



NUI MAYNOOTH

Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

A STUDY OF ASSOCIATIONAL CULTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRISH  
NATIONALISM, 1780-1830, WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SOFTWARE  
INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

BY

SHARON WEBB

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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND  
MAYNOOTH

SUPERVISORS OF RESEARCH:  
PROFESSOR R.V. COMERFORD  
DR. JOHN G. KEATING

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## CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

Sharon Webb and John G. Keating, 'MIHS - Text mining historical sources using factoid' at DH2009, Maryland University (25 June 2009).

Sharon Webb, "'Reconfiguring narrative" using digital tools', Research Foundations for Understanding Books and Reading in the Digital Age Conference (15 Dec. 2010).  
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Sharon Webb, Aja Teehan and John G. Keating, 'The Born Digital Graduate: Multiple representations of and within Digital Humanities PhD theses' at DH2011, Stanford University (20 June 2011).

## ABSTRACT

‘A study of associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, 1780-1830,  
with the construction of a software information environment’

Sharon Webb

This research investigates the role of associational culture in the development of Irish nationalism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Parallel to this historical investigation it examines the use of and implements a digital humanities methodology to research and where possible a digital solution was used to support this thesis. This project can be described as a digital humanities project as it produces both a traditional historical thesis along with various digital objects or artifacts and consideration is given to the theoretical and practical issues of both the ‘digital’ and ‘humanities’ components. It reflects growing interests within the arts and humanities to incorporate the use of software solutions in humanities research and indicates a growing trend towards software development within the arts domain. Software development was a feature of this project and technical developments and discussions are interspersed with the historical investigation into Irish associational culture.

Associational culture provides an important focus to investigate identity politics in Irish society which is linked to a complicated construction of and concept of nationalism, linked to religion, ascendancy and the imperial context. An overview of Dublin’s associational world reveals the magnitude and diverse range of clubs and societies which existed and how their contributions to society, in practical as well as ideological terms, were essential to the development of movements which shaped the Irish political, social and cultural landscape. A case study on the Historical Society of Trinity College reveal the educational, social and political roles societies play and the important social networks and communities they can nurture and support. Concluding remarks reveal a cultural shift in Irish society as post-Union politics and associational culture exposed the diversity of Irish identity and revealed the existence of ultra Protestant and ultra Catholic factions.

## INTRODUCTION

‘A study of associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, 1780-1830, with the construction of a software information environment’ describes advances and developments in Irish nationalism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century within a twenty-first century digital framework. This thesis uses a digital methodology to support investigation and research into associational culture and its influence on Irish nationalism. The purpose of this thesis is two fold - to highlight the importance and utility of digital approaches to humanities research and engage humanities scholars in digital technology which can support the production of historical scholarship but also to investigate the important social phenomenon of associational culture and its affect on Irish nationalism. Research into Irish associational culture was carried out in conjunction with the development of bespoke software and digital solutions to the main phases of historical research - source management, argument development and research presentation. A custom XML markup was developed to structure primary and secondary source material to support source management. This included a bespoke structured annotation layer, called a factlet, to support argument development and was pivotal in the creation of the historical research now presented. Factlets and factoids, which visualise the link between sources and interpretation, were realised in the digital research environment developed at An Foras Feasa, CRADLE (Collaborate, Research, Archive, Develop, Learn, Engage) and engineered as a fully functional component of the system. CRADLE hosts a number of digitised primary documents related to the historical research and contains digital articles generated from the Bundle Object, which is a placeholder for the technologies used to dynamically create these digital artifacts.

The reader is now invited to visit [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie), and explore the digital resources which accompany this thesis. The ‘Associational Dublin Archive’ contains a collection of primary source material as well as digital articles, a presentation, slides and discussions, which are available for the reader to engage and interact with.

Similar to the development of the digital humanities methodology, which focused on supporting each phase of historical research, the chapters now presented form a logical representation of these phases. As such chapter 1 and 2 will focus on the theoretical or literature review of digital humanities/digital history and associational

culture respectively, while chapter 3 will discuss the digital methodology used to support the historical research presented in chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7. Chapter 8 then explores the development of the Bundle Object and reflects the final phase of historical research, presentation. The following introduction will launch our discussion of associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, after which we will also introduce the second part of this research - ‘the construction of a software information environment’.

*A study of associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, 1780-1830...*

Associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, 1780-1830, investigates two important features of modern society, group association and national identity. Modern expressions of nationalism are underpinned by the development and utilisation of associational structures which support and encourage various social, political and religious movements. Irish nationalism and modern Irish political structures have been influenced and determined by the social and political movements born from associational activity during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. The impact of associational culture in the development of modern Irish nationalism is evident in the litany of clubs and societies which have emerged and the consistency with which they channel and direct national, social and political movements and their achievements in transforming Irish society. Its position as a nation within the imperial context has set the political, social and religious tone in Ireland throughout the early modern period and affects the very construction and definition of Irish nationalism. The period under discussion, 1780-1830, is important not only for Irish nationalism but for the development of modern ideas and perceptions of nationalism across Europe, born as a result of and response to the American War of Independence, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic War. The nineteenth-century is equated with nation-building yet it is the late eighteenth-century and the impact of the ideals and radical politics emanating from the French Revolution which foregrounds the roots of modern nationalism.

This thesis investigates the abstract and practical contributions made by certain clubs and societies to developing ideas of Irish nationalism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. Focusing primarily on Dublin’s associational world this research considers a number of clubs and societies which exist during the period and

investigates, thematically, how through associational activities they promoted and created a particular, socially and politically constructed idea of Irish identity. One of the major difficulties in Irish nationalism is the fact that as a political and social construct, Irish nationalism is a contested idea and one which includes multifarious and conflicting conceptions of Irish identity given the existence and policy directives of English rule which has its roots in the twelfth-century with Henry II. The imperial context creates subsets of Irish citizens, along religious, political and ethnic lines. The result of these policies, including the penal laws, a series of legislations from the seventeenth-century which effectively forced Irish Catholics out of politics and infringed on landownership rights and education, among many others, was the creation of multiple claims to Irish identity, including Irish Catholics, Irish Protestants, Old English, New English, Anglo-Irish not to mention Loyalists and Unionist in the nineteenth-century. These identities represent the English struggle to control Irish politics and the various interest groups which were either supported or repressed, Protestants and Catholics respectively, in Irish society.

Dublin's associational world in the late eighteenth-century is reflective of these identities and as such provides a unique lens with which to investigate important developments in Irish nationalism during the period. It reveals the complex social networks which individuals belonged to and how these networks contribute directly and indirectly to the development of Irish nationalism and identity. During the late eighteenth-century Ireland experienced the first real attempts to organise mass popular politics, attempts which were driven and encouraged by associational activity and this pattern of agitation, organised through associational means, continued throughout the nineteenth-century.

Irish associational studies have enjoyed continued growth over the last decade, evident in such research projects as 'Associational culture in Ireland, c. 1750-c.1940: a database', which produced an online database but also resulted in a conference at NUI Maynooth in 2008 and the publication of *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (2010), edited by Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford.<sup>1</sup> Other recent publications include *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (2010), edited by James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell,<sup>2</sup> which, like Kelly and Comerford's edition, showcase important

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<sup>1</sup> Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010).

research into Irish associational culture. Contributors such as Jennifer Kelly, R.V. Comerford, James Kelly, Martyn J. Powell, T.C. Barnard, Jacqueline Hill and Allan Blackstock have all contributed extensively to the field in their own right. Topics include the Ribbonmen by Jennifer Kelly, *'The downfall of Hagan': Sligo Ribbonism in 1842* (2008), loyalism and Orangeism by Allan Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland* (2007), the Fenians by R.V. Comerford, *The Fenians in context: Irish politics and society, 1848-82* (1985) and Liberty and Ormond Boys by James Kelly, *The Liberty and Ormond Boys : factional riots in eighteenth-century Dublin* (2005).

Irish associational culture studies have been influenced by the exemplary publication on British associational studies by Peter Clark, whose seminal work, *British clubs and societies 1580-1800, the origins of an associational world* (2000),<sup>3</sup> provides the context and starting point for any study of associational culture. The importance of his work is reflected in the fact that he presented the keynote lecture at the 2008 conference at NUI Maynooth and that he is cited by many of the contributors to the two volumes discussed previously on Irish associational culture. Clark's work deals with many facets of associational culture and establishes the phenomenon as an essential feature of modern political and civil society. He also considers important questions such as why associational bodies emerge and why they are effective at guiding and influencing social change. As such Clark foregrounds our consideration on associational culture in chapter 2.

Kelly and Powell's, and Kelly and Comerford's 2010 publications emerged during the latter part of the second year of this research and provided invaluable information and evidence from which to draw. These timely publications fortified the reason and necessity to include a case study on associational culture and Irish nationalism which focused on the Historical Society of Trinity College. This case study narrowed the focus of the research but in the context of the two volumes discussed contributes to the knowledge domain as it provides important insights into a society which has received nominal attention in other publications. The decision to include the Historical Society of Trinity College, more commonly known as the Hist, provided a unique lens to investigate the social networks which supported and encouraged national movements such as the United Irishmen, the Catholic Association and Young Ireland, to

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Clark, *British clubs and societies 1580-1800, the origins of an associational world* (Oxford, 2000).

name a few. As the oldest student debating society in Ireland, and in close competition with Cambridge and Oxford's debating societies for this title in England, the Hist provides a unique platform for students and honorary members to develop oratory and writing skills but more importantly, supported the development of life long social networks between members, which contributed directly to Irish political movements and agitation.

While studies of associational culture in the late eighteenth-century have been explored by other historians, its role in the development of nationalism has yet to be fully explored. The focus on nationalism within this research provided a unique lens to examine the role of associations in Irish society. Ideas of nationalism were supplemented with the consideration of civil society theory but also with the concept of Othering, which we define more specifically as the association and disassociation of various identity groups both in forms of nationalism and associational movements. It is in this sense, coupled with the inclusion of a case study on the Hist, that this research has particular relevance to the development of Irish associational studies, which has prospered over the last number of years and continues to do so.

As we will discuss, chapter 4 is an overview of associational culture in Dublin during the period and considers the idea and development of Irish nationalism in all contested forms. Many of these clubs and societies are also reviewed with theories and definitions of associational culture and the idea and theory of civil society, discussed and presented in chapter 2. Theories of associational culture are often discussed with reference to the idea and concept of civil society and Jürgen Habermas' work on the public sphere and public space is frequently used to buttress theories and developments in associational movements. While these are legitimately viable and his considerations offer important insight into modern perceptions of civil society and the development of modern political and social institutions, Habermas is not the theoretical focus on discussions on group identity and the development of civil society within this research. Instead 'An Associational World' (chapter 2) begins with an examination of anthropological definitions of associations. We discuss the role of voluntary associations as supportive and pertinent to social movements and social change, carried out both at local and national levels. Many of these anthropological definitions focus their attention on the word voluntary and how the act of joining affects the definition of associational culture. While many associations are overtly voluntary, this presumes a

level of choice which may not exist in certain political and social circumstances, as individuals are compelled to join particular associations to secure for themselves rights and privileges. Our discussion of anthropological definitions of associational culture assesses the work of R.T. Anderson, Dorothy Hammond and D.E. Brown. This leads our discussion to two important contemporary eighteenth and nineteenth-century philosophers, Edmund Burke and G.W.F. Hegel, both of whom contributed to civil society theory.

A number of Burke's tracts, published during the late eighteenth-century, are used to explore the abstract notion of civil society theory and the utility of associations as a virtuous social activity. In his writings Burke describes individualism as a corrupting force - a view which is in contrast to his stance on group association and participation which he preserves as a protective force in society. He also makes an important connection between associational ties and their ability to develop sentimental and emotional ties to the nation. Late eighteenth-century publications by Burke offer important theoretical and transcendental discussions on civil society theory and ideas of nationalism and as such are used in our discussion of civil society in chapter 2 and on nationalism in chapter 7. Burke is also an important figure because of his extra curricular achievements as a student in Trinity College Dublin during the 1740s. In 1747 Burke, along with three other students, founded the first debating society in Trinity and it is this club which became the motivation for the establishment of Historical Society of Trinity College in 1770. Burke's "Club" is described as the Hist's predecessor and as such Burke features in later discussions on the Society in chapter 5 and 6. As co-founding member of the Society Burke provides practical examples of associational culture as well as theory on the subject.

G.W.F. Hegel also features in chapter 2 for his important contributions to civil society theory which in itself supports theories on associational culture and how it creates national identity through group affiliation and participation. Hegel's ideas, philosophy and theory on civil society, and indeed his theories on patriotism, enforce ideas of universal and collective wills, generated through constant participation and interaction with an ever increasing social group. As a nineteenth-century philosopher Hegel provides contemporary theories on the topic of civil society. Burke and Hegel both feature in contributions to theories on civil society and provide insight into ideas of

nationalism and as such are considered in detail in chapter 2 as well as chapter 7, which deals with associational culture and nationalism.

Chapter 2 examines the theoretical framework of this thesis and considers associational culture with civil society theory. This chapter also details a literature review and looks at many of the works previously cited, including Clark's important contribution to the topic. The literature review on associational culture will consider the seminal work of Peter Clark, *British clubs and societies 1580-1800, the origins of an associational world* (2000) and his important contribution to the field. We will also consider the work by R.J. Morris and two recently published surveys of Irish associational culture, James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (2010) and Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (2010).

Chapter 4 is a brief overview of Dublin during the late eighteenth-century and looks at the clubs and associations which were active in Dublin during the period. A 'Glimpse into Dublin's associational world' examines a number of clubs and societies and their contributions to various forms of nationalism, including cultural and consumer nationalism and considers civil society theory in terms of an individual's participation and interaction with various clubs and societies and the social networks these support. The sources used for this overview are mainly contemporary newspaper reports and articles and while other pamphlets and periodicals have been consulted, the *Freeman's Journal* and the *Dublin Chronicle* were invaluable in providing evidence for many clubs and societies and as such provide the bulk of primary source material in this chapter.

