.

³⁸³ Hardiman, *Irish Minstrelsy*, Volume I, p. xxv.

Volume two, which Hardiman called ‘Jacobite Relics’, contained Hardiman’s more explicit plea for the liberation of his countrymen from tyranny. He highlighted in the introduction how the Irish have suffered under English rule, using even more explicit imagery than in the introduction to volume one:

The political situation of the Irish with respect to England, has been frequently compared with that of the Greeks in their relation to Turkey. Lord Byron emphatically called the Greeks ‘a kind of Eastern Irish Papists,’ thereby intending to convey in the strongest possible manner to an European mind, the idea of Turkish despotism and Grecian slavery. [...] Adrian, the Pope, ‘let slip the dogs of war,’ debilitentur delantur, weaken – exterminate, became, for centuries, the way cry of Ireland. From Henry the Second, to Henry the Eighth, the land was deluged with the blood of the natives. Elizabeth depopulated Munster. James the First depopulated Ulster. Cromwell cut off thousands of the Irish, and treated the survivors with more than Turkish cruelty. William dosed the sanguinary scene, and the genius of England, satiated with blood, amused itself under Anne, and her successors, to George the Third, is erecting the most hideous monument of legal persecution ever exhibited to the view of an astonished world.³⁸⁴

Hardiman used his works on Irish history to draw attention to the injustices that his countrymen suffered and his co-religionists had suffered until the relaxation of the Penal Laws two years earlier.³⁸⁵ Although he used much more violent language and imagery than O’Conor, the two scholars are similar in their aims in promoting the genius of the Irish to the world and in their attempts to

³⁸⁴ Hardiman, *Irish Minstrelsy*, Volume II, pp. 3-5.

³⁸⁵ In 1864, Todd used similar imagery in describing the unfair treatment of the Irish under English rule. He wrote that: “The original Irish Church, properly so called, having so merged into the Church of the English Pale, has adopted the Reformation, and lost in great measure its hold upon the descendants of the native tribes. This loss is to be attributed to that old and deep-seated disaffection to England which is the parent of almost all the political and sectarian evils of the country; nor can there be a doubt that this disaffection was mainly caused not by religious differences, but by the impolitic measures enforced in the twelfth and following centuries, for compelling the Irish people to adopt manners and laws for which they were wholly unprepared; not to speak of the arbitrary confiscation of landed property for the benefit of the English colonists, and the sudden overthrow of the authorities of the native chieftains.” (James Henthorn Todd, *St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland: A Memoir of his Life and Mission* (Dublin: Hodges, Smith & Co., 1864)).

eradicate the link between Irishness and barbarism. His work had an effect on those to whom offence was meant to be given. O'Donovan, based in Dublin, wrote to Hardiman in Galway conveying the effect his *Irish Minstrelsy* had had:

[...] I can assure you, from real knowledge, that the friends of England look upon your vols. as a violent political production intended, and in the first degree, calculated to raise party feelings and national animosities and that you were originally induced to compile the work from that motive than from a wish to preserve the originals. [...]

Your work is violently attacked in the *Christian Examiner*; (no. 1 Jan 1832) that work attacks everything Popish with sectarian fury and anti-Christian rancour. The indirect criticism upon your work is very impertinent.³⁸⁶

Ferguson had not intended for his reviews to create sectarian tensions, arguing in the first part that:

We will not suffer two of the finest races of men in the world, the Catholic and Protestant, or the Milesian and Anglo-Irish, to be duped into mutual hatred by the tale-bearing go-betweens who may struggle in impotent malice against our honest efforts, even though the panders of dissension should be willing to pay out of their own pockets.³⁸⁷

It should be pointed out that Ferguson had originally written the review for *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. However it was rejected by that periodical and was instead published in the *Dublin University Magazine*.³⁸⁸ Ferguson complained in the review about Hardiman's translations from Irish, which he deemed to be "uncouth and difficult,"³⁸⁹ and "spurious, puerile, unclassical – lamentably bad."³⁹⁰ He also took issue with the lack of "Irish

³⁸⁶ Letter John O'Donovan to James Hardiman, dated 31st January 1832, RIA, MS 12 N 10, number 5.

³⁸⁷ Samuel Ferguson, 'Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy – No. 1', *Dublin University Magazine*, Vol. 3 (April 1834), pp. 456-478; 457.

³⁸⁸ Eve Patten, *Samuel Ferguson and the Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), p. 53.

³⁸⁹ Ferguson, 'Irish Minstrelsy, no. i', p. 460.

³⁹⁰ Ferguson, 'Irish Minstrelsy, no. iii', *DUM* 4 (October 1834), pp. 444-467; 453.

sentiment,” as Ferguson felt that the translations did not convey a feeling for Irish composition and rhythm.³⁹¹ Parts one and two of the review are typical of an academic review – the reviewer comments upon a translation and gives opinion as to the merit of the work. It was parts three and four of the review which were problematic, as they accused the Catholic Church in Ireland of stagnating the country’s social development.³⁹² Ferguson also attacked some medieval and early modern Irish traits, such as fosterage and the clan systems in the third part of the review. He claimed that the former divided loyalties, whereas the lack of unification promulgated by the latter had made it easier for the Anglo-Normans to seize power.³⁹³ The concluding part of the review took issue with Hardiman’s writings in English in the collection, particularly those of a political nature. Ferguson termed these “petty anti-Anglicisms” and claimed they were “highly prejudicial to the best interests of the country.”³⁹⁴ Ferguson ended his review with some examples of his own translations of the poems which Hardiman had included in *Irish Minstrelsy*.

Eve Patten demonstrates that it is easy to read sectarian arguments into Ferguson’s review. Patten describes how scholars such as Seamus Deane, Joep Leerssen, and Tom Dunne have claimed that Ferguson’s attack on Hardiman was the result of Catholic Emancipation and the unease it caused Irish Protestants.³⁹⁵ Dunne calls it “the colonization of Gaelic literature in the interests of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy.”³⁹⁶ Patten suggests, that while these are valid responses suggested by Ferguson’s use of bigoted and racially primitivist arguments, the review should instead be seen as a “knee-jerk reaction” to Hardiman’s overt use of recent Irish history and the illtreatment of the Irish by the English, articulated in aggressive language.³⁹⁷ It is also worth noting that the articles were published in the highly sectarian *Dublin University Magazine*, which frequently published anti-Catholic articles and that Ferguson

³⁹¹ Ferguson, ‘Irish Minstrelsy, no. ii’, *DUM* 4 (August 1834), pp. 152-168; 155.

³⁹² Ferguson, ‘Irish Minstrelsy, no. iii’, p. 448.

³⁹³ *Ibid*, pp. 449-452.

³⁹⁴ Samuel Ferguson, ‘Irish Minstrelsy, no. iv’, *DUM* 4 (November 1834), pp. 514-542; 515.

³⁹⁵ Patten, *Samuel Ferguson*, pp. 52-54.

³⁹⁶ Tom Dunne, ‘Haunted by History: Irish Romantic Writing, 1800-1850’ in *Romanticism in National Context*, eds., Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 68-91; 83.

³⁹⁷ Patten, *Samuel Ferguson*, pp. 52-55.

was only twenty-four at the time of their publication.³⁹⁸ The review can be seen as an angry reaction to a publication which had removed any Protestant and Unionist link to the Gaelic past. Even if Ferguson had meant to highlight sectarian divides, by the mid-1840s he had alienated himself from the *Dublin University Magazine*,³⁹⁹ indicating a dissatisfaction with the publication and what it stood for, as well as a change of his own views. Ferguson's other 1834 publication in the *Dublin University Magazine* also makes it easy to read pro-Protestant arguments into his review of *Irish Minstrelsy*. His article in the second volume, called 'A Dialogue between the Head and the Heart of an Irish Protestant',⁴⁰⁰ is a debate between the 'Heart', which is sympathetic to native Catholic Ireland and the 'Head', which counter-argues the points made by the 'Heart', fearing more rebellion and loss of Protestant control.⁴⁰¹ This is centred particularly around the issue of Repeal, which the Head claims can only come about when Protestants are disgusted with the English Government.⁴⁰² The dialogue ends with a declaration of love for Irish Catholics, who are ignorant of the religious truth of Protestantism.⁴⁰³ Throughout the dialogue, both the 'Head' and the 'Heart' argue their case to be considered Irish. As Patten highlights, the 'Head' is seen by critics as Ferguson's own stance on the debate,⁴⁰⁴ whereas Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh sees an echo of the arguments of Grattan and Fitzgibbon regarding the Union in the 'Dialogue'.⁴⁰⁵ It is worth noting that when reviewing O'Donovan's *The Annals of Ireland* (by the Four Masters) in March 1848, Ferguson was full of glowing praise for both the author and the execution of his work.⁴⁰⁶

This is the only example of an argument among antiquarians based upon religion in print between 1830 and 1876 that I have seen, and this seems to

³⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 57.

³⁹⁹ Patten, *Samuel Ferguson*, pp. 104-105.

⁴⁰⁰ (November 1833).

⁴⁰¹ Samuel Ferguson, 'A Dialogue between the Head and the Heart of an Irish Protestant', *DUM* II (November 1833), pp. 586-593; 586.

⁴⁰² *Ibid*, p. 588.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 593.

⁴⁰⁴ Patten, *Samuel Ferguson*, p. 64.

⁴⁰⁵ M. A. G. Ó Tuathaigh, 'Sir Samuel Ferguson – Poet and Ideologue' in Terence Brown and Barbara Hayley, ed., *Samuel Ferguson: A Centenary Tribute* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1987), pp. 3-25; 9. See also n. 15 to Ó Tuathaigh's chapter.

⁴⁰⁶ Samuel Ferguson, 'The Annals of the Four Masters', *DUM*, Vol. XXXI (March 1848), pp. 359-376; 571-584.

indicate that religious disagreement was not a large feature of nineteenth-century antiquarian culture in the public sphere. Where there was disagreement, many scholars were careful not let their personal views, if they had them, interfere with the facts that they were presenting. In the ‘Preface’ to *The Culdees of the British Islands*, Reeves speaks of dealing “with the points at issue, whatever my private sentiments may be.”⁴⁰⁷ Todd discussed the highly contentious figure St Patrick in *St. Patrick, Apostle of the Irish* and highlighted how he had treated only of the historical evidence for him. He wrote that:

[He] hopes that no reader will suppose him to have been influenced by any controversial prejudice in coming to this conclusion [that St Patrick’s mission was not given to him by Pope Celestine, which Todd came to based on documentary evidence]. He is conscious of no such prejudice. He is, indeed, sincerely attached to the Reformed Church of these kingdoms, in which he holds the office of a priest; but he cannot perceive how the question whether Patrick had or had not his mission from Rome affects in any way the controversy which now unhappily divides the western Church. The Rome of the fifth century was not guilty of the abuses which rendered the Reformation necessary in the sixteenth. If we acknowledge, as we must do, the Roman mission of Palladius, as well as the Roman mission of Augustine of Canterbury, it is difficult to see what is to be gained in denying the Roman mission to Patrick.⁴⁰⁸

3.2 Interactions between Irish and European Antiquarians

The phenomenon of working in learned societies was not limited to Ireland. The formation of antiquarian societies had, most likely, been inspired by practices in Britain and in other European countries. Many countries formed learned societies during the nineteenth century, though some had begun this process much earlier.⁴⁰⁹ Much like in Ireland, the work carried out by members

⁴⁰⁷ Reeves, *The Culdees of the British Islands*, p. vi.

⁴⁰⁸ James Henthorn Todd, *St. Patrick, Apostle of the Irish* (Dublin: Hodges, Smith & Co, 1864), p. vi.

⁴⁰⁹ See Berger, *The Past as History*, pp. 133-136, for a discussion of some of them.

of these societies also focused on a ‘golden age’.⁴¹⁰ In the vast majority of European countries, there were national antiquarian societies which were frequently academies similar in scope to the Royal Irish Academy, as well as more local-based societies. England had the most county-based antiquarian societies.⁴¹¹

Given the close proximity of the two countries and the number of Irish manuscripts held by English institutions, there is surprisingly little correspondence between Irish and English antiquarians in the nineteenth century. There is one letter in the Graves Collection of the Royal Irish Academy from an English antiquarian, C. Knight Watson, who was the secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of London. In his letter to Charles Graves, Knight Watson gives thanks for a copy of volume I of the *Senchus Mor*, which had been sent to the Society.⁴¹² Rosemary Sweet has demonstrated that the ancient Britons as a topic of research was far more popular among Scottish and Welsh antiquarians.⁴¹³ Because of the emphasised Celtic nature of the three countries, there is correspondence between antiquarians of these countries on matters linguistic and archaeological. The South Welsh antiquary, Thomas Stephens, corresponded with William Wilde, John O’Donovan, and Eugene O’Curry.⁴¹⁴ Stephens was interested in the history of Welsh literature and published *The Literature of the Kymry* in 1849. He wrote to John O’Donovan in 1855 about “legends of foreign origin” blended with the traditions of Wales. In his letter, he mentions that he first wrote to Wilde, who suggested he contact either O’Donovan or Curry.⁴¹⁵ Another Welsh correspondent was John Williams, who also went by the Bardic name ‘Ab Ithol’. Along with Henry Longuville Jones,

⁴¹⁰ See the next chapter for a discussion of medieval Ireland as a topic for antiquarian study.

⁴¹¹ For more on English antiquarianism, see Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional*, for a discussion of the nineteenth century; and Sweet, *Antiquaries*, for the eighteenth and early nineteenth. Stuart Piggott traces the development of antiquarian thought from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the nineteenth in *Ruins in a Landscape*.

⁴¹² Letter C. Knight Watson to Charles Graves, 24th November 1865 RIA 24 O 39/CG/BL/157.

⁴¹³ Sweet, *Antiquaries*, pp. 120-122.

⁴¹⁴ I am exceptionally grateful to Dr. Adam Coward of the ‘Knowledge Transfer and Social Networks: European Learning and the Revolution in Welsh Victorian Scholarship’ project at the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth, Wales for the information. Publication forthcoming. The database was launched in August 2017 and is available at <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/letters-534> and <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/letters-889>.

⁴¹⁵ Letter Thomas Stephens to John O’Donovan, 2nd November 1855, RIA 24 O 39/JOD/354. O’Curry was sometimes referred to as Curry.

Williams was one of the founders of the Cambrian Archaeological Society. In 1853, he wrote to O'Donovan, asking to procure a copy of his grammar book, as he himself was working on a new edition of a Welsh grammar book dating from the thirteenth century.⁴¹⁶

There was frequent correspondence between Scottish and Irish antiquarians, and the sharing of information with Scottish antiquarians. William Forbes Skene, an antiquarian based in Edinburgh, wrote to O'Donovan in 1856 about a poem that was written in either Irish or Welsh and he asks O'Donovan to aid him with it.⁴¹⁷ William Reeves made frequent mention of Skene in his letters to James Graves, stating in one that he had met “Skene, Prof Innes, and Joseph Robertson”⁴¹⁸ and writing in another about how he had met them again at the “Scotch meeting of antiquaries in Edinburgh.” Reeves presumably attended this meeting.⁴¹⁹ Irish antiquarians also published in Scottish antiquarian journals. In volume 3 (1857-1859) of *The Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland* both William Reeves and George Petrie published articles: Reeves on ‘Saint Maelrubba: his History and Churches’ and Petrie on ‘Notice of a Barrow at Huntsworth in the Parish of Harray, Orkney, recently opened up’. Petrie seems to have visited Scotland often; in a letter to C. J. Thomsen in 1846, the Danish antiquary J. J. H. Worsaae, reported that Petrie is expected in Scotland soon.⁴²⁰ The Earl of Ellesmere was also able to write letters of introduction for Worsaae to “leading figures in Dublin”, which presumably were fellow antiquarians.⁴²¹ William T. McCulloch of the National Museum of the Antiquaries of Scotland, Edinburgh, wrote to Graves in December 1865 or

⁴¹⁶ Letter John Williams to John O'Donovan, 30th September 1853, RIA 24 O 39/JOD/374.

⁴¹⁷ Letter William Forbes Skene to John O'Donovan, 3rd June 1856, RIA 24 O 39/JOD/349.

⁴¹⁸ Joseph Robertson was the secretary of the Maitland Club in Glasgow and a correspondent of Reeves's. See Jean-Michel Picard, ‘William Reeves and the edition of the *Life of St Columba: The Continental Connection*’ in *Print Culture and Intellectual Life in Ireland*, pp. 95-115; 98-99. “Prof Innes” is Cosmo Innes – a judge and antiquarian. For more about him, see Richard Marsden, *Cosmo Innes and the Defence of Scotland's Past c. 1825-1875* (London: Routledge, 2016) and Richard Marsden, *Cosmo Innes and the Sources of Scottish History c. 1825-1875*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2011.

⁴¹⁹ Letters William Reeves to James Graves, 7th August 1850-29th November 1852 RIA 24 O 39/JG/144 and 25th April 1856-19th August 1858 RIA 24 O 39/JG/146 respectively.

⁴²⁰ Letter J. J. H. Worsaae to C. J. Thomsen, 12th November 1846, cited in *Viking Ireland: Jens Worsaae's Accounts of his Visit to Ireland, 1846-47*, ed., David Henry, trans. Åse Goldsmith (Balgavies, Angus: the Pinkfoot Press, 1995), p. 1. More on Worsaae's visit to Dublin below.

⁴²¹ Henry, *Viking Ireland*, p. xii.

January 1866 to thank him for donating two publications of the Brehon Law Commission.⁴²²

The antiquarian works and reputations of the antiquarians were known to scholars outside of Ireland and the British Isles and helped scholars in Continental Europe with their own research. Unsurprisingly for a nation which would provide many Celtic scholars of its own, there were scholars in Germany who corresponded with Irish antiquarians, John O'Donovan in particular. There is record of some letters being exchanged between O'Donovan and the philologist and folklorist Jakob Grimm and there is also mention in letters between Jakob and his brother Wilhelm of the scholars William Wilde and Whitley Stokes.⁴²³ Given the philological interests of the Grimm Brothers, especially Jakob, it is not surprising that they would have been aware of the work of O'Donovan and Stokes, and, as folklorists, they may have been aware of and interested in Wilde's antiquarian work on folklore. Jakob Grimm was in fact so impressed by O'Donovan's work that he invited him in 1856 to become a corresponding member of the Royal Academy of Berlin.⁴²⁴ The letter (described in n. 369) also makes reference to Grimm's writings to "M. Todd". However, records of any correspondence between Todd and Grimm have not been found.

As the author of *Grammatica Celtica*, it could only have been expected that Johann Caspar Zeuss (1806-1856 – German linguist) would have been familiar with Irish linguistic work, as well work on other Celtic languages. In the 'Praefatio Auctoris' to *Grammatica Celtica*, he makes reference to both O'Donovan's 1845 *Grammar of the Irish Language* and O'Reilly's 1821 *Irish-*

⁴²² Letter William T. McCulloch, December 1865-January 1866 RIA 24 O 39/CG/BL/108. More on the Brehon Law Commission below. See p. 102.

⁴²³ See <http://www.grimmnetz.de/ka/persreg.html> (accessed 15/04/2015) for a record of persons mentioned in the letters between Jakob and Wilhelm and to whom letters were addressed. The project to publish the letters of the Grimm Brothers is still underway and volume 25 will deal with Irishmen and matters relating to Ireland (Iren und Irland Betreffende Briefwechsel). http://www.grimmbriefwechsel.de/_bw__briefwechsel__ubersicht/bw_programm/bw_programm.html (accessed 15/04/2015).

⁴²⁴ The letter, written in German, was published in *Revue Celtique*, 6 in 1883-85, p. 416, in 'Celtic Notes and Queries', prepared by F. Vieweg. A letter from Hans Claude Hamilton, State Paper Office, to O'Donovan erroneously mentions the honour bestowed upon him by Wilhelm Grimm (RIA 24 O 39/JOD/132). In the Graves collection, a letter in RIA 24 O 39/JOD/140 requests a translation of (again) Wilhelm Grimm's letter for *The Freeman's Journal*, however a letter in RIA 24 O 39/JOD/195 from Donal MacCarthy mentions that no notice of this letter ever appeared in the papers.

English Dictionary.⁴²⁵ This suggests that, though possibly limited to those interested in Celtic linguistics and therefore with specialist knowledge, the above works were available in Germany.

The Danish antiquarians, Jens Jacob Asmussen Worsaae (1821-1885) – mentioned above – and Carl Christian Rafn (1795-1864), were also correspondents of their Irish counterparts. Both were members of *Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftelskab* (The Royal Society of Antiquaries of the North), which had the aim of re-examining Viking history by translating and publishing literature relating to the sagas.⁴²⁶ Rafn, who served as the Society's first secretary, wanted to publicise the Society's work abroad and find interested patrons to help fund the Society's collection of antiquities and, so, he wrote to many heads of state, gentlemen, and academics, offering them membership for a subscription fee.⁴²⁷ Among the many academics he solicited are several Irish antiquarians, some of whom not only corresponded with Rafn, but also became members of the Society. As one who worked on Norse subjects in Ireland,⁴²⁸ George Downes (1790-1846), unsurprisingly, was one of the Society's first Irish members. Between 1843 and 1863, the Society published *Antikvarisk Tidsskrift*, which was similar to the Royal Irish Academy's *Transactions*. They published the names of those who had donated money to the Society – more than 50 rixdollars would guarantee publication (Rowley-Conwy has calculated 100 rixdollars as being worth 11 guineas in c. 1835, which would be around \$800-\$1000 today).⁴²⁹ It seems, though, that some scholars⁴³⁰ also made contributions of artefacts to the Society's library and museum.⁴³⁰ George Downes is listed as

⁴²⁵ Johann Caspar Zeuss, *Grammatica Celtica* (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1853), second edition (Berlin: Weidmann, 1871), ed. H. Ebel, p. ix.

⁴²⁶ Paraphrase of Steen Jensen, 'Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftelskabs stiftelse 1825, *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*: 5-19 cited in C. Stephen Briggs, 'C. C. Rafn, J. J. A. Worsaae, Archaeology, History and Danish National Identity in the Schleswig-Holstein Question' *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology*, 13 (2) (2003), pp. 4-25; 5.

⁴²⁷ Briggs, 'C. C. Rafn, J. J. A. Worsaae, Archaeology, History and Danish National Identity in the Schleswig-Holstein Question', pp. 5-7.

⁴²⁸ See 'On the Norse Geography of Ancient Ireland', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 19 (1843), pp. 84-96.

⁴²⁹ Peter Rowley-Conwy, 'The Three Age System in English: New Translations of the Founding Documents', *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology*, 14 (1) (2004), pp. 4-15; 15, n. 1.

⁴³⁰ Next to William Betham and George Downes's names is the acronym F.B.B (Har forhem erlagt bestandigt Bidrag – has paid contribution). Next to George Petrie and James Henthorn Todd's is the acronym S.B.B (Ved Bidrag tim samlingerne (selskabets Bibliothek, det historisk-archæologiske Archiv, Museet for nordiske Old sager; det amerikanske Cabinet etc) afgjort Bidraget – has made a contribution to the collection (Societal library, the historical-archaeological archive, the Museum of the Old Sagas, the American Cabinet, etc) and paid contribution). Both translations my own.

being a member between 1844 and 1845 in the *Antikvarisk Tidsskrift*.⁴³¹ In 1836 the Society began publishing some of the paper in French under the title *Mémoires de la société des antiquaires du Nord*, and this continued until 1860. Volume 1 contained transactions between 1836 and 1839 and Downes's name appears as a subscriber, having contributed 50 rixdollars.⁴³² William Betham was listed as a member in both publications between 1835 and 1853, as was Thomas Crofton Croker between 1835 and 1863. George Petrie (1790-1886) and James Henthorn Todd are both listed as members in *Antikvarisk Tidsskrift* between 1848 and 1863. Rafn is listed in volume two of *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* (1840-1844), as having been an honorary member of the Royal Irish Academy since 1827.

As well as being members of *Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftelskab*, Irish antiquarians corresponded with Rafn and Worsaae. There is a record of Downes writing to Rafn in the archives of Det Kongelige Bibliotek – both personally in 1838 in response to a letter from him, and in his role as secretary of the *Oldskriftelskab*.⁴³³ There is also a record of a letter from Todd to Worsaae in 1849.⁴³⁴

Perhaps the greatest interaction between the northern and Irish antiquarians was Worsaae's visit to Dublin in 1846-7. The Duke of Sutherland and Lord Francis Egerton (later the Earl of Ellesmere) asked the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries to send a Danish antiquarian to Britain, presumably out of their own antiquarian interests. Worsaae, at this time, had been asking King Christian VIII of Denmark to fund a tour of the British Isles for his own research into the Viking incursions in this part of the world. This led to the King commissioning Worsaae to investigate Scandinavian antiquities in the British Isles.⁴³⁵ It seems, from his correspondence, that Worsaae was interested in the state of Irish antiquarianism and the Royal Irish Academy's collections of

⁴³¹ All volumes of this publication have been digitised by Projekt Runeberg and are accessible on <http://runeberg.org/antiqdk/> (accessed 20/04/2015).

⁴³² *Mémoires de la société des antiquaires du Nord*, Vol.1 (1836), p. 24.

⁴³³ <http://www.kb.dk/da/kb/nb/ha/HA/brevbase.html> - search for Downes. (accessed 12/12/2014) The letters themselves are stored in collection 1599 2f (my thanks to C. Stephen Briggs's article for this information).

⁴³⁴ http://base.kb.dk/pls/ha_breve_pub/ha_breve.breve?pAfsender=&pModtager=&pTitel=&pAar=&pAction=long&pNext=184366&pLang=dk&pDesign=2 (accessed 21/04/2015).

⁴³⁵ Henry, *Viking Ireland*, pp. viii-ix.

artefacts.⁴³⁶ He was pleased that Irish antiquarians were interested in Danish antiquarianism and was particularly happy to enlighten them on how the museum of the *Oldskriftselskab* how come to be formed and added to.⁴³⁷ Worsaae received a warm welcome from his Irish colleagues: in the letter mentioned first, he describes how Petrie wrote to him before he came to Ireland, saying that “an antiquarian would always get a good reception from him,”⁴³⁸ and throughout his correspondence, both to Thomsen, the Councillor of State, and his mother, he describes how friendly the antiquarian circles in Dublin were, how Todd, with whom he was staying, would take him out on day trips, and how he became an Honorary Member of the Reform Club, where he dined with members of “Young Ireland” and attended talks given by O’Connell.⁴³⁹ According to his letter dated 8th January 1847,⁴⁴⁰ Worsaae was the first to propose a translation of *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gaillibh*, which was later carried out by Todd, and in the same letter he asks Thomsen to warn Rafn about Betham, who “wrote the notorious Etruscan-Irish books!!!”⁴⁴¹ Worsaae continues, stating that:

This man has damaged the Society of [Northern] Antiquaries’ reputation quite enormously. Rafn seems to have bestowed absolute authority on him in the past, which brought men like Petrie out of contact with the Society! I have heard more about the Society of Northern Antiquaries than I wanted to hear and I have had the misfortune to have to defend it.⁴⁴²

Worsaae left Dublin in February to return to London. It is not known precisely in which year this visit took place, but in the mid-1840s Petrie visited Worsaae

⁴³⁶ Letter dated 12th November 1846 to C. J. Thomsen in J. J. A. Worsaae, *En Oldgranskens Erindringer, 1821-1847*, ed., V. Hermanses (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1934) cited in *Viking Ireland*, trans. Åse Goldsmith, p. 1.

⁴³⁷ Letter dated 2nd December 1846 to his mother, cited in *Viking Ireland*, pp. 6-7.

⁴³⁸ *Viking Ireland*, p. 1.

⁴³⁹ All letters from *Viking Ireland*, pp. 1-18.

⁴⁴⁰ In *Viking Ireland*, pp.11-14. Here p. 13.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*

and Thomsen in Denmark, bringing back with him the three-age system of archaeology, which Thomsen had pioneered.⁴⁴³

Given the fact that antiquarian publications were available, or at least known, in foreign countries (*Antikvarisk Tidsskrift*, for example, had a section in every volume on recent antiquarian publications, from South America to Australia and, naturally, *Storbritannien og Irland*), it is perhaps unremarkable that antiquarians should contact those with similar interests. It seems most likely that Grimm contacted O'Donovan because he admired his work, as one philologist to another. There appears to be no evidence of an agenda in the letter that he sent to him, other than to heap praise on O'Donovan's efforts, perhaps in the recognition of his own labours. Whilst the warm reception that he was given in Dublin suggests that Worsaae was respected as an antiquarian, it would appear that Rafn and Worsaae had agendas in their correspondence with Irish antiquarians, Rafn most particularly. As Andrew Wawn points out, in the nineteenth century, "the Vikings still enjoyed a poor reputation abroad. They were commonly seen as violent pillagers, rapists and land-takers; their very name evoked memories of aggressive and uncivilised society."⁴⁴⁴ Understandably, scholars of this period would perhaps wish to change this perception and this could be one reason why the founders of The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries wrote to Irish antiquarians; both because Ireland was one of the countries which had been invaded and still held artefacts of these people, and also because the Nordic antiquarians were hoping to appeal to the Irish people who had frequently been and, to some extent, still were painted as being barbarous.⁴⁴⁵

There was also a more practical reason for their correspondence. The matter of membership and the cost of it has already been raised, and the Northern Antiquaries asking their Irish counterparts for money seems to be a common theme. In the first volume of *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* (1836-1840), there is a record of George Downes reading out a letter from Rafn

⁴⁴³ Joseph Raftery, 'Aspects of George Petrie. I. George Petrie, 1789-1866: A Re-Assessment', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature*, Vol. 72 (1972), pp. 153-157; 156.

⁴⁴⁴ Andrew Wawn, *The Vikings and the Victorians: Inventing the Old North in 19th Century Britain*, p. 4, cited in Briggs, 'C. C. Rafn, J. J. A. Worsaae, Archaeology, History and Danish National Identity in the Schleswig-Holstein Question', pp. 4-5.

⁴⁴⁵ See section 5.4 for a discussion of English depictions of Irish barbarity and racial inferiority.

asking for money for a public library in Reykjavík. Downes seems particularly struck by the idea that “the island for which Professor Rafn felt so much interest, had peculiar claims on the sympathy of Irishmen, as having been, like their own island, a place of refuge for literature, when banished from the continent of Europe.”⁴⁴⁶ It can perhaps be understood that by highlighting the similarities between countries which came under the observance of The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, it would perhaps make the Irish antiquarians more likely to contribute funds.

These similarities may have been highlighted to serve not only a financial purpose, but also a political one. Describing Worsaae’s tour in Ireland, Briggs writes that “in Ireland, perhaps more so than in Scotland, Worsaae was acting as advocate for strengthening national identity to a minority oppressed nation with which his own countrymen felt great sympathy.”⁴⁴⁷ In 1848, presumably after a burgeoning in patriotic sentiment during Worsaae’s period in Ireland, Holstein nationalists wanted Schleswig-Holstein to be united under its own constitution as part of a German alliance.⁴⁴⁸ Briggs explains that “as early as 1843, in *Danmarks Oldtid*, Worsaae had invoked the Danish past as a bastion against foreign aggression.”⁴⁴⁹ It is entirely possible that by corresponding with Irish antiquarians, the Danes were seeking allies for their struggle, seeing a reflection of their situation in the Irish one. As noted above, Worsaae’s letters mention that he dined with Young Irelanders and went to listen to O’Connell speak. It may be that Worsaae was courting supporters who could speak up for Denmark should the need arise, and seeking to convince those in politics that history could be on their side in their own struggle with a dominant European power.⁴⁵⁰

Reeves had extensive contact with antiquarians based in continental Europe. As the original manuscript of Adomnán’s late seventh-century *Vita Columbae* was held in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, it is understandable that he

⁴⁴⁶ Pp. 260-61.

⁴⁴⁷ Briggs, ‘C. C. Rafn, J. J. A. Worsaae, Archaeology, History and Danish National Identity in the Schleswig-Holstein Question’, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 12.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 13.

⁴⁵⁰ For further discussion of Danish antiquarianism and the 1848 war with Prussia, see J. Laurence Hare, *Excavating Nations: Archaeology, Museums, and the German-Danish Borderlands* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

would have corresponded with Swiss antiquarians, particularly as Reeves was dependent upon scholars in that country to supply him with transcriptions of the text in order that he might edit and translate it.⁴⁵¹ The archaeologist Ferdinand Keller (1800-1881) was a particular correspondent of his. Keller founded the *Antiquarische Gesellschaft in Zürich* (the Antiquarian Society of Zurich) and Reeves became a member.⁴⁵² Reeves's *The Life of Columba* was well received and Picard describes the favourable reaction of some European scholars to it.⁴⁵³ Irish antiquarians appear to have desired the approval of their continental colleagues; several of them wrote letters to Charles Graves thanking him for their copies of one or two volumes of *The Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland*, which they sometimes refer to as the *Senchus Mor*. Such correspondents included Ferdinand Keller, Adolphe Pictet (1799-1875), and Franz Bopp (1791-1867).⁴⁵⁴ It was only with continental Europe that links were pursued by Irish antiquarians; William Betham was the only antiquarian to have been a member of the American Antiquarian Society, becoming a member in 1838.⁴⁵⁵

As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, the correspondence between Irish and foreign antiquarians reflected the differences in the type of antiquarian research pursued by Protestants and Catholics. Many Catholic scholars were Irish-speakers, so were, therefore, involved in the translation of texts and other language-based research. Protestant scholars were more likely to be involved with non-textual based antiquarianism, but some of them (mentioned above) were known to philologists outside of Ireland. Charles Graves was on the steering committee of the project to edit and translate the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland*, which explains foreign scholars acknowledging the receipt of copies of the work directly to him. William Reeves's edition of *The Life of Columba* was based on a Latin original which was the life of an Irish saint. During Columba's lifetime, he founded a

⁴⁵¹ Picard, 'William Reeves', pp. 100-106.

⁴⁵² Richard W. Seaver, 'William Reeves' in, *Belfast Literary Society 1801-1901: Historical Sketch With Memoirs of Some Distinguished Members*, eds., William Steen et al (Belfast: The Linenhall Press, 1902), pp. 119-121; 120.

⁴⁵³ Picard, 'William Reeves', pp. 111-113.