As stated this thesis also focuses on a case study on the Historical Society of Trinity College, whose records and journals, although not complete, are held in the manuscript department at Trinity College Dublin. The history of the Society, which is still active today, is discussed in chapter 5 and includes incidents such as the Society's involvement with radical politics and the 1798 Rebellion, as well as expulsion from the College in 1794 and in 1815. This chapter examines many of the Society's members, including Theobald Wolfe Tone, Thomas Addis Emmet, Robert Emmet, Thomas Moore, Charles Wolfe, Isaac Butt and Thomas Davis. There is also a strong link between the Hist and Daniel O'Connell. The Hist was instrumental in supporting nationalist groups such as the United Irishmen in the late eighteenth-century and the Catholic Association and Young Ireland in the nineteenth-century. It is in this sense that the Historical Society

of Trinity College holds particular significance as a training ground for many of Ireland's most influential nationalist and political figures. However, as a student debating society, the Hist also provides important educational functions through the provision of their *raison d'être* - the study and promotion of history, oratory and composition. Chapter 6 then is dedicated to a discussion of all three areas of study and offer important insight into the politics and ideals of Hist members but also those of the wider community.

Chapter 7 focuses on associational culture and nationalism and as previously stated evaluates Burke and Hegel, who provide important theory and context on the topic. Nationalism is also compared to ideas of patriotism and how the two are expressed in different ways by different groups in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. This chapter also considers the impact of the Irish penal laws and their affect on the creation of particular societies but also how these laws provide a reference point both for Catholic identity and protest.

The work of Benedict Anderson, an important contributor to nationalist theory, is considered throughout this thesis. Anderson's important concept, and the title of his 1983 publication, *Imagined Communities*, is used to describe the power of associational culture to support and advance the idea of an imagined community of real and abstract members. Anderson places emphasis on the technological discoveries which make possible a society steeped in literature and prose. The development of the printing press makes it possible for the mass production of cheap and divergent publications which create what he terms an 'imagined community'.<sup>4</sup> Print capitalism develops notions of identity rooted in written language, as characters represent members of these 'imaged communities'. Stories of imagined members conjure up a sense of belonging to a group of unknown players with similar pre-occupations and concerns, and consequently national identity. Anderson's phrase, 'imagined communities', is in many ways analogous to associational activity as there emerges a sense of belonging to a time and space that exists concurrently with fellow readers or indeed members. While novels contribute to a sense of belonging to a network of readers, newspapers and other daily or weekly publications are more acutely in tune with contemporary issues and therefore provide tangible evidence of the movements and progress of fellow members. Problems of literacy wane as publications and print become widely disseminated in vernacular

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<sup>4</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 2006).

languages and reading clubs, groups and coffee houses disseminate the ideas and contents of newspaper and magazines. The production and dissemination of affordable publications creates opportunities for traditionally illiterate or low literate classes to engage in this world of print capitalism and subsequently the national identity which these publications promote.

Anderson's idea of an imagined community is used to support the conceptual abstraction of identity inherent in associational activity as a method to align an individual with a particular constructed identity. It is through participation in associational groups and activity that individuals perceive themselves as belonging to an extended community of members, a process which Burke and Hegel support and describe. Through group affiliation individuals and their families support and encourage the development of universal and collective rights and increase an individual's investment in and dependence on universal ties. In this sense members increase their social capital which is linked to the local, regional and national bodies in which they participate. Nationalism is a common thread throughout this thesis: it underpins the theoretical framework and guides our discussions on Dublin's associational world as well as our case study on the Historical Society of Trinity College.

The abstract and general theory of nationalism is supplemented by more specific works on Irish nationalism and Irish history during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. R.F. Foster's 1989 publication *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* provides an extensive summary of Irish history and deals with important features of Irish society during the period under discussion, including the idea of patriotism in the late-eighteenth-century and the 'mobilization of popular politics' across the period reviewed.<sup>5</sup> R.V. Comerford's *Ireland, inventing the nation* (2003) was used extensively and is an authoritative, thematic, survey on Ireland and examines Irish 'Politics', 'Origins', 'Religion' and 'Language' among other topics. This thematic approach emphasises the complexities inherent in Irish society and provides a thorough exploration of the characteristics and idiosyncrasies which influence and shape Irish social, religious and political history. *A new history of Ireland* volume iv (1691-1800) and volume v (1801-70) also contain extensive information on Irish history during the period under review and contributors include R.B. McDowell, David Fitzpatrick and S.J. Connolly. Edited by T.W. Moody and W.E. Vaughen these works are essential to

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<sup>5</sup> R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (London, 1989), p. 289.

any study of Irish history and the exhaustive list of essays includes ‘Reform and reaction, 1789-94’ and ‘Revolution and the union, 1794-1800’ by R.B. McDowell and ‘Aftermath and adjustment’ and ‘Mass politics and sectarian conflict, 1823-30’ by S.J. Connolly. Allan Blackstock’s 2007 publication *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829* is also used and provides important discussions on the role and proliferation of loyalist association during the period. Reference works such as the *Oxford companion to Irish history* and the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* online were used to supplement the above material.

In addition to a consideration of nationalism the idea and concept of Othering is a common thread throughout this thesis. Although a chapter is not dedicated to it, Otherness features as an implicit characteristic and attribute in nationalist identity and group affiliation. Political and social groups can promote nationalist feeling through member affiliation and mutual political sentiment. The fundamental reason for the establishment of a club or society will determine the ‘type’ of member it attracts. Similar to nationalism, clubs and societies are often exclusive in nature and require potential ‘members’ or associates to hold a certain moral, political, religious, economic or social stance. Thereby ensuring the Other is not included. This is important in nineteenth-century associational culture in Ireland as clubs and societies become more sectarian and divided in their political and religious outlook. As nationalism develops, nations and states become more exclusive in nature by restrictions and definitions of the group that belongs to the constructed national body and those who do not. It is in this sense that throughout this thesis group affiliation and cohesion is often described with reference to this idea of association and disassociation, literally and figuratively describing the ‘in’ group and the ‘out’ group.

In *Beyond Anthropology, society and the Other* (1989) Bernard McGrane states that ‘a culture that discovers what is alien to itself simultaneously manifests what it is in itself’.<sup>6</sup> To create identity, society defines itself by what it is not. In this sense how is Irish nationalism constructed? In many ways Irish nationalism consists of the Other language, the Other religion, the Other history and even the Other class. The contested identities and definition of Irish nationalism develop divergent group identity rooted in differing claims to language, land and culture.

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<sup>6</sup> Bernard McGrane, *Beyond Anthropology, society and the Other* (Oxford, 1989), p. 1.

*...and the construction of a software information environment.*

The central research question investigates how local, regional and national movements contribute to and enforce the individual's conceptual and actual place within a community of nationally bound citizens. Yet the research methodology involved in creating, 'Associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, 1780-1830', transforms this research from a History PhD, the content of which we have detailed above, into a research project centered on historical research within a digital humanities framework. Explorations into Dublin's associational world and its impact and contribution to Irish nationalism, in all its variations, have been supported, where possible, with the use of a digital humanities approach. Just like civil society theory is used to inform the research statement and supplements anthropological definitions of associational culture, digital humanities and digital history provides the theoretical context for the digital approach and supplements the traditional historical research methodology. This digital approach provides practical methods to support the historical activities of primary research, argument development and argument presentation and as such broadens the context of historical research and methodology as it influences the production and development of the historical narrative now presented. As such we must consider the second part of the research statement - 'the construction of a software information environment' which is discussed in chapter 1, 3 and 8 and forms an integral part of the overall thesis and development of this research.

The traditional history PhD element, which focuses on Dublin and the complex system of social networks supported by clubs and societies from various religious, political, social and economic backgrounds, is underpinned by the implementation of a digital humanities methodology. As such the thesis structure, as the table of contents indicates, incorporates historical chapters as well as chapters which focus on digital approaches to research, argument development and presentation. The purpose of this PhD is to investigate an historical research statement using a digital humanities methodology and explore ways in which this approach can support the creation of history but also ways to present digital objects and the historical narrative produced using these resources.

This research project is a result of undergraduate experience with the 'Associational culture in Ireland, c. 1750-c.1940: a database' project and a Bachelor of

Arts degree in history and computer science. These interconnections between humanities and computer science are born from the continued growth and rapid development of information technology over the last number of decades. They reflect a growing interest among scholars in the arts and humanities to incorporate the use of software applications in humanities research and indicate a growing trend towards software development within the arts domain. The rapid assimilation and incorporation of digital technology in academic life means that we consume, use and manipulate technology subconsciously. Many research activities, including source research, management, analysis and presentation have transformed over the past decade and students and academics alike now rely on various digital methods to research and communicate scholarship and are everyday confronted with new mechanisms to explore data and information. Most scholarly activity now centers on the use of software applications which includes the use of simple (but revolutionary) word processing packages, database applications, source management systems and visualisation software to more complex software designed to support geospatial analysis or GIS, text and data mining techniques. Online content has also revolutionised the way in which we consume data, as users can access source material instantly and historians can now find many online versions of traditional primary sources such as newspapers, journals and pamphlets. A brief look at the bibliography for this research demonstrates the availability of many primary sources online through proprietary gateways such as Eighteenth Century Collections Online as well as open access sites including the Internet Archive and Google Books.

Contemporary research methods can often rely upon the use and engagement with standard or off-the-shelf software applications which are not tailored to specific types of research. An example of this is the use of database management systems within historical research and current database models which can be restrictive for historical purposes, as outlined by John G. Keating, Denis Clancy, Thomas O'Connor and Marian Lyons in 'Problems with databases and the XML solution' (2004).<sup>7</sup> The use of databases within historical research has become the norm, yet innovations for the construction of historical databases are slow to surface. Historians tend to rely on database applications such as Access and MySQL, among others, to help maintain and order primary data

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<sup>7</sup> John G. Keating, Denis Clancy, Thomas O'Connor and Marian Lyons, 'Problems with databases and the XML solution' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, lvii (2004), pp 268-75.

extracted from sources. These traditional database applications and models are limited by the premise that data input can, and should be, normalised to create an efficient and memory friendly database. They are based on the premise that data is ordered, structured and type generic. Yet many historical sources are by their nature randomly constructed and require a database to be flexible. Source information gathered for this research demonstrates that clubs and societies can change names, merge, disappear and reappear. This has implications for data integrity, yet this type of instability yields important historical information for political and social maneuvering. While traditional applications allow for easy manipulation and analysis of numeric information they are limited in text evaluation - a disadvantage to historians, as text in various forms make up the vast proportion of historical sources. Alternative methods to database management systems include the use of markup languages such as XML, as advised by Keating et al. and provides researchers alternative means to interact with source material in a format which is more sympathetic to textual information but also provides scope to query and reuse historical data structured in this manner.

Increasingly collaborative research between the arts and humanities and computer science produce bespoke software and applications which are driven by the humanities researchers and their end user requirements. Research institutes, such as An Foras Feasa at NUI Maynooth, develop strategies to engage humanities research in the use, development and deployment of software applications and digital research methodologies, enabling researchers to actively engage in the development of e-infrastructure for humanities research. Projects such as the 'Irish Associational Culture Database',<sup>8</sup> 'The Irish in Europe Project'<sup>9</sup> and 'Irish Confraternities and Parishes Website & Database',<sup>10</sup> represent collaborative research between An Foras Feasa and the History department at NUI Maynooth and establishes a tradition of collaboration and interdisciplinary investigation. The projects listed above not only represent collaborative research but are representative of projects and research which fall under the academic discipline referred to as digital humanities or humanities computing. Digital humanities provides much theory and discussion on the development of

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<sup>8</sup> 'Irish Associational Culture Database' available at <http://www.irishassociations.ie/history/> (12 Sep. 2011).

<sup>9</sup> 'The Irish in Europe Project' available at <http://www.irishineurope.com/> (12 Sep. 2011).

<sup>10</sup> 'Irish Confraternities and Parishes Website & Database' available at <http://www.irishconfraternities.ie/> (12 Sep. 2011).

technology, its affect on humanities research and provides theory and practical advice and training for both humanities researchers and computer scientists alike. It is in this context that we may refer to this project as an exercise in digital humanities which as an umbrella term for all humanities research in the digital realm can be broken down and includes the idea of digital history. Digital history is genre specific and as such focuses on the idiosyncrasies and concerns of historical research in the digital medium. Both concepts are considered in chapter 1.

Projects like the ‘Irish Associational Culture Database’ involve the development of bespoke software, designed specifically to fulfill particular use case scenarios as specified through dialogue between the historian and the software development team. Yet rather than focus on the development of research specific software, this research envisaged the development of digital humanities methodologies which, although influenced by historiographical theories, could support any historical research and was not focused on a particular remit. As such all methodologies produced are open to modification and reuse by other researchers.

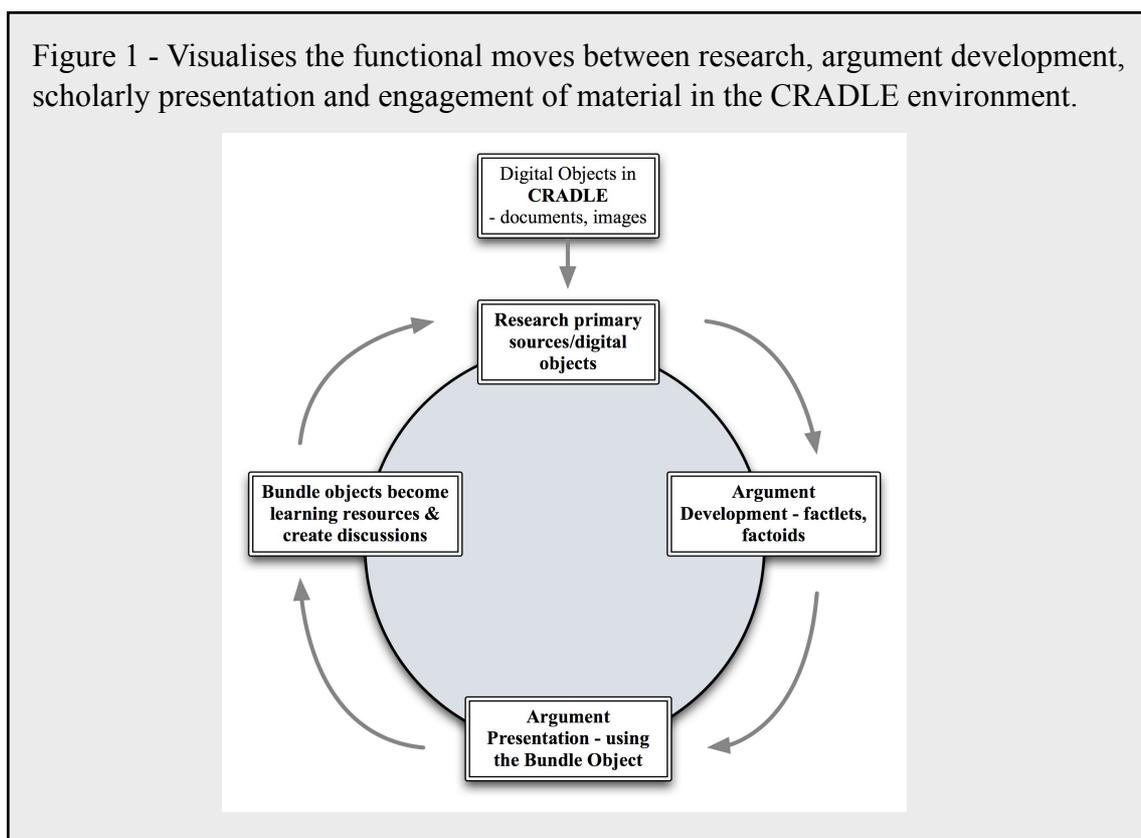
The history research presented in chapter 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 was supported by the use and implementation of a digital humanities methodology. The historical aspect of this thesis is presented as a traditional print document and aspects of the associational culture case study on the Historical Society of Trinity College are presented as a digital article within the online learning and research environment CRADLE (Collaborate, Research, Archive, Develop, Learn, Engage), developed at An Foras Feasa by a team of software engineers, Damien Gallagher and Danny Fallon and for which Sharon Webb implemented the factlet/factoid branch, discussed in greater detail in chapter 8. This software, co-funded by the IRCHSS and Intel and project managed by Dr. John G. Keating, Associate Director for An Foras Feasa, provides an open platform for researchers to use and is not tailored to one specific research project. CRADLE hosts various digital objects and learning resources, which are part of a user specified collection. Functionality includes annotations, discussion forums, automatic relationship graphing, media hosting and digital archiving and preservation. This project enables researchers to manage their source collections and learning objects in an environment which supports collaborative research and interaction between users and as such the ‘Associational Dublin Archive’ pertains to this research and digital objects, including

primary journals and pamphlets and secondary articles derived from these, relating to this thesis.