⁴⁵⁴ These letters are all in the Royal Irish Academy's Graves Collection, under the sub-category of Brehon Law.

⁴⁵⁵ List of members, <http://www.americanantiquarian.org/memberlistb> (accessed 19/05/2016).

monastery on the Hebridean island of Iona, which became part of the modern country of Scotland in the later medieval period. This explains Reeves's large amount of correspondence with Scottish antiquarians.

Protestant antiquarians were more likely to be members of foreign antiquarian societies, presumably because they came from higher social classes than their Catholic counterparts and could afford to pay more than one set of subscription fees for membership. John O'Donovan, however, appears to have been the only antiquarian to have been elected to membership of a foreign academy.

Conclusion

There were a number of differences between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century antiquarianism. There was an increase in the number of Catholics working in learned societies and there were more societies, with several existing simultaneously. Where there had previously been tensions between members of a given society, the nineteenth century saw tensions within and also between societies. There were rules against disturbing the harmony necessary to succeed as a society and these forbade discussions based on politics or religion. Yet, as has been shown, the only recorded debates between members were to do with scholarship; either the perceived lack of it, a denial of access to manuscripts, or because groups of scholars simply disagreed on the dating of archaeological remains. The groups themselves contained members of both religious communities. Therefore, they cannot be described as sectarian debates. As was explained above, only the correspondence relating to debates has been examined. This is to ensure any arguments seemingly sectarian in nature are in fact this rather than examples of personal grievances between two antiquarians. John O'Donovan frequently used his correspondence with James Henthorn Todd, William Reeves, and occasionally John Windele,⁴⁵⁶ to express his frustrations with Owen Connellan. O'Donovan was a Catholic; Connellan a

⁴⁵⁶ See, for example, UCD John O'Donovan/William Reeves Correspondence, UCD JOD L 3, L 17, and RIA Windele Collection, 4/B/10/117 (ii).

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Protestant, which could make the arguments between them based on their differing religions. O'Donovan's hostility towards Connellan, however, was solely personal. It was largely based upon an angry letter that Connellan had written to O'Donovan in 1843 and upon the fact that Connellan had become Professor of Celtic at Queen's College Cork in 1849 – a role which O'Donovan had wanted himself.⁴⁵⁷

A discussion of why medieval Ireland was the subject of so much antiquarian activity is examined in the next chapter. The chapter will also detail the types of antiquarian works published between 1830 and 1876 and ascribes the works to the appropriate community of scholars.

⁴⁵⁷ See letter John O'Donovan to William Reeves, dated 9th August 1850, UCD John O'Donovan/William Reeves Correspondence, UCD JOD L 38 and letter John O'Donovan to Denis Florence MacCarthy, dated 8th November 1848 in NLI MS 132.

Chapter Three: Protestant and Catholic Antiquarian Research Subjects

While the previous chapter examined interactions between Protestant and Catholic antiquarians, this chapter examines the various antiquarian works published between 1830 and 1876. Research topics are linked to the respective religious communities and reasons are suggested for these links. This chapter will demonstrate that the study of medieval Ireland was the topic of the most interest to the antiquarians, with the vast majority of works focusing on this theme.⁴⁵⁸ It questions what purpose studying medieval Ireland could serve, and whether the numerous antiquarians had agendas that they pursued in their scholarly works. Medieval Ireland had been central to antiquarian research in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴⁵⁹ This chapter seeks to assess whether antiquarian research in the nineteenth century was a continuation of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century antiquarian interests or whether scholars were motivated by different factors.

Previous works on antiquarianism and historiography in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have ascribed an interest in the medieval period and engagement with antiquarianism as being the product of the widespread practice of working in learned societies.⁴⁶⁰ The numerous antiquarian societies functioning in the majority of European countries in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries made the medieval period a fashionable pursuit. This was reflected in the perception in Ireland that this era was Ireland's 'golden age', a view that became commonplace in national historiographies.⁴⁶¹ Joep Leerssen,

⁴⁵⁸ With the exception of Petrie's song and folklore collection and Wilde's folklore collection, the rest of the works focus on medieval Ireland and largely consist of the translations of medieval and Classical Irish texts.

⁴⁵⁹ See chapter one for more details.

⁴⁶⁰ For example, Arnaldo Momigliano's definition of what he terms "the age of the antiquaries," which involved study in learned societies. See Arnaldo Momigliano, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian', p. 286, and p. 1 of this thesis. Patrick Geary and Gábor Klaniczay claim that Northern and East-Central Europe focused especially on the Middle Ages, as classical roots in these areas were either weaker or non-existent. They compare these areas with countries such as Germany, which cultivated an archaic history based largely upon the rediscovered text of Tacitus's *Germania*. See, Geary and Klaniczay, eds., *Manufacturing the Middle Ages*, p. 1.

⁴⁶¹ See, for example, Geary and Klaniczay, eds., *Manufacturing the Middle Ages*; Evans and Marchal, eds., *The Uses of the Middle Ages in Modern European States*; Berger and Lorenz, eds., *Nationalizing the Past*; Dirk Van Hulle and Joep Leerssen, eds., *Editing the Nation's Memory: Textual Scholarship and Nation-Building in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008); and Ian Wood, *The Modern Origins of the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013/2016).

in addition to this, ascribes motivation for engagement with antiquarianism to patriot and nationalist purposes.⁴⁶²

4.1 Nineteenth-century Antiquarian Works

As was discussed in the introduction to this thesis, ‘antiquarianism’ is an umbrella term for many different subjects that would eventually become separate disciplines. This section discusses the differences between Protestant and Catholic research topics and suggests reasons for such differences.⁴⁶³

Protestants were mainly involved in the investigation into Ireland’s physical remains. William Wilde gave lectures to the Royal Irish Academy on archaeological matters which were later published in *Transactions*. He drew heavily on physical remains in his two antiquarian guides to parts of Ireland - *The Beauties of the Boyne and the Blackwater* (1849) and *Lough Corrib, Its Shores and Islands: With Notices of Lough Mask* (1867). He is responsible for three of the catalogues of artefacts in the library of the Royal Irish Academy.⁴⁶⁴ While Robert Shipboy MacAdam was known especially as an Irish scholar, revivalist, and manuscript-collector, he was also the founder of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* (1853), to which he contributed several articles on items found in Ulster.⁴⁶⁵ George Petrie has not unreasonably been referred to as “the father of [Irish] archaeology,”⁴⁶⁶ due to his sixty articles on the subject⁴⁶⁷ and his promotion of the Danish three-age system (mentioned in the previous chapter),⁴⁶⁸ which purportedly made the discipline of archaeology more scientific than it had been before. Edwin Quin, third Earl of Dunraven, is particularly known for bringing the Ardagh chalice to public attention in 1873 and for his *Notes on Irish architecture*, published posthumously.⁴⁶⁹ Samuel

⁴⁶² See Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), pp. 159-62 for more on this. In an Irish context ‘patriot’ refers to the eighteenth century; ‘nationalist’ to the nineteenth.

⁴⁶³ For a list of antiquarian works published during the period 1830 to 1876, see Appendix B.

⁴⁶⁴ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 131.

⁴⁶⁵ A. J. Hughes, *Robert Shipboy MacAdam: His Life and Gaelic Proverb Collection* (Belfast: The Institute for Irish Studies, The Queen’s of University Belfast, 1998), p. 54.

⁴⁶⁶ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 105.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁸ See p. 91 of this thesis.

⁴⁶⁹ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 155.

Ferguson is better known for his literary creations, but he compiled *Ogham Inscriptions in Ireland, Wales and Scotland*, which was published posthumously in 1887. Dennis Henry Kelly, from a family of converts to Anglicanism,⁴⁷⁰ published some articles on archaeological remains in Ireland, alongside translations of Irish literature.⁴⁷¹

O'Donovan, O'Curry, and Windele⁴⁷² are the only Catholics who engaged somewhat with archaeology and, even then, for the former two, it was never a large focus of their work. O'Donovan and O'Curry had both worked for the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland,⁴⁷³ under the guidance of George Petrie and as part of this had recorded physical remains and their locations as they came across them in the field. O'Donovan spent the greater amount of time in the field, but this was his only engagement with archaeology. O'Curry had spent a little time in the field as well, but he engaged more with archaeology later in his career. His appointment to the chair of Irish History and Archaeology at the Catholic University in 1853 and the posthumous publication in 1873 of his lectures *On the Manner and Customs of the Ancient Irish* show him to have engaged with Ireland's material past. As has been described in the previous chapter,⁴⁷⁴ John Windele, on the other hand, wrote several articles regarding the purported Pagan origins of round towers and Ogham inscriptions and was very much interested in material remains. His friend and fellow Corkonian, Father Matthew Horgan (c.1775-1849), was also interested in antiquities and had translated some of the Ogham inscriptions that were at the centre of the dispute mentioned in the last chapter. He was also the first president of the South Munster Antiquarian Society.⁴⁷⁵

It can be suggested that the field of archaeology was attractive to Protestant scholars as most of them would not have had the necessary language skills to work with Irish. Many Protestant scholars involved in archaeological

⁴⁷⁰ Mac Peaircín, *Donnchadh Ó Ceallaigh*, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 19.

⁴⁷² John Windele was buried in the Catholic cemetery of St Joseph's, Cork City, so it can be assumed that he was a Catholic. His religious affiliation does not appear to be written anywhere.

⁴⁷³ More on this below.

⁴⁷⁴ See pp. 75-79 of this thesis.

⁴⁷⁵ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 103. Horgan was a priest, antiquarian, and Irish scholar, elected MRIA in 1838. See Patrick Long, 'Horgan, Matthew ('Mat')', *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a4102>, for more details.

research were from higher levels of society than their Catholic counterparts and Roy Foster suggests that this gave them more leisure time to devote to such research.⁴⁷⁶

Alongside Todd, a significant Protestant scholar who did not engage with material remains was Whitley Stokes. He had studied at Trinity College, Dublin under Rudolf Thomas Siegfried, who had come to Dublin on the invitation of Todd.⁴⁷⁷ Siegfried was a comparative philologist and Sanskrit teacher, and Stokes's publications clearly demonstrate, that he too was also interested in comparative philology. As was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Stokes published the bulk of his work after 1876 and is considered part of the next generation of scholars, but he warrants special mention here for the work he did on Irish and Celtic philology. While he translated many works before 1876, he was also interested in purely linguistic topics, which makes him unique from the rest of the antiquarians in this period. For example, he was the only Irish scholar until much later to publish an article such as 'Bemerkungen über die irische Declination' (Remarks on Irish Declension),⁴⁷⁸ or 'Notes on Comparative Syntax'.⁴⁷⁹

The argument for leisure time, outlined above, could also be applied to the collection of folklore and Irish traditional music, which was largely limited to scholars who would have been considered gentlemen. The former included scholars such as George Petrie⁴⁸⁰ and the Rev. James Goodman – a clergyman based in Ventry and Skibbereen and, later, Professor of Irish at Trinity College, Dublin.⁴⁸¹ Though several antiquarians appear on the council of the Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland, founded 1851, only

⁴⁷⁶ Roy Foster, *Paddy and Mr. Punch: Connections in Irish and English History* (London: Allen Lane, 1993), p. 26.

⁴⁷⁷ Ó Dochartaigh, 'A Shadowy but Important Figure', p. 32.

⁴⁷⁸ Kuhn's *Beiträge zur vergleichende Sprachforschung*, 1 (1858). My translation.

⁴⁷⁹ *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1860-1 (1861).

⁴⁸⁰ The most recent full-length biography of Petrie is William Stokes's *The Life and Labours in Art and Archaeology of George Petrie* (London: Longmans, Green & Company, 1868).

⁴⁸¹ See Nicholas Carolan, 'An tUrramach James Goodman (1826–96), fear eaglasta, ceoltóir, agus bailitheoir ceoil' in *Foinn agus focail. Léachtaí Cholm Cille XL* (Maynooth: An Sagart, 2010), pp. 7–19; Breandán Breathnach 'Séamus Goodman 1828-1896 Bailitheoir Ceoil' in *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society*, No.6 (1973), pp. 151-171; Pádraig de Brún 'A Ventry Convert Group,' in *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society* No.13(1980), pp. 143-148; and Niamh Ní Shiadhail, 'A Nineteenth-century Poem on Conversion by Séamus Goodman' in *Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Symposium of Societas Celtologica Nordica*, eds., Niamh Ní Shiadhail and Ailbhe Ó Corráin forthcoming (2017).

Petrie and Goodman collected contemporary music and songs. Petrie was aided in the collection of lyrics by O'Curry.⁴⁸² The collection was republished in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries,⁴⁸³ and is still occasionally used to catalogue songs.⁴⁸⁴ Goodman had compiled a manuscript collection of over 2,000 songs by 1866, making him an exceptionally prolific collector.⁴⁸⁵ Petrie and Goodman forged the way for Charlotte Fox, née Milligan (1864-1916), who was a prolific collector at the turn of the twentieth century. The Rev. Laurence Renehan (1797/8-1857), President of Maynooth in the 1840s and 1850s and prominent member of the Celtic Society, also collected music. He published *A History of Music* (1858) and *A Grammar of Gregorian and Modern Music* (edited and published posthumously by Richard Hackett in 1865).⁴⁸⁶ (Renehan was also a manuscript-collector and gathered many manuscripts on Irish history from continental monasteries.)⁴⁸⁷ Like the collection of folklore, discussed below, the collection of music and songs was only possible for those with the time and financial resources to be able to move around the country and collect such material. Much like origin myths, folklore was only studied by a few antiquarians, mainly Thomas Crofton Croker and William Wilde. Crofton Croker published two books on folklore in the south of Ireland, *Researches in the South of Ireland, illustrative of the scenery, architectural remains, and the manners and superstitions of the peasantry*, published 1823, and *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland*, published 1824. Wilde covers some folklore in *Lough Corrib*, where he relates some local legends from around the shores of the lough and footnotes them with some annalistic evidence from O'Donovan's translation of *The Annals of the Four Masters*. He also published *Irish Popular Superstitions* in 1852. His wife, Jane Wilde, commonly known as

⁴⁸² George Petrie, ed., *The Petrie Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1855), p. vi.

⁴⁸³ Facsimile edition (Farnborough, Hampshire: Gregg International, 1967/1969); and edited by David Cooper with Lillis Ó Laoire (Cork: Cork University Press, 2002/2005).

⁴⁸⁴ For example, some of the songs catalogued in Nioclás Tóibín's *Duanaire Déiseach* (Baile Átha Cliath: Sairseal agus Dill, 1978), use the numbers from the Petrie collection.

⁴⁸⁵ Eoghan Ó Raghallaigh, 'James Goodman', *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a3520>.

⁴⁸⁶ David Murphy, 'Renehan, Laurence F.' *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a7629>.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Speranza, published some of her husband's collection after his death under her own name.⁴⁸⁸

Leerssen describes Anglo-Irish interest in folklore as “cultivation of popular tradition”, claiming it was “an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of political-historical research.”⁴⁸⁹ As Protestant scholars would not have had the command of Irish to use manuscripts for historical research, an attempt to do so would have been either speculation or using other people's words; alternatively, they would have been limited to using English language sources. This would have resulted in outcomes that were far from satisfactory. For those scholars who could afford to leave Dublin and go out into the country, folklore collecting could have been an entertaining exercise for them. Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, however, points out that John Windele employed people to collect folklore material for him.⁴⁹⁰

Linguistically speaking, the Catholic scholars, who generally had a better level of Irish than the Protestant ones, would have been better suited to this type of research. They were not limited to talking to those who could speak English. However, as most of the Catholic scholars were from rural backgrounds (for example O'Donovan and O'Curry), it could have led to them being identified with the subjects of research, namely ‘the peasantry’. Clare O'Halloran argues that the Protestant scholars would feel “less personally implicated in that ascription of age-old barbarism than did Catholic antiquaries.”⁴⁹¹ It could then be easy to see why, if they were trying to be taken seriously as scholars, folkloric antiquarian research was not an attractive subject for Catholic scholars. O'Donovan was conscious that some aspects of historical writing could leave him open to ridicule; writing to Thomas Larcom in 1835 during his work for the Ordnance Survey, he remarked that “some may laugh at me for producing this [miracles attributed to Patrick in the *Vita Tripartita*] as

⁴⁸⁸ Joy Melville, ‘Wilde, Jane Francesca Agnes’ in *Oxford Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29398>. The two works were *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms and Superstitions of Ireland* (1887) and *Ancient Cures, Charms and Usages of Ireland* (1890)

⁴⁸⁹ Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, p. 160.

⁴⁹⁰ Personal correspondence, 27/02/2017.

⁴⁹¹ Clare O'Halloran, ‘Negotiating Progress and Degeneracy: Irish Antiquaries and the Discovery of the “Folk”, 1770-1844’ in *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds., Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 193-206; 197.

historical authority, when it is evidently a fabricated legend.”⁴⁹² As O’Donovan spent a lot of time in rural areas, discussing place names with locals for his work on the Ordnance Survey, he would have been ideally suited to collecting folklore, had he been so inclined. This lack of interest on O’Donovan’s part in folklore collection is lamented by Stiofán Ó Cadhla, who regrets the lack of information such an endeavour produced, laying the blame for what he sees as a focus on translation instead at the feet of the British establishment.⁴⁹³

Modern scholarship has found fault with those antiquarians who translated medieval Irish texts using their knowledge of Modern Irish and familiarity with manuscript tradition. However, for the most part, these modern scholars are grateful for the vast amounts of compilation, transcription, and translations that the nineteenth-century scholars did, as it has greatly aided them in their own work.⁴⁹⁴ The amount of translations that the Catholic scholars undertook is remarkable and frequently involves large texts, which resulted in several years of work. Annals were a frequent topic for research and the nineteenth century saw the editing and translating of the so-called *Annals of the Four Masters*, the *Annals of Loch Cé*,⁴⁹⁵ the *Chronicum Scotorum* of Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh,⁴⁹⁶ the so-called *Fragmentary Annals*,⁴⁹⁷ and the *Annals of Boyle*.⁴⁹⁸ Other texts included the law texts, commonly referred to as ‘Brehon law’,⁴⁹⁹ translations of poems, for example, James Hardiman’s *Irish Minstrelsy or Bardic Remains of Ireland*, and shorter pieces of prose literature, for example, O’Donovan’s *The Banquet of Dun na n-Gedh and the Battle of*

⁴⁹² Letter John O’Donovan to Thomas Larcom, dated 25th May 1835, in *Ordnance Survey Letters: Armagh and Monaghan*, ed. Rev. Michael O’Flanagan (Bray, 1927).

⁴⁹³ Ó Cadhla, *Civilizing Ireland*, pp. 4-5. For Ó Cadhla’s more indepth study of folklore and the Ordnance Survey, see *ibid.*, pp. 133-169.

⁴⁹⁴ See, for example, Daniel Binchy’s comments on the transcriptions that O’Donovan and O’Curry did made of the law texts, which made his edition of *Corpus Iuris Hibernici* possible, as the original manuscripts had deteriorated in the intervening years. D. A. Binchy, ed., *CIH*, Volume I (Baile Átha Cliath 1978) p. xvii.

⁴⁹⁵ William Maunsell Hennessy, ed. and trans., *The Annals of Loch Cé*, 2 vols. (London: Longman & Co., 1871).

⁴⁹⁶ William Maunsell Hennessy, ed. and trans., *Chronicum Scotorum: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs, from the earliest times to A.D. 1135, with a supplement containing the events from 1141 to 1150* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866).

⁴⁹⁷ John O’Donovan, ed. and trans., *Annals of Ireland: Three Fragments* (Dublin: Archaeological Society, 1860).

⁴⁹⁸ Published in 1845 by John D’Alton under the title, *The History of Ireland, from the earliest period to the year 1245, when the Annals of Boyle, which are adopted and embodied as the running text authority, terminate* (Dublin: John D’Alton, 1845).

⁴⁹⁹ More on this below.

Magh Roth,⁵⁰⁰ *The Tribes and Customs of Hy-Many*,⁵⁰¹ and *The Genealogies, Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*.⁵⁰² One example of longer pieces of prose is Todd's edition and translation of *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh*.⁵⁰³

Although Protestants, Connellan and Kelly were Irish-speakers and were, therefore, capable of translating texts. In 1849, Connellan was appointed Professor of Irish at Queen's College, Cork, thus making him even less likely to join his co-religionists in archaeological research. He was now being paid a regular salary to teach Irish. William Reeves, while sometimes publishing on archaeological matters, also translated, albeit from Latin. This is not particularly remarkable, as education for one of his rank at the time, and later training befitting an Anglican clergyman, would have included Latin. James Henthorn Todd was, along with Whitley Stokes, one of the few Protestant, Anglo-Irish scholars to translate from Irish. Todd remarked in the 'Preface' to his edition and translation of *Leabhar Imuinn* that one of his motivations for publishing the work was to save it from obscurity. He began by making claims about the worth of the text, stating:

A large number of the Hymns which it contains have never been published, and are wholly unknown to the learned. The Latin Hymns are accompanied throughout by a gloss, partly Latin and partly Irish, and scholia, very interesting in a philological point of view; whilst those of them which are written in the Irish language are, setting aside their historical importance, most valuable, from their great antiquity, to the student of Celtic literature.⁵⁰⁴

Having informed the reader of how lucky they were to be able to consult this valuable work, Todd then described how he, with the help of O'Donovan, O'Curry, and Reeves, had made this possible. He informed the reader that "time, however, is going on and every year's delay is fraught with danger."⁵⁰⁵ This

⁵⁰⁰ John O'Donovan, ed. and trans., *The Banquet of Dun Na N-Gedh and The Battle of Magh Rath: An Ancient Historical Tale* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1842).

⁵⁰¹ John O'Donovan, ed. and trans., *The Tribes and Customs of Hy-Many, commonly called O'Kelly's Country* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1843).

⁵⁰² John O'Donovan, ed. and trans., *The Genealogies, Tribes, and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach, commonly called O'Dowda's Country* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1844).

⁵⁰³ James Henthorn Todd, ed. and trans., *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh* (London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867).

⁵⁰⁴ Todd, *Leabhar Imuinn*, p. 1.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 2.

danger was not just to the manuscript itself, but, rather, also to those who knew how to interpret it: “The death of any one of the eminent Irish scholars, who have so long been engaged in the study of our ancient records, would render it impossible to bring out the work, at least the Irish portion of it, with the same fulness of illustration and accuracy which may now be attained.”⁵⁰⁶

Much has been made of the contribution by Protestant clergymen to antiquarian research in the nineteenth century, yet there were also Catholic clergymen who engaged with antiquarianism. Laurence Renehan and Matthew Horgan have already been mentioned, but there are three other clergymen who published on later church history in the 1840s and 1860s. Matthew Kelly (1814-1858) was a priest who had been professor of philosophy at the Irish College in Paris, being eventually appointed to the chair of ecclesiastical history at Maynooth in 1857. He was a founder member of the Celtic Society and edited and published for them an edition of John Lynch’s *Cambrensis Eversus* (1848, 1850, 1851), the *Apologia pro Hibernia* of Stephen White (1849), Philip O’Sullivan Beare’s *Historiae Catholicae Iberniae Compendium* (1850), and the *Calendar of Irish Saints: The Martyrology of Tallaght* (1857).⁵⁰⁷ Kelly’s interest in early modern history was shared by Charles Patrick Meehan, who had entered the Irish College in Rome in 1828, and been ordained in 1835. While in Rome, he had discovered the neglected graves of Hugh O’Neill and Hugh O’Donnell, which had strengthened his interest in Irish history. A friend of many of the Young Irelanders and the confessor of James Clarence Mangan, he contributed two items to the *Nation’s* Library of Ireland historical series; *The Confederation of Kilkenny* (1846) and a translation of Daniel O’Daly’s *The Geraldines, earls of Desmond, and the persecution of the Irish catholics* (1847).⁵⁰⁸ Cardinal Patrick Moran (1830-1911) was, like Kelly, interested in ecclesiastical history. A nephew of Cardinal Paul Cullen, he spent much of his life at the Irish College in Rome, as well as at the Roman Seminary and the Urbanian College of Propaganda Fide, and was awarded a doctorate of divinity by the future Pope Leo XIII at the age of twenty-two. He published

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁷ C. J. Woods. ‘Kelly, Matthew’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a4456>.

⁵⁰⁸ Linde Lunney and James Quinn, ‘Meehan, Charles Patrick’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a5784>.

some works on early modern Catholic history: *Historical sketch of the persecutions suffered by the catholics of Ireland under the rule of Cromwell and the puritans* (1862), *History of the catholic archbishops of Dublin*, vol. 1 (1864), and *Spicilegium Ossoriense* (1874).⁵⁰⁹

The topics outlined above were the focus of much antiquarian research in the nineteenth century. Although a Catholic middle class in Ireland rose from the eighteenth century onwards,⁵¹⁰ compared with their Protestant counterparts, Catholic scholars were frequently less financially secure. This meant that they could not afford to engage with some research topics, particularly those which involved travel. This included research at archaeological sites, which would have involved costs in accommodation and equipment. Catholic scholars were often Irish-speakers and, therefore, capable of translating material from Irish to English. Dublin-based Protestant scholars, who were Anglo-Irish, did not necessarily have the linguistic skills to be able to do so as, in most cases, they did not speak (or need to speak) Irish. When they did so it was through choice - unlike rural Protestant clergy or landlords who needed to be able to speak to their subordinates.

Occasionally, there was collaboration on projects between the two communities of scholars. In the nineteenth century, there are two examples of collaboration on large scale antiquarian projects. One is the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey, which demonstrated how collaboration could vastly aid antiquarian research. The other is the Commission to translate the Brehon laws, which was not successful.

The Ordnance Survey was formed in June 1791,⁵¹¹ several years after the commencement of the Military Survey of Scotland, begun by William Roy in 1747 to counteract any further Jacobite uprisings.⁵¹² The Survey of England began soon after the Ordnance Survey's foundation in 1791⁵¹³ and moved to Wales soon after in 1803.⁵¹⁴ The first map, of the County of Kent, was published

⁵⁰⁹ John Molony, 'Moran, Patrick Francis', *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a5960>.

⁵¹⁰ See Maureen Wall, 'The Rise of a Catholic Middle Class in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Irish Historical Studies*, vol. 11, no. 42 (Sept. 1958), pp. 91-115.

⁵¹¹ Rachel Hewitt, *Map of a Nation: A Biography of the Ordnance Survey* (London: Granta Books, 2010), p. 113.

⁵¹² *Ibid*, pp. 19-20.

⁵¹³ *Ibid*, p. 125.

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 182.

in 1801.⁵¹⁵ It was apparent to all that a similar survey would be carried out at some point in Ireland and this duly began in 1824. Where the Ordnance Survey of Ireland differed from that carried out in Great Britain - and which was possibly influenced by the problems of Welsh toponymy encountered in the surveys of Wales in the 1750s and the 1820s,⁵¹⁶ - was in the creation of a department to deal with topography. The importance of place names in the Survey of Ireland is exemplified in ‘Colby’s Instructions for the Interior Survey of Ireland’, where he states in instruction 33 that “the persons employed on the survey are to endeavour to obtain the correct orthography of the names of places by diligently consulting the best authorities within their reach.”⁵¹⁷ And with this idea in mind, the topographical or historical department of the Ordnance Survey was founded in the early 1830s.⁵¹⁸ The person in charge of this department was Thomas Larcom, who “was in favour of adopting the version that was closest to the original Irish form, ‘not venturing to restore the original and often obsolete name, but approaching as near to correctness as was practicable’.”⁵¹⁹ In order to find these original forms of place names, it was necessary to compare written sources with current forms. The task required an expert in the Irish language and its literature.⁵²⁰ Edward O’Reilly was appointed in April 1830,⁵²¹ but after his death some months later was replaced by John O’Donovan,⁵²² who had known Larcom since 1828.⁵²³ The department was headed by the antiquarian, George Petrie who, along with O’Donovan, assembled a team of scholars around him, which by 1834 included the scholar, Eugene Curry, later O’Curry.⁵²⁴ The way it worked was thus: O’Donovan had spent some three and a half years researching placenames in printed and manuscript sources in Dublin

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 163.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 191-4.

⁵¹⁷ ‘Colby’s *Instructions for the Interior Survey of Ireland, 1825*’, cited in J. H. Andrews, *A Paper Landscape: The Ordnance Survey in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001, reprint 2006).

⁵¹⁸ Doherty, *The Irish Ordnance Survey*, pp. 19-20.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 19.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid*, p.19. Quote from Larcom cited in *ibid*.

⁵²¹ Ó Maolfabhail, “Éadbhard Ó Raghallaigh, Seán Ó Donnabháin agus an tSuirbhéireacht Ordanáis 1830-4”, p. 75.

⁵²² Ó Muraíle, ‘Seán Ó Donnabháin’, pp. 11-82; 15.

⁵²³ Doherty, *The Irish Ordnance Survey*, p. 19.

⁵²⁴ Breandán Ó Madagáin, “Eugene O’Curry (1794-1862): Pioneer of Irish Scholarship”, *Clare: History and Society*, Matthew Lynch and Patrick Nugent, eds. (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2008), pp. 425-448; 428.

and then, after realising that field staff were of little use to him in establishing contemporary usage due to their ignorance of the Irish language, went into the country himself to collect place names.⁵²⁵ After O'Curry joined the Topographical Department, he acted as O'Donovan's cross-referencer in Dublin, although he himself was active in the field between 1837 and 1839.⁵²⁶ O'Donovan, whilst out on the road, would send back letters a few times a week to Dublin, and these contained much of the information he had gathered about place names from both locals and manuscripts in private collections, as well as information about historical and antiquarian sites he had come across on his way. Petrie, O'Curry, and the others involved in the Topographical Department used the letters for their own antiquarian researches, while, as previously mentioned, O'Curry cross-referenced the information within them with manuscripts in Dublin libraries and institutions. It could be argued that two things were necessary for the Survey's endeavours to be successful. Firstly, O'Donovan and O'Curry had to have been part of the topographical department, due to their high levels of scholarship. Secondly, the Topographical Department had to be led by people who were willing to put considerable effort into historical researches and into topography. As Joep Leerssen writes, "the troika of Petrie, O'Donovan and O'Curry has often been celebrated as the rescue team of Irish antiquarianism" by attempting to be more scientific and critical in their investigations into Gaelic antiquity.⁵²⁷ Because of their vast historical researches into the manuscripts and other sources, great care and attention was paid to the resulting translation and transliteration of place names, with O'Donovan frequently disagreeing with Larcom on how a place name should be written.⁵²⁸

The Topographical Department was fortunate to have O'Donovan and O'Curry because, not only did they give place names the full attention they deserved, they also had a great familiarity with manuscripts, the importance of which in deciding the original place names has already been shown. Although many manuscripts were in the possession of learned societies, such as the Royal

⁵²⁵ Paraphrase of Doherty, *The Irish Ordnance Survey*, p. 20.

⁵²⁶ Paraphrase of Ó Madagáin, "Eugene O'Curry", p. 430. Information about O'Curry's time in the field cited in *ibid.*

⁵²⁷ Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, pp. 102-3.

⁵²⁸ See, for example, Andrews, *A Paper Landscape*, pp. 123-6.

Irish Academy, and libraries, several still remained in private hands and it is thanks to the physical labours of O'Donovan in traversing the country that many were able to be consulted and further add to topographical knowledge.

The reason for the success of this project was the combination of the people involved. Petrie and Larcom were committed to making the Survey a success and knew to greatly value the contributions that O'Donovan and O'Curry made to the project. They themselves were also of value to it and the combination of scholars involved in the Topographical Section ensured its success. Doherty describes how beneficial it was for the Survey to have people like Larcom and Petrie involved:

Larcom and Petrie were committed to the new spirit of 'scientific' history sweeping Europe, and were convinced of the importance of topographical remains, written sources and folklore to historical research. They saw the Ordnance Survey as providing the opportunity and means to promote their ideas in Ireland and to conduct a systematic examination of historical sites and artefacts, in conjunction with a comprehensive study of literature and tradition. Memoirs, constituting a new history of Ireland, would correct errors and distortions, fill the gaps, and establish rigorous and scientific standards.⁵²⁹

The Ordnance Survey was the first collaborative antiquarian project that O'Donovan and O'Curry worked on together, but it was not to be their last. The next great endeavour that they undertook together was the project to translate the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland*, commonly referred to as the Brehon Laws. As will be shown, this project did not meet with the success that their work on the Ordnance Survey of Ireland had been. This is because the two Catholics were in a minority of Protestant scholars, who were answerable to the British Government, but who, above all, lacked the necessary competence.

In 1852 James Henthorn Todd and Charles Graves submitted an appeal to the British Government for funding for a project to translate some early Irish legal tracts, the *Senchus Éirenn* or, as they are commonly referred to, the Brehon

⁵²⁹ Doherty, *The Irish Ordnance Survey*, p. 79.

Laws.⁵³⁰ Funding was secured and given at an initial £5000 to set up and maintain a commission, and £500 per annum afterwards,⁵³¹ and this had been granted based on Eugene O’Curry’s transcription and translation of the *Book of Acaill* – thought to be one of the most difficult of the law texts.⁵³² The appeal for funding was accompanied by a pamphlet, ‘Suggestions with a view to the transcription and publication of the manuscripts of the British Museum, the University of Oxford, the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College Dublin’. Five volumes of edited texts of the early laws, with accompanying English translations, were published in total, comprising the Old Irish canonical text and a body of Middle Irish and Early Modern Irish glosses – the first volume in 1865, the second in 1869, the third in 1873, the fourth in 1879, and the last in 1901, and these included editions of the *Senchus Már*, the *Bechbretha*, and *Críth Gablach*, amongst many others. That any of the work was published at all was in itself a success, as the project was fraught with problems from the start and suffered a great setback with the untimely deaths of the two chief translators, John O’Donovan and Eugene O’Curry in 1861 and 1862 respectively. Among the problems facing the project was the identity of the people involved. The first meeting of the Commission for the publication of the ancient laws and institutes of Ireland was held on 7th December 1852 and the members were:

Dr. James Henthorn Todd, Dr. Charles Graves, Dr. George Petrie, Sir Thomas Larcom, Chief Baron David Pigot, Lord Chancellor Francis Blackburne, Lord Monteagle, Sir Joseph Napier, the Earl of Dunraven, the Earl of Ross, Lord Talbot de Malahide, and Rev. Dr. Thomas Romney Robinson.⁵³³

In the words of one commentator, “Of the twelve, two were Catholics, a few were Irish scholars but not Irish speakers; none had the tradition of Gaelic culture inherent in both O’Curry and O’Donovan.”⁵³⁴

⁵³⁰ Boyne, *John O’Donovan*, p. 96.

⁵³¹ *Ibid*, p. 98.

⁵³² *Ibid*.

⁵³³ Boyne, *John O’Donovan*, p. 99.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid*.

Inauspiciously enough, at the very first meeting the first problem arose. The Commissioners had appointed O'Donovan as editor and O'Curry as his assistant.⁵³⁵ Naturally, O'Curry felt slighted by this and objected. The project had been his idea in the first place and funding had been secured on the basis of his work.⁵³⁶ Graves pointed out to O'Curry that he was neither a classical scholar nor a legal expert, whereas O'Donovan was both. O'Curry answered that the ancient laws were not written in Latin, but Gaelic, "and had baffled the best classical scholars at Trinity for centuries."⁵³⁷ The result was that both were appointed editors,⁵³⁸ though their former friendship – already strained – soured further as a result. Further problems arose from the fact that the task was enormous – one of the easiest parts was the transcription of between five and six thousand pages of manuscript. The preliminary translation of the transcripts took five years to do – O'Donovan ended up with twelve volumes, O'Curry with thirteen.⁵³⁹ Due to the delays in publishing and the great expense incurred, the Lords of the Treasury put pressure on the editors, which resulted in the commissioners coming to the conclusion that the delays were due to "an indifferent command of the English language on the part of the editors, and on their lack of expert knowledge of legal phrases and of ancient laws."⁵⁴⁰ The Second Report of the Commissioners recommends the employment of a third editor to rectify this.⁵⁴¹ O'Curry had wanted Whitley Stokes to fulfil this role as early as 1857,⁵⁴² but Stokes declined, as he did not feel himself to be competent enough, stating:

I can well believe that Curry's and O'Donovan's translations will need revision. I have seen and tried in vain to understand a specimen of the

⁵³⁵ Minutes of the First Meeting of the Commissioners appointed to superintend the publication of the ancient laws and institutions of Ireland in RIA MS 39/CG/BL/ 1.

⁵³⁶ Boyne, *John O'Donovan*, p. 99.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁸ Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Commissioners appointed to superintend the publication of the ancient laws and institutions of Ireland in RIA MS 39/CG/BL/ 1. See also Boyne, *John O'Donovan*, p. 99.

⁵³⁹ John O'Hagan, "The Study of Jurisprudence – Roman, English, and Celtic", *Occasional Papers and Addresses by Lord O'Hagan, K.P.* (London 1884) p. 81.

⁵⁴⁰ Boyne, *John O'Donovan*, p. 100.

⁵⁴¹ Second Report of the Commissioners for Publishing the Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland in RIA 24 O 39/GG/BL/5.

⁵⁴² Dr. Sigerson, 'Eugene O'Curry's Statement', *Journal of the National Literary Society of Ireland*, I (1902), pp. 147-59; 152.

former's versions of some ancient law, and O'Donovan's acquaintance with English legal technical terms is I fear not very great. ... In truth, there is hardly any work I should like better, did I only feel myself competent. But my knowledge of Roman law is very slight – of civil law nil – and of the *Leges Barbarorum*, A[nglo] Saxon and Welsh law only such a smattering as has been found by reading Michelet's little book on the *Origines du Droit Français*....⁵⁴³

In 1860, a parliamentary order was issued to get the Commission to appoint an editor skilled in ancient law and legal terminology, removing O'Donovan – an expert linguist and trained lawyer, and O'Curry – the most skilled scholar of his day in the interpretation of old Irish manuscripts – and replacing them with a Professor of Jurisprudence at Queen's College, Belfast, William Neilson Hancock, who could not speak, read, or write Irish, and his assistant, Thomas Busted, who was likewise handicapped.⁵⁴⁴ O'Donovan and O'Curry worked thenceforth separately from each other under Hancock's supervision, correcting and re-correcting printer's proofs and not being allowed to confer on translations.⁵⁴⁵ The reason for the Commission's decision is not known; Éamon De hÓir suggests that:

b'fhéidir gur dheacair leo glacadh leis an Donnabhánach agus le hEoghan Ó Comhraí, clan fheirmeoirí beaga Caitliceacha gan léann ollscoile, mar scoláirí; ba mhaith ann iad, b'fhéidir leis na 'curious tracts' a bhí le fail i nGaeilge a mhíniú do na fíorscoláirí, ach ba shin an méid. Má bhí an garbhthiontú a bhí déanta roinnt aisteach anseo is ansiúd – agus bí cinnte go raibh – is é is dóichí gur mheas an Coimisiún nach é deacracht an bhuntéacs ba chuis leis ach easpa Bhéarla lucht an tiontaithe.

(Perhaps they found it difficult to accept O'Donovan and O'Curry, the children of Catholic small farmers and lacking university education, as scholars; they might have been good enough to explain the 'curious

⁵⁴³ RIA MS 240/CG/BL/148 Letter from Stokes to Charles Graves dated 18 March 1857

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 100-101.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 101.

tracts in Irish to genuine scholars, but that was all. If the rough translation that had been done was rather strange in places – and no doubt it was – the Commission probably ascribed this not to the difficulty of interpreting the original text but to the translators’ inadequate English.)⁵⁴⁶

O’Donovan died towards the end of the following year, O’Curry the year after, leaving the laws nowhere near completed. After O’Donovan’s death, Hancock suggested that O’Curry continue editing the *Book of Aicill*, while he and Busted attempted to progress with the *Senchas Mór*.⁵⁴⁷ Hancock, however, soon came to realise that he needed another assistant who would be able to help him with the Irish. He approached John O’Beirne Crowe, Professor of Irish at Queen’s College, Galway, who refused him, as it would involve a demotion on Crowe’s part.⁵⁴⁸ Hancock was eventually assisted by the Reverend Thaddeus O’Mahony,⁵⁴⁹ Professor of Irish at Trinity College, Dublin and translator of Keating’s *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, who assumed responsibility for the Irish language aspect of the *Book of Aicill* and the *Senchus Mór* after O’Curry’s death on 30th July 1862.⁵⁵⁰ Before his death, O’Curry had requested that he and O’Donovan’s names be printed, so that their work on the project might be known; not only was this done, but they were listed as joint editors of the *Book of Aicill* and the *Senchus Mór*, whereas Hancock was listed as an assistant.⁵⁵¹ Despite the setbacks, the laws were published in their entirety,⁵⁵² due in part to scholars such as William Maunsell Hennessey,⁵⁵³ who aided in the editing and correcting of some volumes after the deaths of O’Donovan and O’Curry. The

⁵⁴⁶ Éamon De hÓir, *Seán Ó Donnabháin agus Eoghan Ó Comhraí* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Teo, 1962), p. 101. My gratitude to Nollaig Ó Muraíle for help with the translation.

⁵⁴⁷ Letter W. Neilson Hancock to James Henthorn Todd, dated 9th January 1862 in RIA MS 24 O 39/CG/BL/76.

⁵⁴⁸ Letter John O’Beirne Crowe to W. Neilson Hancock, dated 16th June 1862 in RIA MS 24 O 39/CG/BL/45.

⁵⁴⁹ Letter W. Neilson Hancock to James Henthorn Todd, dated 1st August 1862 in RIA MS 24 O 39/CG/BL/76.

⁵⁵⁰ De hÓir, *Seán Ó Donnabháin agus Eoghan Ó Comhraí*, p. 112.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid*, 111.

⁵⁵² W. Neilson Hancock, et al, eds., *The Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland*, VI Vols. (Dublin: A. Thom & Company, 1865-1901). For a scholarly discussion of the original law texts themselves, see Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Liam Breatnach, and Aidan Breen, ‘The Laws of the Irish’, *Peritia* 3 (1984), pp. 382-438.

⁵⁵³ Lúing, ‘William Maunsell Hennessey’, p. 61.

linguistic ability of the scholars involved in the project was essential to its success in being published; there were some scholars, such as Stokes who thought the *Laws* of little use to philologists⁵⁵⁴ and claimed that it was sad to think of the public expense and labour wasted on this futile endeavour.⁵⁵⁵

The success of the work on the Ordnance Survey of Ireland had been dependent upon the figures of Thomas Larcom and George Petrie, who both demanded excellence from their employees and who knew that scholarship of this calibre was the result of careful study. The reason for the difficulties faced during the translation of the Brehon Laws was due to the lack of like-minded scholars on the steering committee and above that in the British Government.

4.2 Publishing the Works

There were differences between Catholic and Protestant antiquarians in the publication of their works and more specifically in the media in which they disseminated them.⁵⁵⁶ Most antiquarian works were published in book form, though the cost of producing in this medium (rather than in journal-articles) meant that relatively few were produced. There were more books published by Protestant scholars, but Catholics were also well represented, particularly by O'Donovan and O'Curry. The works that were printed in books were often scholarly editions and translations of medieval Irish materials, such as Reeves's translation of Adomnán's *Vita Sancti Columbae* or Todd's translation of *Lebor Imuinn*. Among the exceptions to this were the publication of O'Curry's *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History* and the posthumous publication of his lectures *On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*. There were also a small amount of publications to aid those learning Irish.⁵⁵⁷

Chapter two discussed how the Ossianic Society was formed after certain members of the Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society did not like the

⁵⁵⁴ Whitley Stokes, *A Criticism of Dr. Atkinson's Glossary to Volumes I-V of the Ancient Laws of Ireland* (London: David Nutt, 1903), p. 5.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 49.

⁵⁵⁶ See Appendix B for a list of publications.

⁵⁵⁷ See chapter four for more on these and Appendix B for a list of the publications.

numbers of gentlemen involved in the Society. Protestant involvement in nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism is reflected in the journal articles for several societies. Nine volumes of the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* were published over the course of nine years. Only fourteen articles were written by Catholic scholars and many of these were by O'Donovan and Windele. The rest of the articles were written by Church of Ireland clergy, such as Charles Graves and William Reeves; Church of Ireland gentlemen scholars, such as Erasmus D. Borrowes and Herbert Francis Hore; Ulster Presbyterian scholars, such as Robert Shipboy MacAdam, James Carruthers, and John Scott Porter. The Kilkenny Archaeological Society published five volumes of transactions over four years. Of all the articles in these, thirteen were written by Catholics. Again, these largely consisted of writings by John O'Donovan and John Windele, while the most frequent Protestant contributor was the Rev. James Graves. The Irish Archaeological Society, Celtic Society, Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, and Ossianic Society focused on publishing books rather than journals, though the last-mentioned society published transactions between 1853 and 1858. These last, however, focused solely on publishing aspects of Ossianic literature edited by one person rather than articles by various different contributors.⁵⁵⁸ The books published by the other societies were equal in the amount of contributions by Catholic and Protestant antiquarians. John O'Donovan and James Hardiman were among the most frequent Catholic authors, with occasional output from Eugene O'Curry. The most frequent Protestant authors were Reeves, Todd, and Aquilla Smith.⁵⁵⁹

Magazines were another way for antiquarians to disseminate their research in a manner that was affordable and likely to reach a larger market than that for books. As Francesca Benatti points out in her study of the various Irish penny journals, they were never merely mass-circulation periodicals, but ones more closely aligned to the search for an Irish identity.⁵⁶⁰ Benatti also states that

⁵⁵⁸ See, for example, *Transactions of the Ossianic Society for the year 1855: The Pursuit after Diarmuid O'Duibhne, and Grainne, the Daughter of Cormac Mac Airt, King of Ireland in the Third Century*, vol. III, ed., Standish Hayes O'Grady (Dublin: John O'Daly, 1857).

⁵⁵⁹ See Appendix B in this thesis for a list of these works, as well as the appendix to Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*, pp. 134-135.

⁵⁶⁰ Francesca Benatti, *A National and Concordant Feeling: Penny Journals in Ireland, 1832-1842*, unpublished PhD thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2003, p. 15. See also Maurice Earls, *The Dublin Press 1815-50: A Study of Contending Ideologies*, unpublished PhD thesis, University College, Dublin, 1984.

when a magazine indicated that it was from either Dublin or Edinburgh, for example, it was an indicator to the nineteenth-century reader that the magazine partook of “the national character” of those countries.⁵⁶¹ This section will make references to the following magazines: The *Dublin University Magazine*, the *Dublin Penny Journal*, the *Irish Penny Journal*, *Duffy’s Hibernian Magazine*, and the *Irish Penny Magazine*. The *Dublin University Magazine* will only be mentioned briefly, as it was never designated an antiquarian publication, but rather a literary and political one. There were fewer than ten original articles on antiquarian research in ninety volumes over forty-five years. There were some reviews written by antiquarians about other antiquarian works, but very little original work was presented.

The *Dublin Penny Journal* (hereafter DPJ) was founded in 1832 by the Rev. Caesar Otway and John Sewell Folds, with Otway as editor. Otway was a Church of Ireland clergyman and antiquarian, who had formerly edited the *Christian Examiner* and had helped to design the *Dublin University Magazine*.⁵⁶² Otway edited just seven issues by himself; issue seven announced the arrival of a new co-editor and contributor – George Petrie.⁵⁶³ Petrie became one of the chief contributors to *DPJ* and helped to change the format, by illustrating the front page with a picture of an archaeological ruin and writing the accompanying piece, which focused on the history of the place and references to it in the annals. Otway contributed far fewer articles than Petrie, signing himself as ‘Terence O’Toole’.⁵⁶⁴ One of his writings for the *Journal* was his eight-part series ‘A Tour to Connaught’. John O’Donovan was another frequent author for *DPJ*, contributing nineteen articles on Irish literary history. As Benatti highlights in her thesis, the most popular topic in the *DPJ* was the history and topography of Ireland, with one hundred and six articles.⁵⁶⁵ Irish

⁵⁶¹ Benatti, *A National and Concordant Feeling*, p. 46.

⁵⁶² Benatti, *A National and Concordant Feeling*, p. 54.

⁵⁶³ *Dublin Penny Journal*, I, 7, 11th August 1832, p. 56. No title given. For a discussion focused on George Petrie and his contribution to the *Penny Journals*, see Maggie Brier, *Hope and History: an Examination of George Petrie’s Landscape Paintings and Penny Journal Essays in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, unpublished M.A. thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2004.

⁵⁶⁴ See ‘introduction’ to *Irish Identity and Literary Periodicals, 1832-1842*, edited and introduced by Nicholas Lee (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2000). In the introduction to volume I, Lee discusses the various pseudonyms of the contributors to the *DPJ*, *IPJ*, and *IPM*. Petrie signed himself as ‘P’ and John O’Donovan, ‘JO’D’.

⁵⁶⁵ Benatti, *A National and Concordant Feeling*, p. 74.

antiquities had forty-seven.⁵⁶⁶ Benatti dubs the *DPJ* an “antiquarian” publication,⁵⁶⁷ yet only the first volume of collected issues for the years 1832 to 1833 can really be termed this. After volume II, the journal changed editorial hands and the new editor, Mr P. Dixon Hardy, had very little inclination to continue Petrie’s work. He assumed the editorship from issue fifty-seven onwards⁵⁶⁸ and, perhaps to send a sign to Petrie about the new direction of the journal, he published in a later issue Henry O’Brien’s essay on the round towers, which had lost to Petrie’s in a Royal Irish Academy competition.⁵⁶⁹ John O’Donovan contributed the last article in a series on *Cormac’s Glossary* in Hardy’s first issue as editor, but after this he ceased writing for the journal. William Betham wrote seven further articles for the *DPJ* between 1833 and 1835 on people such as Red Hugh O’Donnell and on places such as Roscrea and the Grianán of Ailech.⁵⁷⁰ Aside from Betham’s, there were a small number of antiquarian articles written by unnamed people, but the distinction between Petrie and Otway’s and Hardy’s editorship is remarkable. In the 111th issue (16th August 1834), an unnamed author wrote a piece called ‘The Antiquary’, in which an exceptionally unflattering depiction of the figure was given.⁵⁷¹ The antiquary is described as having “so strange a natural affection to worm-eaten speculation, that it is apparent he has a worm in his skull.” After insulting those interested in archaeological remains, the author turned his attentions to antiquarians who worked with manuscripts, describing them thus:

He had rather interpret one obscure word, in any old senseless discourse, than be the author of the most ingenious new one. He devours an old manuscript with greater relish than worms and moths do; and, though there be nothing in it, values it above any thing printed, which he accounts but a novelty. When he happens to cure a small botch in an old

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 93.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 99.

⁵⁶⁸ Volume II, issue 57, 3rd August 1833.

⁵⁶⁹ Volume II, issue 98, 17th May 1834, pp. 361-364.

⁵⁷⁰ See issues 68, 19th October 1833; 74, 30th November 1833; 86, 22nd February 1834; 95, 26th April 1834; 119, 11th October 1834; 122, 1st November 1834; 124, 15th November 1834; and 148, 2nd May 1835. Betham used the initials ‘B’ or ‘WB’.

⁵⁷¹ Pp. 51-52.

author, he is as proud of it, as if he had got the philosopher's stone and could cure all the diseases of mankind.

As the *Dublin Penny Journal* continued publishing antiquarian articles after this, it is interesting that this article should have appeared in it. It can only be assumed that it was intended to insult the former antiquarian editors of the journal though even in issue 185 (16th January 1836) a translation into Irish by O'Curry of a poem, 'Thou art gone to the grave', was included. The journal ceased circulation in 1836 due to financial difficulties.⁵⁷² Even as late as 1840, however, Samuel Ferguson had not forgiven Hardy for taking over from Petrie and Otway and not maintaining the high standard of work they had commenced.⁵⁷³

In this journal, the number of antiquarian contributions by Catholic scholars was dwarfed by the number of Protestant ones. However, if one takes the poems both composed and translated by James Clarence Mangan (1803-1849) into account,⁵⁷⁴ then the numbers of articles by both religious confessions are approximately equal.

Petrie's next large-scale publishing enterprise was the *Irish Penny Journal* (hereafter *IPJ*), which released its first issue on 4th July 1840. As might be expected, it drew heavily upon antiquarian research for its articles. Like the *DPJ* under Petrie's editorship, the front page consisted of a drawing by Petrie of an Irish town or archaeological remain, for which he wrote the accompanying text. Between the first issue and the last (52, 26th April 1841), Petrie contributed forty articles. O'Donovan, in contrast, wrote eight. There were some other unnamed writers who gave the journal articles on antiquarian matters, as well as some poems by Mangan, but Petrie was the main antiquarian contributor to the journal.

The *Irish Penny Magazine* (hereafter *IPM*) began circulation on 2nd January 1841, in its second incarnation. It had begun circulating in 1833, lasting to 1834, but was again re-issued in 1841. As the second issue of *IPM* was, to

⁵⁷² See 'Note to the Reader' at the beginning of Volume IV. The last issue was 208, 25th June 1836.

⁵⁷³ See *Dublin University Magazine*, volume 15, no. 85, January 1840 'The Dublin Penny Journal', pp. 112-128.

⁵⁷⁴ Mangan used the pseudonyms 'C', 'Clarence St., Liverpool', 'Clarence', 'J.C.M', 'J.M', and 'M'. See Lee, *Irish Identity and Literary Periodicals*, Vol. I, p. xii.

begin with, a much revised edition of the 1833 articles, I have here referred to the 1841 version. O'Donovan assumed Petrie's role as topographer and chief antiquarian writer for the journal.⁵⁷⁵ Over one year⁵⁷⁶ and two volumes, John O'Donovan wrote forty-three articles for the magazine. Mangan contributed translations of twenty-seven pieces of Irish literature; Petrie, one article on the fairy superstitions from the north of Ireland; and Betham, seven – three on archaeological remains and the rest were continuations of Petrie's study of fairy superstitions from the north of Ireland. John Windele wrote two pieces on some archaeological remains near Kinsale and D. C. Grosse, esq, wrote seven on archaeological remains all over the country.

In comparison with the *Irish Penny Magazine*, the *Dublin University Magazine* (hereafter *DUM*) was solely the domain of Protestant writers. It has already been mentioned that very few items of antiquarian interest were published in this magazine over the course of its run. Original material composed for the magazine consisted of an article on 'The Learning of the Ancient Irish' by a J. S. of Belfast and some items by William Wilde, which would later form part of his 1852 publication, *Irish Popular Superstitions*.

On a much smaller scale than the magazines outlined above, Windele's short-lived publication, *Bolster's Quarterly Magazine*, also contained some articles on antiquarian subjects amidst many on contemporary Romantic poets. The magazine only lasted for two volumes between 1826 and 1827, which were edited by Windele. Number two contains an extract from James Hardiman's *History of the Town of Galway*, but Windele was the main contributor of the antiquarian articles

The last magazine to be considered is *Duffy's Hibernian Magazine* (hereafter *DHM*), which began circulation in 1860. Until his death in December 1861, John O'Donovan was the main contributor, with several articles on the history of prominent Irish families, for example the O'Donnells and the Maguires. The archaeologist William Wakeman wrote several articles on topics ranging from crannogs to Pagan and Christian practices in the Aran Islands. Church of Ireland and Catholic clergymen began writing from January 1862;

⁵⁷⁵ Petrie was not the editor of this magazine.

⁵⁷⁶ The last issue was published on 26th March 1842.

from the latter group there were contributions on subjects such as the Irish College in Rome and whether the Early Irish Church was Catholic or Protestant.⁵⁷⁷ The last issue was number thirty in June 1864, which contained no items of antiquarian interest.

It is fair to say that publishing in magazines was equally distributed between Catholic and Protestant scholars. This, however, is based upon the number of articles published, which were normally by the same author, rather than the number of authors involved. As was stated above, books and society journals were limited to fellow antiquarians or readers from the middle and upper classes. Magazines, on the other hand, had a much larger readership, due to their relative affordability. The significance of the equal distribution of the different confessions meant that the general public had access to the works of both Catholic and Protestant scholars equally. When we consider this in light of Benatti's comment, given above, that the penny journals were never just mass-circulated periodicals, but were more closely aligned to the search for an Irish identity, it may be possible to discern some influence upon this which originated with a Protestant antiquarian. As the majority of Ireland was Catholic during the years that the magazines were in publication, this possible influence is interesting. Chapter four will discuss Protestant and Catholic antiquarian influences upon Cultural Nationalism and the search for an Irish identity in greater detail.

4.3 Contemporary Events and the Antiquarian Works

The period 1830 to 1876 witnessed events that had a great impact upon Ireland. These included the relaxation of the last of the Penal Laws, the movement for the repeal of the Act of Union, the so-called 'Tithe War', the Great Famine, the Young Ireland rebellion, the Fenian rebellion of 1867, and the Irish Land Act of 1870, which would spark the later Land War. Protestant scholars were usually the only ones who researched contemporary Ireland, and, therefore, references to these events appear only in their works. Catholic

⁵⁷⁷ The Rev. Patrick Francis Moran in Vol. II, issue 7, July 1862 for the former and the Rev. James Gaffney in Vol. V, issue 25, January 1864, for the latter.

scholars, and some Protestants, were concerned about the Great Famine's effects upon the state of the Irish language. They were particularly concerned with the number of speakers left and whether the 1851 census could measure this.⁵⁷⁸ Much of what was written about the Famine was a reflective lament for a lost way of life that could not be regained. Writing in 1855, Petrie remarked that:

The "land of song" was no longer tuneful; or, if a human sound met the traveller's ear, it was only that of the feeble and despairing wail for the dead. This awful, unwonted silence, which, during the famine and subsequent years, almost everywhere prevailed, struck more fearfully upon their imaginations, as many Irish gentlemen informed me, and gave them a deeper feeling of the desolation with which the country had been visited, than any other circumstance which had forced itself upon their attention.⁵⁷⁹

Petrie was based in Dublin, though this did not keep him removed from experiences like this as an everyday occurrence.⁵⁸⁰ Largely also based in Dublin, Wilde had a house in County Galway and had witnessed the effects of the Famine first hand. Writing in 1852, Wilde declared that the Famine as having shaken Ireland to the core and, from a folklore point of view, changed it irreparably. He wrote that:

The great convulsions which society of all grades has lately experienced, the failure of the potato crop, and a most unparalleled extent of emigration, together with bankrupt landlords, pauperizing poor-laws, grinding officials, and decimating workhouses, have broken up the very foundations of social intercourse.⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁸ See chapter four for further details.

⁵⁷⁹ Petrie, *The Ancient Music of Ireland*, p. xii.

⁵⁸⁰ See Ó Muraile, 'Seán Ó Donnabháin', pp. 57-58, for some of O'Donovan's experiences of the Famine in Dublin, which Petrie may also have experienced.

⁵⁸¹ William Wilde, *Irish Popular Superstitions* (Dublin: James McGlashan, 1852), pp. 9-10.

Wilde's 1867 publication, *Lough Corrib: It's Shores and Islands with Notices of Lough Mask*, also treated of the Great Famine. Set in Connacht, one of the worst-affected areas, the subject is unavoidable. Again, Wilde discussed how the failure of the potato had an irreparable effect upon the populace, resulting in the death and emigration of "hundreds and thousands."⁵⁸² Wilde was, arguably, writing for an upper-class Dublin or British audience;⁵⁸³ therefore he may not have wished to dwell on the subject which might have called for accusatory tones.⁵⁸⁴ Because of this, Wilde possibly felt unable to voice a personal opinion on the Great Famine. His wife, Lady Jane Wilde, née Elgee, better known by her *Nation* pseudonym, Speranza, could express herself, however, and in much stronger terms:

Two terrible calamities fell upon Ireland - famine and pestilence; and by these two dread ministers of God's great purposes, the Irish race were uprooted and driven forth to fulfil their appointed destiny. A million of our people emigrated; a million of our people died under these judgements of God. Seventeen millions worth of the property passed from the time-honoured names into the hands of strangers. The echoes of the old tongue - call it Pelasgian, Phoenician, Celtic, Irish, what you will, still the oldest in Europe, is dying out at last along the stony plains of Mayo and the wild sea-cliffs of the storm-rent western shore. Scarcely a million and a half are left of people too old to emigrate, amidst roofless cabins and ruined villages, who speak that language now. Exile, confiscation, or death, was the final fate written on the page of history for the much-enduring children of Ireland. One day they may reassert themselves in the new world, or in other lands.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸² William Wilde, *Lough Corrib: It's Shores and Islands with Notices of Lough Mask* (Dublin: McGlashan & Gill, 1867), pp. 168-169.

⁵⁸³ The work begins by outlining the itinerary from Dublin, indicating that the traveller was either beginning his journey there, or had arrived by ferry into the Port of Dublin.

⁵⁸⁴ See, in this context, Charles Edward Trevelyan's publicised views that the Famine was a judgement from God on the Irish and his decision to end government-sponsored aid to the Poor Law districts. See, Donnchadh Ó Corráin and Tomás O'Riordan, 'Charles Edward Trevelyan' in *Ireland, 1815-1870*, pp. 261-263; 261-262.

⁵⁸⁵ Lady Wilde ('Speranza'), *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms and Superstitions of Ireland* (London: Ward & Downey, 1888), p.327.

Note, however, the similarity of Speranza's views with Trevelyan's notorious view that the disaster of the Great Famine was in accord with the will of God, or "God's great purpose."⁵⁸⁶ This view was also espoused in some Irish-language poetry, for example that of Peadar Ó Gealacháin, whose poetry Tomás Ó Fiaich termed "useful source-material for the historian of the Famine era."⁵⁸⁷ A contemporary view contradicting this can be found in Máire Ní Dhroma's poem, 'Amhrán na bPrátaí Dubha', dated to approximately 1850, and is expressed most particularly in the lines "Ní hé Dia cheap riamh an obair seo,/ Daoine bochta a chur le fuacht is le fán" ("It was never God who thought up this work,/ Of casting out poor people to wander in the cold).⁵⁸⁸ This view was echoed by William Bennett of the Society of Friends, who asked "is this to be regarded in the same light of a Divine dispensation and punishment?"⁵⁸⁹ The Church of Ireland was a source of aid during the Famine, impressing both the Society of Friends with their efforts⁵⁹⁰ and the Catholic Church.⁵⁹¹ Donal Kerr writes that the bishops' address at the 1850 Synod of Thurles "can be seen as an attempt to counter the ideology of Trevelyan and the political economists."⁵⁹² The address emphasised the blame to be laid at the feet of the penal laws for causing the Famine, and attempted to remove the apportioned blame for its occurrence from the supposed indolence of the Irish peasant. The address also suggested that the Government's contempt for the poor was both unchristian and contrary to the Gospels.⁵⁹³ Evangelical Protestants, however, largely saw the Famine as a judgement from God caused by idolatry. The Reverend Edward

⁵⁸⁶ See n. 584 above.

⁵⁸⁷ Tomás Ó Fiaich, 'The Ulster Poetic Tradition in the 19th Century', in *Léachtaí Cholm Cille III* (Má Nuad: An Sagart, 1972), pp. 19-37; 32. For more on Ó Gealacháin, see Ciarán Dawson, *Peadar Ó Gealacháin: Scríobhaí* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1992) and Ó Buachalla, *I mBéal Feirste Cois Cuan*, pp. 122-135.

⁵⁸⁸ Máire Ní Dhroma, 'Amhrán na bPrátaí Dubha', cited in Crowley et al, eds., *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine*, p. 608; Cormac Ó Gráda, *An Drochshaol: Béaloideas agus Amhráin* (Baile Átha Cliath: Coiscéim, 1994), pp. 59-60; Nioclás Tóibín, *Duanaire Déiseach* (Baile Átha Cliath: Sáirséal agus Dill, 1978, second edition 1979), pp. 19-20; and Donal Kerr, *The Catholic Church and the Famine* (Blackrock, Co. Dublin: The Columba Press, 1996), p. 82. Translation by Kerr in *ibid.* For more on Máire Ní Dhroma and 'Amhrán na bPrátaí Dubha', see Ciaran Ó Gealbháin, "'Na Prátaí Dubha" agus Déantúis Eile a Leagtar ar Mholly na Páirce', *An Linn Bhuí: Iris Ghaeltacht na nDéise*, 19 (2015), pp. 41-62.

⁵⁸⁹ Cited in Kerr, *The Catholic Church and the Famine*, p. 82.

⁵⁹⁰ Christine Kinealy, *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 152.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹² Kerr, *The Catholic Church and the Famine*, p. 83.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*

Nangle, founder of the Achill Mission, linked the Famine to the grant given by the British Government to Maynooth College in 1845 and he based this upon the timing – that the Famine had begun in the very month that the grant was given.⁵⁹⁴

The Young Ireland insurrection of 1848 is not mentioned in the antiquarian works, but there are some mentions of it in correspondence. In its European context of ‘the year of revolutions’, mention of 1848 is found in a letter from James Clarence Mangan to James Hardiman. He wrote that:

All the political changes that have convulsed Europe of late would appear to be but the precursors of some tremendous moral earthquake of which men entertain at present only a vague and dim presentiment. The pulpits of this city [Dublin] have rung with warnings to people on this subject. [...] We shall see strange things, if we live, in 1849 and 1850. Meantime let us all pray, work and humble ourselves before God. He is our only trust and stay.⁵⁹⁵

John O’Donovan mentioned the likelihood of something happening in a letter, claiming that “the people here seem all for war.”⁵⁹⁶ He also mentioned the trial of the Young Irelander, John Mitchel, in a letter to an unnamed correspondent.⁵⁹⁷

4.4 Early Medieval Ireland as a Subject for Study

As mentioned above, the medieval period was chosen frequently as a subject for study by antiquarians across Europe – the so-called ‘golden age’ in a country’s history. This was a period that was deemed by scholars as being of

⁵⁹⁴ Edward Nangle, *Protestant Watchman* (Dublin), 12th May 1848, p. 37, cited in Kinealy, *The Great Irish Famine*, p. 160.

⁵⁹⁵ Letter from James Clarence Mangan to James Hardiman, dated 7th December 1848. RIA 12 N 20-21, Hardiman Letters.

⁵⁹⁶ Letter to Denis Florence MacCarthy, dated 10th April 1848, NLI MS 132, letter 20. Cited in Boyne, *John O’Donovan*, p. 108.

⁵⁹⁷ Letter, John O’Donovan to ?, dated 2nd June 1848, NLI MS 132, no. 2, cited in Ellen Shannon-Mangan, *James Clarence Mangan: a Biography* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1996), p. 387.

particular interest to those seeking to extol the country's greatness. In many countries this period fell within the perimeters of the era called the Middle Ages.⁵⁹⁸ Stefan Berger points out that "medievalism was one of the most enduring characteristics of Romantic national history writing – especially [...] in those European nations which had 'big' middle ages."⁵⁹⁹ This period was carefully selected to best reflect the interest of the scholar or of the national myth that was being created. It can be argued that the medieval period in Ireland has left a vast amount of material for scholarship. This includes literature, both poetry and prose, historical texts, genealogies, and place-name lore, amongst other things.⁶⁰⁰ Due to the activities of monasteries, hereditary scribal and other learned families, and antiquarians in preserving, copying, and transmitting the texts, this material was available to those who had the necessary language skills to consult them. Admittedly, as a good deal of the material was in private collections, it was only available to those who sought it out and who were able to gain access. Given the amount of material written during the medieval period, and still extant, it was to be expected that this period should be the subject of particular study. Yet, the availability of material from later periods would indicate that there was an element of choice about the early medieval period in Ireland being subjected to detailed study. Though there were some nineteenth-century scholars⁶⁰¹ who studied the Vikings in Ireland and the Norse influence on such fields as that of toponymy, these scholars were few in number. Therefore, it is easy to construct a paradigm of nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism as consisting of scholars born in Ireland and who studied early medieval Ireland.

Looking at the works of these antiquarians and the image of medieval Ireland that they portray, it can be suggested that this period was carefully chosen. Even in the nineteenth century, the Irish were still considered by the

⁵⁹⁸ See the works given in n. 461 above for further details of how the medieval period was used in nineteenth-century nation-building in other European countries.

⁵⁹⁹ Berger, *The Past as History*, p. 114.

⁶⁰⁰ See above for discussion of antiquarian subjects and works.

⁶⁰¹ For example, George Downes, who wrote on the Norse influence on Irish place names. See his essay, 'On the Norse Geography of Ancient Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 2 (1840 - 1844), pp. 87-89.