It is a challenge to present the history research and the digital humanities methodology as one single research entity but it is important that we visualise them as part of the same research project and not as two separate ones. Historical research requires us to implement research methodologies and in some cases to attain or learn new skill sets, such as learning a foreign language, training in paleography or in this case learning and using software engineering skills and computer programming. Yet rather than perceiving the digital humanities methodology as adjacent or secondary to the historical research, the use and creation of digital tools were integral in all steps of the creation of the history thesis. The storing and annotating of primary and secondary source data was supported by XML and the creation of a custom schema which included the use of the factlet structure to support annotation of data in a systematic, functional and genre specific manner. This XML schema, called the global schema discussed in chapter 3, supports source management and querying, and is used to present final outputs of this research within CRADLE using the Bundle Object. The factlet structure and the subsequent creation of factoids, a visualisation of the links and relationships between factlets, and the use of XQuery and XSLT to query data, was used to inform the historical write up.

Digitisation of selected pamphlets from the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth, at the An Foras Feasa imaging lab was also carried out, while DRIS, Digital Resources and Imaging Services at Trinity College, provided digital images of a number of selected journals from the Historical Society of Trinity College. Digitised pamphlets from the Russell library include the *Laws of the Historical Society of the University of Dublin, instituted in the year 1770* (1770) and *An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College, Dublin* (1795). All digital images created for this research, which are unavailable elsewhere online, are now part of the ‘Associational Dublin Archive’ collection within CRADLE. In CRADLE these digital objects, which includes a speech by the eighteenth-century revolutionary figure Theobald Wolfe Tone, become the focal point for historical research, learning and historical engagement as CRADLE supports the creation of factlets, the visualisation of factoids in a springGraph and the uploading of a ‘Bundle’ object, which enables the

presentation of a PDF article and a digital article and links historical argument back to the original sources within the CRADLE environment.



CRADLE is also a learning environment and teaching resource as slide shows and recorded lectures can also be uploaded, while the ability to start and enter discussions enables users to interact with primary sources, historical argument, online lectures and other users. Figure 1 demonstrates the cyclical relationship between primary sources, argument development and scholarship and supports the description of these objects as boundary objects, as they fulfill different functional and pedagogical requirements, depending on the user and their perspective. This cyclical relationship also supports the creation of new knowledge and generates dynamic scholarship.

The creation and utilisation of CRADLE within this research is an evolution of the original thesis statement which outlined the creation of bespoke software to support historical research. This bespoke software, named MIHS (Mining Interactive Historical Sources) and the topic of a conference paper at Digital Humanities 2009 (Digital Humanities Annual International Conference) otherwise known as DH2009, 'MIHS - Text mining historical sources using factoids',<sup>11</sup> evolved in line with institutional

<sup>11</sup> Sharon Webb and John G. Keating, 'MIHS - Text mining historical sources using factoid' at DH2009, Maryland University (25 June 2009).

changes at An Foras Feasa and the development of an in-house project which ultimately created CRADLE and supported many of the proposed features of MIHS. The evolution of this software is documented in chapter 3 and its creation represents software development processes and rapid prototyping inherent in software design and development.

Developing the factlet and factoid branch of CRADLE required working as part of a software team and development was carried out using Adobe Flex. Factlets, which were initially realised as a XML description, are structured annotations which consider the genre specific and functional steps historians take in the creation of history. Factlets, however, are derived from John Bradley and Harold Short's use and specification of factoids, which we use to visualise the relationship between factlets and represent the links between interpretation and the subsequent creation of historical narrative. Both factlets and factoids reflect the process of interpretation inherent in historical research and narrative. They allow the user to present interpretations in the context of original source material and illustrate the process of argument development. Factlets and factoids are considered in the DH2009 paper and are discussed in further detail in chapter 3 and chapter 8. The implementation of the factlet and factoid structure within CRADLE is also considered in the Webb, Teehan and Keating's DH2011 (Digital Humanities 2011) paper 'The Born Digital Graduate: Multiple representations of and within Digital Humanities PhD theses'.<sup>12</sup> This deals with the creation and use of the Bundle object within CRADLE and supports the final stages of a PhD - the presentation of content. The DH2011 paper and the Bundle object focuses on the creation of new methods to represent PhD theses which use a digital humanities methodology and supports the multiple representation of thesis articles using XML, XSLT, HTML, CSS and JavaScript. The Bundle object hosts the XSL templates to produce a PDF document using XSL-FO and XSLT and a digital article which includes timelines and keystones as boundary objects. A user-guide to the Bundle object is available in CRADLE and details the practical use of these templates which can be extended and reused by new users, a copy of which is also supplied in the appendix. Indeed two MA students at An Foras Feasa have already used this object to support the creation of digital articles related to their MA theses. The Bundle object will be discussed further in 'Associational Dublin in

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<sup>12</sup> Sharon Webb, Aja Teehan and John G. Keating, 'The Born Digital Graduate: Multiple representations of and within Digital Humanities PhD theses' at DH2011, Stanford University (20 June 2011).

a digital world' which explores the methodologies used to support research, argument development and the presentation of specific aspects of the historical thesis.

The history thesis presented within this research is a result of this digital humanities methodology. Yet this traditional history thesis is not the only product of this research. The digital humanities approach allows us to present material associated with the research and not just the research itself. Primary source material as well as some of the interpretative processes and argument development, captured in the factlet and factoid structures, allow us to reverse engineer the historical narrative and provide reader/user access to historical processes. This capability enables the reader/user to question the sources as well as the historical argument or interpretation presented in the research and as figure 1 suggests, opens up scholarship for further investigation and discussion.

As discussed the historical research looks at the development of Irish nationalism through the growth and influence of associational culture in Dublin during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century and examines how clubs and societies construct group identity and how that identity influences ideas of Irish nationalism. This is the associational Dublin which is evaluated in a digital world; but what makes this historical project conducive to the use of digital humanities methodologies? The primary and secondary sources used to inform the historical research question range from newspapers to pamphlets, journals and periodicals. They are traditional sources that historians use and are not unique because they necessarily require computational analysis. Why a digital humanities approach then? Some might simply argue, why not? How do we push the boundaries of historical knowledge if we do not push the methods which help create it? A digital humanities approach was perhaps an inevitability given that this historian is also a programmer yet some of the methods we have discussed are not complex software engineering problems. The factlet structure is a simple XML structure influenced by G.R. Elton's *The practice of history* (1969) and Caroline Coffin's discussion of 'constructing and giving value to the past' within history.<sup>13</sup> Expressed through XML and realised within CRADLE, the factlet specification provides a structured approach to research which can interact with history at a conceptual and abstract level, while the factoid, which visualise links and relationships

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<sup>13</sup> Caroline Coffin, 'Constructing and giving value to the past: an investigation into secondary school history' in Frances Christie and J.R. Martin (eds), *Genre and institutions, social processes in the workplace and school* (London, 2002), p. 201.

between factlets, visualises the connections historians make between different sources through a specific research statement or lens. Rather than just being linked to historical interpretation, factlets and factoids are directly linked to primary sources within the CRADLE environment and as such brings the user back to the primary object which influenced the historical interpretation and historical narrative and in this sense opens history to new users and readers alike.

New approaches to research and new methods in support of research can help us not only answer old questions but devise new ones. Providing a formal structure to Dublin's associational world revealed the intricate connections and social networks which contribute to individual and collective realisation of universal goals and national achievements, while the ability to search and collate these results through simple XSLTs and XQueries supported the arguments and historical narrative now presented in this thesis. Experimenting new ways to process and visualise source material stimulates new interpretations and encourages the development of new knowledge both for historical research but also the development of historically driven software and digital technology.

## CHAPTER 1

### WHAT IS DIGITAL HISTORY? A METHODOLOGY - DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND DIGITAL HISTORY, A REVOLUTION IN HISTORICAL INQUIRY.

This chapter considers the theoretical context for the production of the historical thesis on associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, within the methodological framework of digital humanities and digital history. It looks at digital humanities as a field which is inherently interdisciplinary and provides the context for this research, which may also be described as digital history. We will examine the broad idea of digital humanities and look at its roots in the mid-twentieth century before looking at the idea and development of digital history. Looking first at the development of cliometric or quantitative history in the 1960s, we will then discuss the practical application and use of database systems in historical research and the explosion of the Internet and the proliferation of the personal computer in the 1990s which transformed history and computing. George Welling's 2001 article 'Can computers help us read history better?' will also be examined before discussing the impact of technology on historical research and inquiry.

#### *Digital humanities, humanities computing*

Digital humanities and humanities computing can be seen as filling the gap between computational and information science and arts and humanities. In their simplest form they are concerned with the production and application of digital tools for humanities research. They also provide theory and solutions to ongoing and ever emerging problems in the realms of digital media, digital resources, text markup, text analysis and database methods to name but a few. Digital humanities and humanities computing are also concerned with the history, principles and application of computer science methodologies, and production, dissemination and archiving of scholarly output in digital format. They also provide a forum for humanities researchers and computer scientists to collaborate. The scope for study is vast. Digital humanities or humanities

computing describe and bring together projects, research and theories which combine traditional humanities research with technological innovation and application. In many respects the terms “digital humanities” and “humanities computing” are interchangeable but are generally used to differentiate between the application and theory of the humanities and computing and the production of software for the arts and humanities respectively. However, this definition begins to blur as humanities researchers become more efficient and proactive in generating software solutions to particular humanities problems. Willard McCarthy’s 2005 publication, *Humanities computing*, describes the field as a ‘cultural change’,<sup>1</sup> and in many respects this change is highlighted within academia as many universities now provide humanities computing courses to both undergraduate and postgraduate students in the faculty of arts and humanities, as well as computer science. This development reflects the trends towards humanities researchers becoming the generators of software solutions and not just the consumers, while the provision of humanities computing courses within computer science highlights the compatibility of the humanities and computer science. Computer science courses which provide digital humanities modules contextualise use case scenarios and the theoretical framework of humanities computing, which is often described as another problem domain within software engineering. Given these trends, within the context of this research, both terms are interchangeable.

Digital humanities and humanities computing, however, are not monolithic. Their subject domain is vast and includes the spectrum of humanities disciplines, the specialities of computer science and a fusion of these subject domains. This assertion is reflected in ‘A digital humanities manifesto’ which states that ‘digital humanities is not a unified field but an array of convergent practices that explore a universe in which print is no longer the exclusive or the normative medium in which knowledge is produced and/or disseminated’.<sup>2</sup> Yet even this statement does not do justice to the subject area and is an oversimplification of the digital humanities domain of study. Published in 2008, ‘A digital humanities manifesto’, produced by the Center for Digital Humanities at UCLA, was superseded by another ‘digital humanities manifesto 2.0’ (2009) which added that print now ‘finds itself absorbed into new, multimedia configurations’ and the digital humanities explore ‘a universe in which...digital tools, techniques, and media

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<sup>1</sup> Willard McCarthy, *Humanities computing* (London, 2005), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> ‘A digital humanities manifesto’ (2008) available at <http://manifesto.humanities.ucla.edu/2008/12/15/digital-humanities-%20manifesto/> (15 Feb. 2010).

have altered the production and dissemination of knowledge in the arts, human and social sciences'.<sup>3</sup> The additional text provides a more apt description of digital humanities and the research it supports and encourages. Rather than a mere replacement of print, the use and creation of new digital tools and techniques create new media but also supports the formation of new and fresh perspectives on traditional research, the development of whole new areas of research, new opportunities for collaboration between institutions, students and academic departments, which encourages the sharing of resources, as well as supporting new ways to disseminate, interact, visualise and create new scholarship.

The broad range of topics which digital humanities support are reflected in the diverse content and contributions to digital humanities journals, monographs and, perhaps the largest indicator of vast variety of topics, the annual international digital humanities conference, organised by the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations, or the ADHO. The annual 'Digital Humanities conference' plays host to papers on topics including hyperspectral imaging, image markup, 3D scanning, TEI, text encoding, text analysis, text mining, computer aided paleography, visualisation techniques, digital musicology, authorship, digital materiality, digital curation and poetry.<sup>4</sup> This, however, is only a tiny fraction of the myriad topics that the digital humanities encompasses and for which it endeavors to provide theoretical frameworks and support. Yet, as Willard McCarthy points out in *What is humanities computer?* (1998), humanities computing, as an interdisciplinary technique or 'scholarly activity...reveals a substantial common ground of technique from which to address research and teaching problems across the [arts and humanities] disciplines'.<sup>5</sup> So while digital humanities and humanities computing consider a plethora of sub-disciplines, as a whole it can provide new research tools to support these disciplines as many share similar research and teaching activities.

Lou Burnard's 1999 article, 'Is humanities computing an academic discipline? or Why humanities computing matters?' makes important observations and states that the

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<sup>3</sup> 'The digital humanities manifesto 2.0' (2009) available at <http://manifesto.humanities.ucla.edu/2009/05/29/the-digital-humanities-manifesto-20/> (12 Aug. 2011).

<sup>4</sup> DH2009, University of Maryland, conference outline available at [http://www.mith2.umd.edu/dh09/index.html%3Fpage\\_id=89.html](http://www.mith2.umd.edu/dh09/index.html%3Fpage_id=89.html) (15 Dec. 2009); DH2010, Kings College London, conference outline available at <http://dh2010.cch.kcl.ac.uk/home.html> (14 Aug. 2011); DH2011, Stanford University, conference outline available at <https://dh2011.stanford.edu/> (14 Aug. 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Willard McCarthy, *What is humanities computer? Towards a definition of the field* (1998) available at <http://www.arts-humanities.net/bibliography/574> (18 Sep. 2011).

discipline is ‘intrinsically interdisciplinary, methodologically focussed, socially necessary [and] historically grounded’.<sup>6</sup> That it is ‘intrinsically interdisciplinary’ has already been considered while his second observation, that it ‘methodologically focused’, is reflected in chapter 3 as it looks at the digital methodology employed in this research. Burnard’s last observation, that it is ‘historically grounded’ will be considered in the next few paragraphs. His third observation that it is ‘socially necessary’, is perhaps one of the most important. As Burnard states ‘proper application’ of humanities computing makes it ‘more accessible to more people’ but warns that if we do not interact with the subject ‘there is a very real danger that those traditional concerns and values may disappear or be subverted’.<sup>7</sup> Engagement with humanities computing and digital humanities is essential to the development of our digital culture, which is now a reality rather than a future prospect. Traditional research must engage in new methods and techniques to support not only its creation but presentation. Proliferation of digital humanities projects which demonstrate the utility of this approach promote the discipline and its effectiveness as a legitimate facet of traditional research which can support but also shape humanities scholarship.

#### *Digital humanities and digital history - ‘historically grounded’*

If humanities computing is ‘intrinsically interdisciplinary’ the emergence of digital history alongside the discipline reflects this inherent feature. Digital history is a constituent part of digital humanities or humanities computing and indicates a specific role and place for historical research within the umbrella term. Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig’s 2006 publication *Digital history. A guide to gathering, preserving and presenting the past on the web* provides practical advice to historians but the authors maintain that their book is a guide rather than a ‘theoretical manifesto’.<sup>8</sup> Digital history, however, is much more than the presentation of content on the web. Within digital humanities it is a speciality area which looks at the specific needs and solutions for historians, historical archives and sources, and situates itself in the theoretical

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<sup>6</sup> Lou Burnard, ‘Is humanities computing an academic discipline? or Why humanities computing matters?’ (1999) available at <https://www.zotero.org/groups/tei/items/75SPD319> (21 Sep. 2011).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel J. Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital history. A guide to gathering, preserving, and presenting the past on the web* (Pennsylvania, 2006), p. 13.

framework developed under its parent label. However, McCarthy's 2009 definition of digital humanities may in fact question digital history as a subject in its own right as he states that,

digital humanities is that which happens digitally in each of the disciplines of the humanities. It is to be distinguished from humanities computing, which is what these separate digital activities have in common and which takes place at some kind of institutional centre, be it physical or notional.<sup>9</sup>

If 'digital humanities is that which happens digitally in each discipline', in what sense is digital history different then digital humanities? What are the key differences then between digital humanities and digital history? Perhaps this answer lies in the research that digital history produces, as not only is it 'methodologically focused' but it is historically focused. Of course there are generic solutions and methods which all disciplines utilise e.g. digitisation, text encoding, mapping, visualisation, mining but it is the application of these, in the context of specifically historical research, which marks the difference between the disciplines catered for within the umbrella term digital humanities or humanities computing.

Burnard's assertions that humanities computing is 'historically grounded' lies in the fact that as a discipline it can trace its roots to the mid-twentieth century when an Italian priest, Roberto Busa, influenced by the technological advances of World War II, embarked on a successful digital humanities project, producing numerous digital products spanning four decades. Busa, influenced by the development of technology during World War II, sought out and found a machine to help with 'linguistic analysis of written texts...at IBM'.<sup>10</sup> In 'Perspective on the digital humanities' Busa describes how he wanted 'to make an index verborum of all the words in the works of St Thomas Aquinas and related authors' which totaled 'some 11 million words of medieval Latin'.<sup>11</sup> When Busa received help from IBM, 'the entire texts were gradually transferred to punched cards and a concordance program written for the entire project'.<sup>12</sup> His perseverance and patience culminated in the publication of the first

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<sup>9</sup> 'Day in the life of the digital humanities' available at [http://tapor.ualberta.ca/taporwiki/index.php/Day\\_in\\_the\\_Life\\_of\\_the\\_Digital\\_Humanities](http://tapor.ualberta.ca/taporwiki/index.php/Day_in_the_Life_of_the_Digital_Humanities) (20 Sep. 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Roberto A. Busa, 'Foreword: Perspectives on the digital humanities' in *A companion to digital humanities* (Oxford, 2004), p. xvi.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Susan Hockey, 'The history of humanities computing' in *A companion to digital humanities* (Oxford, 2004), p. 4.

printed volume in 1974 and a CD-ROM in 1992 and his long standing influence and longevity in the field is confirmed through the 'Busa Award' - presented every third year at the international Digital Humanities conference. Busa is an important contributor to digital humanities and he is often cited as a significant point of origin for the discipline. His recent death in August 2011 will no doubt prompt posthumous publications which deal with his important contributions.

Just as Busa employed computational methods to his project, history as a discipline has considered and applied automated computational methods since the middle of the twentieth-century and has, where possible, applied these methods for research, keeping up with technological advances and trends in computing. Before the contemporary use of computer technology, computational methods, based on the use of statistical analysis for census returns and other quantifiable data, resulted in manually created graphs and tables. Quantitative history or cliometric history used these manual methods to ascertain political, social, economic and demographic trends. Skepticism for quantitative research proliferated before (and after) the arrival or use of computerised methods as theorist and practitioners expressed concerns over the distortion of evidence which statistical analysis, if not applied properly, can produce. Geoffrey Elton commented in *The practice of history*, first published in 1967, that

those determined to put their faith in 'sophisticated' mathematical methods and to apply 'general laws'..., are either to be pitied because they will be sinking in quicksand while believing themselves to be standing on solid earth, or to be combated because they darken counsel with their errors.<sup>13</sup>

Elton's *The practice of history* defends traditional methods of historical research and presents a pessimistic view of qualitative history and the use of 'mathematical methods'. This pessimism is not just confined to method as Elton questions whether the nature of historical sources can support such methods, as the scarcity of significant amounts of numerical data can result in sampling which yields limited results and inaccuracy if not interpreted and presented properly. He questions the merit of statistical analysis and maintains that even though it can sometimes present interesting results, it can only prove what already exists within the evidence:

Sometimes methods of counting and analysing yield valuable results, but they can do so only if there exists the sort of evidence which has already inclined

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<sup>13</sup> G.R. Elton, *The Practice of History* (Oxford, 2002), p. 31.

historians to hold views to which the ‘sophisticated’ machinery gives firm foundations.<sup>14</sup>

Elton attacked this emerging ‘new’ history ‘for turning historians into statisticians, slaves to quantitative analysis, narrowly focused and divorced from the people, places and events they purported to research’.<sup>15</sup> For Elton, it is the facts ‘about the past that are in control’ and not the methods that transform evidence to statistical form, although Elton states he does not ‘deny the virtue of systematic study, or even the occasional virtue of IBM machines’,<sup>16</sup> its merits or successes are expressed with a tinge of cynicism and suspicion.

The inaccessibility of early computer technology and programming only added to this despondency. Early forms of programming were cumbersome and often required a specialist or intensive individual training. The user friendly software packages available today did not exist and it was this which prompted French historian, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, to claim that ‘the historian of tomorrow will be a programmer or he will be nothing’.<sup>17</sup> The proliferation of accessible and user friendly computer technology through the development of the microchip and the personal computer in the 1980s and 90s provided the means for a history and computing transformation into a tangible, practical discipline that didn’t require the historian to be a programmer per se, just computer literate. Yet, Le Roy Ladurie’s statement has specific relevance to advances in digital history today.

Statistical analysis within historical research can be a contested form of historical interpretation because it can often lack or alter interpretation. Figures and numbers can skew perceptions and distort conclusions when based solely on means, averages, etc. The consequences of this were demonstrated in the 1970s in the United States when Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman published *Time on the cross: the economics of American Negro slavery*. The conclusions the authors came to were based on ‘quantitative methods and data’ and, as William G. Thomas points out in his contribution to *A companion to digital humanities* (2004), they largely ignored ‘the textual and qualitative analysis of other historians as well as the social and political

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 31

<sup>15</sup> Ian Anderson, ‘History and Computing’, *Making history the changing face of the profession in Britain*, available at [http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/history\\_and\\_computing.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/history_and_computing.html) (10 Feb. 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Mawdsley & Munck, *Computing for historians*, p. 3.

context of slavery<sup>18</sup> and important slave narratives. The authors' computerised analysis lead them to erroneous conclusions about the economics of slavery but worse still the conditions that slaves endured. Fogel and Engerman asserted false economic conditions and dealt with the sensitive subject of slavery in a manner which belittled and trivialised an important aspect of American history. Their publication not only had important cultural connotations but raised doubts and suspicions about the merits of computerised methods and statistical analysis.

While *Time on the cross* attracted much negative press, other key events provided much needed positive developments in the field, including the establishment of Computers and the Humanities journal in 1966 and the Association of Literary and Linguistic Computing and Association for Computers and the Humanities in 1970, which still continue.<sup>19</sup>

*History and Computing* (1987) focuses on the development of key technologies and includes essays on the use of databases in different historical contexts, the use of various text analysis programs in historical research, problems with text and graphical information among many others.<sup>20</sup> This publication emphasises the growing use of database and database systems in historical research and demonstrates that history and computing enjoyed a proliferation and advancement during the 1980s even before the widespread use of modern desktop computers.

The growing use of database and database systems is an important development in digital history as it offers historians huge advantages through their capacity to engage with their most important asset - sources. Database management systems continue to provide the means to organise and store historical data in digital archives. Yet, as we have already noted in our introduction, Keating et al. provide important advice on the use of database systems, especially when XML can provide better solutions to modeling historical data.

*History and Computing II* (1989) followed *History and Computing*, demonstrating the continued advancement of the field. This publication contains important comments by Manfred Thaller on 'The need for a theory of historical

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<sup>18</sup> William G. Thomas, III, 'Computing and the Historical Imagination' in *A companion to digital humanities* (Oxford, 2004), p. 57.

<sup>19</sup> Hockey, 'The history of humanities computing', p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Denley and Deian Hopkin (eds), *History and computing* (Manchester, 1987).

computing<sup>21</sup> who maintains that the continued growth of the discipline, or sub-discipline, of history and computers made necessary the accompaniment of a thorough and meaningful intellectual and academic discourse, to give direction and maintain intellectual prosperity and development in the area. He concludes that, ‘computer usage is an established fact for many historical departments and to exchange our knowledge about it we need a firm conceptual and theoretical base’.<sup>22</sup> Thaller differentiates between digital humanities and digital history (or history and computing) as he calls for a discourse which accounts for the specific needs of the historian. Although Thaller is described as ‘an experienced quantitative historian’,<sup>23</sup> he argues that the use of restrictive commercial database systems impedes ‘methodological reasoning’ and produces a situation where historians try to fit complex data sources into prepackaged software rather than thinking more logically about their own data requirements.<sup>24</sup> These requirements may include provisions for temporal, political and societal change and context, or ‘fuzzy’ data <sup>25</sup> and as such there exists, as Thaller states, ‘properties of our data which simply do not fit into the clean rectangular tables of relational software’.<sup>26</sup> Thaller concludes that historical research requires more comprehensive ‘alternatives... for the organisation of data’ and suggests the development of ‘software tailored for historical use’.<sup>27</sup> Although not specifically mentioned in this publication there is no doubt that Thaller refers to his own work on the ‘historical workstation’ which he began to develop in 1978 at the Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte in Gutenberg and which is described in great detail in the 1991 journal publication, ‘The historians workstation project’.<sup>28</sup> The basic components of the historical workstation are described as ‘a desktop computer which...has access to database management software...specific to historical research’ and has ‘access to a large number of read-only databases, being equivalent to traditional printed editions of source material’.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Manfred Thaller, ‘The need for a theory of historical computing’ in Peter Denley, Stefan Fogelvik & Charles Harvey (eds), *History and computing II* (Manchester, 1989).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas, ‘Computing and the historical imagination’, p. 60.

<sup>24</sup> Thaller, ‘The need for a theory of historical computing’, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Manfred Thaller, ‘The historical workstation project’ in *Computers and the Humanities*, xxv, no. 2/3 (1991), pp 149-62.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

The workstation is supportive of the intellectual and academic process of the historian and its functions and features rely upon analysis of this process. This idea of a historical workstation has been outmoded by the development of the world wide web, which provides access to the databases, sources and features described by Thaller. His idea is still an important contribution to the theory and practice of digital history and digital humanities as it considers the implicit and explicit requirements of historical sources, including the analyses of source material, the links or relationships between sources, events and people and the context sensitivity of data.

Thaller also engages in Elton's analysis of historical fact and interpretation, as he endeavors to maintain a distinction between the historical fact as it exists independently and the fact as it exists through interpretation. His system endeavors to keep 'the meaning of the records in the database...independent of its source information'<sup>30</sup> and as such maintains the integrity of the original source, while capturing interpretations of it. Thaller's contributions is important as he promotes discourse on digital history but makes practical advances in the development of technology for historical research.