English to be a barbarous people.⁶⁰² The antiquarian works, however, portrayed a so-called golden age of Irish learning, which helped to counteract the accusations of barbarity in both the antiquarians' minds and those of their readers. It was the role of the antiquarian to interpret and translate the information contained within manuscripts; first for fellow scholars and then for a wider audience of interested people. The same can be said for material remains.⁶⁰³ Where translations were concerned, those without knowledge of Old, Middle, Classical, or Modern Irish were entirely dependent on the works of those antiquarians who were able to translate texts from Irish into English. Translations from Latin were slightly different in that those who could afford to buy copies of the published translations were normally of a class who had received an education which included Latin. It should be pointed out, however, there there were few translations from Hiberno-Latin published in the nineteenth century. Readers were limited in what they could comprehend by the need for greater elucidation of the manuscripts. Biblical exegesis, for example, would have only been known to those with clerical training.⁶⁰⁴ As the primary sources and the tools to reading them lay in the hands of only a few, antiquarian works, therefore, are the interpretation of one person or a small group of scholars. People read what the antiquarians wished to portray. While scholars could argue among themselves regarding the various theories about the origins of round towers or Ogham, they were unable to do so regarding accuracy of translations or archaeological reports, at least not until the discipline of philology had become more firmly established from the 1850s onwards,⁶⁰⁵ in

⁶⁰² For example, the *Punch Magazine* cartoons depicting the Irish as apes. See, Roy Foster, *Paddy and Mr. Punch*, pp. 171-194 and L. P. Curtis, Jr., *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1971, revised edition 1997).

⁶⁰³ See, for example, Alain Schnapp's definition of antiquarianism in the introduction to *World Antiquarianism: Comparative Perspectives*, given in the introduction to this thesis on p. 17.

⁶⁰⁴ See, for example, Harold H. Rowdon, 'Theological Education in Historical Perspective', *Vox Evangelica* 7 (1971), pp. 75-87; 76, which stresses the necessity of "training in authoritative interpretation" in order to elaborate upon Christian doctrine. Benjamin W. Bacon highlights his belief that "if there is any value in Christianity, it must be obtained by right exposition of the Scriptures." ('Exegesis as an Historical Study', *The Biblical World*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Mar., 1901), pp. 178-184; 179). See also Thomas O'Loughlin, *Early Medieval Exegesis in the Latin West: Sources and Forms* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013), pp. xi-xiii and Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 217-218, for more modern treatment of Rowdon and Bacon's earlier arguments.

⁶⁰⁵ Dáibhí Ó Cróinín refers to Johann Caspar Zeuss's *Grammatica Celtica*, published in 1853, as being the seminal work which "freed Celtic Studies from the clutches of 'Celtomaniacs'" and helped to establish Zeuss as the master of the "new philology." Ó Cróinín, *Whitley Stokes*, pp. 7-8. It echoes a much older statement by Richard Irvine Best that the *Grammatica Celtica*'s appearance was the birth

the case of the former, and the discipline of archaeology had become more developed, in the case of the latter. From a scholar's point of view, this lack of enforceable standards could make the period attractive, as fellow antiquarians were less able to point out flaws, inconsistencies, and errors.

The eighteenth-century Celtic revival, and the Ossian controversy in particular, had created an interest in older literatures⁶⁰⁶ yet this certainly did not extend to reading scholarly works. In the nineteenth century, it is likely that the educated and literate members of the public, who were able to afford books, would have only shown interest in those works designed for a non-antiquarian readership. These include William Wilde's travel guides to the Boyne and Lough Corrib⁶⁰⁷ and Thomas Crofton Croker's *Researches in the South of Ireland*.⁶⁰⁸ As medieval Ireland was a very popular subject for antiquarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it remained as such in the nineteenth. Scholars could attach their own meanings and political views to this topic, if it served their purpose.

Conclusion

A large difference between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was in the areas in which research was carried out. Antiquarians in the previous century had largely focused on the question of origins, both of the Irish people and of the Irish language. Aside from one series of debates, which focused on the Pagan or Christian origin of round towers and Ogham inscriptions, the questions of origins did not feature predominantly in the nineteenth century. Instead, the search for origins was replaced by subjects which more closely matched the skills and social standing of the two communities. The rise of the

of Celtic philology. (R. I. Best, 'Bibliography of the Publications of Whitley Stokes', *Zeitschrift for Celtische Philologie*, 8 (1912), pp. 351-406; 352).

⁶⁰⁶ Leerssen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, p. 340.

⁶⁰⁷ William Wilde, *The Beauties of the Boyne and the Blackwater* (Dublin: McGlashan & Gill, 1849 reprinted Headford, Co. Galway: Kevin Duffy, 2003); *Lough Corrib, Its Shores and Islands: With Notices of Lough Mask* (Dublin: McGlashan & Gill, 1867 reprinted Headford, Co. Galway: Kevin Duffy, 2002/2007). See p. 97 of this thesis for a discussion of these works.

⁶⁰⁸ Thomas Crofton Croker, *Researches in the South of Ireland: illustrative of the scenery, architectural remains, and the manners and superstitions of the peasantry* (London: J. Murray, 1824, reprinted Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1981). See p. 93 of this thesis for a discussion of this work.

discipline of archaeology was patronised by Protestant scholars, who could afford to engage with this form of antiquarianism, both financially and in terms of time. They could likewise afford to make circuits of the country, collecting folklore and traditional music, though, as has been demonstrated, they were sometimes reliant on the linguistic skills of their Catholic counterparts. Unlike many antiquarian scholars in the eighteenth century,⁶⁰⁹ in the nineteenth some Protestants were capable of providing comprehensive and faithful translations of Irish-language source material (e.g. Todd and Stokes).

There are numerous possible reasons why scholars would chose to engage in the antiquarian study of early medieval Ireland. This period symbolised a time when Ireland was renowned for its sanctity and learning and people could and should be proud of it. By making the materials accessible to a wider audience, antiquarians were giving more people the opportunity to share in this admiration of their country, its past, and its people. Medieval Ireland, perceived as a non-sectarian country, could also have been an attractive prospect in a modern country where religious divisions had spilt over into social classes. The attempt to enforce non-sectarianism in the learned societies provided a home for scholars who did not want to be drawn into religious or political debates regarding their works or their own religion or politics. It is not known, however, just how much the rules regarding religion and politics were needed. It is noteworthy that the only religious debates known to have taken place in learned societies were between the so-called ‘paganists’, who were interested in pre-Christian Ireland, and the ‘Christians’, who were interested in the period from the conversion onwards.⁶¹⁰ Those affiliated with both groups were both Catholic and Protestant, resulting in two groups of Catholics and Protestants arguing with the other group. While this does count as a religious debate, it should be highlighted that members of the two religious communities were working together to argue their case against a similarly mixed group, reiterating

⁶⁰⁹ There were some Protestants in the eighteenth century, who engaged with Irish-language material, for example, William Neilson (1774-1821), who wrote a grammar of Irish (see chapter four and appendix A of this thesis for more on this) and John Toland (1670-1722), who was a correspondent of Edward Lhuyd (see Michael Brown, ‘Toland, John’, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8584> for more on him.). For a study of Protestants and the Irish language in the eighteenth century, see James Kelly, ‘Irish Protestants and the Irish Language in the Eighteenth Century’ in *Irish and English*, pp. 189-217.

⁶¹⁰ See Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*, pp. 14-33.

Viscount Strangford's claim that Protestant and Catholic laboured together, if not, in this instance, as harmoniously as Strangford portrayed.⁶¹¹

The historian David Bell asserts that national sentiment and nationalism are not the same thing, stating that "more than a sentiment, nationalism is a political program which has as its goal not merely to praise, defend, or strengthen a nation, but actively to construct one."⁶¹² What Bell calls national sentiment has been commonly described as cultural nationalism and he states that national sentiment is frequently mistaken as nationalism. This is because nationalists have often linked their political aims to the nation's characteristics, for example blood, language, and historical territory. Bell writes how nationalism evokes images of immemorial pasts and deep bonds between people and lands.⁶¹³ Nineteenth-century antiquarianism's links to and inspiration for the Irish Cultural Nationalism movement at the end of the nineteenth century will be discussed in the next chapter, but it could be suggested that one motivation for engagement with antiquarianism was a variant of national sentiment or cultural nationalism: national pride. This links back to the arguments for the choice of the early medieval period as Ireland's 'golden age'. It suggests that although this period did serve agendas, it also was simply a source of pride and was deserving of study based on this merit. Ireland was not the only country in Europe to invoke its medieval past during the course of the nineteenth century. As Leerssen, and Evans and Marchal demonstrate, most European nations in the nineteenth century emphasised aspects of their country's medieval past in their respective historiographies.⁶¹⁴ Quite frequently this took the form of origin myths; Leerssen describes European counterparts' in *Remembrance and Imagination*⁶¹⁵ and Irish origin myths are described more fully in chapter one.⁶¹⁶ Bernadette Cunningham explains how origin myths came to feature in nineteenth-century antiquarianism, particularly ones based on *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*. In this period, they were not a central research

⁶¹¹ See pp. 128-129 of this thesis for Strangford's comment.

⁶¹² David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 3.

⁶¹³ *Ibid*, p. 5.

⁶¹⁴ Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, pp. 27-29; Evans and Marchal, eds., *The Uses of the Middle Ages*.

⁶¹⁵ Pp. 27-29.

⁶¹⁶ See pp. 56-57 of this thesis.

question, but a result of nineteenth-century scholars examining seventeenth-century translations of them.⁶¹⁷ She argues that they would go on to influence Catholic nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁶¹⁸

Medieval Ireland was a period which people could be proud of, as antiquarian works had demonstrated the purported holiness and scholarly nature of the medieval Irish, and scholarship had made it more accessible to non-specialised audiences. The works published by antiquarians helped to strengthen and disseminate images of Ireland's past glories and the people who made them possible. The *Senchas Mór* depicts a highly functioning society with a complex legal system that heavily punished transgressors.⁶¹⁹ This would no doubt appeal to many as it could help combat notions of barbarity and savagery. The many exegetical and religious texts helped to portray the medieval Irish as a Godly people, capable of great elucidations of Biblical and Patristic material, and devoted to learning. The various texts that were written in continental Irish monasteries helped to further develop this idea and to demonstrate that this learning was desirable for foreign clergy, monarchs, and the general public. This material was written in both Latin and Old and Middle Irish, showing just how deep Irish monastic learning was. The same could not be said for the modern Irish world. Writing in 1848 to Reeves, O'Donovan reveals his despair at the Gaelic world, stating:

I fear the Gaelic world is likely to die of sheer inanimation. Societies gone to pot! [...] The failure of the potatoes and the fear of Mitchel have among the Gaedhil frightened literature of existence.⁶²⁰

O'Donovan feared for the survival of Irish and seemed to accept its death as inevitable. After publishing *A Grammar of the Irish Language* in 1845, he remarked to Reeves that only antiquarians would buy it and that it was likely to

⁶¹⁷ Bernadette Cunningham, 'Transmission and Translation of Medieval Irish Sources in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries' in *The Uses of the Middle Ages.*, pp. 7-17.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶¹⁹ Fergus Kelly, however, admits the likelihood of the laws having been slightly distorted by generalisations, but concludes that "in general the law-texts are a sound guide to early Irish legal institutions." *Early Irish Law: a study based mainly on the law-texts of the 7th and 8th centuries AD* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1997, reprint 2000), pp. 8-9; *A Guide to Early Irish Law* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1988, reprint 2001), pp. 239.

⁶²⁰ University College, Dublin Special Collections, 13 May 1848, IE/UCD/SC/JO'D/32.

be a monument (i.e. funeral monument) of the language.⁶²¹ To discover that Irish had been spoken all over the continent in the so-called *Schottenklöster* and that it was the language of composition for many religious tracts was infinitely preferable to the situation in nineteenth-century Ireland, which was witnessing a great decline in the number of Irish-speakers. The various annals had also recorded the numerous glories of past Irish people for posterity and, in translating them, scholars such as O'Donovan must have helped to make them seem real again.

The elucidation of the golden age of medieval Ireland could have had one of two effects on people in nineteenth-century Ireland. Firstly, the past glories could have acted as a motive for some to refute the aspersions of barbarity by focusing on the glories of the medieval period in Ireland. This was not necessarily political, although this certainly could have provided an incentive for those more politically minded.⁶²² By drawing attention to these glories, the antiquarians were aiding in the refutations. On the other hand, by studying this golden age, attention was being drawn to the problems in nineteenth-century Ireland by highlighting the difference from a supposed 'golden age' in the distant past. As Walter Goffart puts it, "what is a retrospective Golden Age but a stick with which to beat the present?"⁶²³

The next chapter looks at how the research carried out by antiquarians in the nineteenth century helped to influence the Cultural Nationalism movement at the end of the century and in doing so, examines the legacy of the scholars from both religious communities.

⁶²¹ 26 July 1845, IE/UCD/SC/JO'D/5.

⁶²² See the next chapter for more on this.

⁶²³ Walter Goffart, *Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800) Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (South Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), p. 254.

**Chapter Four: Nineteenth-century Irish Antiquarianism and its Influence
on Irish Cultural Nationalism**

When scholars have previously linked the research carried out by antiquarians to the development of cultural nationalism, they have usually suggested one of two conclusions. The first conclusion is a brief observation that an interest in medieval manuscripts and the translations of them by antiquarians helped to cultivate an interest in the Irish literary tradition, which, in turn, inspired the Literary Revival.⁶²⁴ The other holds that interest in historical research during the nineteenth century is symptomatic of the European phenomenon of ‘National Thought’,⁶²⁵ which is connected to nation building. This research is normally based upon a golden age, which is considered to be a time when the nation in question was great. This was frequently in opposition to the contemporary state of the nation. Both of these conclusions are valid arguments yet they do not provide a complete answer to the question of how much influence antiquarianism had on the Cultural Nationalism movement. In the first case, only the Literary Revival is considered and other matters such as language and religion are ignored. In the second case, Ireland is placed in a European paradigm. The problem with this is that Ireland in isolation is not examined thoroughly, and where Ireland may not match trends in other European nations, is not highlighted. Many works have also focused solely on either the Gaelic Revival or the Irish Literary Revival⁶²⁶ and have not looked at both together as part of the Cultural Nationalism movement.

This chapter addresses the question of how much influence antiquarian researches carried out between 1830 and 1876 had on the form of the Cultural

⁶²⁴ See, for example, Seamus Deane, *Celtic Revivals: Essays on Modern Irish Literature, 1880-1980* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd, 1985), pp. 14-21, especially p. 21.

⁶²⁵ Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), pp. 15-16.

⁶²⁶ Some recent examples include: Timothy G. McMahon, *Grand Opportunity: The Gaelic Revival and Irish Society, 1893-1910* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008); Brian Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge: Darwin, an Athbheochan agus Smaointeoireacht na hEorpa (Indreabhán, Conamara: An Clóchomhar, Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 2009)*; P. J. Mathews and Declan Kiberd, eds., *Handbook of the Irish Revival – An Anthology of Irish Cultural and Political Writings 1891 – 1922* (Dublin: The Abbey Theatre Press, 2015); Anthony Roche, eds., *The Irish Dramatic Revival 1899-1939* (London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2015); and Irina Rupp Malone, *Ibsen and the Irish Revival* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Nationalism movement at the end of the nineteenth century. It looks at the core principles and aims of the Irish Cultural Nationalism movement by examining texts written by Cultural Nationalists, between the 1880s and the first decade of the twentieth century, and linking them to their antiquarian origins. While it is widely accepted that there is a link between the two, there has as yet been very little investigation into how exactly they are linked and how strong the link between them is. The chapter will also highlight differences between Protestant and Catholic Cultural Nationalists, examining which aspects of the movement were more important to activists belonging to the respective confessions and suggesting why this might be so. It will suggest that the research carried out by Catholic scholars had a greater influence on the Cultural Nationalism movement than Protestant scholars.

The discussion begins by outlining the various definitions of ‘nationalism’, leading onto ‘cultural nationalism’, to show the numerous discrepancies between them and to highlight that Ireland needs to be viewed by itself in order to best understand Irish nationalism rather than in a European context. The chapter will then examine the various identity traits that Irish cultural nationalism emphasised, for example, language, literature, and religion, amongst others, and will discuss how antiquarian research carried out earlier in the century provided the impetus to the movement. Much of the focus on the Irish language in the following pages is on the late-eighteenth century and after 1876 for two reasons. Firstly, it demonstrates what views of Irish and ‘Irishness’ existed prior to the period covered by this thesis and how this was later used by Irish Cultural Nationalists. Secondly, the period 1830 to 1876 is examined thoroughly in Robert Somerville-Woodward’s thesis on the development of an Irish-language consciousness in the nineteenth century. Although Somerville-Woodward does not make the antiquarian translation of Irish texts his main focus; instead he expands his socio-linguistic focus to highlight the relationship between Irish and the political scene in the nineteenth-century, this time period has not been covered in as much depth in my thesis to avoid repetition. Somerville-Woodward examines four key political figures (Daniel O’Connell, Charles Gavan Duffy, William Smith O’Brien, and Thomas Davis) and their links to and views on the Irish language. He argues that O’Connell’s role as mediator between two separate cultures was misinterpreted

by late-nineteenth-century Irish language activists⁶²⁷ and he labels Duffy “a conduit between Irish nationalists of the 1840s and later Irish nationalists who were more urgent and aggressive in their attitudes towards the Irish language.”⁶²⁸ While the language was politicised in the first half of the nineteenth-century, cultural nationalism was largely through the medium of English. As section 5.2 will demonstrate, Irish was promoted as being the language of Ireland, but there was little undertaken to preserve the living language until 1876 (the formation of the Society for the Promotion of the Irish Language) and, on a larger scale, 1893 (the formation of the Gaelic League). This was despite the 1851 census highlighting the trends in decline among speakers.

5.1 Definitions of ‘Nationalism’ and ‘Cultural Nationalism’

Each commentator on the study of nationalism has his or her own definition of what can be labelled ‘nationalism’.⁶²⁹ While there is some overlap between the definitions offered by various scholars, some differ greatly from others. This is because many scholars apply their definitions to a large variety of countries, while some focus on a specific country. Therefore, it is important to cite a number of scholars of the subject to form a definition of Irish nationalism and Irish cultural nationalism in particular. Scholars of nationalism are categorised in two schools: modernists and primordialists. Modernists argue that nationalism is a modern construct, emerging after 1800 through efforts to ‘build’ nations and focus on what it means to be an individual of that nation. Primordialists, on the other hand, disagree with the time frame that modernists impose and claim that there is no great difference between modern nationalism and pre-1800 patriotism. They argue that nationalism can date back to the pre-

⁶²⁷ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, pp. 16-17.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 17.

⁶²⁹ The following definitions of nationalism come from both modernist and primordialist scholars. These scholars have been selected as they have either written some of the most recent works on the subject of nationalism or they are frequently cited by other scholars, thus making their works somewhat canonical. I am exceptionally grateful to The Nationalism Project for suggesting some of the names. See www.nationalismproject.org for more details regarding this project.

modern period, the medieval period, and, even, the late-antique and antique periods.⁶³⁰

Primordialist scholars argue that the origins of nationalism pre-date the French Revolution and that it was possible for nationalist thought to emerge at various times during this period. Azar Gat, for example, argues that nationalism is politicised ethnicity⁶³¹ and that a nation exists, no matter how small it is, if it possesses some political self-determination or is active in attempting to achieve this.⁶³² According to Gat's theories, nationalism emerged along with the concept of the tribe, meaning that it can be dated back millennia. The belief that nationalism can be detected before the Middle Ages is not a popular concept and is supported by only a handful of scholars. That the origins of nationalism can be traced back to the Middle Ages is more widely held by scholars, among whom is Caspar Hirschi. He argues that it was the creation of university *nationēs*, which highlighted the differences between scholars from various areas of the former Roman Empire, which was the *Ursprung* of nationalism.⁶³³ Adrian Hastings also links the emergence of nationalism with the Middle Ages, citing the rise of the vernacular and the beginning of publishing in those languages as being of particular importance⁶³⁴ He claims that when the Bible was published in a vernacular language, its influence became widespread in the hands of priests.⁶³⁵ However, as section 2.1 of this thesis argued, the Reformation's emphasis on Bibles in the vernacular was to encourage engagement with the text itself, limiting the agency of priests in interpreting the word of God. Like John Breuilly, Hastings uses examples of case studies, rather than applying theories to construct his arguments. The main focus of his work is his claim that England was the first nation with such a sense of national identity, emerging in the Middle Ages, that it is possible to speak of as nationalism. Hastings pays

⁶³⁰ For more on primordialism and modernism, see Umut Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000, second edition 2010), pp. 49-52; pp. 72-73.

⁶³¹ Azar Gat, with Alexander Yakobson, *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 2.

⁶³² *Ibid*, p. 23.

⁶³³ Caspar Hirschi, *The Origins of Nationalism: An Alternative History from ancient Rome to Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 78-80.

⁶³⁴ Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 12.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 23.

attention to nationalism in Ireland, suggesting that English nationalism impinged upon Ireland. He believes that the placing of Englishmen, secure in their identity, into a country as similarly secure in its identity as Ireland,⁶³⁶ helped to further strengthen this identity by exposure to a foreign one – and one that had not been absorbed into the nation, as was the case with the Vikings.⁶³⁷ Hastings is one of the few scholars of nationalism to look at the Irish context in particular, making his arguments particularly suitable to be discussed in this thesis.

Turning next to the modernist scholars, David Bell, much like his fellow modernists, sees nationalism as a specifically modern phenomenon.⁶³⁸ His work focuses on the French Revolution as the pivotal moment generating nationalism and national thought in France, arguing that nationalism and national thought are separate concepts, the former always being a political programme used to construct a nation.⁶³⁹ He also notes that the term ‘nationalism’ was only used after the French Revolution.⁶⁴⁰ Eric Hobsbawm also links the origins of nationalism to the French Revolution, as does Benedict Anderson.⁶⁴¹ John Breuilly rejects the idea that nationalism is created by national identity or a search for national identity, arguing that nationalism is about political power, which is about the control of the state.⁶⁴² He states that there are two types of nationalism: unification nationalism, which is the formation of a larger state

⁶³⁶ This is a very broad and potentially problematic statement, as it assumes unity between all the inhabitants of Ireland. Twelfth-century Ireland was divided between various dynastic leaders across all the provinces, which has led scholars to question to what degree Ireland was a *natio*. See, for example, Donnchadh Ó Corráin, ‘Nationality and Kingship in Pre-Norman Ireland’, in T.W. Moody, ed., *Historical Studies XI: Nationality and the pursuit of national independence, papers read before the Conference held at Trinity College, Dublin, 26–31 May 1975* (Belfast: Appletree Press, 1978), pp. 1–35 and Francis John Byrne, ‘Ireland and her neighbours, c.1014–c.1072’, in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, ed., *Prehistoric and Early Ireland, A New History of Ireland I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 862–898. In attempting to answer if Ireland existed in the twelfth century, David Dumville draws the conclusion that an Irish nation did exist, but an Irish nation state did not. (David N. Dumville, ‘Did Ireland Exist in the Twelfth Century?’, in *Clerics, Kings and Vikings: Essays on Medieval Ireland in Honour of Donnchadh Ó Corráin*, eds., Emer Purcell et al (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2015), pp. 115–126).

⁶³⁷ Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood*, p. 68.

⁶³⁸ David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France*, p. 198.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 3.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 5–6.

⁶⁴¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789–1848* (London: Abacus, 2010), p. 165; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983, revised edition 2006), pp. 6–7.

⁶⁴² John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982, second edition 1993) P. 1.

from fragmented smaller units;⁶⁴³ and separatist nationalism, which involves small units attempting to bring about a separation from a large empire.⁶⁴⁴ Where Breuilly differs from Hobsbawm is that he does not develop a theory about nationalism and then apply it to his research; he instead uses a series of historical case studies, which he analyses, compares, and contrasts and then forms general conclusions from these case studies.

As this thesis attempts to investigate Irish Cultural Nationalism by placing it in its historical and political context, this method of examining the results of similar case studies and forming conclusions provides a useful methodological framework in which to examine the Irish context. While most modernists claim that nationalism, not just as a political concept but in its entirety, began to rise in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Leerssen believes that only the political concept of nationalism began then. He traces the beginnings of the concept of nationalism back to the ethnocentrism of the medieval period, leading onto political upheavals and Romantic philology, which impacted upon nationalist ideology.⁶⁴⁵ Miroslav Hroch separates nationalism into three distinct phases: phase A is a period of scholarly interest in the language, history, and culture of the oppressed nationality. The scholars in question were motivated by a desire for knowledge and, what he terms, “an active affection for the region which they were in.” Phase B is the period of patriotic agitation; and phase C, the rise of a mass national movement.⁶⁴⁶

Turning to Ireland, some scholars, such as Joost Augusteijn have claimed that it suits primordialist arguments about the origins of nationalism, as it “has [...] a long history of separateness, both politically as well as culturally.”⁶⁴⁷ Ireland is a nation in which foreign power was exerted as early as the twelfth century.⁶⁴⁸ As a result, an awareness was created by the inhabitants

⁶⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 96-98.

⁶⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 123-124.

⁶⁴⁵ Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe*, p. 21.

⁶⁴⁶ Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: a Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the smaller European Nations*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 23.

⁶⁴⁷ Joost Augusteijn, “Irish Nationalism and Unionism Between State, Region and Nation” in *Region and State in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Nation-Building, Regional Identities and Separatism*, eds., Joost Augusteijn and Eric Storm (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 192-208; 192.

⁶⁴⁸ Other modern European countries which came under the control of foreign powers in the late Middle Ages include Finland, which became a colony of Sweden in the thirteenth century and the

of Ireland of what ‘Irishness’ was. As Steven Ellis points out, in the late Middle Ages, Gaelic society differentiated between *Gaelach* and *Éireannach*.⁶⁴⁹ As this was before the Reformation, there was a shared religion between the different ethnicities in Ireland. Post-Reformation, religion became the greatest mark of division,⁶⁵⁰ as the so-called ‘Old English’ settlers largely retained their Catholic faith, while the so-called ‘New English’ were largely Protestant. After the Counter-Reformation and the excommunication of Elizabeth I in 1570 by Pope Pius V, Irish Catholicism became more militant, culminating in Hugh O’Neill’s proclamations and articles in 1599;⁶⁵¹ these echoed earlier sentiments by Old English figures such as James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald, that they could not have a heretic and excommunicant as their head of state.⁶⁵² O’Neill’s articles called for the establishment of Ireland as an independent country, nominally under the English crown, and the adoption of Catholicism as the country’s established religion. This can be seen as one of Ireland’s earliest manifestations of political nationalism, as O’Neill was campaigning for a separate, Catholic state. This view is supported by Brendan Bradshaw, who sees Stanyhurst’s activities as politically nationalistic⁶⁵³ and is also supported by Tom Garvin.⁶⁵⁴ Bradshaw, however, traces the origins of national thought amongst the Anglo-Irish back to the mid-Tudor period.⁶⁵⁵ The intended recipients of O’Neill’s articles and proclamations were the English-speaking Catholics of Ireland,⁶⁵⁶ demonstrating

Baltic States, which were Christianised by the Teutonic knights. See, Max Engman, ‘Finns and Swedes in Finland’ in *Ethnicity and Nation Building in the Nordic World*, ed., Sven Tägil (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1995), pp. 179-216; 179 and Kevin O’Connor, *The History of the Baltic States* (London: Greenwood Press, 2003), p. 13, respectively.

⁶⁴⁹ Steven G. Ellis, ‘Nationalist Historiography and the English and Gaelic Worlds in the Late Middle Ages’, *Irish Historical Studies*, 25, 97 (1986), pp. 1-18; 3. For a history of the word *Éireannach*, see Ruairí Ó hUiginn, ‘Éireannaigh, Fir Éireann, Gaeil agus Gaill’ in *Aon don Éigse: Essays marking Osborn Bergin’s Centenary Lecture on Bardic Poetry (1912)*, eds., Caoimhín Breatnach and Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 2015), pp. 17-49.

⁶⁵⁰ Richard English, *Irish Freedom: the History of Nationalism in Ireland* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2006), p. 64.

⁶⁵¹ See Hiram Morgan ‘Faith & Fatherland in Sixteenth-Century Ireland’, *History Ireland*, 2 (Summer 1995), volume 3, pp. 13-20 and Hiram Morgan, ‘Faith and Fatherland or Queen and Country? An Unpublished Exchange between O’Neill and the State at the Height of the Nine Years War’, *Dúiche Néill: Journal of the O’Neill Country Historical Society*, 1994, pp. 9-65; 12.

⁶⁵² Morgan, ‘Faith and Fatherland in Sixteenth-Century Ireland’.

⁶⁵³ Brendan Bradshaw, *The Irish Constitutional Revolution of the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 283.

⁶⁵⁴ Tom Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1981), p. 15.

⁶⁵⁵ Bradshaw, *The Irish Constitutional Revolution of the Sixteenth Century*, p. 287.

⁶⁵⁶ Morgan, ‘Faith and Fatherland in sixteenth-century Ireland’.

that they were unified by their religion and their habitation of Ireland. This unity is also reflected in the nomenclature used to describe the inhabitants of Ireland; as Mícheál Mac Craith and Nollaig Ó Muraíle have shown, in Tadhg Ó Cianáin's prose account of the journey of the Ulster chieftains and their followers into exile, the term *Gaelach* has fallen out of use and has been replaced by the more inclusive *Éireannach* (plural form *Éireannaigh*).⁶⁵⁷ This term is also used by Geoffrey Keating in *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*.⁶⁵⁸ To complement the use of the term *Éireannach*, Ó Cianáin also uses the term *naisiún*,⁶⁵⁹ suggesting an awareness of the concept, especially as in one instance he uses the phrase *Naisiún Éireannach*.⁶⁶⁰ This idea of a nation unified by religion would endure, even if people no longer aimed for a state of their own, into the 1640s and the English Civil War. The Catholic representatives, loyal to Charles I, saw themselves as united, despite their varying social classes, and exemplifying what it meant to be Irish. Their seal of office carried the words *Pro Deo, Rege et Patria, Hibernia Unanimis*.⁶⁶¹ Richard English has referred to the representatives as a proto-nation,⁶⁶² as the seventeenth-century political elite defended the Irish kingdom's supposed constitutional privileges against the parliament at Westminster, but did not claim sovereignty – a feature which he claims is essential for this to be defined as nationalism.⁶⁶³ He, instead, labels the late-eighteenth-century Patriot movement as something resembling modern nationalism for the first time in Ireland, even if the nation most Patriots proposed was strictly Anglican and did not recognise Catholics or Non-Conformists as belonging to this nation.⁶⁶⁴

⁶⁵⁷ Mícheál Mac Craith, 'Preface' to *Turas na dTaoiseach nUltach as Éirinn from Ráth Maoláin to Rome: Tadhg Ó Cianáin's contemporary narrative of the journey into exile of the Ulster Chieftains and their Followers, 1607-8 (The so-called "Flight of the Earls")*, ed. and trans., Nollaig Ó Muraíle (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp. 11-15 11; Ó Muraíle, *Turas*, p. 28; Ó Muraíle, 'Tadhg Ó Cianáin as eyewitness to the exile of Ulster's Gaelic lords' in *Irish Europe*, pp. 44-62; p. 58.

⁶⁵⁸ Brendan Kane, 'A dynastic nation? Re-thinking National Consciousness in Early Seventeenth-Century Ireland' in *The Flight of the Earls: Imeacht na nIarlaí*, eds., David Finnegan, Éamonn Ó Ciardha and Marie-Claire Peters (Creggan, Co. Derry: Guildhall Press, 2011), pp. 124-131; 124.

⁶⁵⁹ Mac Craith, 'Preface', p. 11; Ó Muraíle, *Turas*, p. 28.

⁶⁶⁰ Ó Muraíle, *Turas*, p. 28.

⁶⁶¹ For God, King and Fatherland, Ireland United. Translation by Richard English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 61.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

What the paragraph above has served to highlight is that Ireland must be considered in its own context in order to set out its nationalist history; otherwise there is a risk that in discussions of nationalisms, Ireland is passed over in relative silence when compared to other European nations. Richard English emphasises the necessity of this, both in his description of Patriotism,⁶⁶⁵ which he describes as having “a distinctive Irish meaning,”⁶⁶⁶ and in his introduction to *Irish Freedom*, in which he declares theories of nationalism to have little use in tracing a history of it. According to him, while there are numerous works detailing theories of nationalism across many time spans and geographical areas, the most useful tool for investigating Irish nationalism is to look at Irish material only.⁶⁶⁷ Tom Garvin highlights that, while some historians have focused on the purported ‘uniqueness’ of Irish nationalism, that ‘uniqueness’ derives from the fact that Ireland was one of the first conquered countries to develop anti-colonial nationalism.⁶⁶⁸

What Leerssen refers to as ‘national thought’ can also be - and is - referred to as ‘cultural nationalism’. It is Hroch’s ‘phase A’⁶⁶⁹ and Hastings’s and Hechter’s⁶⁷⁰ cultural identity in nation formation. Many of the scholars cited above only allow that nationalism is a political construct and ideology in which national identity plays a very small role. For them, nationalism is the means by which increased political power can result in a sovereign state. This may be the case, but the importance of cultural identity cannot be ignored. For many nations and sovereign states, such identity was the springboard from which they started conceiving of a nation of members of their own community. This did not happen in every single case, but the importance of it should not be understated. John Hutchinson distinguishes cultural from political nationalism, claiming that they

⁶⁶⁵ English defines Patriotism as awareness amongst eighteenth-century Irish Protestants about the pursuit of Irish interests, particularly regarding the English control of Irish affairs. For the Patriots, government policies regarding the Irish nation should be for the benefit of the Irish people themselves and not those who sat in Westminster. The Patriots also argued for greater self-government. *Irish Freedom*, p. 81.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

⁶⁶⁸ Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics*, p. xi.

⁶⁶⁹ See Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, second edition 1992), p. 12.