The most important development, the Internet, in the early 1990s, coupled with the continued advancement of personal computers with ever increasing computational power and ability, transformed and revolutionised not only the idea and practice of digital humanities and digital history, but every aspect of, primarily, modern western culture. The Internet provides for the near instantaneous dissemination of information across time and space, providing resources similar to, yet infinitely greater than, Thaller's workstation. Apart from its many benefits it poses as many problems and threats to scholarly research. The Internet relinquishes responsibility for the dissemination of accurate knowledge and while it provides a relatively cheap forum for academic scholarship through online journals and other academic gateways, it does the same for otherwise unpublished, unchecked and unedited works. The Internet, as Gertrude Himmelfard states,

does not distinguish between the true and the false, the important and the trivial, the enduring and the ephemeral...Every source appearing on the screen has the

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<sup>30</sup> Thomas, *Computing and the historical imagination*, p. 60.

same weight and credibility as every other; no authority is 'privileged' over any other.<sup>31</sup>

While scholarly institutions, academic gateways such as JSTOR, among many others and websites hosted by sanctioned, recognised institutions provide some filtering of online content, the vast majority of internet users must learn to recognise legitimate and trustworthy online sites, just as historians must question the validity and authenticity of traditional primary material.

Despite these developments in digital history there remains a certain vagueness over the definition of history and computing in theory and in application precisely because of the widespread use of computers. Not all historians who use computers are creating digital history. Conversely not all 'practitioners of historical computing' are historians, as Matthew Woollard indicates in his 1999 article 'What is history and computing?'<sup>32</sup> Even the phrase history and computing has come under fire and has been described as an 'amorphous concept'.<sup>33</sup> Is 'digital history' any less ambiguous? What is clear from the events and projects listed above is that digital history or history and computing is a methodology for the completion and enactment of historical research in all its guises, social, economic, political or otherwise.

However contentious the origins or the term history and computing may seem, this does not belie the present day situation, as digital history is produced and utilised on a daily basis. Modern history is open to new technology and techniques and embraces it as part of modern historical inquiry and research, as an important teaching tool and as an inherent part of historical methodology, whether through the utilisation or the creation of digital history and digital objects.

Cohen and Rosenzweig's 2006 publication describes digital history as the production of online historical content. They consider digital history as the presentation of web-based content where websites are built and serviced by historians. Their publication provides useful information for anyone who wishes to produce historical websites. Cohen and Rosenzweig briefly engage in theoretical discourse related to digital history and what they call the 'perils and promises' of it and consider important

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<sup>31</sup> Daniel J. Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital history, a guide to gathering, preserving and presenting the past on the web* (Philadelphia, 2006), p. 1. ; see also Andrew Keen, *The cult of the amateur, how today's Internet is killing our culture* (New York, 2007).

<sup>32</sup> Matthew Woollard, 'Introduction: What is history and computing? An introduction to a problem' in *History and Computing*, xi, no. 1-2 (1999), p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

issues of preservation of online content as well as copyright issues and the collection of digital artifacts or digital curation.<sup>34</sup> Cohen and Rosenzweig facilitate and promote historians and other humanists to become involved in producing digital history and not just consumers of it. Readers are guided through different technology and are exposed to topics such as website design, image capturing and management, text encoding, building digital archives and digital preservation, among others. In this sense the reader is introduced to many of the techniques and methods required to build comprehensive digital history projects. Although a reference work for building content on the web, it acts as a portal or starting point to engage historians in digital history methodology or indeed history and computing.

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's prediction in the 1960s that the 'historian of tomorrow will be a programmer or he will be nothing' may not have come to fruition but it is important that historians engage in all aspects of digital history as it exists now and as it emerges, either as a methodology in research, through the production of new software solutions or utilising existing software and digital artifacts and content. Our present relationship with history and computing is that of productivity and optimism as history engages in computer technology and reaps the benefits. While we must still learn from the errors of early quantitative analysis, it is still true that such methods can create engaging and thought provoking history. While digital history and digital humanities extend quantitative history, transforming it from manual to computerised means and methods, they also crucially provide a plethora of methodologies that are more than just numerical counting units. The 1990s revolution in computer software and hardware and the appearance and widespread use of the Internet has led to computer technology being an essential component in all scholarship that hardly needs to be mentioned. The use and application of new technologies have rendered it inevitable that theories and problems centered on this growth should emerge and while this is what digital humanities as a subject domain strives to provide, history must also engage in these discussions not only to ensure its needs are met but to be part of the dialogue which creates and expands the idea and practice of digital history.

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<sup>34</sup> Cohen & Rosenzweig, *Digital history*, p. 1.

*'Can computers help us read history better?'*

The development and use of technology has implications for scholarly pursuits and affects the way in which historians conduct and carry out research. Previous discussions demonstrate the pervasiveness of digital technology and how it is used as part of historical studies rather than adjacent to it, but what are the benefits of its use within historical research? George Welling's 2001 article asks an important question - 'Can computers help us read history better?'.<sup>35</sup> Welling discusses the use of quantitative and computational linguistics as methods in historical research and outlines the use of software to engage historians in analysis of 'changing interpretations over time'.<sup>36</sup> Welling's study uses text analysis software to track changes in the *Outline of American history*, which was published for American consulates in Europe in a number of editions over time. His study endeavored to track changes, interpretation and reinterpretations in the text given 'either a Democratic or Republican point of view,' as supported by the relevant President or government in power at the time of editing.<sup>37</sup> Welling cites an advantage of this approach as 'the exclusion of the impressionistic interpretations' because 'within the same set up the results will always be the same', a demand he says of 'scientific approach[s]'.<sup>38</sup> Elton also refers to history in the nineteenth-century as developing a more 'scientific, ordered, [and] systematic' approach.<sup>39</sup> He argues this does not mean historians can set up experiments akin to other scientific studies. Unless other "facts" emerge the outcome will be the same. In this sense digital history can engage traditional sources in new discourse, rooted in technology. While there remain questions over interpretation and the transparency between it and historical facts, digital history can provide tools which make historians aware of their own individual bias, that can transpire into research conclusions. We can use technology to omit certain 'impressionistic interpretations' but it is still the historian who is in control of the

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<sup>35</sup> George Welling, 'Can computers help us read history better? Computerized text-analysis for four editions of The Outline of American History' in *History and Computing*, ii, no. 13 (2001) ; also see George Welling, 'From revolution to reconstruction and what happened afterwards' available at <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/index.htm> (25 Aug. 2011) and George Welling, 'The prize of neutrality, trade relations between Amsterdam and North America 1771-1817, a study in computational history' (PhD thesis, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1998).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Elton, *The practice of history*, p. 3.

technology that assists in particular analysis of texts. As it is the historian who must provide the semantics for the technology to understand the complex concepts that emerge, a point which Welling emphasises. The result of Welling's analysis of the *Outline of American history* using text analysis software, reveal particular trends over time in the preoccupations and expressions of identity history through these particular publications. In this respect Welling makes important observations on the nature of these publications and their use as a tool to promote particular versions of history as dictated by different governments. These publications in themselves and the techniques which Welling employed highlights the political use of history and its construction as a narrative and interpretation which is politically and socially motivated.

Elton states that, 'to some commentators, no history that does not tell a story deserves the name at all, while others object to anything but pure analysis as below the highest aspirations of the historian'.<sup>40</sup> Slightly changing Welling's original question to, "Can computers help us do history better?", we can consider how digital history benefits the processes of historical enquiry, as a subject of education, a discipline of research and a topic of mass interest.

Digital history has affected how history is taught and researched. The mere accessibility of digital sources, images and artifacts creates a more dynamic forum for students and researchers to engage with and experience historical content. Digital history can expose the primary material used in research and allow engagement with the discourse between primary sources and the secondary literature which creates arguments based on these tangible artifacts. Online cultural artifacts provides us with direct access to raw material or raw data. This increased exposure to raw data enables interaction with history at a new interactive levels and offer advantages, not only in terms of access to primary sources, but to activities surrounding this. John K. Lee states that online historical research 'encourages increased archival activity, promotes the development of social networks, are easier to manipulate, are searchable, are more flexible, and include an organizational strategy related to the content of the collection'.<sup>41</sup> The benefits of digital history within the classroom, the seminar room and at conferences go beyond accessibility of sources. Forums and online groups generate communities of users with common interests and cultivate shared enthusiasm for history

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> John K. Lee, 'Digital history in the history/social studies classroom' in *The History Teacher*, xxxv, no. 4 (2002), p. 508.

which transcends the physical boundaries. These online activities create a community of users which coalesce online and represent new forms of associational culture.

Digital historical resources, which environments such as CRADLE support, are easier to manipulate, search and are infinitely more flexible than their physical or analog counterpart and provide readers/users with an opportunity to engage more thoroughly with documents, collections and cultural artifacts. Digital resources are searchable and flexible because they can incorporate XML encoding, and hypertextuality, which make them machine readable, open to automated querying and enables nonlinear methods of research. XML encoding provides text with context and meaning and provide end users with enhanced capabilities to query and question text, while hypertext enables and extracts knowledge through connections, relationships and links.

Apart from providing access to primary and secondary material, the Internet and digital technology has changed the way in which information is read and understood. Hypertext is the underlying principle of the world wide web and provides the means to navigate from one site to the next. Hypertextuality embodies this principle and is the act of linking and negotiating between one text and other peripheral or secondary text or sites. It enables non-linear forms of reading and for the first time, as Michael Riffaterre states in 'Intertextuality vs. hypertextuality' (1994), 'the epistemology of interpretation must consider giving equal rights to readers and to the text alike'.<sup>42</sup> Texts which incorporate hypertext do no need to be read in a linear fashion, the author relinquishes control over the way digital text are read and interpreted. The reader's ability to review and consider texts that are linked or connected in some way removes the author's or the text's ability to guide the reader through signals and signs embedded within the text. Hypertext enables and prompts the reader to leave the main text and pursue alternative lines of inquiry which are not necessarily part of the main body or argument. In effect it creates an infinite line of study. As Stephen Robertson (2006) points out, hypertext 'permit readers to take various paths through a given body of text blocks, and encourages associative thinking'.<sup>43</sup> It encourages readers to move beyond the confines of individual text and can create more explorative and in-depth reading experiences.

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<sup>42</sup> Michael Riffaterre, 'Intertextuality vs. hypertextuality' in *New Literary History*, xxv, no. 4 (1994), p. 779.

<sup>43</sup> Stephen Robertson, 'What's wrong with on-line readings? Text, hypertext, and the history web' in *The History Teacher*, xxxix, no. 4 (2006), p. 444.

Hypertext engages the reader and transforms him/her from a passive to an active agent, in control of the logical and conceptual semantics he/she chooses to consider. It is a matter for the reader to decide whether to engage with signifiers in the text or not, even though the original or subsequent text may have initiated the exploratory sequence. Hypertext can create interactive reading for students and scholars alike and provide much needed context to the myriad of concepts, themes, people and events which are considered in historical text and research.

Parallels between hypertextuality and the literary theory of intertextuality reflect the fact that both consider the exoteric content of a given text but in fundamentally different ways. Hypertextuality explicitly cites and references other works, texts, ideas, people, and provides the means to connect to sites and information outside the confines of the original text. While intertextuality is implicit, it is the reader's decision to pick up on innate references and ideas which the author has interwoven in the text. We must question though, how much control does the reader gain through hypertextuality? If intertextuality or references within a book are picked up and researched by the reader, does hypertext coerce the reader to pursue different avenues of research? Although it may encapsulate the historian's methodology of linking and making relationships between text, sources, people and events, the majority of resources do not employ the advantageous effect of hypertextuality, which is evident by the online primary and secondary sources used to investigate associational culture in Ireland. The *Freeman's Journal*, accessed through [www.irishnewsarchive.ie](http://www.irishnewsarchive.ie), provides no interactivity with content which is presented as images rather than text, the drawback of which is reflected in the rudimentary and error prone search results. Online journals and articles mirror the functionality of their printed counterpart and although born digital articles are seemingly capable of more advanced search criteria, they in effect function in the same way as a well constructed index. Online journals and articles have not evolved with the technology that disseminates them and many still think in terms of print and its capabilities. Many journals replicate printed material in digital form. The majority of primary and secondary material do not take advantage of hypertextuality and its potential to provide fuller and more significant reading experiences. It is in this sense that the creation of a digital article, which is derived from the historical research on the Historical Society of Trinity College, is considered in chapter 8 as a method to present

history which uses digital functionality, including the use of hover text that provides contextual information to the reader in the environment it is presented.

The proliferation of online articles, however, impact the very existence of academic journals, regardless of whether they consider new ways of presenting content. At a symposium held at NUI, Maynooth, in October 2009, Professor Robert Schneider, editor of the *American Historical Review*, maintained that the article is part of a certain genre, capable of existing as an independent entity and kept in circulation through the demands of producers and consumers. On the other hand, he observed journals, as a physical entity, are at risk of being obscured.<sup>44</sup> The need to print journals, in a physical sense as opposed to web-publishing, poses a threat to the very existence of academic journals as viable academic or commercial products. This in turn poses a threat to the article itself, not the proliferation or dissemination of it but to the academic and scholarly capital contained within it.

Academic journals, such as the *American Historical Review*, *English Historical Review* and *Irish Historical Studies*, provide a bona fides to articles contained in these publications. The journal imposes a vetting process, through editorial procedures and acceptance. The cost of printing imposes a cap on the number of articles to be published in one issue and justifies editorial acceptance and rejection, imposing rigorous rules of acceptance when submissions are high. The imposition of such restrictions seems arbitrary as online publications are not limited by the same cost constraints. Articles published online have the potential to become an abstraction of the journal and become detached from the institution and the prestige associated with that particular journal. The digital article, accessible through JSTOR or other OPACs, (Online public access catalog) may become detached from the journal and the scholarly identity inherent in that journal. Schneider also sees articles losing a certain synergy when taken out of the context of their related journal as certain publications contain related articles or forwards by the editor/s.

The use of digital object identifiers, or DOI's, can ensure articles remain linked to their corresponding journal, and as discussed by Professor George Bernard, editor of the *English Historical Review*, online systems such as Manuscript Central, offer online peer review system, which stores reviews before they are published and impose a

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

scholarly process.<sup>45</sup> Like Schneider, Bernard expressed his concern that online only journals would result and expedite a slip in scholarly standards. The physical and financial constraints of the print journal provide a de-facto editing and vetting process. Print makes necessary strict rates of acceptance and length. Online only makes these worthy restrictions redundant. The editors were concerned that if there is no acceptance level then there is no practical need to reject articles, resulting in more articles which could potentially have less academic value. Articles attached to journals carry the prestige or credentials of the associated journal and it is these associations which encourage people to publish. Academic journals and institutions need to address these real issues and concerns and preserve academic values within a digital world.

Another solution to preserving the academic values attached to articles and online publications is the approach used by the Open Access movement which promotes open access but imposes a peer review process on scholarly work. The Open Access movement is concerned with the fact that publishing online costs marginally less than print yet licensing costs to universities and libraries have increased substantially over the last decade. Yet rather than just being concerned with access to content, open rather than through a pay wall, the Open Access movement is also concerned with the way in which we interact and use born digital articles and scholarly content as it promotes the use of data and text mining which publishers can restrict. This movement attempts to give the scholarly community more control over their publications and realise the potential of online publication, provide free access and enable the use of data and text mining techniques which can lead to new and interesting scholarly questions as well as answers.

The preservation of academic values is as important as the preservation of primary sources in digital format. This concern is reflected in the vast number of projects which seek to find a digital home for non-digital sources. Manuscripts, scrolls, ledgers, letters, journals, newspapers, periodicals, paintings, images and much more are digitised daily and in the process are revitalised and reinvigorated with renewed life and purpose as a new digital representation of the original artifact. Projects such as ‘The

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<sup>45</sup> George Bernard, “The History Article in the Digital Age”, hosted by Department of history, NUI Maynooth (Maynooth, 2 Oct. 2009)

doomsday book online'<sup>46</sup> and 'The proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913'<sup>47</sup> and 'Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c.1940: a database'<sup>48</sup> provide access to important data and textual information while projects such as 'History wired' from the Smithsonian Institution provide users access to numerous cultural artifacts represented as a digital cultural objects, many of which are not on display in physical form anywhere else.<sup>49</sup> These projects preserve sources which have existed for hundreds of years and provide a new digital home with additional benefits to users. Yet, there is a real danger that data or information as it exists today, which is born digital, may not enjoy the same longevity as their paper or velum based counterparts. Students and researchers may have more access to sources of the past because of the digital present, but a "digital history" of the present may not persist into the future.

The dichotomy of 'scarcity or abundance'<sup>50</sup> which Roy Rosenzweig discusses relates to the volatile manner in which digital data exists and the manner in which digital medium produces infinite amounts of data, respectively. Historians are more often than not confronted with problems of source scarcity, rather than abundance. There is no clear path that primary sources take to ensure their preservation. Many are preserved because an institution or an individual deemed them important to protect whether as part of a family history, national heritage or because of some political or cultural foresight. Yet many sources are in existence today purely by accident. The medium in which traditional primary sources exist, paper, velum and microfilm have secured their preservation, whether accidentally or not. Of course there are issues surrounding deterioration, acid erosion and wanton destruction of material but their physicality alone can preserve these cultural objects. As discussed projects world wide are concerned with digitally preserving the past as it exists today but the abundance of digital data may not transpire into the abundance of born digital primary sources in the future.

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<sup>46</sup> 'The Doomsday book online' available at <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/> (18 Aug. 2011).

<sup>47</sup> 'The proceedings of the Old Bailey, 1674-1913) available at <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/> (18 Aug. 2011).

<sup>48</sup> 'Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c.1940: a database' available at <http://www.irishassociations.ie/history/> (18 Aug. 2011).

<sup>49</sup> 'History wired, a few of our favourite things' available at [www.historywired.si.edu](http://www.historywired.si.edu) (18 Aug. 2011).

<sup>50</sup> Roy Rosenzweig, 'Scarcity or abundance? Preserving the past in a digital era' in *American Historical Review*, cviii, no. 3 (2003), pp 735-62.

Rosenzweig's 2003 article 'Scarcity or abundance? Preserving the past in a digital era' confronts this polarity. He maintains that historians, archivists and librarians need to work together to secure lasting solutions that exclude or solve problems of software and hardware incompatibility. Digital formats, dating back twenty years, are incompatible with modern computers and while migration from one format to another seems a worth while solution, 'one estimate is that data migration is equivalent to photocopying all the books in a library every five years'<sup>51</sup> and could diminish functionality inherent in the original format. Preserving content on the web is also a real issue especially given the volatile nature of online content. Projects such as the Internet Archive and the Wayback machine, endeavour to capture and archive the Internet. The Internet Archive send "crawlers" out to capture the web by moving link-by-link and completing a full snapshot every two months'.<sup>52</sup> The IA and other projects like Google Groups, go some of the way to preserving the Internet for future historians but even capturing the Internet at certain points has its limitations for a multitude of reasons. Many HTML pages are dynamically generated and customised on the fly and as such do not exist until a user queries or searches the databases which stores content and as a result, as Rosenzweig states, 'the IA's crawlers do not capture much of the so-called 'deep web' that is stored in databases. Multimedia files - streaming media and flash - also do not seem to be captured'.<sup>53</sup> Copyright issues pertaining to web content also has implications for what systems can capture and the complex nature of web content, which theoretically consists of infinite hyperlinks, makes it almost impossible to preserve content in tact and in their original context. Archiving of online content for future exploration and study is a daunting task but historians must engage in the digital processes which will secure our historical future.

Solutions to preserving the future of history based on digital data, include the use of PURLs (Persistent Uniform Resource Locators), permalinks (permanent URL's associated with a file) and the use of XML or markup languages to create POP, persistent object preservation,

which creates a description of a digital object (and groups of digital objects) in simple tags and schemas that will be understandable in the future; the records

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 747.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 749.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 751.

would be ‘self-describing’ and hence, independent of specific hardware and software....[Computer scientists] maintain that records in this format will last for three hundred to four hundred years.<sup>54</sup>

To avoid scarcity of sources in the future historians must engage with emerging technology and methods. There must be a conscientious effort to ensure the continuity of digitised primary sources and born digital sources. Although we have discussed digital history as methods to do history today, digital history must engage in preserving this digital future.

Avoiding a future of scarcity brings its own problems but we are already dealing with the problem of data abundance. The exponential growth of computer memory and subsequently online data and information, means there exists large volumes of data, massively distributed, in multiple forms, both structured and unstructured.<sup>55</sup> Large, new volumes of data are created on a daily basis, born from the retail, financial, scientific and academic sectors to name but a few and we all contribute to this ecosystem of data production. We can access data remotely in a number of ways, through the Internet, digital repositories, local intranets or file transfer protocols sites. Yet, while search engines such as Google and Yahoo, and academic gateways such as JSTOR, provide access to the ever increasing number of websites and information, they only exacerbate the problem of data abundance as more and more documents are made available but, as Ronen Feldman and James Sanger point out in *The text mining handbook* (2007), ‘our ability to absorb and process this information remains constant’.<sup>56</sup> Methods to deal with data abundance already exist and are used successfully in retail and financial sectors to anticipate and coerce consumer spending through pattern analysis. The same methods can be used to analyse text for historical purposes. Methods of data or text mining provide automated and interactive means to extract knowledge and information from large text or corpus and the use of markup language ensures that text contain meaning and can be queried and analysed by current and future users.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 754.

<sup>55</sup> Maria Wallis at ‘Digital humanities - new frontiers’ conference at Trinity College Dublin (Dublin, 14 Oct. 2009).

<sup>56</sup> Ronen Feldman and James Sanger, *The text mining handbook, advanced approaches in analyzing unstructured data* (New York, 2007), p. x.

Text mining can be defined as, ‘a knowledge-intensive process in which a user interacts with a document collection over time by using a suite of analysis tools’.<sup>57</sup> Text mining extracts patterns, trends and injects meaning and context through preprocessing operations which provide structure to otherwise unstructured text in historical document collections. While it is centered on automated means, it can also learn through user interaction with sources, usually through providing an ontology or specific linguistic meanings and concepts, this act is essential as it provides user specific results in analysis. Text mining can be used for any sector which generates large document collections, i.e. the arts and humanities. Document collections may consist of journal articles, word processing documents, text presented on the web, primary source material, digitised books, emails, etc. They consist of textual content, presented in a textual fashion, linear in nature rather than tabular.

In comparison to information contained in structured databases, text documents comprising natural language may seem unstructured. Yet all natural language texts contain structure through the semantics and functional properties inherent in the texts. Elements such as ‘punctuation marks, capitalization, numerics and special characters... often serve as a kind of “soft markup”’<sup>58</sup> and while these are important structural concerns they can only yield limited text analysis. Documents, available online, whether born digital or not, will contain some sort of markup, whether through XML, HTML or other metadata constructs, providing some sort of text context. However, the most commonly used text mining algorithms concentrate on representing documents through characters, words, terms and concepts. Of these four the most important for text mining historical sources is concepts.

Representing document collections by its concepts can be achieved manually or automatically, a combination of both is desirable and more beneficial. Concepts exist within text but are usually not explicitly stated. By providing a ‘preexisting domain ontology, lexicon or formal concept hierarchy’<sup>59</sup> texts can be analyzed or mined for specific concepts. For example, the term “associational culture”, most likely will not be used within text documents from the eighteenth-century, yet the concept exists. By defining the concept “associational culture” as pertaining to other ‘single words,

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p.1.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

multiword expressions, whole clauses, or even larger syntactical units<sup>60</sup> such as ‘members of’, ‘the meeting of’, ‘subscriptions to’, ‘proceedings’, etc, a document collection can be mined automatically for the existence of this concept. Text mining is used to process and enhance existing digital collections but can also be used on collections created by individual researchers and a number of open source solutions exist.

Historical examination requires researchers to consider both primary and secondary material and while some archives avail of digital technology and are active in producing digital collections it is true that the vast majority of primary material have yet to be digitised. Initiatives such as DRIS (Digital resources and imaging services) at Trinity College Dublin, the ‘Digital Library’ provided by the National Library of Ireland and projects developed within An Foras Feasa, are continuing attempts to digitise the historical record, but limitations in funding and resources mean that current academic researchers and scholars still rely heavily on primary sources in their original printed or microfilm format. The use of digital mediums to manage these sources are used widely within historical research, whether using rudimentary tools such as word processing, basic spreadsheets, complex entity-relationship databases or constructing XML documents. The use of a database or XML for managing sources is a decision entirely up to individual researchers but as John Bradley states in his 2005 article,

XML is well suited when project materials are “document oriented” and involve marking up written text, whereas RDB [Relational Database] is well suited when project materials are “data oriented”, i.e. looking at materials outside of a textual framework.<sup>61</sup>

However, this does not mean ‘document oriented’ material are always represented in XML and relational databases have traditionally enjoyed greater usage than their XML counterpart in historical projects and research, whether or not they are suited. Database software packages are more widely known and taught as part of basic computer training, which may contribute to their prevalent use within historical research. XML provides more flexibility for representing, structuring and querying text documents, it is naturally conducive to historical content and documents. As we have already mentioned,

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> John Bradley, ‘Documents and data: Modelling materials for humanities research in XML and relational databases’ in *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, xx, no. 1 (2005), p. 134.

the use of databases in historical studies is discussed in John G. Keating, Denis Clancy, Thomas O'Connor and Marian Lyons' 2004 paper, 'Problems with databases and the XML solution', which examines the prevalent use of databases in historical studies and the problems associated with the use of 'unsophisticated tools like Microsoft Access'.<sup>62</sup>

XML (Extensible Markup Language) allow users to easily model source information by applying user and source specific tags, consisting of elements and attributes, in essence creating a unique, user specific markup language. XML is flexible as it can be interpreted or parsed by most programming languages, such as Flex which contains numerous inbuilt XML classes, and it can be extended easily to allow for changes or additions in data structure. XML markup or tagging provides meaning and context to text. XML allows tagging within tags so that names of people, clubs, societies, places, dates, and ideas can be identified within a corpus of text. This process transforms data into information, which can provide meaningful answers to questions asked of the text and thereby generates new knowledge. Encoding data is only the first step, as XQuery and XPath provide sophisticated tools to query XML documents and it is here that the advantages of tagging text becomes apparent. Flex also provides the means to query XML documents, with E4X (ECMAScript for XML) in the Flex framework. XML is also easily transformed into web pages, using CSS and XSLT and allows for effective data presentation. As such XSLT is used in conjunction with a number of other languages including CSS and HTML to create a digital article which is part of the Bundle Object and described chapter 8.

The use of XML provides a base for the application of further methodologies and techniques to help in the organisation and extraction of knowledge. XML enables complex querying and can be easily transformed for use in websites, digital repositories and subsumed into digital collections. Using XML and implementing metadata systems such as Dublin Core and VRA ensures that data is transmutable, as techniques such as metadata mapping and the use of XSLT to create new XML structures enables data sharing among communities and software systems. The XML approach provides a systematic approach to the encoding of historical content and an invaluable structure to primary source that is both manageable and future proof.

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<sup>62</sup> John G. Keating, Denis Clancy, Thomas O'Connor and Marian Lyons, 'Problems with databases and the XML solution' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, lvii (2004), pp 268-75.

XML is used to capture primary and secondary material drawn up for this project, including born digital articles and publications but also primary sources which have no digital alternative. The creation of the factlet structure, used to create structured annotation to support scholarly writing and presentation and the XML schema which supports this structure and is used to encode various secondary and primary sources will be discussed in the chapter 3, 'Associational Dublin in a digital world'. However, text encoding and the use of XML is but one method within digital history or digital humanities projects and in many respects represents a starting point which enables the development and use of other techniques such as data mining and visualisation. Although visualisation techniques often use text which is not encoded.

Developments in technology over the last number of decades affect the way in which we research, present and disseminate history. With these developments digital humanities and digital history have emerged to support the creation of humanities scholarship within a digital framework. Key developments which affect the historical research include the use of automated computational analysis, developments in web technology which enables the dissemination and presentation of historical research and provides new ways to engage students and researchers in historical content, as well as the use of database technology, XML encoding of data sets, data and text mining, visualisation techniques and mapping and GIS. Yet, despite these developments and advances digital humanities and digital history are often viewed as peripheral or adjunct to history and other humanities based disciplines, notwithstanding individual institutional developments. Projects such as 'Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c.1940: a database', which we will consider in more detail in chapter 3, reflect collaboration between traditional history research and software engineering techniques. In its entirety 'Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c.1940: a database' can be considered as a digital humanities or digital history project, yet its development still reflects the division between consumers of digital history and producers of it. In this sense historians engage with technology at different levels, as passive users, active users (creating content), participant observers (directly contributing to the development of digital projects) and active software developers, for example Daniel Cohen and George Welling. Yet, even given these various levels of interactions with technology the historical community must engage more thoroughly with developing technologies if we

are to sustain the historical record now and in the future. We cannot passively observe the deterioration of our developing, volatile digital culture.