⁶⁷⁰ See Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 97.

are two different phenomena.⁶⁷¹ Political nationalists have the sovereignty of the state as a political unit as their core belief. For cultural nationalists, according to Hutchinson, the state is an accidental occurrence and something organic which emerges from the collective identity of a group of people with shared characteristics.⁶⁷² He argues that, though previous scholars have seen cultural nationalism as the domain of backward societies, which, when confronted with more scientifically advanced cultures, retreat into the golden eras of the past, this is not actually true; indeed cultural nationalism can have a modernising effect.⁶⁷³ He observes that, in fact, cultural nationalism was prevalent among the intelligentsia (here he focuses on the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the mid-nineteenth century), who saw the nation as being a high civilisation with a unique place in the world and in the development of humanity. It was their wish to elevate the nation to this place again.⁶⁷⁴

In Ireland, the importance of cultural nationalism is especially great. This can be explained by the country's rich cultural and literary history and its long established cultural identity before it was subject to foreign rule. Throughout Ireland's history as a lordship and, later, a kingdom under the English crown, and, later still, part of the British Empire, it was always these cultural differences of language and religion which were foremost in the minds of the majority subjects and their minority rulers. Even after the minority had come to view themselves as being just as Irish as the majority, the matters of religion and language still divided them. Among European nations in the nineteenth century, large-scale cultural nationalism was focused on the vernacular, most particularly in printed works. Ireland is unique in this respect as cultural nationalism was largely conducted through the language of the occupying nation, English. As demonstrated below, Ireland was subject to a language shift from Irish to English, rendering the use of English necessary. Appeals for the use of the national language meant in many cases learning it and in a few, maintaining what was still in use.⁶⁷⁵ This is different to the

⁶⁷¹ John Hutchinson, 'Cultural Nationalism and Moral Regeneration' in *Nationalism*, eds., John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 122-131; 122.

⁶⁷² *Ibid*, p. 122.

⁶⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 127.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 128.

⁶⁷⁵ See below for a fuller discussion of this.

situation in other countries, where the national language had always been and had remained the language of the majority. As Monika Baár demonstrates in her case studies of five Eastern European historians, their works were mostly written and published in the languages of the majority in each country.⁶⁷⁶

Like the Patriot movement in the eighteenth century, there was a strong Protestant presence in the Cultural Nationalism movement at the end of the nineteenth century. There had also been a strong Protestant presence in the Young Ireland movement, with some of “the leading lights” being Trinity College graduates. The movement itself had its origins in an intellectual faction of the Repeal movement.⁶⁷⁷

Irish ideas about identity came to the fore at times when Ireland was designated a lordship and, later, a kingdom, albeit under the English crown; after 1800, the situation changed and Ireland was now part of the United Kingdom. This meant that patriotism turned into nationalism and with it came a reassessment of what it meant to be Irish. This reassessment was heavily informed by the work carried out by antiquarians and was based on the characteristics of the Irish – a new-found minority in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

As James Quinn points out, the Young Irelanders and their emphasis on history were a new development in Irish nationalism, as previous movements, such as the United Irishmen, had largely ignored Irish history.⁶⁷⁸ Quinn adds that they were the first group of Irish nationalists to base their claim for “self-determination primarily on cultural and historical arguments.”⁶⁷⁹ MacDonagh claims that this gives a “timeless quality” to the “nationalist interpretation of history”, making past grievances such as Cromwell’s massacres as poignant in

⁶⁷⁶ Monika Baár, *Historians and Nationalism: East Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). Baár focuses on the following historians: Joachim Lewel (Polish), Simonas Daukantas (Lithuanian), František Palacký (Czech), Mihály Horváth (Hungarian), and Mihail Kogăniceanu (Romanian). Only two of the historians published in other languages – Lewel published two works in French while in exile in Belgium and Palacký published one history of Bohemia in German.

⁶⁷⁷ Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics*, p. 51. See also R. Dudley Edwards, ‘The Contribution of Young Ireland to the Development of the Irish National Idea’ in Séamus Pender, ed., *Essays and Studies presented to Professor Tadhg Ua Donnchadha (Torna) on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday, September 4th 1944* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1947), pp. 115-133; 120-121.

⁶⁷⁸ Quinn, *Young Ireland and the Writing of Irish History*, p. 60.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 3.

their time as they were in the seventeenth century.⁶⁸⁰ They sought to popularise current antiquarian study as a form of improvement, following in the wake of the temperance movement in the late 1830s.⁶⁸¹ As part of this enterprise in improvement, they believed that the study of the past would reconcile nationalist and unionist and Catholic and Protestant⁶⁸² in celebrating the glories of the Irish past – for the Young Irelanders were very much interested in promoting those glories, to the extent that much-derided scholars such as Charles Vallancey were defended.⁶⁸³ The Young Irelanders also stressed the Celtic origins of the Irish, with frequent mentions of ‘the Celt’ in their literature, though when it became apparent that using race as the basis of national identity would perpetuate existing divisions, they ceased using that term in favour of the more inclusive word ‘Irish’.⁶⁸⁴

5.2 The Importance of the Irish language and its Antiquarian Roots

Many of the commentators cited above have remarked upon the importance of language in the creation of a national identity,⁶⁸⁵ and this is particularly important if the language deemed to be the ‘national’ language is at risk. There is no one single reason for the decline of Irish in the nineteenth century. The language shift from Irish to English occurred because of a mixture of factors, including increasing bilingualism in Irish and English, which eventually led to widespread abandonment of Irish; the Great Famine in the 1840s which saw death and emigration from largely Gaeltacht districts cause further lowering of numbers; and the creation of the national education system in 1831. This last meant that schooling was mandatory, the instruction in which was largely in English.⁶⁸⁶ The 1851 census had asked questions regarding

⁶⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 66. MacDonagh, *States of Mind* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) pp. 9-10, cited in Quinn.

⁶⁸¹ Quinn, *Young Ireland*, p. 2, 17-18, 44.

⁶⁸² *Ibid*, p. 32.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 33, 68-69.

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 75-76.

⁶⁸⁵ See, for example, Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, p. 178; and Anthony D. Smith, *The Cultural Foundation of Nations: Hierarchy, Covenant, and Republic* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), pp. 20-21.

⁶⁸⁶ Reg Hindley, *The Death of the Irish Language: A Qualified Obituary* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 13-20.

capability in Irish and the results showed only five percent of the population as monoglot speakers of Irish.⁶⁸⁷ There were indeed strong indications that the number of Irish speakers had begun to sharply decline from 1800.⁶⁸⁸ The report accompanying the 1881 census⁶⁸⁹ showed that aside from the decade 1861-1871, which had seen an increase of 13.9% in the number of reported Irish-speakers, each of the other decades from 1851-1881 had seen a decrease of between 26 and 28.4% per decade.⁶⁹⁰ There were some expressions of concern from individuals before this, for example John O'Daly's comment in a letter to John Windele in 1846 that his guide to learning the Irish language should be subtitled "language without a mouth."⁶⁹¹ Many antiquarians were keen to see the question about the Irish language added to the 1851 census and several of them, including William Reeves and John O'Donovan, wrote letters of support to the Registrar General to petition him to include the question.⁶⁹²

Though there were two languages spoken on the island, only Davis, of all the Young Irelanders, would promote the Irish language as being essential to 'Irishness'.⁶⁹³ Although there had been some societies formed to promote the modern form of the Irish language in the nineteenth century,⁶⁹⁴ the largest, furthest-reaching, and longest-running was the Gaelic League, which was formed in 1893, and still exists today under its Irish name, *Conradh na Gaeilge*. The Irish language societies that were in existence before *Conradh na Gaeilge* was founded were located in Dublin, aside from one society based in Cork and

⁶⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 17.

⁶⁸⁸ Ó Tuathaigh, *I mBéal an Bháis*, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁸⁹ Cited in Hindley, *The Death of the Irish Language*, p. 14.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 14.

⁶⁹¹ John O'Daly to John Windele, 13th February 1847, RIA Ms. 4.B.6 [991-3].

⁶⁹² See, in particular, the correspondence between John O'Donovan, Robert Shipboy MacAdam, John Windele, and T. Swanton in the RIA Windele Collection, in MSS 4/B/7/108; 4/B/10/16; 4/B/10/117 (i); and 4/B/10/117 (ii). These letters from Mac Adam and O'Donovan to Windele in 1851 asked him to lend his support in putting the question about the Irish language in the census. Swanton wrote to Windele in 1848 to ask about the number of Irish language speakers post-Famine.

⁶⁹³ Quinn, *Young Ireland and the Writing of History*, p. 76-77. See below for quotes from Davis on this subject.

⁶⁹⁴ For example, the Gaelic Society of Dublin, formed 1808; the Gaelic Society of Cork, formed 1818 (both short lasting); the Ulster Gaelic Society, formed 1830; and the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, formed 1876. See also Seán Duffy, 'Antiquarianism and Gaelic Revival in County Louth in the Pre-Famine Era', *Journal of the County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (1988), pp. 343-368, for a discussion of Irish revival efforts in the early nineteenth-century in County Louth. For an in-depth investigation of the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, see Máirtín Ó Murchú, *Cumann Buan-Choimeádta na Gaeilge: Tús an Athréimithe* (Baile Átha Cliath: Cois Life Teoranta, 2001).

one based in Belfast. The Dublin and Cork-based societies had been extremely short lived – only one, the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language had lasted for more than two years. They had all been largely interested in Irish as an antiquarian subject, rather than as a living language.⁶⁹⁵ The situation was different in Belfast.⁶⁹⁶ Although the Ulster Gaelic Society was formed there in 1830, there had been a long-standing interest in learning Irish as a living language in the city before that. It was considered desirable to learn it due to its perceived unifying capacity, much like that of antiquarianism, which was of importance in a religiously diverse town like Belfast. In the eighteenth century, it was also perceived as being a useful language to know as a means of communication. An advertisement in the *Northern Star*, the publication of the United Irishmen, on 16-20 April 1794 for Pádraig Ó Loingsigh's (Patrick Lynch's) services in the Belfast Academy states that:

[...] This language recommends itself to us, by the advantages it affords the students of Irish and Eastern Antiquities, especially to those who wish to acquire the knowledge of Druidical Theology and worship, as sketched by Cæsar and Tacitus.

It is particularly interesting to all who wish for the improvement and Union of this neglected and divided Kingdom. By our understanding and speaking it we could more easily and effectually communicate our sentiments and instructions to all our Countrymen; and thus mutually improve and conciliate each other's affections.

The merchant and artist would reap great benefit from the knowledge of it. They would then be qualified for carrying on Trade and Manufactures in every part of their native country.⁶⁹⁷

This advertisement is optimistic about the continuation of Irish as a living language, but a year later, another author is seemingly declaring Irish to be an

⁶⁹⁵ See Breandán Ó Buachalla, *I mBéal Feirste Cois Cuain* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1968, third edition 1978), and Ciaran McDonough, "Learning Irish in Late-Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Belfast: the Antiquarian Influence", *Studia Celtica Fennica* XI, 2014, pp. 39-47, for more details.

⁶⁹⁶ Ó Buachalla, *I mBéal Feirste Cois Cuain*, pp. 28-44.

⁶⁹⁷ Hughes, *Robert Shipboy MacAdam*, p. 54.

antiquarian subject. This is most likely due to the varying view of Irish, with the latter view most likely being the predominant one held by middle-class Protestants. *Bolg an tSolair*, published 1795, carries a very different advertisement for language lessons than the one given above:

[...] [A]n acquaintance with Gaelic, as being the mother tongue of all the languages in the West, is necessary to every antiquary who would study the affinity of languages, or trace the migrations of different races of mankind of late it has attracted the attention of the learned in different parts of Europe – SHALL IRISHMEN ALONE REMAIN INSENSIBLE? – Shall its beauties be lost to those who have had opportunities from their infancy, of understanding it?

As is stated above, Irish is considered of benefit only for those interested in antiquarian research and the history of Ireland. The advertisement gives no hint that Irish might be useful as a living language, as it is spoken by the majority of the inhabitants of rural areas. The advertisement may refer to Irish as the national language “spoken by a great many inhabitants” in the extract below, yet it is still spoken of principally as a means of unlocking the past.

Notwithstanding that Ireland had been subject to England from the time of Henry II and that English colonies had remained for centuries in this country, no attempt was made to change the national language, nor to force foreign jargon on the natives. The Irish enjoyed their own laws and language, till the reigns of Elizabeth, and James I when the English laws were universally established, and English schools were erected, with strict injunctions that the vernacular tongue should no longer be spoken in the seminaries; yet under all these difficulties, many valuable manuscripts have been transcribed, and several books of morality printed in the Irish type in foreign countries; and even to this day, the Irish is spoken by a great many inhabitants of this kingdom.

Here, Irish is being linked with the purported historical sovereignty outlined above. Learning Irish is presented as a patriotic duty, especially, as the extract goes on to declare, there is a risk of the language being lost.

There are several Irish manuscripts now lying dormant and unheeded, in many obscure parts of this count[r]y, many of them transcribed above forty years ago. About that time they were read, and listened to with pleasure, even by the common people; there was scarce any neighbourhood wherein there was not some Irish scholar to be found, who could entertain his neighbours, by reading some ancient poems or stories of the achievements of his heroic ancestors.

At present, there are but few who can read, and fewer that can write the Irish characters; and it appears, that in a short time, there will be none found who will understand an Irish manuscript, so as to be able to transcribe or translate it.

From this advertisement, it would seem that the greatest reason to learn Irish is for the ability to read long-forgotten manuscripts for one's own pleasure or to study them. The extract given below mentions that the editors of the journal have offered Irish lessons in order to prevent the 'neglect' of the language, but again Irish is presented as being part of tradition and not of everyday life.

It is chiefly with a view to prevent in some measure the total neglect, and to diffuse the beauties of this ancient and once-admired language, that the following compilation is offered to the public; - hoping to afford a pleasing retrospect to every Irishman who respects the traditions, or considers the language and composition of our early ancestors, as a matter of curiosity or importance.⁶⁹⁸

This preface to the Irish lessons given in the periodical clearly views Irish as being solely beneficial to antiquarian study and not as a means of

⁶⁹⁸ Patrick Lynch and Charlotte Brooke, eds., *Bolg an tSolair* (Belfast: the Northern Star, 1795), p. 10, reprint (Belfast: Athol Books, 1999) pp. 10-11.

conversing with other people in the country. The passage also links the language with national sentiment and patriotic ideal. The link between learning Irish and antiquarian research is seen most keenly after 1784 and is demonstrated in the prefaces of grammars and other aids to learning Irish. Instead of introducing Irish as a living language, most authors highlight the benefits to antiquarian study, as related in the advertisement in *Bolg an tSolair*. William Neilson, a Presbyterian clergyman, published an *Introduction to the Irish Language* in 1808. In the introduction to the work, he claims that knowledge of Irish is useful in tracing “the origin of names and customs.”⁶⁹⁹ It should be remembered that *Bolg an tSolair* was a United Irishman periodical, which explains the nationalist tone of the advertisements. As Roger Blaney has highlighted, there were many Presbyterians in Ulster who engaged with Irish for various purposes.⁷⁰⁰ This included the aforementioned William Neilson, who wrote his grammar for proselytising purposes. In and around Dublin, Irish also had antiquarian connotations. There were no societies to promote the learning of Irish after the Gaelic Society ceased operating, although between 1809 and 1867 eleven Irish grammars and learning aids were published.⁷⁰¹ In his discussion of the importance of printing in a national language, Hobsbawm writes that:

‘The folk’ could be a revolutionary concept, especially among oppressed peoples about to discover or reassert their national identity, particularly those which lacked a native middle class or aristocracy. There the first dictionary, grammar or collection of folksong was an event of major political importance, a first declaration of independence.⁷⁰²

In the case of Ireland, which had begun political campaigns (as mentioned above) long before turning to Cultural Nationalism to reinforce its separateness from Great Britain, the publication of dictionaries and grammars may not have been deemed necessary to raise consciousness of linguistic

⁶⁹⁹ William Neilson, *Introduction to the Irish Language*, cited in Hughes, *Robert Shipboy MacAdam*, p. 52.

⁷⁰⁰ Roger Blaney, *Presbyterians and the Irish Language* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation/The Ultach Trust, 1996).

⁷⁰¹ See Appendix B for a list of titles.

⁷⁰² Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, pp. 321-322.

separateness. The publication of a grammar did not have to have an effect on the ‘folk’ – it could simply be a grammar. The grammars were, of course, a necessity for those learning Irish as the decline of the Bardic schools from the beginning of the seventeenth century meant that native knowledge was not being transmitted as it once was. The issue of literacy was also important, as previous scholarship on non-official languages⁷⁰³ has claimed that those who were not educated would have most likely been illiterate. This has been disputed by Niall Ó Ciosáin, who points to the widespread use of political propaganda in the late-eighteenth century as indicative of a level of pre-existing literacy.⁷⁰⁴ He also highlights the numerous works in Irish produced by scribes and in print during the course of the nineteenth century,⁷⁰⁵ though he adds that literacy was “usually acquired in English, even for Irish speakers” and that “the spread of literacy paralleled the spread of English.”⁷⁰⁶

The Irish language could be seen as a suitable antiquarian subject as it was deemed to be dying out and thus it would be more akin to the Old and Middle Irish of the manuscripts than a living language.⁷⁰⁷ In letters to William Reeves, John O’Donovan frequently bemoaned the state of the language stating that his *Grammar* was suitable only for antiquaries and that it would remain as a monument of the language.⁷⁰⁸ In another letter to John Windele, he reflected upon the ever-decreasing interest in Irish, remarking:

The taste for Irish language and literature [is] less and more insipid and [is] less every year, and therefore I think it of more consequence to work steadily and assiduously to preserve in an intelligible form what historical materials we have than any thing that could be done in the way of teaching the language, which will become obsolete in fifty years. The English will put out all the Celtic dialects of the British Isles in a few

⁷⁰³ See, for example, Furet and Ozouf, and Laquer, cited in Ó Ciosáin, *op.cit.* below, p. 30.

⁷⁰⁴ Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750-1850* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), second edition (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2010), p. 34.

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-188.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁷⁰⁷ See, for example, Maureen Wall, “The Decline of the Irish Language” in *A View of the Irish Language*, ed., Brian Ó Cuív (Dublin: Stationary Office, 1969), pp. 81-90

⁷⁰⁸ 26 July 1845, IE/UCD/SC/JO’D/5.

generations more, and we must rest content with precisely whatever literature is contained in these dialects.⁷⁰⁹

As many antiquarians occupied their time with transcribing and translating, or even just writing about older Irish texts, it was easy for them not to pay attention to the modern language. The same could be said of the readership of the antiquarian works, who were equally as enthralled by Old and Middle Irish and less receptive to the contemporary form.⁷¹⁰ It is not surprising that works written by antiquarians describe the benefits of learning Irish for the study of older Irish texts and for greater insight into the Irish past.⁷¹¹ Other authors make frequent reference to the age of the Irish language and frequently employ the word ‘Celtic’. Modern Irish had ceased to be politicised after 1795 and would not be so again until the Young Irelanders made it so by writing about it.

Irish had been made into an antiquarian subject and, as such the study of it was mostly patronised by Protestant scholars. Oliver MacDonagh claims that ‘Protestant Gaelicism’ was dominated before 1850 by George Petrie and he explains that even if no individual Protestant scholar could match the Catholic scholars Hardiman, O’Curry, and O’Donovan, collectively they could lay claim to having carried out a greater amount of scholarship.⁷¹² The learned societies played a large role in this and they would also do so in their attempts to preserve Irish. Robert Somerville-Woodward claims that it was this impulse to form learned societies that would help the Irish language the most, stating that:

In Ireland, the period 1820-1870 witnessed the end of age-old traditional relationships. The patronage of Irish poets and scribes by individuals that had been established over centuries was broken within the space of

⁷⁰⁹ Letter John O’Donovan to John Windle, dated 6th February 1851, RIA, MS 4/B/10/117 (ii).

⁷¹⁰ For more on the translation of older Irish texts, see Ciaran McDonough, “‘Death and Renewal’: Translating Old Irish Texts in Nineteenth-Century Ireland”, *Studi Irlandesi*, 4, (2014), pp. 101-111. See also Nollaig Ó Muraíle, ‘Whitley Stokes and Modern Irish’ in *The Tripartite Life of Whitley Stokes*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011) pp. 196-217, and Pádraic Moran, ‘Their harmless calling’: Whitley Stokes and the Irish Linguistic Tradition’ in *The Tripartite Life of Whitley Stokes*, pp. 175-184.

⁷¹¹ See, for example, Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, pp. 216-271.

⁷¹² MacDonagh, *States of Mind*, p. 105; 108. This, however, is debateable. It must be remembered that John O’Donovan and Eugene O’Curry’s works quite often involved exceptionally large publications, which were the result of years of scholarship. See, for example, O’Donovan’s edition of *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland* and O’Donovan and O’Curry’s edition and translation of *The Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland*.

half a century. However, the ‘sense of doom’ that pervaded poet and patron alike resulted in the forging of new relationships which preserved continuities with the past, present and future. Patronage became institutionalised with patrons adopting the guise of learned and literary societies. Individuals remained, toiling to retrieve and preserve the relics of Ireland’s written, and also increasingly, its spoken past. The dynamic which created ‘national’ societies, more vigorous and long-lived than their individual counterparts, paved the way for the future of the Irish language.⁷¹³

Somerville-Woodward also links antiquarianism to “the rise of something called Irish nationality”, as the antiquarianism of the nineteenth century had ceased to be apolitical.⁷¹⁴ The Young Irelanders would now take this newly forming Irish nationality and use it to aid their nationalist cause. As with the United Irishmen and the so-called ‘Patriots’, this nationalism reflected all who were living upon the island. It was multi-confessional and multi-racial and, above all, ‘Irish’. As Thomas Davis wrote:

At last we are beginning to see what we are, and what is our destiny. Our duty arises where our knowledge begins. The elements of Irish nationality are not only combining – in fact, they are growing confluent in our minds. Such nationality as merits a good man’s help and wakens a true man’s ambition – such nationality as could stand against internal faction and foreign intrigue – such nationality as would make the Irish hearth happy and the Irish name illustrious, is becoming understood. It must contain and represent the races of Ireland. It must not be Celtic, it must not be Saxon – it must be Irish. The Brehon Law and the maxims of Westminster, the cloudy and lightning genius of the Gael, the placid strength of the Sasanach, the marshalling insight of the Norman – a literature which shall exhibit in combination the passions

⁷¹³ Somerville-Woodward, ‘*Language without a Mouth*’, p. 12.

⁷¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 71.

and idioms of all, and which shall know and rule by the arrogance of none – these are components of such a nationality.⁷¹⁵

Naturally, the Irish language was part of this nationality, as being of historical importance to the cultivation of an Irish identity and as a means for Irish people to distinguish themselves from the English. Thomas Davis placed particular emphasis on the language in a series of writings, some in *The Nation* newspaper:

The language, which grows up with a people, is conformed to their organs, descriptive of the climate, constitution, and manners, mingled inseparably with their history and their soil, fitted beyond any other language to express their prevalent thoughts in the most natural and efficient way. To impose another language on such a people is to send their history adrift among the accidents of translation – ‘tis to tear their identity from all places – ‘tis to substitute arbitrary signs for picturesque and suggestive names – ‘tis to cut off the entail of feeling, and to separate the people from their forefathers by a deep gulf – ‘tis to corrupt their very organs, and abridge their power of expression.⁷¹⁶

He also wrote that:

To lose your native tongue and learn that of an alien, is the worst badge of conquest – it is a chain on the soul. To have lost entirely the national language is death; the fetter has worn through.... Nothing can make us believe that it is natural or honourable for the Irish to speak the speech of the alien, the invader, the Sassenagh tyrant.⁷¹⁷

Despite Davis’s passionate pleadings for the country not to allow an increase in the influence of English, there was no large-scale action undertaken until the so-called Gaelic Revival, which was spurred on by the formation of the Gaelic League in 1893. What Davis did achieve was to argue for Irish to cease

⁷¹⁵ Rolleston, ed, *Prose Writings of Thomas Davis*, p. 193, cited in MacDonagh, *States of Mind*, p. 110.

⁷¹⁶ Cited in Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, p. 14.

⁷¹⁷ Rolleston, *Prose Writings of Thomas Davis*, p. 160, cited in MacDonagh, *States of Mind*, p. 110.

being an antiquarian subject and, instead, for the language to be cultivated by the general public – a public that was sympathetic to its plight. This, however, would occur until the end of the nineteenth-century and in more limited numbers than Davis had originally imagined. He had also forged the links between the modern language and national identity. That the Irish past was a Gaelic one had been widely known since the late eighteenth century, but Davis brought that idea to the present day and attempted to inspire others to see this as well.

In order for Irish to be preserved, it would have to be studied by a far larger group of people than the scholarly, antiquarian circle it was limited to at that time. Irish would also have to cease being a subject to be studied and instead be a language to be spoken. The Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language had attempted to do this prior to the foundation of the Gaelic League, but it was the second society which achieved greater success. Ireland, compared with nationalist movements in other European countries, was relatively late to seize on its linguistic difference from the ruling power as a reason for its autonomy or independence. This is interesting, as it reverses the order of Hroch's three phases of nineteenth-century nation-building, where phase A is the focus on national traits, of which language is of great importance. This is highlighted by Marcus Tanner, who writes:

The Gaelic project had started too late. The national revivals in central Europe and the Baltic Lands had all begun in the early to mid-nineteenth century, when technology was in its infancy and the fate of cultures and tongues could still be determined by the effort of a small elite of clergy, intellectuals and benign magnates.⁷¹⁸

All over Europe in the early to mid-nineteenth century, language has played an exceptionally large part in the nation building process.⁷¹⁹ The Finnish Literary Society (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura) was founded in Helsinki

⁷¹⁸ Marcus Tanner, *The Last of the Celts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 98.

⁷¹⁹ For example, in the modern countries of Finland, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Lithuania, Poland and, the Czech Republic, to name just some. For further information, see Baár, *Historians and Nationalism*; Ingrid Merchiers, *Cultural Nationalism in the South Slav Habsburg Lands in the Early Nineteenth Century: The Scholarly Network of Jernej Kopitar*, published PhD thesis (Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 2007); and Derek Fewster, *Visions of Past Glory: Nationalism and the Construction of Early Finnish History* (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2006).

in 1831⁷²⁰ to translate the *Kalevala* (an epic poem composed by Elias Lönnrot, first published in 1835, based on Finnish and Karelian folklore) and to investigate Finnish linguistic matters, including “a clarification of the Finnish reflexive verb.”⁷²¹ Finnish nationalism provides a useful comparative perspective to Irish nationalism as they both emerged from the antiquarian pursuits of the seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries, which were also patriotic. Emphasis was placed on the early Middle Ages as both countries were subject to foreign control from the high Middle Ages onwards.⁷²² To look at another European nation at this time, the nationalist, Arthur Griffith, found it remarkable that Hungarian nationalists had never spoken anything other than Hungarian and made a point of doing so to emphasis their dissatisfaction with their treatment under Austrian rule in the 1840s. In comparison with Hungary, he was amazed that the Irish had so neglected their language.⁷²³ As Proinsias Ó Drisceoil has highlighted, some cultural nationalist movements in Europe, particularly in the Slavic countries, were almost entirely based upon the issue of language: “ní dhearna náisiúnaithe cultúrtha Slavacha na linne idirdhealú idir saothrú na teanga agus na litríochta” (Contemporaneous Slavic cultural nationalism did not make a distinction between the cultivation of the language and literature.)⁷²⁴ Ireland was an exception in Europe, as the language was not the central focus of cultural nationalist movements until the 1890s. People were very much aware of Irish as the unofficial national language, due to the focus of antiquarians and other scholars, yet nothing was done to stem its decline until the very end of the century. There were, of course, literary societies in Ireland, but these were antiquarian in nature and were very much focused on translating older Irish texts. The modern form of the language and contemporary literature were of little interest to the majority of their members.

⁷²⁰ Mervi Kaarminen ‘Finland’ in *Atlas of European Historiography: The Making of a Profession, 1800-2005*, eds. Ilaria Porciani and Lutz Raphael (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 74-76; 74.

⁷²¹ Matti Klinge, “‘Let us be Finns’ – the Birth of Finland’s National Culture’ in *The Roots of Nationalism: Studies in Northern Europe*, ed. Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1980), pp. 67-75; 70.

⁷²² Fewster, *Visions of Past Glory*, pp. 23-24.

⁷²³ Arthur Griffith, *The Resurrection of Hungary: A Parallel for Ireland* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1904), third edition reprint (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2003), pp. 72-73.

⁷²⁴ Proinsias Ó Drisceoil, *Seán Ó Dálaigh: Éigse agus Iomarbhá* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2007), p. 80. My translation.

Despite this view, there were those who were still optimistic about and full of plans for Irish's future. The Young Irelanders may have advocated the preservation of the Irish that was still left in Ireland, but the Revivalists had a goal of bilingualism or, in some cases, such as Hyde, complete de-anglicisation. On the 25th November 1892, Douglas Hyde gave a speech to the Irish National Literary Society in Dublin on the future of the Irish language and his desire to see Irish men and women turn away from English literature and mannerisms and to cultivate Irish ones instead.⁷²⁵ It was Hyde's desire to see others adopt the patriotism he felt for the Irish language and to demonstrate their Irishness by speaking it. He pointed out that many great foreign scholars had learned and gained expertise in it, so why should not ordinary Irishmen. He echoes John O'Donovan in this respect, who gave Irish classes in the Royal Irish Academy without the full consent of the council. O'Donovan complained that being paid "destroys the patriotic nature of the thing later" and feared that the classes would be stopped as they had attracted "radicals and papists."⁷²⁶ Despite this, O'Donovan did not speak Irish at home, unlike O'Curry,⁷²⁷ and confessed to James Clarence Mangan that he knew "English about six times better than I know Irish."⁷²⁸ The Irish language had been linked to patriotism and nationalism by people like O'Donovan and also by the Irish Confederation, which was a group formed by some radical ex-Young Irelanders, who had broken from the main body. The Confederation also offered Irish lessons.⁷²⁹

Those who made an intrinsic link between language and nationality had drawn heavily on the sentimental value of language that was characteristic of the time. Jakob Grimm, in the 1840s, declared:

⁷²⁵ Douglas Hyde, "On the Necessity of Deanglicising Ireland" in Vivian Mercier and David H. Greene, eds., *1000 Years of Irish Prose* (New York: The Deven-Adair Company, 1953/New York: The Universal Library, 1961), pp. 79-89.

⁷²⁶ Letter John O'Donovan to John Windele dated 13 February 1845, RIA 12 L 9.

⁷²⁷ Boyne, *Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*, p. 94.

⁷²⁸ Letter John O'Donovan to James Clarence Mangan, in D. J. O'Donoghue, *Life and Writings of James Clarence Mangan*, p. 121, cited in Boyne, *Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*, p. 118.

⁷²⁹ O'Driscóil, *Seán Ó Dálaigh*, p. 163. A letter from the Cork poet Tomás Ó Conchúir to John O'Daly dated 5 October 1847, RIA 24 C 56, states that the Confederation was encouraging the language.

Lassen Sie mich mit der einfachen Frage anheben: was ist ein Volk?
Und ebenso einfach antworten: ein Volk ist der Inbegriff von Menschen,
welche dieselbe Sprache reddten [sic]. (Let me begin with the simple
question, what is a people? – and reply with the equally simple answer:
A people is the sum total of persons speaking the same language.⁷³⁰

According to Grimm’s statement, if the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland spoke Irish, at least until the Famine in 1845-1849, this would have meant that Irish was the language of the Irish people. Though, as has been shown, the numbers of Irish-speakers had already declined greatly by 1845. Yet, this was not enough to secure the continuation of Irish as a vernacular language amongst those who spoke it in the home. Irish had to be politicised and in a stronger way than it had been. Education was one of the ways in which this was brought into effect; the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language had attempted to bring Irish into the educational system, eventually, in 1879, requesting the Conservative government to allow Irish as an extra-curricular subject in primary schools. It was not to be a full primary subject until 1900.⁷³¹ Compared to other countries in Europe, this was rather late. Arthur Griffith, the politician and founder of Sinn Féin (1872-1922), had been impressed by the use of Hungarian in the political arena in the 1840s, “so that today the Hungarian language is the only language of millions in Hungary,”⁷³² and Eric Hobsbawm describes the insistence on *magyarized* (i.e. in Hungarian) schooling during the nineteenth century.⁷³³ There was a petition for education in Irish from Charles Edward H. Orpen, who wrote a pamphlet in 1821 titled “The Claim of Millions of Our Fellow-Countrymen of Present and Future Generations to be Taught in Their Own and Only Language: The Irish”, which was addressed to the upper classes in Ireland and Great Britain.⁷³⁴ This, however, was not a plea for Irish medium education for its own sake, but rather for proselytising purposes: the

⁷³⁰ Jakob Grimm, *Kleinere Schriften*, Band 7 (Berlin/Gütersloh: Dümmler/Bertelsmann, 1864-1890), p. 557. Translation by Joep Leerssen in *National Thought in Europe*, p. 179. I have standardised the German.

⁷³¹ MacDonagh, *States of Mind*, p. 116.

⁷³² Griffith, *The Resurrection of Hungary*, pp. 72-73.

⁷³³ Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire*, p. 157.

⁷³⁴ Charles Edward H. Orpen, “The Claim of Millions of Our Fellow-Countrymen of Present and Future Generations to be Taught in Their Own and Only Language: The Irish” (Dublin: R. M. Tims, 1821).

foreword asks for the opportunity for the Irish to read the Scriptures in their own language, and the work is dedicated to “the Ladies Committee, auxiliary to the Irish Society for Promoting the Education of the Native Irish, through the medium of their own language.”⁷³⁵ It is possible that Irish had to become a precious commodity, to become a minority language, in order for it to gain greater currency as a part of national identity and as something to be used politically. As Timothy G. McMahon has shown, Gaelic League members were largely from the lower middle classes, with professionals and the clergy being the next highest in number.⁷³⁶ Therefore, the members were those with political power or increasing political power who could effect change.

As has been stated in this thesis, it is notable that Ireland was an anomaly in Europe, having developed a political system for greater autonomy and seen insurrections for separation from Great Britain or the United Kingdom before drawing upon cultural nationalism to further strengthen these claims. One possible reason for this could have been the perceived difficulty of the Irish language. The fact that very few people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries could read medieval and later Irish manuscripts helped to ‘prove’ just how difficult Irish was. This, along with the lack of standardised orthography, or widespread literacy in the language, could have led monoglot English-speakers in Ireland to believe that it was too difficult and pointless for them to learn Irish, particularly as it was becoming more and more marginalised after the Famine. The reasons, however, for the great language shift are very complex and cannot be narrowed down to one or two.⁷³⁷ It was not like Hungary, Finland, or the majority of European countries that were subject to foreign power, in which the speakers of the ‘national language’ were the majority. What could have begun to change this opinion was the interest by foreign scholars in the

⁷³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 3. It should be noted that there was great use of Irish for the purposes of proselytization in nineteenth-century Ireland. See, for example, Pádraig de Brún, *Scriptural Instruction in the Vernacular: The Irish Society and its Teachers, 1818–1827*, (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 2009). It should also be noted that the use of Irish for proselytization proved highly contentious and brought about the so-called ‘Bible War’ in Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth-century. See, Irene Whelan, *The Bible war in Ireland: the "Second Reformation" and the polarization of Protestant-Catholic relations, 1800-1840* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005) for a fuller account of this.

⁷³⁶ He gives 55.0% for lower middle class members and 25.1 for professionals and the clergy., *Grand Opportunity*, p. 102.

⁷³⁷ See above, p. 142.

language. In 1853 Johann Caspar Zeuss published *Grammatica Celtica*, which looked at the grammar and relationship between the Celtic languages. Zeuss's interest was later followed by the interest of many other scholars, for the most part German, though also including some Danes and Norwegians, who would work on Old and Middle Irish, while (in some cases) becoming proficient in the modern language.⁷³⁸ These included such people as Ernst Windisch (1844-1918), Heinrich Zimmer (1851-1910), and Kuno Meyer (1858-1919). They made such a contribution to the study of Irish that the philologist Whitley Stokes was once heard during an argument with Standish Hayes O'Grady (1832-1915) to remark that the "two German professors [Windisch and Zimmer] had, in the previous thirty five years, done more for the knowledge of Irish 'than all the native scholars of Irish that have ever lived.'" ⁷³⁹ Once foreign scholars had begun learning Irish, their work gave a higher status to the language and this encouraged people to learn it.

Another reason for the emphasis on language revival was connected to the antiquarian origins of the interest in Irish. The idea of the national language linked to identity was coming to the fore during the nineteenth century and it cannot be disputed that the antiquarian interest in Old, Middle, and Classical Irish texts, and the work by antiquarians on Modern Irish, helped to promote this idea. The fact that nearly all of the texts that were translated, transcribed, and researched by antiquarians were in Old Irish, Middle Irish, or Classical Irish helped to solidify this idea, too, and highlight that the Irish past was one that was written mainly in Irish, though some texts were in Latin. The work carried out by the Topographical section of the Ordnance Survey had shown that much of the toponymy of Ireland was linguistically Irish. Even the choice of the *cló Gaelach*, to print the translations of the older Irish texts, was seized upon by the Revivalists and used in their arguments for distinctive Irish characteristics. They declared it to be the only appropriate Irish script, as it reflected the half uncial script found in the earliest Irish manuscripts. The Revivalists made such comments as "we have used our own characters for fourteen hundred years" and

⁷³⁸ For example, Kuno Meyer, Holger Pedersen and Carl Marstrand.

⁷³⁹ *The Academy* 6th April 1889 cited in Ó Lúing, "William Maunsell Hennessy", p. 45.

“[It is] another link with the noble past of our saints and scholars.”⁷⁴⁰ Robert Somerville-Woodward has argued that it was the engagement of Irish antiquarians which helped to make the Gaelic Revival possible, stating that:

The societies and individuals who have featured prominently in this analysis [his thesis] helped to bridge the gap between antiquarian scholars and the cultural nationalists who emerged in Ireland towards the end of the nineteenth century. In many ways mid-nineteenth century societies such as the Ossianic Society helped to set an agenda that would witness, even within the lifetime of some of its members, a radical about-face in attitudes towards, and perceptions of, the Irish language.⁷⁴¹

It is this last point which is particularly salient. Irish had always been seen as barbarous when compared to English and, due to its place on the periphery, Irish was associated with poverty. Mason’s *Parochial Survey* in 1822⁷⁴² recorded the views of Anglican clergymen of people in their parish. One clergyman saw links between Irish and barbarism, stating that:

The common Irish are naturally very shrewd, but very ignorant and deficient in mental culture; from the barbarous tongue in which they converse which operates as an effectual bar to any literary attainment.⁷⁴³

These views could have continued until the beginning of the twentieth century, when, possibly, it would be too late to save Irish; yet it could be argued that through having become a subject studied outside of Ireland, it had become respectable enough to become more popular and learned by more people. It could then become part of the nation’s identity as it had been turned from being deemed a barbarous tongue spoken by peasants with an ever-decreasing number

⁷⁴⁰ See Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, pp. 145-168 for more on the *cló Gaelach* versus the *cló Rómhánach*. Quote taken from ‘Correspondence’, *Irisleabhar na Gaeilge*, Issue 1, number 3, January 1883, pp. 103-104, cited in Ó Conchubhair, pp. 158-159.

⁷⁴¹ Somerville-Woodward, *Language Without a Mouth*, p. 406.

⁷⁴² William Shaw Mason (1774-1853) was a statistician, tasked by Sir Robert Peel to carry out a statistical survey of Ireland, using local clergymen and parish records to collect data. See William Shaw Mason, *A Statistical Account or Parochial Survey of Ireland*, vol. I (Dublin: Graisberry and Campbell, 1814), pp. vii-xvii, for an account of Mason’s methodology.

⁷⁴³ Cited in Orpen, *The Claim...*, p. 21.

of speakers to being a matter of pride. Antiquarian research had shown that this language was used to compose great literature, both religious and secular. This had made a difference to later cultural nationalists, who were impressed with the past, but looked forward to the future. D. P. Moran (1869-1936 – nationalist journalist) wrote the following:

Against the volume of that derision [by Englishmen] all the Irishman had to fall back on was that he saw in this newspaper or that penny reading-book a statement that we were a fine people long ago; that O'Curry and others had gone into the question and gave their words that it was right.⁷⁴⁴

Irish had had a glorious past as a language in which great works of literature were composed and which had been spoken by early medieval Irish *peregrini* (i.e. pilgrims and wandering clerics) across Europe. It had then become a subject for study by foreign scholars, which helped change the upper and middle class Irish person's image of it, as Irish could be in vogue, much as Celtic literature had been in the wake of the Ossian controversy at the end of the eighteenth century. This could have made societies like *Conradh na Gaeilge* appealing. Irish could also be developed further as part of the national identity, by those who were committed to speaking and developing it, rather than people like Thomas Davis who, in his short and busy life, had not managed to master it. It had become part of contemporary Irish identity instead of something belonging to the past. As Moran puts it:

We spend much time endeavouring to unravel such mysteries as: - Who are the Celts? As if it mattered to anyone, beyond a few specialised scholars, who they were. It never seems to strike anyone that there is a much more interesting mystery, with all the data for unravelling it, at our own doors: one, besides, which it is very desirable for practical

⁷⁴⁴ D. P. Moran, *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland* (Dublin: James Duffy & Co, Ltd, ca. 1906), p. 39.

purposes that we should attempt to solve. That mystery is: - who and what are *we*?⁷⁴⁵

Ireland was not the only country trying to address this question. In the second half of the nineteenth century, European intellectual thought had become more scientific and less Romantic in research. While it has long been thought that German cultural nationalism was the only influence and inspiration for the Gaelic Revival,⁷⁴⁶ scholars such as Sinéad Garrigan Mattar⁷⁴⁷ and Brian Ó Conchubhair have shown that it was scientists such as Charles Darwin, Max Müller, Robert Knox, Arthur Gobineau, Max Nordau, Benedict Augustine Morel, Cesare Lombroso, and the poet and literary scholar, Matthew Arnold, who had more of an effect upon the way Irish was viewed, along with notions of an Irish race and what would happen if this culture declined and, eventually, became extinct.⁷⁴⁸ Darwin's publications *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) and *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871) were particularly influential, as they dealt with the classification of languages, suggesting that they could evolve as much as humans could, and that they could become extinct.⁷⁴⁹ As Ó Conchubhair demonstrates, Darwinism even had an impact upon aspects such as dialects, orthography, and typeface.⁷⁵⁰

5.3 The Irish Literary Revival and its Antiquarian Roots

Much has been written over the years on the Irish Literary Revival, giving a lot of information about the mainly Protestant writers who spearheaded the movement. One explanation for the lack of great interest in the Irish Literary Revival by Catholics in the nineteenth century is that, as being mainly Gaelic

⁷⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.79. Italics Moran's own.

⁷⁴⁶ Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁴⁷ Sinéad Garrigan Mattar, *Primitivism, Science, and the Irish Revival* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 3-14. Garrigan Mattar focuses on the Irish Literary Revival.

⁷⁴⁸ Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, pp. 3-6.

⁷⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 5.

⁷⁵⁰ See, *ibid*, p. 193; p. 169; p. 145.

Irish and frequently Irish-speakers,⁷⁵¹ they had access to literature and they did not need to create a new style that was Irish. Though the collapse of the Bardic system in the seventeenth century had meant a reduction in the number of professionally-trained poets and scribes,⁷⁵² literature was still being created in Irish. Examples of this include the long poem of c. 1780, *Cúirt an Mheán-Oíche* by Brian Merriman⁷⁵³ and the productions of scribes such as Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin and scores of others who were still assembling hundreds of manuscripts at least until the time of the Great Famine.⁷⁵⁴ Mention should also be made of the number of poets composing in Irish throughout the nineteenth century, including Antoine Ó Raifteirí and Peadar Ó Gealacháin (the latter died in 1860). Even if there were fewer texts being composed, there was a flourishing oral tradition which made poems, songs and folktales accessible to the illiterate.

An account from 1894 by William Patrick Ryan, one of the committee members of the Irish Literary Society, London, gives great detail about the early days of the Literary Revival, the members of the various clubs and societies, and the aims of the various societies regarding the literature they were promoting.⁷⁵⁵ Since then, there have been many publications detailing the Literary Revival, particularly with regard to certain authors, such as W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, John Millington Synge, and George Moore.⁷⁵⁶ This section will focus on the links between antiquarian research and the Literary Revival, looking in particular at what influence certain antiquarian works had on the works produced by the revivalists. It is clear that the translations of older Irish literature, combined with Douglas Hyde's pleas for the creation of art that was in essence Irish, created much inspiration amongst the *literati*. But was antiquarianism's influence limited to providing the names and characteristics of

⁷⁵¹ This argument is valid until the mid-nineteenth century. After this, when census reports showed that Irish was in decline, it can be argued that Irish Catholics may not have felt the great need to link literature to their identity, as their Protestant counterparts may have done.

⁷⁵² Declan Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. xii.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 182.

⁷⁵⁴ Nicholas Wolf, *An Irish-Speaking Island: State, Religion, Community, and the Linguistic Landscape in Ireland, 1770-1870* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), p. 192.

⁷⁵⁵ William Patrick Ryan, *The Irish Literary Revival: Its History, Pioneers and Possibilities*, (London: W. P. Ryan, 1894, reprint New York: Lemma Publishing Corporation, 1970).

⁷⁵⁶ It is worth noting that George Moore was from a Catholic family from Mayo. See Adrian Frazier, *George Moore, 1852–1933* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000) for more on his life and works.

some of the Ulster Cycle characters for Lady Gregory to use in her own works? The influence of antiquarianism upon the Literary Revival can be perceived as being more than that. The translation of older Irish material had made it more accessible to English-speaking readers; the writers, in turn, made it more attractive to the general public by turning it from an antiquarian work, intended for scholars, into a work of fiction. Far from merely inspiring people, though it undoubtedly did that, the antiquarian research carried out earlier in the nineteenth century defined for the later writers what Irish literature was. Even if the later writers were unable to use the same language as the medieval writers, or even incapable of using the Irish language altogether, they still had guides as to what Irish literature was.

Mary Helen Thuente claims that the United Irish uprising of 1798 was the motivation for and beginning of Irish literary nationalism, particularly amongst the Young Ireland writers in the 1840s.⁷⁵⁷ Although the antiquarian interest in Irish literary history in the second half of the eighteenth century had created interest in what was dubbed ‘Celtic literature’, this meant creating romantic images of Ireland in prose and verse, highlighting natural beauty spots and Irish folk beliefs. It was not until nearer the turn of the nineteenth century that the literature in English became, as Thuente describes it, more patriotic, though some writers, such as Charlotte Brooke, William Phillips, and George Howard, could be considered as such. By patriotic, Thuente does not necessarily mean that it was linked to the politics of Grattan’s Patriotism, but that it was written with the intention of glorifying Ireland. Thuente demonstrates the influence that Macpherson’s *Ossian* poems had on the United Irishmen, particularly their poetry.⁷⁵⁸ She adds that Macpherson’s bard was a satirist and poet who provided great inspiration for the United Irish writers, who mainly worked through the medium of satire and poetry.⁷⁵⁹ The United Irishmen, in turn, provided great inspiration for the Young Ireland and *The Nation* writers, as well as for the poet and prose-writer Thomas Moore.⁷⁶⁰ Thuente states that

⁷⁵⁷ Mary Helen Thuente, *The Harp Restrung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Irish Literary Nationalism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994), p. 1.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 193. See also Clare O’Halloran, ‘Harping on the Past: Translating Antiquarian Learning into Popular Culture in Early Nineteenth-Century Ireland’ in *Exploring Cultural History: Essays in Honour*

the Young Ireland writers believed that the United Irishmen had created an ideology as well as a literary tradition upon which they modelled their own works. This included taking traditional Irish melodies and attaching politically charged words to them,⁷⁶¹ as well as producing songbooks, which were anthologies of poems published in the United Irish newspaper, *The Northern Star*, and later in Young Ireland newspapers. The Young Irelanders, between 1843 and 1845, produced the *Spirit of the Nation Songbooks*, which were modelled upon the *Paddy's Resource* songbooks, published by the United Irishmen.⁷⁶²

Aside from some mentions of the word 'Milesian' and some references to events in Irish history, there is not much in the United Irish poetry that could be considered antiquarian.⁷⁶³ There is, however, much more in the poetry of the Young Irelanders that could have been inspired by the antiquarian research of the time. There are more frequent references to personalities from Irish history, such as Owen Roe O'Neill,⁷⁶⁴ as well as historical events. Leonard Ashley has claimed that the Young Ireland writers can be placed in a context of "purely antiquarian dimensions", claiming that:

Before the *Nation* came along, there had been for some years a growing interest in the ancient poetry of Ireland and translation of Gaelic poetry had followed the first significant published collection of the Ancient Songs and Ballads in Bishop Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) and the less reliable so-called 'Ossian' poems in the 'translations' of James Macpherson.⁷⁶⁵

Thuente, however, believes that Ashley fails to see the influence that the United Irishmen had on Charles Gavan Duffy in particular.⁷⁶⁶ She adds that it

of Peter Burke, eds., Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo, and Joan-Pau Rubiés (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010), pp. 327-344; 333.

⁷⁶¹ Thuente, *The Harp Restrung*, p. 193.

⁷⁶² *Ibid*, p. 194.

⁷⁶³ See Thuente, *The Harp Restrung*, appendix B, for examples of United Irish poems.

⁷⁶⁴ Thomas Davis, 'Lament for Owen Roe O'Neill', *Nation*, 19 November 1842, cited in Thuente, *The Harp Restrung*, p. 221.

⁷⁶⁵ Leonard Ashley, 'Introduction' in *Ballad Poetry of Ireland*, ed. Charles Gavan Duffy (Delmar, Pennsylvania: Scholars' Facsimiles, 1973), p. vii, cited in Thuente, *The Harp Restrung*, p. 195.

⁷⁶⁶ Thuente, *The Harp Restrung*, p. 195.

is important to highlight the influence of the United Irishmen on the origins of Irish literary nationalism, as “popular national literature created for the purpose of political propaganda created inaccurate and divisive views of Irish history.”⁷⁶⁷ She believes, however, that it:

does not justify ignoring the important and influential symbiotic relationship between politics and literature that existed within the United Irish movement as many of the divisive ‘myths’ of Irish national identity that have been the subject of so much recent revision did originate in the United Irish movement, but there, significantly, they were part of a pluralistic conception of Irish culture.⁷⁶⁸

Patricia Boyne, however, claims that the figures who had the greatest impact upon their contemporaries and the writers of the Irish Literary Revival were the antiquarians John O’Donovan, Eugene O’Curry, and George Petrie.⁷⁶⁹ Thomas MacDonagh wrote in *Literature in Ireland* (published posthumously in 1920) that:

There is one group of authors whose work is, in one sense of the word, more truly Anglo-Irish than that of any of the writers I have mentioned here, with the exception perhaps of such men as Mangan and Ferguson. I refer to the great translators, those pioneers of Irish studies who rendered the Old Irish poems and sagas into an English which gained from the originals a distinct power and beauty. The importance of the work of Eugene O’Curry, John O’Donovan, Whitley Stokes, Standish Hayes O’Grady, can hardly be overestimated. With these scholars stands George Petrie.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 230.

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

⁷⁶⁹ Boyne, *The Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*, p. 98. Some of Boyne’s work has been reconsidered by C oil n Parsons, who considers the research carried out by the topographical section of the Ordnance Survey to have had an impact upon Irish writers such as Beckett, Synge, and Joyce. See *The Ordnance Survey and Modern Irish Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁷⁷⁰ Thomas MacDonagh, *Literature in Ireland* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1920), p. 61.

The antiquarians were especially important to the writers associated with the Irish Literary Revival, as they had not only provided them with examples of Irish literature, but had also made a tradition accessible to them, which without the translations would have remained closed off. They had thus allowed the writers to become part of the Irish literary tradition. The work that O'Donovan, O'Curry, Todd, and Hennessy, amongst others, had done had provided their contemporary writers with material on which to base their own works. One such writer was Samuel Ferguson, who, along with composing poetry based on Old and Middle Irish works, was an antiquarian himself, publishing articles on archaeological subjects in the various antiquarian journals. Ferguson was a Protestant and a Unionist and his nationalism was of a non-sectarian nature, echoing the United Irishmen and contemporaneous with the Young Irelanders. He is particularly renowned for his review of James Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy* in the *Dublin University Magazine*, where he argued that "the often dissident songs of Gaelic Ireland were part of a heritage common to all Irishmen."⁷⁷¹ Ferguson was a 'Nationalist Unionist'⁷⁷² and many of his poems are situated in a historical Ireland. It is not surprising that the translations of texts by O'Donovan, O'Curry, and O'Grady provided the base for many of these poems. As Boyne writes:

Yeats claimed that Ferguson provided the morning of a truly great national literature and was "the most central and most Celtic" of Irish poets. But Ferguson's debt to the scholars, Petrie, O'Curry, O'Donovan, was very great. Their discovery and translation of old manuscripts hidden in libraries at home and abroad provided him with a wealth of Gaelic tradition, gapped, indeed, and written in an archaic form which he adapted entirely to an entirely new linguistic situation.⁷⁷³

⁷⁷¹ Peter Denman, *Samuel Ferguson: The Literary Achievement* (Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe, 1990), p. 23.

⁷⁷² This seemingly contradictory term reflects the view of some who were not in favour of repealing the Act of Union between Britain and Ireland. They saw themselves as nationalists, as they believed that union with Great Britain was in Ireland's best interests. William Wilde was another antiquarian who described himself as a 'Nationalist Unionist'. See Terence de Vere White, *The Parents of Oscar Wilde: Sir William and Lady Wilde* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1967), p. 116 for more on this.

⁷⁷³ Boyne, *The Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*, p. 126. Yeats quote taken from *Dublin University Review*, November 1886, p. 940.

Boyne is not the only scholar to point out how indebted Irish writers were, particularly those of the Literary Revival, to the antiquarians. Mercier and Greene emphasise that credit must be given to the historians, who were the first to translate Irish texts into English, but there is also a sense of indebtedness to the philologists of the mid-nineteenth century, who made the editing and translations of Old and Middle Irish texts possible. They add that:

Not until the scholars, historians and translators had done their work could the great writers of the early part of the Revival – Yeats, Synge, Lady Gregory, Standish [James] O’Grady – accomplish their astonishing feat of recreating, for readers of modern English, a literature and a mythology which had been moribund for nearly a thousand years.⁷⁷⁴

The modern scholars cited above highlight the importance of the antiquarians in making the literature representative of the whole Irish people, as people had to be conscious of their heritage.⁷⁷⁵ Norman Vance terms it “the patriotic antiquarian endeavour to secure national possessions from the ravages of time.”⁷⁷⁶ Tymoczko points out that, following the Ossian controversy, translation was felt to be a necessity, as “only a literary movement based on authentic ancient texts could be adequately grounded for Ireland’s cultural and political purposes.”⁷⁷⁷ Michael Cronin also highlights how highly authenticity was prized, claiming that “the original is sacrosanct, and deviation in matters of translation or orthography is suspect.”⁷⁷⁸ Tymoczko describes two translation strategies for the original texts: the first is based on making the text attractive to an audience and Tymoczko cites Lady Gregory as exemplifying this type. The second is what she describes as “close textual transpositions verging on nearly unreadable gloss translations, utterly lacking in literary interest or merit.”⁷⁷⁹ To

⁷⁷⁴ Mercier and Greene, ‘Introduction’ to *1000 Years of Irish Prose*, p. xiii.

⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁶ Norman Vance, *Irish Literature: A Social History. Tradition, Identity and Difference* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), second edition (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), p. 158.

⁷⁷⁷ Tymoczko, *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*, p. 65.

⁷⁷⁸ Michael Cronin, *Translating Ireland: Translation, Languages, Cultures* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), p. 133.

⁷⁷⁹ Tymoczko, *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*, p. 122.

demonstrate this, Tymoczko first gives a passage in Old Irish from *Cath Maige Tuired*, then gives Stokes's and Gregory's translations.⁷⁸⁰ Gregory's translation is based on Stokes's, but she makes further emendations to it, so that the English is less stilted and she also renders it into 'Kiltartanese', a dialect she concocted, supposedly based on the form of Hiberno-English spoken around her home in the barony of Kiltartan.⁷⁸¹

Augusta Gregory used many antiquarian translations of texts as inspiration for her own writing. The bibliographies in her works⁷⁸² show that she was familiar with many translators, including Stokes and Kuno Meyer, but that she was heavily reliant on O'Curry, frequently citing his name as a source. As Boyne points out, "the brevity of this reference obscures the extent of her indebtedness."⁷⁸³ Gregory frequently refers to O'Curry's articles in the journal *Atlantis* and in his books, *Lectures on the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish*, and *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*. O'Curry's works were widely referred to when discussing early Irish history and the study of it. In his famous work *The Study of Celtic Literature*, Matthew Arnold refers to O'Curry's researches as "a good specimen of the sane mode of proceeding so much wanted in Celtic researches."⁷⁸⁴ In his *Literary History of Ireland*,⁷⁸⁵ Douglas Hyde exhibited an in-depth knowledge of Irish literary history, combined with a familiarity with Irish-language manuscript sources. He occasionally mentions the name of an antiquarian such as O'Donovan in his footnotes, but it is evident that he is reliant on much more specialised knowledge than he acknowledges, particularly regarding the dating of some texts, which

⁷⁸⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 123-129.

⁷⁸¹ Maureen O'Rourke Murphy and James McKillop, *An Irish Literature Reader: Poetry, Prose, Drama* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987, second edition 2006), p. 150.

⁷⁸² Lady Gregory, *Cuchulain of Muirthemne: The Story of the Men of the Red Branch of Ulster arranged and put into English by Lady Gregory. With a Preface by W. B. Yeats* (London: John Murray, 1902, reprint, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe, 1970) and *Gods and Fighting Men: The Story of the Tuatha De Danaan and of the Fianna of Ireland, arranged and out into English by Lady Gregory. With a Preface by W. B. Yeats* (London: John Murray, 1904, reprint, Dublin: Nonsuch Publishing Limited, 2006).

⁷⁸³ Boyne, *The Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*, p. 102. For what exactly the writers used from the antiquarian works, see, *ibid.*, part three, pp. 102-188.

⁷⁸⁴ Matthew Arnold, *The Study of Celtic Literature* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1867, popular edition 1912), p. 64.

⁷⁸⁵ Douglas Hyde, *A Literary History of Ireland: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, (New York: Ernest Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 71, for example, where Hyde dates *Lebor na hUidre* and gives its transmission history, without citing any sources for this. This is not to suggest that Hyde was plagiarising the works of other scholars, but rather that he was writing a popular work, using the research of established scholars, and does not want to overwhelm the reader with many sources.

no-one without a great familiarity with the older forms of the language could establish without assistance.

The literature of the Irish Literary Revival was written in English. Therefore, at least in terms of language, it was virtually indistinguishable from British or American literature. In order to make the literature produced uniquely Irish, authors of this period needed to take inspiration from past medieval and early modern literature written in Irish, in order to do so. It is apparent that antiquarian research helped to shape the path that the Irish Literary Revival took, by translating the past into options for inspiration. This meant that by using themes and motifs from the Irish-language literature of the Middle Ages, a new literature could be created in English that was of Ireland. By using antiquarian works as inspiration, the scholars of the Revival could link themselves, via translation, to a literary tradition over a thousand years old. The writers themselves could be described as popularising antiquarianism – bringing the results of years of study to the general populace and foreign markets. Despite the regularity with which O’Curry’s works appear in bibliographies, they were not the books which would have had mass appeal. The literary works made historical events more personalised and accessible in a way that erudite scholarly accounts could not and, so, they were suitable to highlight the differences between the English and the Irish, even down to the dialects used in the works⁷⁸⁶, and to create a nationalist literature, which writers like Yeats and Lady Gregory hoped would become a national literature, even though it was written in English.

5.4 Non-Textual Based Antiquarianism

Much of this chapter has focused on how Ireland’s literary heritage and the focus on it by nineteenth-century antiquarians helped to shape and influence the Cultural Nationalist movement at the end of that century and in the first

⁷⁸⁶ For more on the use of the so-called ‘Stage Irish’ dialect and accent, used in the Irish Literary Revival to emphasise differences between Hiberno-English and standard English, see Meaghan Connell, *It’s in the details the Devil is: Corpus Linguistics and Irish English Literary Dialect*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2014.

decades of the twentieth. A large amount of antiquarian research consisted of the translation and editing of texts. This was instrumental in making accessible to a larger audience the literature that outlined the conditions of Irishness, which were exemplified in the golden age of medieval Ireland. These conditions included being (purportedly) a sovereign nation, being Irish-speaking, and giving reason for Ireland to be nicknamed ‘the island of saints and scholars’. Therefore, the translations and editions should be considered to have played an important role in the development of cultural nationalism. It should not be forgotten, however, that nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism was not solely concerned with texts and that the other forms which antiquarianism took also played a role in cultural nationalism.

One such antiquarian form was the study of material artefacts; a study which would later become the separate discipline of archaeology. Though there were some Catholics linked with this discipline, it was very much dominated by Protestant scholars. George Petrie was one of those, publishing widely on a variety of archaeological sites and remains, as well as acting as head of the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey. He was particularly known for being one of the earliest scholars to look at relics *in situ*,⁷⁸⁷ particularly on the famous dig which he oversaw at Hill of Tara, in the 1830s,⁷⁸⁸ It had been more common for those interested in archaeological remains to examine items that had been donated to learned institutions, rather than digging them out of the ground themselves.⁷⁸⁹ Petrie’s fellow Royal Irish Academy member, Sir William Wilde, was another scholar interested in Ireland’s material remains. He was responsible for three of the catalogues of material in the library of the Royal Irish Academy⁷⁹⁰ and also published works of craniology and the ethnology of the ancient Irish.⁷⁹¹ Those archaeologists who worked on Ogham inscriptions were obliged to go to the sites, and these include Samuel Ferguson, John Windele, John O’Daly and Mat Horgan. As there are more Ogham stones found

⁷⁸⁷ Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁸ See George Petrie, ‘On the History and Antiquities of Tara Hill’, *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 18 (1839), pp. 25-232.

⁷⁸⁹ See, for example, Petrie’s account of his examination of the Cross of Cong in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 4 (1847 - 1850), pp. 572- 585.

⁷⁹⁰ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 131.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.* See also William Wilde, ‘The Early Races of Mankind in Ireland’, *The Irish Builder*, 1st Sept., 15th Sept., 1st Oct. 1874, pp. 245-246; 258-259; 273-274.

in Munster than in the rest of Ireland, there were more archaeologists working on the inscriptions who were members of the South Munster Antiquarian Society.⁷⁹² John Grattan was an eminent craniologist – one who studied skulls. With the promotion of a ‘Celtic’ race, the works of Max Nordau and Cesare Lombroso on skull types, along with other scientists became important in helping to emphasise the supposed difference from the ‘Saxon’ race.⁷⁹³ The Belfast industrialist Robert Shipboy Macadam published many articles on artefacts and was instrumental in setting up the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* in 1853 – the journal of the Ulster Archaeological Society. Edwin Quin, third Earl of Dunraven, is particularly known for bringing the Ardagh chalice to public attention in 1873 and for his *Notes on Irish architecture*, published posthumously.⁷⁹⁴ Samuel Ferguson is better known for his literary creations, but he compiled *Ogham Inscriptions in Ireland, Wales and Scotland*, which was published posthumously in 1887. Although Eugene O’Curry is most closely linked with textual scholarship, his appointment to the chair of Irish History and Archaeology at the Catholic University in 1853 and the posthumous publication in 1873 of his lectures *On the Manner and Customs of the Ancient Irish* show him to have engaged with Ireland’s material past; and he can be considered to be one of the few Catholics, if not the only one,⁷⁹⁵ to have done so.

Much like Ireland’s literary heritage, which was magnified by translations and editions of it, research into material remains drew attention to Ireland’s long history, portrayed as being unique and glorious. Objects could now suggest some of the literature about the mythical inhabitants of Ireland to have been factual, despite more recent scholarship in the twentieth century proving this to be very much erroneous. In relation to archaeological remains, Eugene O’Curry was emboldened to suggest that several swords in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy belonged to the Fir Bolg and the Tuatha Dé Danaan.⁷⁹⁶ William Wilde used John O’Donovan’s edition and translation

⁷⁹² Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 99.

⁷⁹³ See n. 802 below.

⁷⁹⁴ Rockley, *Antiquarians and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 155.

⁷⁹⁵ John O’Donovan was involved with George Petrie’s investigation of the Hill of Tara, published 1839; however, his role in this was to provide textual corroborations for Petrie’s finds. O’Curry did much the same in *On the manners...*, yet also investigated some of the artefacts in the RIA library and so, on merit of this, can be considered to have engaged with archaeology. See Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 115 for more details.

⁷⁹⁶ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, p. 115.

of ‘The Story of Goibniu the Smith in Moytura’ to aid him in his investigation into what he thought was the site of the first battle of Moytirra near Cong, County Mayo.⁷⁹⁷ These archaeological investigations helped to promote the idea of the great age of the Irish people, much as those who chose to argue the case of the Pagan heritage of Ireland did in the 1830s to the 1850s in the so-called ‘Paganist versus Christian’ debate.⁷⁹⁸ Investigations into sites associated with Irish kings, such as the Hill of Tara,⁷⁹⁹ served to reinforce the concept of Ireland’s sovereignty before the coming of the English in the twelfth century. Material artefacts, much like literary texts, could also be used to suit needs, particularly regarding religion. When appointing O’Curry to the Chair of Irish History and Archaeology, John Henry Newman made it clear that he expected O’Curry to make explicit reference to the ‘Catholicity’ of the language, manuscripts, and remains of ancient Ireland.⁸⁰⁰ William Wilde’s research into the skulls of what he deemed the Fir Bolg and the Tuatha Dé Danaan would be used to help bolster claims of a distinct Irish or Celtic race.⁸⁰¹ This would be a central point in the mid-nineteenth-century debates about race, which highlighted the differences between the so-called ‘Celtic and Saxon’ races⁸⁰² and would later be used by language revivalists as a reason to prevent the native tongue of the Irish race from dying out.⁸⁰³ Ó Conchubhair terms this ‘eugenics na Gaeilge’ (the eugenics of Irish) and, as the concept of eugenics only dates from around 1900,⁸⁰⁴ retrospectively applies this to Irish from after the Famine up to the end of the nineteenth century. This concept was used in two ways. Firstly, it created pride in linguistic purity and attempted to halt the mixing of

⁷⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁷⁹⁸ See Damien Murray, *Romanticism, Nationalism and Irish Antiquarian Societies*, pp. 26-27.

⁷⁹⁹ See John Waddell, *Archaeology and Celtic Myth: an Exploration* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2014), pp. 127-128 for more on nineteenth-century investigations into Tara.

⁸⁰⁰ Newman quoted in Michael Herity, ‘Eugene O’Curry’s Early Life’, *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 10 (1967), pp. 143-147; 147, cited in Waddell, *Archaeology and Celtic Myth*, pp. 114-115.

⁸⁰¹ Waddell, *Foundation Myths*, pp. 131-134.

⁸⁰² See Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, pp. 72-76; Bruce Nelson, *Irish Nationalists and the Making of the Irish Race* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 6-7; L. P. Curtis, *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: a Study of Anti-Irish Prejudice in Victorian England* (Bridgeport, Connecticut: Bridgeport University Press, 1968), p. 15; and Richard McMahon, *The Races of Europe: Construction of National Identities in the Social Sciences, 1839-1939* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 248. For McMahon’s full case study of Ireland’s Celtic racial identity in a nineteenth-century European context, see pp. 176-178; 247-271.

⁸⁰³ Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, pp. 76-96.

⁸⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Gaelic with unwanted Saxon influences.⁸⁰⁵ Secondly, it drew attention to the plight of languages which were not deemed the ‘fittest’ in a Darwinian scale or were the languages of a barbarous people and, therefore, there was no need to preserve them.⁸⁰⁶ It is the realisation that Irish could be lost, along with the ‘Celtic’ race, which spurred people on to seek to revive it and to prevent this from occurring.⁸⁰⁷

The investigation of material remains may have been attractive to Protestant scholars as they were entirely devoid of meaning until it was attached to them. Manuscripts were frequently written in Irish and were easily linked to a Gaelic Irish or Catholic identity. One famous example of this is James Hardiman’s introduction to *Irish Minstrelsy* and Samuel Ferguson’s review of the work, discussed above.