Online content, both primary and secondary, informs all historical research so much so that its presence is taken for granted. We need not emphasize the effect the world wide web has on academic scholarship - no one needs convincing. Digital historical resources are used and referred to at all levels of scholarship and broaden access to and engagement in knowledge. Online access to sources exposes students to the essence of historical inquiry and engages them in topical debate. Yet, digital history is more than just access to historical material. The way in which content is presented enhances reading experiences, as features such as hypertext offer students and scholars the means to extend their knowledge base and implement research which is not only informed but enlightened through outside links and relations to other text and sources. Hypertextuality is yet to be utilised to its full potential and while history is making huge inroads to producing online content, there still remains significant work in securing academic continuity and excellence through digital mediums. Scholarly journals and articles have never before reached such wide audiences yet the future of these academic institutions are at risk directly because of the advantages of digital mediums. Conversely it is important that we engage in new initiatives such as the Open Access movement to maximise the potential of digital articles and not get caught up in preserving out dated modes of scholarly publication which do not allow for text mining of the data which we, as a community, create. The merits and credentials associated with certain print journals are maintained through the caliber of its scholarly content and the academic work it encourages and produces. Finding new justifications for editorial procedures merely because digital format relinquishes arbitrary impositions on the number of articles submitted and printed, is not a good enough reason not to impose scholarly vetting. The proliferation of amateur historians online should provide enough grounds to celebrate academic journals as an important way for scholars to ensure academic excellence but as we have seen it is not the only way to ensure scholarly merit and peer review processes, controlled at institutional level, are used for the benefit of writers and readers alike. Historians must engage in methods which regulate and safeguard the academic journal and associated articles. However, we must also recognise and acknowledge peer reviewed online publications in the same manner as

printed ones and consider alternative online academic output as part of scholarly and academic output.

Preserving these academic values in a digital world must go hand in hand with preserving the digital present for future digital history, where digitisation is not an issue but the dual problem of scarcity or abundance is. While we must concede that not everything can be saved, historians need to work with technology that will safeguard sources for future use and research. Yet, while scarcity is a problem historians are often confronted with, abundance has rarely been an issue. The proliferation of online content and born digital data means we must engage in methods which help automate means to extract knowledge and support scholarly endeavors. Text mining, as well as data visualisation, offers solutions to the abundance of data and used in conjunction with XML encoding can produce meaningful and powerful exploration in concept analysis and help track changing patterns within society. Historians cannot passively sit back - we must engage in technology as it develops and become producers of solutions and not just consumers and actively pursue Le Roy Ladurie's prediction.

Online information has changed the way we 'do history' but digital history must be about much more than mere accessibility of information. Digital history must be more than merely safeguarding primary sources in a newly born digital world. Historians must actively pursue and use software solutions to support historical research which moves beyond just the accessibility of digital material or objects but which encourages interaction and engagement with cultural digital objects and artifacts.

This thesis, however, is not focused on the development of digital preservation techniques but rather can be seen as an engagement or an exercise in digital humanities and digital history. As such this research, which foregrounds the production of historical scholarship in a digital framework, promotes the use and development of software tools and resources as a constituent part of PhD research. The development of new tools and techniques which are customizable, extendable and reusable allows for further engagement with the methods used in this research for future projects. The methods which we describe in chapter 3 and 8 are only one approach to digital history or digital humanities but indicate engagement in Le Roy Ladurie's argument that historians must participate in programming and indeed software development. Le Roy Ladurie's statement however becomes more significant as we move into a new era of historical research. That is the development of wholly born digital material which have no

analogue counterpart or surrogates. These born digital objects pose a real problem for data preservation and rely upon methods of data migration, emulation and the use of persistent object preservation through XML markup. Digital archeology, that is excavating hard disks, etc., may become a reality for historians in the future and whether historians participate in this activity relies upon the development and support of programming skills within the discipline as a whole. More pertinent to the present situation is the development of tools that are sensitive to the needs and requirements of the historian, to achieve this historians must contribute to the development of these tools and actively create their own. The ability to expose the primary sources used in research is an important feature of digital history yet even this is hampered by copyright issues, as such digital rights management will dictate how much historians can or cannot support their research with user access to digital primary material or objects. The development of digital research products must also engage users in new ways to interact with content. Rather than an augmentation of the print or analogue counterpart, digital resources can have a transformative affect on user engagement. It is this respect, through the provision and development of tools, that digital humanities or digital history can push the boundaries of historical research, engaging the researcher as well as the reader in new experiences rooted in digital infrastructure.

Welling's concluding remarks indicates that the use of computer technology can yield interesting results and can construct data which would be difficult to otherwise assemble manually. He maintains that digital technology helps historians see things that would otherwise remain hidden. However, he also asserts that 'careful human interpretation' of the results is necessary to make 'proper sense of them'.<sup>63</sup> Digital history is the combination of traditional interpretation and interpretation generated and produced through a digital lens. This digital lens allows for greater interaction with primary material and historical interpretation and through the production of digital components, like the digital article described in chapter 8, encourages readers and users alike to not only engage in historical scholarship but also to contribute to it. This research follows Welling's advice and uses computer technology as a methodology to engage in historical research but closely adheres to using the historian to finalise interpretation and result. Digital humanities and digital history promote historians and other humanities based researchers to become the producers of their own technological

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<sup>63</sup> Welling, 'Can computers help us read history better?', p. 160.

solutions to the problems born from humanities research and help us to ask new questions as well as provide new answers and it is in this sense that humanities computing and digital history are ‘socially necessary’.

## CHAPTER 2

### AN ASSOCIATIONAL WORLD - BURKE & HEGEL ON CIVIL SOCIETY, & A LITERATURE REVIEW OF ASSOCIATIONAL CULTURE

Our previous discussion of digital humanities provides the theoretical framework for this research and the context for the implementation of a digital approach to a traditional historical thesis. As discussed all aspects of the historical thesis now presented have employed a digital approach where possible. The chapter now presented and all subsequent chapters have utilised XML, including the factlet and factoid structure discussed in chapter 3, for source management and argument development.

Just as chapter 1 provides the theoretical framework for digital humanities and digital history, this chapter contextualises the framework for associational culture and further discussions on nationalism in the historical context of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Ireland. The idea and concept of associational culture within an anthropological setting will be considered before moving on to the theory of civil society as espoused by Edmund Burke and G.W.F. Hegel. We will first examine the general idea of associational culture before moving on to review the theory of civil society and a review of studies into associational culture including Peter Clark's work.

#### *Associational culture and the theory of civil society*

The urge to group is fundamental to all human interaction and is reflected in all societies, both primitive and modern. The affiliations we make range from informal familial groups, which require no prerequisites other than sanguine connections, to formal voluntary, oath-bound associations, which restrict access through a vast array of preconditions. These conditions include restrictions based on economics, politics, gender, and race, right through to the whimsical and outright ridiculous. The groups we belong to span local, regional, national and international domains and are both influential and influenced through bidirectional relations. They are driven by common interests or activities and can, but need not always, exist to fulfill certain formal goals, whether charitable, political or otherwise. Discourse on associations offer conflicting

definitions on the type of groups that should be considered in analysis but most agree that affiliations based on kinship should be excluded. Non-kinship affiliations form the basis of associational culture in Ireland as elsewhere and are the predominant basis for the majority of clubs and societies. The difficulty in defining what constitutes associational groups comes from the fact that, in reality, anything that we affiliate or associate ourselves with, in a group scenario, can be defined as an associational entity. Generally speaking, however, associational culture is taken to pertain to clubs, societies or associations which naturally form or coalesce, rather than institutions which exist because of state or government intervention.

Anthropology, political science and social science all provide theories on the cultural, social and political importance of associations and participation in them. Anthropology posits associations as both expressive and instrumental groups which perform important identification and cultural functions, while political science cites participation in associations as vital to democratic processes and the development of civic and political consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Associational culture pertains to the notion of civil society, which distinguishes state and government institutions from those outside the rigors of state bodies, yet, civic engagement alone may be too narrow a definition. Irish clubs and societies in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century perform a vast array of functions, including political (both radical and conservative), philanthropic, educational, industrial, theatrical, musical and those which profess purely sociable functions. Yet, whatever their primary or formal concern may be, there is no doubt that these associations perform secondary roles, which are not explicitly stated. These secondary roles are an important part of associational culture as it is these functions which contribute to individual and national identities. Territorial associations are often excluded by anthropological definitions because participation in them is seen as involuntary and while this definition may deliberately ignore ideas of nationalism, it is perhaps reductionist to assert this given the world's history of territorial conflict and the political and cultural nature of identity based on the idea of self-determination. Indeed, the present situation in Ireland demonstrates how association and disassociation with territory is fundamental to expressions of nationalism which are closely linked to identities expressed by particular political and social groups. Nationalist identity is

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Hammond, 'Associations' in *An Addison-Wesley Module of Anthropology*, module 14 (1972), p. 1.

based on an association with territories that are politically and culturally defined, therefore conflict on this basis, demonstrates an aspect of a voluntary association, as do ideas of self determination.

Associational culture provides the means by which micro communities, based on certain preconditions to admission, are created within society. It is through these communities that members extract, develop and express identities which are not only linked to this micro community but are seen as part of and interacting with, the larger community, or the macro community, based on the political and social idea of the nation. It is in this sense that associations promote and develop ideas of nationalism as they engage members in Benedict Anderson's important concept of *Imagined Communities*.<sup>2</sup> Clubs and societies act as small, 'imagined communities', where a regional or nationwide presence promotes a larger imagined community. Anderson endorses this idea as the main basis of nationalism, seeing it as the theoretical construction of an imagined community of people with similar preoccupations. Collective identity created by clubs, mimic and enhance ideas of nationalism, whether based on civic engagement or not. Yet, before we discuss the relationship between associational culture and nationalism it is important to set up the theoretical framework in which associational culture exists and provide a definition of the types of associations which are considered in this research. A combination of anthropological theory and political science will provide insights into the cultural and political importance of associational culture and will develop the ideas previously mentioned. Associational culture must also be defined regarding ideas of civil society and the public sphere. To ignore aspects of civil society would isolate associational culture from its main counterpart and sphere of influence, and while civil society has enjoyed continued interpretation since its origins in ancient Greece, Edmund Burke, eighteenth-century Irish statesman and politician and G.W.F. Hegel, nineteenth-century German philosopher, provide contemporary, late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century, interpretations and insights into civil society and its relationship to associational culture. Burke is also an important contributor to our case study on the Historical Society of Trinity College as co-founding member of the first debating club at Trinity College in 1747.

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<sup>2</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 2006).

The development of associational ties within society is an important element in the establishment of modern society. It offers services which are distinct from but complement the state and contributes to the development of modern societies in which citizens engage in political and social dialogue. Yet even before our modern conception of society, primitive groups demonstrate the advantages of association and group affiliations. Anthropology sees associational cultural as central to the development of society and some theorists have turned to an ‘evolutionary perspective which stresses the role [of] common interest associations in societies at a certain stage of development’.<sup>3</sup> In many ways these theories reecho Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s observations in *A discourse the origins and basis of inequality among men* (1754) in which he considers the development and growth of civilisation through group interaction of ever increasing magnitude until,

men who had previously been wandering around the woods, having once adopted a fixed settlement, come gradually together, unite in different groups, and form in each country a particular nation, united by customs and character.<sup>4</sup>

This ‘evolutionary perspective’ should not be considered as positing a teleological dimension which results in modern concepts of politics, society and democracy but as a feature which complements and enhances contemporary structures and definitions. An evolutionary look at associational culture and its function in society must also consider the use of contemporary technology and its influences on the type and nature of associations which develop. The advance of print technology democratised knowledge and is one of the most important developmental features of modern society and modern nationalism. Anderson discusses the role of print capitalism in the development of modern nationalism as readers of novels, magazines, pamphlets and newspapers imagine themselves belonging to a time and space that exists concurrently with fellow readers. Clubs, societies and all manner of institutions benefit from the ability to publish their manifestos, resolutions, recommendations, etc., into the public domain. Newspapers, pamphlets and magazines produced regularly and relatively cheaply create this ‘imagined community’ of readers and passive and participant observers, who are engaged in an indirect communication with fellow readers and potential members.

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<sup>3</sup> Robert T. Anderson, ‘Voluntary associations in history’ in *American Anthropology*, i, no. 73 (1973), p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A discourse on inequality* (London, 1984), p. 113.

Indeed, modern technology which enables online and instant communication between people and ideas has changed our concepts of identity through online associations and it remains to be seen whether knowledge remains democratised or owned and controlled by huge multinational conglomerates rather than national bodies. These technological changes enable governments to interact with citizens on a scale never before seen, live podcasts of parliamentary debates submerge citizens in the democratic process and expose them to important national debates as they occur - never before has the public gallery been so full. Edmund Burke, founder of the Historical Society of Trinity College or the Hist, discussed in greater detail in later chapters, might not approve of the radical capabilities of the Internet to incite citizens but would enjoy the fact that the Hist of the twenty-first century has an active online Facebook profile boasting a following of over 1,259 people.<sup>5</sup>

The capabilities of contemporary technology are key to the successful recruitment of members and proliferation of associations in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. Robert T. Anderson explains in 'Voluntary associations in history' (1973) that associational culture developed as a concomitant 'of emergent industrialization involving mainly the upper and middle class'.<sup>6</sup> He considers the development of clubs and societies both in urban and rural areas in industrial nations and although his definitions lack definitive time frames he cultivates a strong attachment to liberal ideals and the existence and development of associations. But, where does Ireland during the years 1780-1830 fit with relation to preindustrial and industrialized nations? Certainly it is an industrial economy which was greatly affected by industrialisation and commercialisation but Anderson's categories do not account for this state of limbo. He does, however, state that the 'worldwide phenomenon' of 'modern urban-industrial growth...correlated with a new, wider development of voluntary associations. As permitted by the government - and often the government outlawed or limited them'.<sup>7</sup> This is certainly true of Ireland during the period 1780-1830, which not only experienced a proliferation of clubs and societies but also government intervention including suppression, most famously of the United Irishmen and later the Orange Order. The types of clubs and societies which emerged and

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<sup>5</sup> 1,259 followers as of 12 July 2011; Original count 700 on 14 May 2010

<sup>6</sup> R.T. Anderson, 'Voluntary associations in history', p. 214.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

developed reflect the social and political concerns and interests of the day, and differ immensely in size and participation as well as social and political background. The majority of clubs and societies were divided by gender with male clubs dominating and while a number of heterosocial associations existed, they were mostly philanthropic and educational in nature. Evidence also suggests that associations often had overlapping members, a famous example being the United Irishmen and the Freemasons, discussed in Patrick Fagan's 1998 publication.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, if an individual was a member of one club, he was likely to be a member of a few. Associations in Dublin range from very formal to informal, while recruitment and participation range from steady increases to steep declines. The longevity and viability of associations vary drastically; some clubs only appear a few times in contemporary newspapers. The more formal an association, the greater the chances that sources which document transactions and dealings will exist. These formal associations include the development of 'rational-legal associations', which are defined by Anderson as having,

written statutes clearly defining the membership, participant obligations, leadership roles and conditions of convocation...It is rational in the sense that as a body it is geared to efficiency in making decisions and taking action...It is legal in the sense that compliance in decisions and actions is sanctioned by the impersonal force of law.<sup>9</sup>

This category of associations, defined as rational-legal in nature, reflect many societies in Dublin who imposed strict rules of admission and clearly defined regulations and principles. Importantly for this research, the Hist, the student debating and historical society at Trinity College, conforms to many of these features and can be described as a self-regulating body, although it remained answerable to the College. The Hist enforced strict rules of admission, outlined member duties, elected various rotating positions and imposed monetary fines for a number of indiscretions. Yet, although self-regulating the Hist remained answerable to the College authorities and suffered suppression by the college authorities when it was expelled for a period from the college campus in 1794 and again in 1815, events which we will consider in later chapters.