Those antiquarians who were involved in the collection of folklore and traditional music also added to vast repositories of items that the Irish could claim were unique to them. Such antiquarians included William Wilde, Thomas Crofton Croker, James Goodman, and George Petrie – the last-mentioned being, among his other roles, a notable music collector. These subject areas would also be presented as uniquely Gaelic and would become part of the armoury against the Saxon influence.

These non-textual based antiquarian practices were largely the domain of Protestant scholars, with some exceptions, as shown above. The archaeological findings, in particular, were absolutely instrumental in helping to develop the image of an Irish or Celtic race. Yet, it can be argued that the influence of textual-based antiquarianism was greater and reached more people, ultimately making Catholic antiquarian research the greater influence upon Irish Cultural Nationalism. The so-called Celtic or Irish race was intrinsically connected to the Irish Revival, arguing that a people had a native language.⁸⁰⁸ The Revivalists were keen to point out that they were not of the Saxon race; therefore, they should not speak English. Matters of religion and the history of Christianity in Ireland were greatly informed by research into the early Irish

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 137-139.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 92-96, 120-126. See chapters 3 ‘Díothú Ciníocha, Meascadh Fola agus Cros-síolrú’ and 5 ‘Frithnimh an Bhéarlachais: *Eugenics* na Gaeilge’ for more information.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 77-78.

⁸⁰⁸ McMahon, *The Races of Europe*, pp. 250-254.

Church. Although there had been a number of Protestants investigating this issue over the centuries, they were still in the minority compared with the number of Catholic researchers.

5.5 The Central Issue of Religion in Antiquarian Texts

Literature was not the only mark of identity that the Cultural Nationalists tried to place in a national context. As the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland were Catholic, it was easier for later Nationalists such as D. P. Moran to promote Catholicism as an inherent part of Irish identity. Nationalists after 1916 also emphasised Catholicism through the memory of the executed Pádraig Pearse – one of the leaders of the Easter Rising. Although the aim of antiquarian societies was to create a neutral place where religion did not and should not matter, this did not mean that political and religious opinions were not expressed. Antiquarians had agreed to abide by these rules, yet they were also people with passions and their own religious beliefs, which meant that some degree of prejudice must have appeared in their works, whether they were conscious of this or not. This was apparently prevalent across Europe; after the publication of Reeves's edition and translation of *The Life of St. Columba* in 1857, a French scholar, whom Jean-Michel Picard terms a "champion of the Catholic cause in France," wrote a review of Reeves's work, demonstrating just how problematic it was to write about medieval religion, the early Irish church in particular. Charles Forbes René de Tryon, comte de Montalembert (hereafter referred to as Montalembert) was a champion of Reeves, whom he saw as trying to present a balanced view of early Irish ecclesiastical history, and doing this during the religiously turbulent 1850s in Europe, a period that witnessed the formation in Ireland of militant Protestant clubs and the hardening of Catholic positions on the question of the Papal States.⁸⁰⁹ Montalembert had only vitriolic comments for those who claimed that there was an Eastern influence upon the churches of the British and Irish Isles, or those who disputed the adherence to Rome by the

⁸⁰⁹ Picard, 'William Reeves and *The Life of St Columba*', p. 110.

churches.⁸¹⁰ He names Todd as being one of those scholars who tries to make Irish ecclesiastical history serve his purpose, writing:

A learned Englishman [sic] of our own day, Dr. Todd, in his *Monograph on St Patrick*, published on 1863, acknowledges that the Irish Church of the sixth century differed in nothing as to doctrine from the rest of the Catholic Church; but at the same time he maintains her independence of the Holy See.⁸¹¹

Jamie Blake Knox also claims that Todd did this, calling his works “the first modern attempt to place Patrick within a distinctly Irish Anglican religious tradition.”⁸¹² In stating this, Knox differs somewhat from the earlier claims by G. O. Simms that Todd’s *Life of St Patrick* was “notable for its historical approach” and, despite allegations to the contrary, “its freedom from narrowness and sectarianism, as he formed his conclusions.”⁸¹³ Other scholars, particularly Catholic ones, for example, Matthew Kelly and Laurence Ranehan, were more cautious about letting any sentiment appear in their works. However, not all of them were as cautious as they possibly needed to be: after O’Curry was put up for election to membership of the Royal Irish Academy in 1853, O’Donovan wrote to William Reeves, asking “will he be elected?” O’Donovan feared that he would not, for “he [O’Curry] has been latterly rather obstreperously, noisily Ultramontane in his arguments and I fear that Haughton and Jellett will succeed in blackbeaning him!”⁸¹⁴ O’Donovan himself had fallen foul of the Catholic authorities by accepting a post at Queen’s University, Belfast – one of the so-called “Godless colleges”.⁸¹⁵ Both were cautious when

⁸¹⁰ Charles Forbes René de Tryon, comte de Montalembert, *The Monks of the West from St Benedict to St Bernard*, authorized translation, 7 vols (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1861-1877), pp. 378-379, cited in Picard, p. 112. For more on Montalembert, see Wood, *The Modern Origins of the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 146-7.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 85, note 1. The monograph Montalembert refers to is *St. Patrick, apostle of Ireland; a memoir of his life and mission, with an introductory dissertation on some early usages of the church in Ireland, and its historical position from the establishment of the English colony to the present day*.

⁸¹² Jamie Blake Knox, ‘Facts or Fiction?’ *The Church of Ireland’s Writing of Irish Church History*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 2014, p. 18.

⁸¹³ G. O. Simms, ‘James Henthorn Todd’, *Hermathena*, no. 109 (Autumn 1969), pp. 5-23; 19.

⁸¹⁴ Letter, John O’Donovan to William Reeves, dated 10th June 1853, University College Dublin, IE/UCD/SC/JO’D/46.

⁸¹⁵ Boyne, *Scholarly Seedtime of the Irish Literary Revival*, note 1, p. 45.

it came to matters of religion in their published work. O'Curry only began mentioning religion in his works later in his life when working for the Catholic university, and particularly in *On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish* and *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*. O'Donovan, was quite as opinionated in relation to religion as in other matters in his unpublished writings – most notably his Ordnance Survey letters. Some of his published work included editions of religious texts, such as *The Martyrology of Donegal*, which he edited and translated. It was, however, only published posthumously in 1864, having been completed and seen through the press by Reeves and Todd.

Unlike their Catholic counterparts, Protestant scholars did not feel the need to have to address matters of Irish church history with caution and could be transparent about the aims of their works. The exception to this is William Reeves, who, as Jamie Blake Knox points out, is considered to be an impartial and exceptional scholar.⁸¹⁶ Todd, on the other hand, was not considered to be an impartial scholar, as has been mentioned above, and even in 1886 was still considered a controversial figure in Irish ecclesiastical historical writing. The Trinity College, Dublin Professor of Ecclesiastical History, George T. Stokes,⁸¹⁷ claimed that his 1886 publication, *Ireland and the Celtic Church. A History of Ireland from St Patrick to the English Conquest in 1172*,⁸¹⁸ would rectify Todd's controversial and heavy scholarship.⁸¹⁹

The need to write Protestant histories occurred for two reasons. Firstly, it was because the Anglican Church had long been portrayed as an import from England and not something that was Irish.⁸²⁰ As Alan Ford describes it, “a fundamental fact of the Irish reformation – that it was imposed on Ireland from England, and lacked, for a considerable period, Irish theological or doctrinal roots. Repeatedly its leaders and its preachers had to be drawn from

⁸¹⁶ Blake Knox, *Facts or Fiction*, p. 17.

⁸¹⁷ Not a member of the scholarly family.

⁸¹⁸ (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1886). This was revised by Stokes and prepared by H. J. Lawlor and reprinted in 1888 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888).

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. v. For more on this work, see Elizabeth Boyle, ‘Writing Medieval Irish Religious History in the Nineteenth Century’ in Jacqueline Hill and Marian Lyons, eds., *Representing Irish Religious Histories: Historiography, Ideology and Practice* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 69-84.

⁸²⁰ Marianne Elliott, *When God took Sides: Religion and Identity – Unfinished History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 98-99; Blake Knox, *Facts or Fiction*, p. 8.

England.”⁸²¹ The second reason further develops the first, turning the Church of Ireland in search of a historical background into the authentic church of the Irish. Antiquarian research sought to prove that “the Early Irish Church was, in essence, Protestant.”⁸²² This had begun with Ussher⁸²³ and was continued again by Todd, Bishop Richard Mant (1776-1848), and Regius Professor of Divinity, Charles Richard Elrington (1787–1850).⁸²⁴ These men – Todd especially – sought to highlight the attributes of the Early Irish Church that they deemed Protestant, thus demonstrating that it was Protestant.⁸²⁵ As Donald Meek puts it, they were aiming:

to construct a tunnel which ran beneath the Roman Catholicism of the Middle Ages. When they arrived at the far end of the tunnel, and emerged into the bewitching moonlight of their imagined past, they found a ‘Celtic Church’ which showed remarkably Protestant features. This allowed them to claim ‘Celtic’ backing for Protestantism.⁸²⁶

As Blake Knox points out, this constructed background was frequently challenged by Catholics, making it a continued argument and explaining the need for it still to be debated in the nineteenth century. He adds that historians connected to the Church of England in the nineteenth century were not subjected to this combative critique, nor did they have to “engage in combative debate with Catholic scholars of the calibre and self-assurance of Stephen White, Mícheál Ó Cléirigh and John Colgan.”⁸²⁷

Despite the supposed non-sectarian nature of antiquarianism and, despite the numbers of Protestants involved in nationalist movements, Irish

⁸²¹ Alan Ford, ‘The Church of Ireland, 1558-1634: a Puritan Church?’, in *As by Law Established: The Church of Ireland since the Reformation*, eds., Alan Ford, J. I. McGuire, Kenneth Milne (Dublin: the Lilliput Press, 1995), pp. 52-68; 57. See also, Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 23-24.

⁸²² Blake Knox, *Facts or Fiction*, p. 10.

⁸²³ See chapter one.

⁸²⁴ See Blake Knox, *Facts or Fiction* for more of these figures and their works.

⁸²⁵ See chapter three of this thesis for more on Todd’s works in this respect.

⁸²⁶ Donald Meek, *The Quest for Celtic Christianity* (Boat of Garten: The Handsell Press, 2000) p. 110. For the parallel situation in Scotland, see *ibid.*, pp. 112-118.

⁸²⁷ Blake Knox, *Facts or Fiction*, p. 10. William Reeves praised White’s scholarship in an article, claiming that Irish antiquarianism was greatly indebted to him. William Reeves, ‘Memoir of Stephen White’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 8 (1861-1864), pp. 29-38; 29.

nationalism would end up being associated with Catholicism. The reason for this is that as the majority of the Irish people were Catholic, Irish, perhaps inevitably became synonymous with Catholicism. Marianne Elliott expands upon this to examine the belief that Catholics were the heirs to the ancient Gaels of Ireland,⁸²⁸ whose religious beliefs had remained unchanged since St. Patrick.⁸²⁹ There are, however, other reasons why this occurred, which are based on the role of the Catholic Church in Ireland throughout the nineteenth century. Until 1829, when the last of them were repealed, the Penal Laws had been in effect, and these had placed severe limitations upon Irish Catholics. The Catholic politician and lawyer Daniel O’Connell, had been instrumental in having them repealed and had then made the repeal of the Act of Union the central subject of his next great campaign. This could be considered a crucial link between nationalism and Catholicism. The infamy of the Penal Laws was memorably expressed in a poem by Thomas Davis, who sought to elicit sympathy for what the repressed Catholics had been forced to endure for their faith.⁸³⁰ Elliott also notes the popularity of a long Irish poem from c. 1655, *Tuireamh na hÉireann* (Ireland’s Dirge), which survives in two hundred and forty two manuscript copies in total and a number of bilingual editions from the mid-nineteenth century.⁸³¹ As Vincent Morley has demonstrated, the largest increase in manuscript copies of this text occurred in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. He links this to the growing sectarian polarization and increased Catholicization of national identity and highlights the fact that in the bilingual printed editions of the 1850s, four Catholic archbishops and twenty-seven Catholic bishops were subscribers.⁸³² The clergy also played a vital role in garnering support for nationalist movements and Desmond Keenan says of them that “all throughout the century [they] seem to have been basically

⁸²⁸ Marianne Elliott, *When God Took Sides*, pp. 20-23.

⁸²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 163. Original quote, “that after a hundred years of this unexampled persecution, the Irish people should have retained their faith as pure and inviolate as they received it from St. Patrick,” taken from Christian Brothers, *Irish History Reader* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1916) p. 240. See also Benjamin Hazard, *Faith and Patronage: The Political Career of Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire, c. 1560-1629* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2010), p. 52.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 157.

⁸³¹ *Ibid*, p. 25.

⁸³² Vincent Morley, ‘Views of the Past in Irish Vernacular Literature 1650-1850’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 134 (2006), pp. 171-198; 174-198, especially p. 188. For more on Catholic reactions to religious issues in poetry, see Niamh Ní Shíadhail, *Conspóidí creidimh 1818-c.1848: roinnt fianaise ó fhilíocht na Gaeilge*, unpublished PhD thesis, University College, Dublin, 2012.

O’Connellite, but with increasing sympathy along with the rest of the nation for the republican tradition.”⁸³³ Donal Kerr describes how, at this time, all of Europe was experiencing a wave of religious renewal,⁸³⁴ making religion carry an even greater sense of importance. In the 1830s, the first monastic community since Henry VIII had suppressed the monasteries in the 1530s was founded in Ireland by the Irish Trappists from France.⁸³⁵ Ireland became even more religious in the 1850s in what Emmet Larkin terms ‘the Devotional Revolution’; this saw attempts to improve the religious practice among Catholics, to encourage greater attendance at Mass, and to discourage folk religion and ensure that everyone knew the Catechism.⁸³⁶ Larkin claims that the Devotional Revolution occurred because the Irish Catholic people had been suffering a collective identity crisis due to the erosion of the Irish language, culture, and way of life during the preceding century.⁸³⁷ His work has been criticised in recent years by historians, among them Donal Kerr, who argues that it was literacy in English that enabled access to the new devotions contained in the religious manuals.⁸³⁸ David Miller, however, believes that the Devotional Revolution was due to the collapse of the popular religious system, which he terms “peasant beliefs”, and which was brought about by the Famine.⁸³⁹ Regardless of what caused it, the Devotional Revolution happened and it highlighted the importance of Catholicism in Ireland. Larkin has written that the Church is not a separate entity to the political system, but is one of the basic elements of that system.⁸⁴⁰ This is perhaps the reason why some of the clergy were more involved in politics than others. One such figure is Archbishop John MacHale, who was one of those involved from an early stage in what Norman Vance calls “Catholic nationalism,” stating that:

⁸³³ Desmond Keenan, *The Catholic Church in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Sociological Study* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1983), p. 179.

⁸³⁴ Donal Kerr, ‘The Catholic Church in the Age of O’Connell’, in *Christianity in Ireland: Revisiting the Story*, eds., Brendan Bradshaw and Dáire Keogh (Blackrock, Co. Dublin: The Columba Press, 2002), pp. 164-185; 168.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 175.

⁸³⁶ See Emmet Larkin, *The Historical Dimensions of Irish Catholicism* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), pp. 57-87.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 5.

⁸³⁸ Wolf, *An Irish-Speaking Island*, pp. 182-183.

⁸³⁹ David Miller, ‘Mass Attendance in Ireland in 1834’ in *Piety and Power in Ireland, 1760-1960: Essays in Honour of Emmet Larkin*, eds. Stewart Brown and David Miller (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen’s University, Belfast, 2000), p. 177.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 92.

His [MacHale's] tough-minded anti-English Celtic Catholicism anticipates the more extreme forms of Catholic nationalism coloured by romantic Celticism, fusing Christian and Pagan notions of blood-sacrifice and redemptive suffering, which found their most influential expression in the rhetoric, and the dedicated life and death, of Patrick Pearse.⁸⁴¹

Other figures include Canon Ulick Bourke, who was active in encouraging the Irish Revival and the formation of societies to promote the use of Irish,⁸⁴² as was Father Eugene O'Growney – one of the founders of the Gaelic League.⁸⁴³ The young Eoin MacNeill (later a scholar and a revolutionary) addressed the clergy in 1891 as the body of influence in Ireland that would cause Irish either to flourish or perish.⁸⁴⁴ Larkin claims that it is only natural that Catholicism would be that important to the Nationalist movement, as the Church “was crucial in helping to effect this social and cultural homogeneity of the nation.”⁸⁴⁵ As McMahon demonstrates, the Catholic clergy were particularly active within *Conradh na Gaeilge* itself, though, as he also points out, lay activists did not readily defer to the clergy on matters which they deemed solely linguistic.⁸⁴⁶ As the century progressed, the links between Church and nation appeared to grow stronger to the extent that the Protestant nationalists at the end of the century and into the next knew that they would need to obtain the Church's approval for their undertakings if they were to see any kind of action on a large scale. Douglas Hyde wrote in a letter in 1906 that, “they [the Priests] are [...] the dominating factor in Irish life. They are always on the spot, they

⁸⁴¹ Norman Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), p. 106. Vance's statement illustrates John MacHale's anti-English Catholicism and his use of it for nationalist purposes, but Vance's qualification of MacHale's beliefs as 'Celtic' (see n. 766 of this chapter) and his reference to 'Christian and Pagan notions of blood sacrifice' detract from addressing the matter of the anti-English, pro-Irish language clergyman.

⁸⁴² *Catholic Churchmen and the Celtic Revival in Ireland, 1848-1916* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002) pp. 126-127.

⁸⁴³ McMahon, *Grand Opportunity*, p. 9.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 129-130.

⁸⁴⁵ Larkin, *The Historical Dimensions of Irish Catholicism*, p. 100.

⁸⁴⁶ McMahon, *Grand Opportunity*, p. 34.

have the women behind them, they can do what they like.”⁸⁴⁷ In another letter, Hyde remarks on the power that the priests have, saying “I’m awfully afraid of frightening the clergy off. We’ll never revive the Irish language if we do.”⁸⁴⁸ The Easter Rising in 1916 and, in particular, the executions of the leaders afterwards further strengthened the link between nationalism and Catholicism.⁸⁴⁹ Tom Garvin describes some of the clergy as “important carriers of the tradition of cultural nostalgia,”⁸⁵⁰ pointing out that neo-medievalism was a guard against modernism, which was seen as a particularly English trait.⁸⁵¹

The Irish Cultural Nationalist movement had been based on a practice of looking backwards into the past to a golden age, where conditions were ideal and the norm of what those involved with the movement were trying to promote. For those who linked Catholicism with Irishness, pre-Reformation Ireland was their golden age as Catholicism was then the only religion in Ireland. They were aided in their beliefs by antiquarian works in the nineteenth century, many of which helped to develop this idea of the past and inspire them to try to make it into Ireland’s future. As mentioned above, John O’Donovan had edited and translated *The Martyrology of Donegal: a Calendar of the Saints of Ireland*, which drew attention to Irish saints. As saints were usually more closely associated with Catholic religious practice than Anglican, and certainly more than non-conformity, the work served to highlight the numerous Irish saints from the medieval period, who would have been deemed to be Catholic,⁸⁵² thus reinforcing the Catholic past of Ireland. Though James Henthorn Todd may have been aiming to prove the Anglican nature of the early Irish church, his works still focused on a historical Irish Catholic church and its patron saint, St Patrick. George Petrie’s work on the Christian origins of the round towers drew attention to the physical remains of what Collins terms “the Celtic Christian

⁸⁴⁷ Cited in J. F. Dunleavy and G. Dunleavy, *Douglas Hyde: a Maker of Modern Ireland* (Oxford, 1991), p. 302 cited in Collins, *Catholic Churchmen and the Celtic Revival in Ireland*, p. 64.

⁸⁴⁸ Cited in Dunleavy and Dunleavy, *Douglas Hyde*, pp. 301-302, cited in Collins, p. 64.

⁸⁴⁹ Collins, *Catholic Churchmen and the Celtic Revival in Ireland*, pp. 19-20.

⁸⁵⁰ Tom Garvin, *Nationalist Revolutionaries in Ireland 1858-1928* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1987), p. 10.

⁸⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 10.

⁸⁵² Catholic here is conveys its meaning of universal, rather than in opposition to Protestant. It is the former meaning of the word, which gave modern Catholics an extra reason to see themselves as the heirs of St. Patrick (see pp. 174-175 of this chapter.)

Golden Age.”⁸⁵³ The edition and translation of *The Life of St Columba* by William Reeves also did this, and it not only demonstrated how Irish monks had performed miracles in Alba (what later became Scotland), but showed that the texts, along with the monks themselves, had spread all over Europe. Collins makes the link between the Catholic patriotism of the subject matter and that of the scholars, writing:

Through empathy with their subject matter, past scholars such as the Four Masters became role models for these later scholars [O’Donovan, O’Curry, and Petrie] and with this the Gaelic Catholic cause that the earlier writers upheld was perpetuated. It is indeed unlikely that either O’Donovan or O’Curry were any more able to distinguish between the cause of Ireland and the cause of Catholicism than were Keating or the Four Masters.

The importance of the Roman Catholic Church in focussing the public’s mind on the Celtic Christian Golden Age cannot be overstressed. For in doing this, it gave an increasingly politicized – and linguistically Anglicized – population something to measure themselves against.⁸⁵⁴

Those who were nationalists, but not Catholics, could become involved in the language movement, or the political movement, or the physical struggle for home rule or, later, independence. Even when their religion had been the state religion, Protestants had been in the minority. This, however, was more of an issue in the twentieth century; in the nineteenth, the Protestants were still the instigators of cultural nationalism and could decide its course for the time being. If definitions of what it meant to be Irish were continuously changing and being changed, then they themselves could decide that their religion was irrelevant to the definition of an Irish identity.

⁸⁵³ Collins, *Catholic Churchmen and the Celtic Revival*, p. 67.

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 69-70.

Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, Irish Cultural Nationalism had been inspired by the representations of the Gaelic past, which the nationalists deemed to have been Ireland's 'golden age'. The medieval period had been a time when everything that cultural nationalists wanted to promote as being Irish was the norm. People spoke only Irish, they were Catholic, and there was great literary output (in Old and Middle Irish, and also in Latin). The antiquarians of nineteenth-century Ireland had opened up this world to a wider audience through their research. The Cultural Nationalists had been inspired by antiquarian publications and had interpreted the results as constituting Irish identity, which could thus be appropriated. As Stephen Alter states:

The antiquarian ethos, a vast topic in itself, united much of that era's scholarship, transcending boundaries between the sciences and the humanities. It showed itself in a varied array of concrete pursuits: in collecting and arranging, in the classifying of things in ordered taxa, in fossil hunting and in stocking geological cabinets; in the interest in old manuscripts and etymologies, in numismatics and inscriptions, in origin myths and buried cities; in the periodization of style in architecture, sculpture and painting; in recovering lost civilizations and deciphering forgotten writing systems; in metaphors of treelike growth, in tracing one's own family lineage. From the enthusiasm for natural history to the rage for discovering (and often inventing) national origins, in the irresistible analogy between archaeology and paleontology, in all these fields, a historical consciousness pervaded. From the unifying aesthetic perspective, sciences and history – the reconstruction of the past – were not at antipodes but at one.⁸⁵⁵

Protestant revivalists had needed to base their values on historical evidence as they were still not the inheritors of native Irish tradition, but, rather,

⁸⁵⁵ Stephen G. Alter, *Darwinism and the Linguistic Image: Language, Race and Natural Theory in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 148, cited in Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge*, p. 258.

had adopted it and attempted to make it their own. The Catholic revivalists, who were nearly always Gaelic Irish, only had to make sure that they spoke Irish and were practising Catholics to fit D. P. Moran's description of what made an ideal Irish person.⁸⁵⁶ Unlike the Protestants, they did not have to extensively research Ireland's religious heritage to legitimise their religion, though admittedly, this was still carried out, particularly in the early modern period.⁸⁵⁷ In a period of rapid change, where there was a risk that everything about the 'common people' that the Cultural Nationalists admired could be lost – their language, their folk beliefs, and their literature – it must have seemed a simple solution to ask the peasantry to maintain their way of living to ensure this did not come to be.

The study of the past to identify what the nation was and what was meant by nationality did not occur solely in Ireland, but was, rather, a European phenomenon and very much a part of the nineteenth-century nation-building process. The study of the past was not meant to isolate the present from it, but to inspire revivals. As John Hutchison states, "the cultural nationalist seeks not to 'regress' into an arcadia but rather to inspire his community to ever higher stages of development."⁸⁵⁸ The chosen period of the past was the golden age where conditions were considered to have been perfect; therefore, it was the ideal of those involved in deeming these conditions perfect to attempt to make them a reality. In Ireland the literature outlining those conditions was locked away from the majority because the language it was written in (mainly Old and Middle Irish, along with some Classical Irish) had not been used for a number of centuries, or was not comprehensible to those interested in the literature. Antiquarian study was important, firstly, to make people aware of this golden age and, secondly, to provide them with the materials to try to bring back such an age. The same applied to the material remains of Ireland's past, which needed antiquarian study to make them accessible to non-specialists. While in other countries, particularly England, the term 'antiquary' or 'antiquarian' was applied to a gentleman scholar, who showed interested in ruins and material finds in the local area, in Ireland 'antiquarian' was a cognate of *seanchaí* and

⁸⁵⁶ *Catholic Churchmen and the Celtic Revival*, p. 161.

⁸⁵⁷ Cunningham, 'Transmission and Translation of Medieval Irish Sources in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', p. 8.

⁸⁵⁸ John Hutchison, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: the Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. 9.

was applied to those who engaged with the past, regardless of whether it was textual or not.⁸⁵⁹ It is, therefore, unlikely that Irish cultural nationalism would have highlighted the conditions of medieval Ireland, which the nationalists considered its golden age, had the antiquarians from the late-eighteenth century onwards not opened up this world to them through their works.

Although there were many Protestants investigating the Irish past, as has been argued above, the works of Catholic antiquarians had a greater influence on the Irish Cultural Nationalist movement and on those traits that it chose to emphasise. This was due to the very distinctive literary and historical texts that were edited and translated and the fact that their reach among readers was greater than those that were archaeological in nature (the latter being largely the work of Protestant scholars). The latter were usually more restricted to the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* or *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, whereas the former were frequently published in the *Irish Penny Journal*, while it existed, or in book form, which meant that it could be circulated more widely.

⁸⁵⁹ See pp. 16-23 of this thesis for a full discussion of the definition of the term ‘antiquarian’.

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to demonstrate and highlight the differences between Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in the period 1830 to 1876. Chapter one traced the development of Protestant engagement with antiquarianism from the seventeenth century to the end of the eighteenth, showing that prior to the nineteenth century there had been differences between the two religious cultures and that these still had an impact in the 1800s. Chapter three highlighted the differences between Protestant and Catholic scholars in research topics, modes of publishing and disseminating research, and also in suggested motivations for engagement with antiquarianism. It also revealed that Protestant scholars were affected by the Great Famine, devoting passages of their works to lamenting the havoc it wreaked upon the rural population. It also showed that the political events of 1848 (i.e. the attempted rebellion) were not widely discussed and only feature in some letters; one from Mangan to Hardiman and in two others from O'Donovan to MacCarthy. Chapter two investigated disputes between antiquarians, assessing whether they were religiously motivated or if they were due to personality clashes. It also examined the phenomenon of working in learned societies and whether there were any attempts to exclude Catholics from the Protestant majority who worked in them. It concluded that the debates were based on the personal assessment of the quality of scholarship and were also due to geographical differences, as the Cork and Belfast-based antiquarians joined together to defend themselves against allegations of poor research and inventive results from the Dublin-based scholars. As there was a mixture of both Catholic and Protestant antiquarians on both sides, the debate was not deemed to be sectarian in nature. Somerville-Woodward terms these “tribal tensions”, adding that though Windele was willing to work with the Belfast scholar Mac Adam, he was “suspicious of all Dublin men, the Royal Irish Academy specifically, and the metropolis in general.”⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁶⁰ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, pp. 420-421.

Chapter four traced aspects of Irish Cultural Nationalism back to their antiquarian origins and attempted to assess whether Catholic or Protestant scholars had the greater impact on the later cultural nationalists. While Catholics had the greater influence on the importance of linking the Irish language to an Irish identity, the work of Protestant archaeologists like Wilde and Gratton helped to create an understanding of a ‘Celtic or Irish race’. Their works on human remains, particularly skulls, helped to take this Celtic race from being the weaker counterpart to the Anglo-Saxon race, promoted by Matthew Arnold,⁸⁶¹ and, by linking the remains with heroic early Irish literature, make that literature something to be proud of.

Previous work by Joep Leerssen on nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism divided scholars into ethnic categories – Gaelic Irish and Anglo-Irish. However, as was made clear in the correspondence between antiquarians, religion was an exceptionally divisive factor in everyday life. This meant that religious differences would also have an effect on working life, particularly when there were scholars of both religions active on the antiquarian scene at that time. As was mentioned in chapter two, most societies had rules against discussions of a political or sectarian nature. Though most of the disputes that took place have been proven not to be due to religious differences, it can be assumed that the rules were in place, either because there had previously been trouble between the two religious confessions, or as a precautionary measure. If this thesis had divided scholars according to ethnic identity, scholars who were Gaelic Irish would have been linked together, though there may have been great differences between them in social standing, politics, and religion. John O’Donovan and Denis Henry Kelly were both Gaelic Irish, yet O’Donovan spent much of his life in mean financial circumstances, earning a living with his works. Kelly, on the other hand, was a landowner with a house and estates to his name. He was also a Protestant, “a high Tory and a professed Orangeman.”⁸⁶² Although Kelly and O’Donovan were very friendly to each other,⁸⁶³ O’Donovan felt a little isolated while staying at Castlekelly due to Kelly’s habit of preaching to his

⁸⁶¹ Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 108.

⁸⁶² Letter John O’Donovan to George Petrie, dated 13th June 1837, NLI MS 792, Petrie Collection, Vol. IV, p. 400.

⁸⁶³ Mac Peaircín, *Donnchadh Ó Ceallaigh*, pp. 10-11.

family and servants every Sunday night.⁸⁶⁴ O'Donovan also added in the letter to Petrie that “the all absorbing feeling is the conversion of Papists,” though he admitted that if there were not religious differences dividing them, “men would then find something else to disagree about and split upon.”⁸⁶⁵ In contrast to this, Somerville-Woodward states that John O'Daly “was trusted by few because he was from the country and a souper.”⁸⁶⁶ O'Daly converted back to Catholicism when he ceased working for the Bible Society,⁸⁶⁷ but as a Protestant, he may have been sincere in his convictions, making Somerville-Woodward's comment somewhat condemnatory. Kelly certainly was sincere, as has been demonstrated above. Owen Connellan may also have been so.

The methodological approach to divide scholars into religious categories has proven to be a worthwhile decision. Firstly, it contributes to new knowledge by adopting an approach for this time-period which has hitherto not been utilised. Secondly, it has reinforced my hypothesis that religion caused the greatest divide between people in nineteenth-century Ireland, more so than language and ethnicity. All the Gaelic Irish antiquarians were bilingual, meaning that they could not be divided from other scholars by their inability to speak English. Some Protestant antiquarians, like James Henthorn Todd, were able to speak Irish to a high level, making the world of the Gaelic Irish accessible to them. The Gaelic Irish antiquarians who had converted, such as Owen Connellan and Denis Henry Kelly, did not cease being Gaelic Irish, but found that more opportunities opened up to them because of their religious affiliation. Kelly's family had converted,⁸⁶⁸ presumably to keep their lands, and it seems likely that Connellan was appointed Professor of Irish at Queen's College, Cork ahead of

⁸⁶⁴ Letter John O'Donovan to George Petrie, dated 13th June 1837, NLI MS 792, Petrie Collection, Vol. IV, p. 400.

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁶ Somerville-Woodward, *Language without a Mouth*, p. 421. Souperism is a derogatory term for those considered to have, or who come from families, who had converted to Protestantism during the Famine in order to avail of the aid offered by the Church of Ireland run soup kitchens. It continued in use after the Famine as an insult to converts, particularly those of a zealous nature. (See, for example, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa's comment in a letter to John O'Donovan that he respects Thaddeus O'Mahony as a Protestant, though would not be able to if he turned out to be one of those “souper-style Protestants.” – RIA 24 O 39/JOD/270). For a larger study on the topic, Desmond Bowen, *History and the Shaping of Irish Protestantism* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), pp. 264-66; and *idem*, *Souperism: Myth or Reality* (Cork: the Mercier Press, 1970), for case studies of the dioceses of Tuam, Achonry and Killala, and Ballina.

⁸⁶⁷ Ó Drisceoil, *Seán Ó Dálaigh*, pp. 35-38.

⁸⁶⁸ Mac Peaircín, *Donnchadh Ó Ceallaigh*, p. 13.

O'Donovan as he was a convert. O'Donovan felt that this was the case, remarking in a letter to MacCarthy, "I was considered too Popish to be sent to Cork."⁸⁶⁹

A new historicist approach was also the right methodological and theoretical framework for this project. By adopting this, I was able to place the texts in their social, historical, and political settings and thus gain greater understanding from them than if I had studied them in isolation. By combining this with the religious divide, it allowed me to trace the development of an awareness of a religious community over the course of the nineteenth century.

There is still much more research to be carried out on nineteenth-century Irish antiquarianism. Few of the scholars examined in this thesis have been the subject of biographies and it is an indicator that work still needs to be done, when a scholar of the calibre of Petrie has not been the subject of a full-scale work since William Stokes's 1868 biography. There is much correspondence between Irish antiquarians in various repositories around the world, but mostly in Dublin. This thesis has used some of it as its source material, but a comprehensive study of the correspondence would be a particularly worthwhile and illuminating endeavour. While this thesis was limited by time and size considerations, it has still added to our knowledge about antiquarian cultures in nineteenth-century Ireland and has helped us to see some antiquarians in a new way compared to how they have been portrayed before. The world of nineteenth-century antiquarianism is vast and it is hoped that this study has succeeded in illuminating Protestant and Catholic antiquarian cultures in the period 1830-1876.

⁸⁶⁹ Letter John O'Donovan to Denis Florence MacCarthy, dated 8th November 1848 in NLI MS 132.

Appendix A: Biographies of Selected Antiquarians

The following is a series of short biographies of the antiquarians frequently mentioned in this thesis. The extracts are based upon summaries of the respective entries of the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. Where a modern biography exists for a scholar, it is listed underneath the entry.

Sir William Betham: Born 22nd May 1779 in Suffolk. He visited Dublin in 1805 to search for documents for a law case and, after finding the archives in the records collection of Dublin Castle to have been neglected, applied to the current keeper to be appointed his deputy. In 1807, he became deputy Ulster King of Arms. He was knighted in 1812 and made Ulster King of Arms in 1820. In 1826 he was made MRIA, serving as the Academy's secretary for foreign correspondence between 1828 and 1839. He collected nearly two thousand manuscripts and books, including the *Book of Dimma* and the *Book of Armagh*, as well as discovering the *Cathach of Colm Cille* in what was thought to be an empty casket. He died on 26th October 1853.

Owen Connellan: Born in 1797 in County Sligo and was most likely a relative of the Irish scholar, Thaddeus Connellan. As a young man, he worked in the library of the Royal Irish Academy as a scribe and translator, where he was patronised by Betham. In the early 1830s, he was appointed Irish historiographer to William IV and professor of Celtic at Queen's College, Cork in 1849. He died on 4th August 1871.

Samuel Ferguson: Born 10th March 1810 in Belfast, Ferguson trained as a lawyer at Trinity College, Dublin and was called to the Irish Bar in 1838. Though he wrote some articles for antiquarian publications on matters such as

Ogham inscriptions, he is primarily known as a writer of poetry based upon translations of medieval Irish literature. Key publications included *The Lay of the Western Gael* (1865) and *Congal* (1872). Ferguson was knighted in 1878 and was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy in 1881. He died on 9th August 1886.

Peter Denman, *Samuel Ferguson: The Literary Achievement* (Gerrards Cross: Smythe, 1990)

Gréagóir Ó Dúill, *Samuel Ferguson: Beatha agus Saothar* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar, 1993)

Eve Patten, *Samuel Ferguson and the Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004)

Charles Graves: Born 6th November 1812 in Dublin. Received a gold medal in mathematics and mathematical physics in 1834 from Trinity College, Dublin and was elected a fellow in that discipline in 1836. In 1843, he was appointed Erasmus Smith's Professor of Mathematics. He was elected a Member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1837, serving as secretary of the council and secretary of the Academy, before being elected President in 1861. In 1866, he gave up academic work to become Bishop of Limerick, Ardfert, and Aghadoe. He died on 17th July 1899.

James Hardiman: Born February 1782 in Westport. Hardiman completed legal training, entering King's Inns in 1809 and he was admitted as a solicitor in 1814. He began working in the Public Records Office in 1811 and continued in this role until 1830. He lost his position that year due to government cutbacks and was forced to sell a third of his Irish manuscripts to the British Museum. In 1820, he published a *History of the Town and County of Galway* and this was followed in 1831 by *Bardic Minstrelsy*. He was a founder member of the Irish Archaeological Society (1840) and the Celtic Society (1846), and was also admitted as a member of the Royal Irish Academy sometime in the 1820s (precise year unknown). When Queen's College, Galway was founded in 1849,

Hardiman declined the chair of Irish, becoming the first librarian instead. He died on 13th November 1855.

William Maunsell Hennessy: Born 1829? In Castlegregory, County Kerry. From 1853 to 1856, he worked on the staff of the *Nation*. He worked for the office of inspectors of lunatic asylums and for the Public Records Office, becoming deputy record keeper after the death of Ferguson in 1886. He was elected as a member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1865, later serving as Todd Professor there. He was involved in the founding of the Society for the Promotion of the Irish Language in 1876 and served on the council for many years. He died on 13th January 1889.

Seán Ó Lúing, 'William Maunsell Hennessy', *Celtic Studies in Europe* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2000), pp. 39-76

Denis Henry Kelly: Born 1797 in Castle Kelly, Aghrane, County Galway. His family had converted to Protestantism in the 1740s and, from O'Donovan's accounts in the Ordnance Survey letters from his time staying at Castle Kelly, Kelly was rather zealous in his beliefs. He was part of the Dublin-based antiquarian circle and was a frequent correspondent of many of the antiquarians. He was also a member of the Royal Irish Academy. Kelly died in 1877.

Kelly does not have an entry in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, so all information has been taken from his only full-length biography, Liam Mac Peaircín, *Donnchadh Ó Ceallaigh: Fear Freastail Lucht Léinn* (Baile Átha Cliath: Coiscéim, 2008)

Robert Shipboy MacAdam: Born 1808 in Belfast. He was educated at the Belfast Academical Institution, where he was taught Irish by the Rev. William Neilson. MacAdam was one of the joint secretaries when *Cuideacht Gaoidhilge*

Uladh (the Ulster Gaelic Society) was formed in 1830. MacAdam was known as a collector of manuscripts and O'Donovan made his acquaintance when he was in Belfast with the Ordnance Survey. Between 1842 and 1856, MacAdam worked on an Irish-English dictionary, which ran to more than a thousand pages in manuscript form. In 1853, MacAdam founded the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, to which he contributed several articles, including more than six hundred Ulster Gaelic proverbs. He died on 3rd January 1895.

Breandán Ó Buachalla, *I mBéal Feirste Cois Cuain* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1968, third edition 1978)

Art Hughes, *Robert Shipboy MacAdam (1808-95): His Life and Gaelic Proverb Collection* (Belfast: Queens University Belfast, 1998)

Eugene O'Curry (also known as Eugene Curry and Eoghan Ó Comhraí): Born 20th November 1794 in Dunaha, County Clare. In 1829, he was employed at the Limerick lunatic asylum as a keeper. In 1835, he joined the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey, working as a manuscript researcher and occasionally out in the field. In the late 1830s, he began working in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, and also for Trinity College Dublin, as a manuscript copyist. In the 1840s he was engaged in a series of catalogues of Irish manuscripts in various repositories in Britain and Ireland. In 1851, he began work on a translation of a law tract, *The Book of Acaill*, which resulted in the project to translate the *Ancient Laws and Institutes* of Ireland with John O'Donovan. He was made a member of the Royal Irish academy in 1853 and in 1854 was appointed professor of Irish History and Archaeology at the Catholic University. O'Curry died on 30th July 1862.

Bráthair Críostamhail, *Síoladóirí .i. Eoghan Ó Comhraidhe agus Seán Ó Donnabháin* (Baile Átha Cliath : Oifig an tSoláthair, 1947)

Éamonn de hÓir, *Seán Ó Donnabháin agus Eoghan Ó Comhraí* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1962)

Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, ed., *Ómós do Eoghan Ó Comhraí* (An Daingean: An Sagart, 1995)

Nollaig Ó Muraíle, 'Introduction', *On the Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish* by Eugene O'Curry, reprinted (Dublin: De Búrca, 1996)

Breandán Ó Madagáin, "Eugene O'Curry 1794-1862 Pioneer of Irish Scholarship", *Clare: History and Society*, eds., Matthew Lynch and Patrick Nugent (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2008), pp. 425-448

John O'Daly (also known as Seán Ó Dálaigh): Born 5th February 1800 in Cappoquin, County Waterford. He began working for the Irish Society in Youghal in 1826 having already converted to Protestantism. O'Daly moved to Kilkenny in 1829, still working for the Society, where he taught the Bible locally. In 1841, he reconverted to Catholicism and in 1845 moved to Dublin, where he opened a bookshop on Anglesea St. In 1853, he and several others founded the Ossianic Society. O'Daly served as honorary secretary and publisher. He died on 23rd May 1878.

Proinsias Ó Drisceoil, *Seán Ó Dálaigh: Éigse agus Iomarbhá* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2007)

John O'Donovan (Also known as Seán Ó Donnabháin): Born 25th July 1806 in Atateemore, County Kilkenny. In around 1818, he began the study of Latin and formal Irish with a local teacher and was transcribing Irish manuscripts competently by the following year. In 1821, O'Donovan began studying at a school in Waterford and began running his own school in 1822. In 1823, he moved to Dublin, where he enrolled in a Latin school, continuing there until 1827. O'Donovan began working as a copyist for James Hardiman in 1827 and in 1830, he replaced Edward O'Reilly in the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey. Amidst his various antiquarian publications, he studied law between 1844 and 1847, though he never practised after being called to the bar. He applied for a lectureship at Queen's College, Cork in 1848, losing to Owen Connellan, but was appointed professor of Celtic languages at Queen's College, Belfast in 1849. With Eugene O'Curry, O'Donovan began work on the *Ancient*

Laws and Institutes of Ireland, which he would continue working on until his death. He was awarded the RIA Cunningham gold medal in 1848, an honorary LLD by Dublin University in 1850, and membership to Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin in 1856, on the recommendation of Jakob Grimm. O'Donovan died on 10th December 1861.

Bráthair Críostamhail, *Síoladóirí .i. Eoghan Ó Comhraidhe agus Seán Ó Donnabháin* (Baile Átha Cliath: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1947)

Éamonn de hÓir, *Seán Ó Donnabháin agus Eoghan Ó Comhraí* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1962)

Patricia Boyne, *John O'Donovan (1806–1861): a Biography* (Kilkenny: Boethius, 1987)

Nollaig Ó Muraíle, 'Seán Ó Donnabháin, An Cúigiú Máistir' in *Léachtaí Cholm Cille XXVII: Scoláirí Gaeilge* (Má Nuad: An Sagart, 1997), pp. 11-31

Edward O'Reilly: Born 6th December 1765. He began collecting manuscripts and books in Irish, which he used to study the language. He is said to have been one of the foremost Irish scholars of his time. With Edward Farmer, he opened an Irish school in Dublin in 1810. In 1817, he published his *Sanas Gaoidhilge/Sags–Bhéarla* and was a member of the Ossianic Society in the same year. In 1818, O'Reilly became an assistant secretary to the Ibero-Celtic Society and in April 1830 began working as an Irish-language advisor to the Ordnance Survey. He died on 26th August 1830.

George Petrie: Born 1st January 1790. He was educated at Samuel Whyte's school on Grafton Street and the drawing school of the Dublin Society. During his teenage years, he developed an interest in archaeology and drew many artefacts – some of which began appearing in journals from 1808. Petrie was made an associate member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1826 and full member in 1828. He was also elected to membership of the Royal Irish Academy in that year and was elected onto the council in 1830. Petrie was

crucial in establishing a library and museum in the Royal Irish Academy and he was also responsible for the acquisition of several manuscripts. Three of the papers he read before Academy members won the Academy gold medal. In 1833, Petrie was appointed to the Topographical Section of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland and in 1835 was appointed overseer of place-name orthography and the cataloguing of antiquities. He was elected president of the Royal Hibernian Society in 1857. Petrie died on 17th January 1866.

William Reeves: Born 16th March 1815. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Trinity College, Dublin in 1835 and a Bachelor of Medicine in 1837. He was ordained a priest in 1839 and became a perpetual curate in Ballymena. He published widely on antiquarian matters and was a member of several antiquarian societies, being elected to membership of the Royal Irish Academy in 1846. Reeves bought manuscripts, most notably the *Book of Armagh*, which was later presented to Trinity College, Dublin. He was awarded a Doctorate of Divinity in 1850 and honorary LL.Ds by Edinburgh and Dublin in 1860 and 1871 respectively. In 1886, Reeves became bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore and President of the RIA in 1891. He died on 12th January 1892.

Whitley Stokes: Born 28th February 1830. His father, the surgeon William Stokes, socialised with many of the prominent antiquarians of the day, so Whitley met many of them in his childhood. In 1851, Stokes graduated from Trinity College, Dublin and moved to London to study law. He was called to the bar in 1855 and published his first prominent publication in Celtic Studies in 1859. In 1860, Stokes won a Royal Irish Academy gold medal for a book on Irish glosses. He moved to India in 1862 to work for the legal administration there, though the vast distance from Ireland did not put a stop to his Celtic publications. He left India in 1882 and moved to England, where he fully devoted himself to Celtic Studies. In total, he published over three hundred articles and thirty books on Celtic Studies. He was nominated a founder fellow of the British Academy, an honorary fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, and was awarded an honorary LL.D from Trinity College, Dublin. He died on 13th April 1909.

Elizabeth Boyle and Paul Russell, eds., *The Tripartite Life of Whitley Stokes (1830-1909)* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011)

Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Whitley Stokes (1830-1909): The Lost Celtic Notebooks Rediscovered* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011)

James Henthorn Todd: Born 23rd April 1805. He graduated in 1825 with a BA from Trinity College, Dublin and received a MA from the same institution in 1832, which was also the same year he was ordained a priest. He received a BD in 1837 and a DD in 1840, also from TCD. Along with several others, Todd founded St Columba's College in 1843, which was intended to provide a classical education for sons of the gentry, as well as Irish lessons for clergymen and landlords. He had been elected to membership of the Royal Irish Academy in 1833 and had founded the Irish Archaeological Society, along with O'Donovan and O'Curry, in 1840. Todd was appointed regius professor of Hebrew at TCD in 1849 and senior fellow in 1850. Todd became librarian of that institution in 1852 and was elected president of the Academy in 1856 – a position he kept until 1861. He died on 28th June 1869.

William Wilde: Born March 1815. After completing schooling in Roscommon, he was apprenticed at Dr Steevens's hospital until he accompanied a wealthy patient on a voyage around the Mediterranean. The financial gain from this enabled him to study ear and eye surgery in London, Vienna, and Berlin. In 1853, Wilde was appointed surgeon oculist in ordinary to the queen in Ireland. He was elected to membership of the Royal Irish Academy in 1839 and devoted much of his time to antiquarian research. Wilde was assistant commissioner for the 1841 and 1851 censuses, which allowed him to study the history of illness in Ireland. He completed a catalogue of items in the Royal Irish Academy's collection in 1862. Wilde was awarded the Order of the Polar Star in 1862; a knighthood in 1862, and the Academy's Cunningham medal in 1873. He died on 19th April 1876.

T. G. Wilson, *Victorian Doctor: The Life of Sir William Wilde* (London: Methuen & Company, 1942)

Terence de Vere White, *The Parents of Oscar Wilde* (London: Hodder, 1967)

John Windele: Born 1801. Windele was largely a self-taught scholar, interested in languages and archaeology. He was one of the few members of the South Munster Antiquarian Society and was a founder-member of the Cork Cuverian Society in 1836. Windele was greatly interested in the study of Ogham and kept an Ogham stone in his house. It is now in the quadrangle of University College Cork. He studied Irish and was a supporter of many Irish scribes, notably the Ó Longáin family, whom he paid to copy manuscripts. He also encouraged his fellow scholars to patronise them. Windele was a founder-member of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society and a member of the Ossianic Society. Though he was a member of few learned societies, his work was appreciated by the Royal Irish Academy, who set up a fund to purchase his collection after his death. He died on 28th August 1865.

Appendix B: Antiquarian Bibliography

The following is a list of articles and books on Irish antiquarian subjects, which were published between 1830 and 1876. Where the work in question is a paper read before the Royal Irish Academy, I have listed its printed version from the *Proceedings* under the year that volume was published and only then if a full version of the paper is printed. I have not included reviews or letters to magazines, as I do not class them as antiquarian works. The former are comments upon an original piece of work and the latter are infrequent and not usually original pieces of work either. At the end of this appendix, I have included a list of Irish learning aids, which were mentioned on page 147.

1830:

John D'Alton, 'Essay on the Ancient History, Religion, Learning, Arts, and Government of Ireland, *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 16 (1830), pp. 1-360

Edward O'Reilly, 'To Investigate the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian, Both as Given Macpherson's Translation, and as Published in Gaelic, London 1807, under the Sanction of the Highland Society of London; And on the Supposition of Such Poems Not Being of Recent Origin, to Assign the Probable Era and Country of the Original Poet or Poets', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 16 (1830), pp. 162-336

George Petrie, 'Remarks on the History and Authenticity of the Autograph Original of the Annals of the Four Masters, Now Deposited in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 16 (1830), pp. 361-393

1831

James Hardiman, *Irish Minstrelsy: or, Bardic remains of Ireland*, 2 vols. London: Joseph Robins, 1831)

1832

James Hardiman, 'Wise Sayings from the Irish', *DPJ*, no. 18 (27th Oct. 1832), p. 138

John O'Donovan, 'The Charter of Newry', *DPJ*, no. 13 (22nd Sept. 1832), pp. 102-104

'Antiquity of Corn in Ireland', *DPJ*, no. 14 (29th Sept. 1832), pp. 108-110

'The Battle of Clontarf', *DPJ*, no. 17 (20th Oct. 1832), pp. 133-136

'Irish Proverbs', *DPJ*, no. 20 (10th Nov. 1832), pp. 158-159

'Annals of Dublin', *DPJ*, no. 22 (24th Nov. 1832), pp. 174-175

'Cormac's Instructions', *DPJ*, no. 27 (29th Dec. 1832), pp. 213-215

George Petrie, 'Ancient Irish Chair', *DPJ*, no. 8 (18th Aug. 1832), pp. 64

'Ancient Irish Literature', *DPJ*, no. 10 (1st Sept. 1832), pp. 75-76

'Ancient Irish Horn', *DPJ*, no. 10 (1st Sept. 1832), pp. 76-77

'Irish Antiquities', *DPJ*, no. 20 (10th Nov. 1832), pp. 156-157

'Ancient Irish Bulla', *DPJ*, no. 23 (1st Dec. 1832), pp. 180-181

1833

William Betham, 'Cromlech at Knockeen', *DPJ*, no. 31 (26th Jan. 1833), p. 245

'Tomb in Holycross Abbey', *DPJ*, no. 45 (4th May 1833), pp. 356-357

'Old Conduit in Dublin', *DPJ*, no. 54 (13th July 1833), pp. 9-10

'Antiquarian Researches – Red Hugh O'Donnell', *DPJ*, no. 68 (19th Oct. 1833), pp. 122-125

'Meelick Abbey', *DPJ*, no. 74 (30th Nov. 1833), pp. 172-173

John O'Donovan, 'Cormac's Instructions (cont.)', *DPJ*, no. 29 (12th Jan. 1833), pp. 231-232

'Annals of Dublin (cont.)', *DPJ*, no. 30 (19th Jan. 1833), pp. 237-238

'Annals of Dublin (cont.)', *DPJ*, no. 32 (2nd Feb. 1833), pp. 253-254

'Antiquity of Corn Mills in Ireland', *DPJ*, no. 36 (2nd Mar. 1833), p. 282

'Annals of Dublin (cont.)', *DPJ*, no. 38 (16th Mar. 1833), pp. 298-299

‘Annals of Dublin (cont.)’, *DPJ*, no. 40 (30th Mar. 1833), pp. 314-315
‘History of the Annals of the Four Masters’, *DPJ*, no. 50 (8th June 1833), pp. 394-396
‘Ancient Irish Literature – Cormac’s Glossary’, *DPJ*, no. 55 (20th July 1833), pp. 19-20
‘Ancient Irish Literature – Cormac’s Glossary (cont.)’, *DPJ*, no. 56 (27th July 1833), pp. 26-27
‘Ancient Irish Literature – Cormac’s Glossary (cont.)’, *DPJ*, no. 57 (3rd Aug. 1833), pp. 37-38

George Petrie, ‘Fairy Children’, *DPJ*, no. 29 (12th Jan. 1833), p. 227
‘Irish Antiquities’, *DPJ*, no. 31 (26th Jan. 1833), p. 244
‘Ancient Irish War Club’, *DPJ*, no. 55 (20th July 1833), p. 20
‘Ancient Houses of Dublin’, *DPJ*, no. 34 (16th Feb. 1833), pp. 268-270
‘Ancient Irish Mether’, *DPJ*, no. 38 (16th Mar. 1833), p. 300
‘Ancient Irish Vessel’, *DPJ*, no. 41 (6th Apr. 1833), p. 328
‘Abbey of Holy Cross, Tipperary’, *DPJ*, no. 47 (18th May 1833), pp. 373-374
‘Ancient Irish Bells’, *DPJ*, no. 47 (18th May 1833), p. 376
‘Bronze Alter Vessel’, *DPJ*, no. 52 (22nd June 1833), pp. 412-413
‘Irish Bracelets of Gold’, *DPJ*, no. 52 (22nd June 1833), pp. 413-414
‘Ancient Irish Trumpets’, *DPJ*, no. 56 (27th July 1833), pp. 27-30

1834

William Betham, ‘Roscrea’, *DPJ*, no. 86 (22nd Feb. 1834), pp. 268-270
‘Ser-Kyran’s Church and Parish’, *DPJ*, no. 119 (11th Oct. 1834), 113-114
‘Ancient Gold Balls’, *DPJ*, no. 122 (1st Nov. 1834), p. 144
‘The Gael and the Kymbri’, *DPJ*, no. 124 (15th Nov. 1834), pp. 154-156
‘The Monastery of Clonard’, *DPJ*, no. 126 (29th Nov. 1834), pp. 175-176

1836-

Eugene O'Curry, 'Ancient Irish Hand-mill or Quern', *DPJ*, no. 193 (12th Mar. 1836), pp. 295-296

1839

George Petrie, 'Remarks on the Book of Mac Firbis, an Irish Manuscript Lately Transcribed for the Academy', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 18 (1839), pp. 3-13

'An Account of an Ancient Irish Reliquary, Called the Domnach-Airgid', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 18 (1839), pp. 14-24

'On the History and Antiquities of Tara Hill', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. 18 (1839), pp. 25-232

1840

George Petrie, 'Castle of Aughnacree', *IPJ*, no. 1 (4th July 1840), pp. 1-2

'Caves of Kishcorran', *IPJ*, no. 2 (11th July 1840), pp. 9-10

'Rock of Cashel', *IPJ*, no. 3 (18th July 1840), pp. 17-18

'Lough Bray', *IPJ*, no. 5 (1st Aug. 1840), pp. 34-35

'Howth Lighthouse', *IPJ*, no. 8 (22nd Aug. 1840), pp. 57-58

'Leighlin Bridge and the Black Castle', *IPJ*, no. 9 (29th Aug. 1840), pp. 65-66

'Castle of Rindown, Roscommon', *IPJ*, no. 10 (5th Sept. 1840), pp. 73-75

'Clontarf Castle', *IPJ*, no. 11 (12th Sept. 1840), pp. 81-83

'Hollybrook Hall, Wicklow', *IPJ*, no. 13 (26th Sept. 1840), pp. 97-98

'Leixlip', *IPJ*, no. 15 (10th Oct. 1840), pp. 113-134

'Inchiquin', *IPJ*, no. 16 (17th Oct. 1840), pp. 121-123

'Newbridge, Kildare', *IPJ*, no. 17 (24th Oct. 1840), pp. 129-130

'Woodlands, County Dublin', *IPJ*, no. 18 (31st Oct. 1840), pp. 137-138

'Malahide Castle', *IPJ*, no. 20 (14th Nov. 1840), pp. 153-154

‘Church and Round Tower of Donoghmore’, *IPJ*, no. 22 (28th Nov. 1840), pp. 169-170
‘Tully Castle, Fermanagh’, *IPJ*, no. 23 (5th Dec. 1840), pp. 177-178
‘Castle of Donegal’, *IPJ*, no. 24 (12th Oct. 1840), pp. 185-187
‘Castle of Termon MacGrath’, *IPJ*, no. 26 (26th Dec. 1840), pp. 201-202

1841

Tracts Relating to Ireland, Vol. I (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1841)

William Betham, ‘Cormac’s Chapel on the Hill of Cashel’, *IPM*, no. 24 (12th June 1841), pp. 189-190

Richard Butler, ed., *The Annals of Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1841)

Eugene O’Curry, ‘Ollamh Fodhla’, *IPM*, no. 1 (2nd Jan. 1841), pp. 3-4

‘Kimbaoth – the Father of Macha’, *IPM*, no. 2 (9th Jan. 1841), pp. 10-11

‘Hugong – Labra Longseach’, *IPM*, no. 3 (16th Jan. 1841), pp. 19-20

‘Meyv of Connaught and Connor of Ulster’, *IPM*, no. 4 (23rd Jan. 1841), pp. 26-28

‘Conary the Great – Crimthan’, *IPM*, no. 5 (30th Jan. 1841), pp. 35-36

‘Moran, the Just Judge’, *IPM*, no. 7 (13th Feb. 1841), p. 51

‘Tuathal the Acceptable’, *IPM*, no. 8 (20th Feb. 1841), pp. 58-60

‘Feidlim the Lawgiver’, *IPM*, no. 9 (27th Feb. 1841), pp. 67-68

‘Conn Ceadcathac’, *IPM*, no. 10 (6th Mar. 1841), pp. 75-76

‘Ollioll Ollum’, *IPM*, no. 11 (13th Mar. 1841), p. 83

‘Cormac O’Conn’, *IPM*, no. 12 (20th Mar. 1841), pp. 91-93

‘Muredach Tireach’, *IPM*, no. 13 (27th Mar. 1841), pp. 99-100

‘Crimthan II’, *IPM*, no. 14 (3rd Apr. 1841), pp. 107-108

‘Niall of the Nine Hostages’, *IPM*, no. 14 (3rd Apr. 1841), p. 108

‘Logary II’, *IPM*, no. 15 (10th Apr. 1841), 114-116

‘Hugh I’, *IPM*, no. 16 (17th Apr. 1841), pp. 124-125

‘Blathmac and Diarmaid II’, *IPM*, no. 17 (24th Apr. 1841), pp. 131-132

‘Fionnachta Fiadhach’, *IPM*, no. 18 (1st May 1841), pp. 139-140

- ‘Flaherty’, *IPM*, no. 19 (8th May 1841), p. 147
- ‘Donough’, *IPM*, no. 20 (15th May 1841), pp. 155-156
- ‘Hugh V’, *IPM*, no. 21 (22nd May 1841), pp. 163- 164
- ‘Malachy I’, *IPM*, no. 22 (29th May 1841), pp. 171-173
- ‘Hugh VI’, *IPM*, no. 23 (5th June 1841), pp. 178-179
- ‘Cormac Mac Cuillenan’, *IPM*, no. 24 (12th June 1841), pp. 187-188
- ‘Callaghan, King of Munster’, *IPM*, no. 25 (19th June 1841), pp. 195-197
- ‘Donough II’, *IPM*, no. 27 (3rd July 1841), pp. 211-212
- ‘Congal II’, *IPM*, no. 27 (3rd July 1841), pp. 212
- John O’Donovan, ‘Malahide Chapel’, *IPM*, no. 1 (2nd Jan. 1841), pp. 1-3
- ‘Cong’, *IPM*, no. 2 (9th Jan. 1841), pp. 9-10
- ‘Dunamase’, *IPM*, no. 3 (19th Jan. 1841), pp. 17-18
- ‘Dunbrody’, *IPM*, no. 4 (23rd Jan. 1841), pp. 25-26
- ‘Glendalough’, *IPM*, no. 5 (30th Jan. 1841), pp. 33-35
- ‘Claregalway’, *IPM*, no. 6 (6th Feb. 1841), pp. 41-43
- ‘Clonmacnoise’, *IPM*, no. 7 (13th Feb. 1841), pp. 49-51
- ‘Bunratty Castle’, *IPM*, no. 8 (20th Feb. 1841), pp. 57-58
- ‘Chapelizod’, *IPM*, no. 9 (27th Feb. 1841), pp. 65-67
- ‘Trim Castle’, *IPM*, no. 10 (6th Mar. 1841), pp. 73-75
- ‘Lismore’, *IPM*, no. 11 (13th Mar. 1841), pp. 81-83
- ‘Athlone’, *IPM*, no. 12 (20th Mar. 1841), pp. 89-91
- ‘Kilkenny’, *IPM*, no. 13 (27th Mar. 1841), pp. 97-99
- ‘Cork’, *IPM*, no. 14 (3rd Apr. 1841), pp. 105-107
- ‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 1’, *IPJ*, no. 41 (10th Apr. 1841), pp. 326-328
- ‘Ennis’, *IPM*, no. 15 (10th Apr. 1841), pp. 113-114
- ‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 2’, *IPJ*, no. 42 (17th Apr. 1841), pp. 330-332
- ‘Howth’, *IPM*, no. 16 (17th Apr. 1841), pp. 121-123
- ‘Donegal’, *IPM*, no. 17 (24th Apr. 1841), pp. 129-131
- ‘Christchurch, Dublin’, *IPM*, no. 18 (1st May 1841), pp. 137-139
- ‘Lusk’, *IPM*, no. 19 (8th May 1841), pp. 145-147

‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 3’, *IPJ*, no. 46 (15th May 1841), pp. 365-366

‘Cork cont’d’, *IPM*, no. 20 (15th May 1841), pp. 153-155

‘Holy Cross’, *IPM*, no. 21 (22nd May 1841), pp. 161-163

‘Killaloe’, *IPM*, no. 22 (29th May 1841), pp. 169-171

‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 4’, *IPJ*, no. 48 (29th May 1841), pp. 381-384

‘Portumna’, *IPM*, no. 23 (5th June 1841), pp. 177-178

‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 5’, *IPJ*, no. 50 (12th June 1841), pp. 396-398

‘Castleconnel’, *IPM*, no. 24 (12th June 1841), pp. 185-186

‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 6’, *IPJ*, no. 51 (19th June 1841), pp. 405-407

‘Limerick’, *IPM*, no. 25 (19th June 1841), pp. 193-195

‘Origins and Meanings of Irish Family Names – part 7’, *IPJ*, no. 52 (26th June 1841), pp. 413-415

‘Boyle’, *IPM*, no. 26 (26th June 1841), pp. 201-204

‘Balrothery’, *IPM*, no. 27 (3rd July 1841), pp. 209-211

‘St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin’, *IPM*, no. 28 (10th July 1841), pp. 217-219

‘St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin (cont.)’, *IPM*, no. 29 (17th July 1841), pp. 225-226

‘Sligo’, *IPM*, no. 30 (24th July 1841), pp. 233-234

‘Londonderry’, *IPM*, no. 31 (31st July 1841), pp. 241-242

‘Castledermot’, *IPM*, no. 32 (7th Aug. 1841), pp. 249-250

‘Dublin Castle’, *IPM*, no. 33 (14th Aug. 1841), pp. 257-258

‘Cashel’, *IPM*, no. 34 (21st Aug. 1841), pp. 265-266

‘Kildare’, *IPM*, no. 35 (28th Aug. 1841), pp. 273-275

‘Holy Island, Lough Derg’, *IPM*, no. 36 (4th Sept. 1841), pp. 281-282

‘Enniscorthy’, *IPM*, no. 37 (11th Sept. 1841), pp. 289-290

‘Glenarm’, *IPM*, no. 38 (18th Sept. 1841), pp. 297-298

‘Swords’, *IPM*, no. 39 (25th Sept. 1841), pp. 305-306

‘Carlow’, *IPM*, no. 40 (2nd Oct. 1841), pp. 313-315

‘Kinsale’, *IPM*, no. 41 (9th Oct. 1841), pp. 321-322

- ‘Carrig, Wexford’, *IPM*, no. 42 (16th Oct. 1841), pp. 329-330
- ‘Downpatrick’, *IPM*, no. 43 (23rd Oct. 1841), pp. 337-338
- ‘Beative Abbey, Meath’, *IPM*, no. 44 (30th Oct. 1841), pp. 345-347
- ‘Roscrea’, *IPM*, no. 45 (6th Nov. 1841), pp. 353-354
- ‘Waterford’, *IPM*, no. 46 (13th Nov. 1841), pp. 361-362
- George Petrie, ‘Castle Caulfield’, *IPJ*, no. 28 (9th Jan. 1841), pp. 217-218
- ‘Kilbarron Castle, Donegal’, *IPJ*, no. 29 (16th Jan. 1841), pp. 225-227
- ‘Castle of Monea, Fermanagh’, *IPJ*, no. 30 (23rd Jan. 1841), p. 233
- ‘Dungarbry Castle, Leitrim’, *IPJ*, no. 31 (30th Jan. 1841), pp. 241-242
- ‘Cahir Castle, Tipperary’, *IPJ*, no. 33 (13th Feb. 1841), pp. 257-259
- ‘Ross Castle, Killarney’, *IPJ*, no. 37 (13th Mar. 1841), pp. 289-291
- ‘Fairy Superstitions from the North of Ireland’, *IPM*, no. 17 (27th Apr. 1841), pp. 133-135
- ‘Holy Cross Abbey, Tipperary’, *IPJ*, no. 38 (20th May 1841), pp. 297-298
- ‘Thomond Bridge and Castle of Limerick’, *IPJ*, no. 39 (27th May 1841), pp. 305-307
- ‘Killymoon, County Tyrone’, *IPJ*, no. 41 (10th Apr. 1841), pp. 321-322
- ‘Antrim Castle’, *IPJ*, no. 42 (17th Apr. 1841), pp. 329-330
- ‘Drimnagh Castle, Dublin’, *IPJ*, no. 43 (24th Apr. 1841), p. 337
- ‘Ardfinnan Castle, Tipperary’, *IPJ*, no. 44 (1st May 1841), pp. 345-347
- ‘Ormeau, Down’, *IPJ*, no. 48 (29th May 1841), p. 377
- ‘Victoria Castle, Killiney’, *IPJ*, no. 49 (5th June 1841), 385-386
- John Windele ‘Round Tower of Kinneigh’, *IPM*, no. 31 (31st July 1841), pp. 245-246

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John Clarke Crosthwaite, ed., *The Book of Obits and Martyrology of the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1844)

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James Hardiman, ed., *A description of the West or h-Iar Connaught* (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1845)

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The ecclesiastical architecture of Ireland, anterior to the Anglo-Norman invasion, comprising an essay on the origin and uses of the round towers of Ireland (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1845)

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James Henthorn Todd, 'Remarks on Some Fragments of an Ancient Waxed Table-Book, Found in a Bog at Maghera, County of Derry, and Presented to the Royal Irish Academy by the Rev. J. Spencer Knox, A. M.', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 21 (1846), pp. 3-15

William Wilde, 'Description of an Ancient Irish Shrine, Called the "Mias Tighearnain"', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. 21 (1846), pp. 16-19

1847

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John O'Donovan, ed. and trans., *Lebor na gCeart or The Book of Rights* (Dublin: Celtic Society, 1847)

1848

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John O'Donovan, ed. & trans., *Annala Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616. Edited from MSS in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy and of*

Trinity College Dublin with a translation and copious notes, 7 Vols. (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1848-51, reprinted 1856)

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1851

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1852

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