The considered benefits of associations vary and include their capacity, as Anderson explains, to 'facilitate the transition of individuals and societies to

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<sup>8</sup> Patrick Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant country, the papist constituency in eighteenth-century Dublin* (Dublin, 1998).

<sup>9</sup> R.T. Anderson, 'Voluntary associations in history', p. 215.

participation in the modern world',<sup>10</sup> their ability to add 'stability' to 'modern societies by providing social units intermediate between the individual and the community' and their role 'as institutions supportive of social change'.<sup>11</sup> It is this provision of a transitional sphere between the private and the public which Hegel and indeed Burke promote and which we will consider shortly. Highly formal associations mimic political proceedings and provide opportunities to enhance and develop democratic rituals, as well as organisational and administrative skills. Anderson states that associations are supportive of social movements but do not create them, and because of admission criteria, many associations cultivate the existing skills of their members rather than being fundamental to their creation. Of course the types of clubs and associations which proliferate reflect the prevailing economic and social situations of the time and while they may not create social movements, their ability to rally and rouse mass public support are instrumental in the success of numerous prominent social movements, including political and nationalistic ones.

Anderson and other anthropologists often classify the clubs and societies which create associational culture as voluntary associations. Indeed a whole host of discussion and argument revolve around the distinction between 'associations' and those with the prefix 'voluntary'. Dorothy Hammond, in 'Associations' (1972), defines voluntary associations as 'groups whose membership results from an act of joining', where membership is not a de facto birth right, for example 'in the family or territorial unit'.<sup>12</sup> Yet, while marriage and family associations are often arbitrary, this unit is central to the majority of social and cultural interactions, both as a driving force of associations outside the family unit and within it. Family associations provide a stable unit for further social interaction and identification. While we may consider political or strategic marriages as performing functions other than familial relations, associations based on the family are far too diverse and intricate to be considered for this study. Non-sanguine relations occur because individuals share 'mutual affection, common interests, similar status, shared purpose' and 'common enemy[ies]',<sup>13</sup> political, religious or otherwise. This 'act of joining' presumes a measure of choice, thus making it an overtly voluntary

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Hammond, 'Associations' in *An Addison-Wesley Module of Anthropology*, module 14 (1972), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

act. The diverse motives which compel or coerce individuals into joining an association include that of desperation, frustration and necessity. Agrarian societies, radical reform groups, political groups, etc., all reflect issues in society which, according to members, are not satisfactorily addressed by the ruling government or parties. In these cases the physical act of joining may be voluntary but the necessity may not - associations may offer the only alternative. Agrarian secret societies in Ireland, including the Whiteboy movement in the eighteenth-century and the Ribbonmen in the nineteenth-century, reflect this idea as members feel compelled to join, due to fear or coercion as well as frustration at economic and social circumstances. Associations of this nature are very different to affinity groups who profess a very individualist or self-serving character, such as drinking and gambling clubs. D.E. Brown asserts that associations are a culturally 'bound concept' and as such cannot be so easily categorised.<sup>14</sup> Definitions based on whether an association is 'voluntary' or not do not always take into account the complex nature of social and political movements.

Hammond offers insight into the function and purpose of associations and is similarly concerned with the 'voluntary' prefix. Her definition of associational culture excludes groups based on 'territorial units'<sup>15</sup> because, as Hammond asserts, membership of these groups is founded on the assumption that membership is an 'automatic consequence of birth'.<sup>16</sup> This definition is inferred on the purely geographical nature of state territory and does not consider the political or cultural aspects of it. Membership of a 'territorial unit' may be contested and may not be de facto. The larger the territory, the greater the risk of contested identity, especially during the formative years of a nation's creation, reflected in Irish nationalism during 1780-1830. Nationality then is membership of a 'territorial unit'. However, membership of a nation is not based on purely geographical notions, but on more complex political, social and cultural concerns, which in effect remove de facto membership. Perhaps we need to distinguish between 'territorial units' and political ones, but inevitably they are inextricably linked, more often than not, political and social constructs define territorial units. We cannot simply exclude affiliations based on territory as this ignores the numerous clubs and societies whose identity is based on affiliations to territory in the physical and political

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<sup>14</sup> D.E. Brown, 'Voluntary association: a further comment' in *American Anthropologist*, lxxv, no. 1 (1973), p. 309.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond, 'Associations', p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

sense. Nationalist groups express territorial links, albeit based on political and cultural notions of a territory.

Brown asserts that such conflicting definitions are not easily reconciled and offers a simple solution to the problem - 'drop the adjective "voluntary" and speak simply of "associations"'.<sup>17</sup> Associational culture then is a loosely defined concept with fairly flexible criteria for the groups, clubs and societies which constitute part of its definition. Something which may help refine this idea or definition of associational culture is the idea of civil society. Bent Flyvbjerg's (1998) discussion of Jürgen Habermas and Michel Foucault, defines the concept of civil society as,

an institutional core constituted by voluntary associations outside the sphere of the state and the economy. Such associations range from, for example, churches, cultural associations, sport clubs, and debating societies to independent media, academics, groups of concerned citizens, grass-roots initiatives and organizations of gender, race and sexuality, all the occupational associations, political parties and labour unions.<sup>18</sup>

This definition covers the broad range of clubs and societies in associational culture and harbors no conflict on voluntarism in contrast to anthropological definitions of associations. Civil society is distinct from institutions of the state, as it operates within the public sphere and relies on community and public consciousness and participation. Many theories and discussions on civil society focus on modern concepts of civic engagement and participation but the concept of civil society has its roots in ancient philosophy, although its meaning has somewhat changed. Aristotelian Greek civil society, defined by Jean L. Cohen in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1998), 'referred to a political community of equal citizens who participate in ruling and being ruled'.<sup>19</sup> The term was then reused 'by eighteenth-century liberals' to attack absolutism and differentiate 'civil' from 'state' society,<sup>20</sup> metaphorically dismembering the body politic. Even though the concept has undergone a number of manifestations over the years and has enjoyed continued reinterpretation by Hegel, Marx, de Tocqueville and most recently Habermas, civil society essentially refers 'to a sphere of activity and set

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<sup>17</sup> Brown, 'Voluntary associations', p. 309.

<sup>18</sup> Bent Flyvbjerg, 'Habermas and Foucault: thinkers for civil society' in *British Journal of Sociology*, xlix, no. 2 (1998), p. 211.

<sup>19</sup> Jean L. Cohen, 'Civil Society' in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London, 1998) available at <http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/S006SECT3> (7 May 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

of institutions outside the state or government'<sup>21</sup> and encompasses 'the West's historic concern for the freedom of association'.<sup>22</sup> Definitions of civil society are of their time. They reflect the cultural and political concerns of the day and similar to associations can be seen as culturally bound. Eighteenth and nineteenth-century liberal interpretations of civil society sought to differentiate state and public society within the realms of republicanism and radicalism that prevailed at the time, especially after the French Revolution. Irish clubs and societies were highly influenced by enlightenment ideas and the American Revolution and the French revolutionary ideas of republicanism. These ideas feature heavily in club resolutions as well as in the press and other publications. Such influences no doubt affected the nature, as well as the function of associations as they sought to emulate the liberal dichotomy between state and public society and propagate ideas of republicanism. This liberal tradition 'focused on individual rights,'<sup>23</sup> the right of free association and freedom of speech within public space and echoed the French Revolution motto, *liberté, égalité*. Later manifestations of this slogan added *fraternité* and reflect the flourishing state of associational culture during the French revolutionary period. This idea of fraternity certainly encapsulates many of the societies which propagate in Ireland during the period 1780-1830 - the most famous fraternity being the legendary Freemasons. The Whig Club, Friends of the Constitution, Liberty and Peace, linked to the Whig Club, the Society of Free Citizens, the Irish Jacobin Club, the Constitutional Society, etc., enjoyed public support and contributed to the development of civil liberties and ideology through this idea of free association. Liberal idealism that baulked against absolutism resonates in the clubs and societies that developed, reflected in both the names and resolutions of such associations and reflected the idea of civil society that liberal idealism promoted.

Civil society theory provides information on the function and benefits of associational culture within society and offers insight into the type of social capital it enhances, while Anthropology provides an understanding of the impact of associations in society and how they function as either expressive or instrumental bodies or a mixture of the two. The anthropological functions will receive further discussion

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Brown, 'Voluntary Associations', p. 309.

<sup>23</sup> Cohen, 'Civil Society'.

momentarily but we will first establish these functions and benefits within civil society theory.

Definitions of civil society are of their time and as such it is important not to attach anachronistic interpretations of it to eighteenth and nineteenth-century Ireland. The revival of civil society as a theory in the last few decades produced a glut of articles dealing with the modern notion of civil society as associations which are not only highly democratised and concerned with markets locally and globally, but entities distinct from the political sphere or state. This current definition, of associations organised outside the realms of the state, describes the institutions discussed for the purposes of this research, that of clubs and societies which perform functions distinct from state and government, but which are not necessarily apolitical.

#### *Edmund Burke and G.W.F. Hegel on civil society theory*

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), offer insight into civil society and support the idea as pertaining to the political sphere. Their interpretations of civil society run counter to more recent ones. Yet, while these important theorists offer a wealth of knowledge between them, another important Irish writer, constitutionalist and politician, Edmund Burke provides information about the function and role of associational culture in late eighteenth-century Ireland within the context of civil society. Burke is important because of his support of religious tolerance and active role in British politics during the period under discussion, but also, as founding member of the Hist, or Burke's Club, he embodies the fundamental principles and doctrines upon which the Hist was established. Burke offers indirect theories on civil society throughout tracts such as *Thoughts on the cause of the present discontent* (1770) and *Reflections on the revolution in France* (1790) and as Richard Boyd (1999) remarks, 'though he devotes much time to discussing their political importance, Burke does not directly refer to institutions between individual and states as "civil society."<sup>24</sup> Burke's stance on civil society is fraught with contradictions and is reflective of his nonconformist views on religion and politics. His disagreement with enlightenment individualism, anti-disestablishmentarian stance and liberal

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<sup>24</sup> Richard Boyd, "'The unsteady and precarious contribution and individuals": Edmund Burke's defense of civil society' in *The Review of Politics*, lxi, no. 3 (1999), p. 468.

inclinations, advocate the seemingly contradictory concepts of establishment and toleration. According to Burke, stability of the state is bound to the stability which established religion provides, as religion provides social control external to state control and is effective as a consistent influence on morality and virtue, avoiding any intermittent governmental corruption. Burke's toleration was incompatible with what Michael W. McConnell (1995) describes as the 'enlightenment project of secularization of society'.<sup>25</sup> This 'project of secularization' advocated individualism, a movement which Burke considered to be destructive to society and religion. In many respects, Burke sits dialectically between the paradigms of liberalism and conservatism.

Similarly conflicting, Burke's interpretations of civil society sit between present day notions of it as 'the antithesis of "political society" or the "state"' and early modern definitions which treat 'civil society as largely synonymous with political society'.<sup>26</sup> Yet, even this early modern definition, advocated by Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, is at odds with eighteenth-century liberals who differentiate 'civil' from 'state' society and promote the body politic or civil society as composed of 'free and equal citizens'.<sup>27</sup> Burke demonstrates the inherent difficulty in locating a precise definition of civil society given its various manifestations and illustrates it as a concept in flux.

Boyd states that in his tracts, Burke 'implicitly contrasts political "liberty" or "government" with non-political "morality and religion...with peace and order, with civil and social manners'.<sup>28</sup> It is the non-political ties which form the basis of society, that of 'family, locality, religion, property and class', yet, it is through these that political agenda and consciousness develop. These ties link society 'to the abstract political order'<sup>29</sup> and as Burke states, provide 'the first link in the series by which we proceed toward a love to our country and to mankind'.<sup>30</sup> This connects ideas of nationalism to that of associational culture and civil society and is implicit to Rousseau's notion of the social contract. Burke's assertions that interaction with society develops a 'love' of one's country is a romanticised notion of belonging to an 'imagined community' and is expressed through an unwritten social contract. In this sense society

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<sup>25</sup> Michael W. McConnell, 'Establishment and toleration in Edmund Burke's "Constitution of Freedom"' in *The Supreme Court Review* (1995), p. 451.

<sup>26</sup> Boyd, 'Edmund Burke's defense of civil society', pp 467-8.

<sup>27</sup> Cohen, 'Civil society'.

<sup>28</sup> Boyd, 'Edmund Burke's defense of civil society', p. 469.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 470.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 479.

is linked to political order through connections to the state made viable by intermediary bodies or voluntary associations.

Burke sees distinctions made between ‘civil’ and ‘political’ as arbitrary and considers them part of the same entity which connects members of society. In doing this, Burke situates his theory on civil society between present day and original definitions of it. Boyd writes, ‘instead of treating "civil society" as an antonym for the "state," as does the currently prevalent usage, or as synonymous with or merely subordinate to political society, as did the original tradition, Burke calls attention to its conceptual indeterminacy’.<sup>31</sup> Yet, rather than just theorising on the subject, Burke states his involvement with associational clubs. In *Reflections*, he writes that he has ‘the honour to belong to more clubs than one, in which the constitution of this kingdom and the principles of the glorious Revolution are held in high reverence’.<sup>32</sup> The proliferation of constitution clubs, in Great Britain as in Ireland, reflects this convergence of the political and the civil. Yet even though Burke states he belongs to a constitution club of sorts he is not ignorant of the revolutionary character which some clubs of this nature develop and promote. Burke detests the alignment of revolutionary societies to French revolutionary rhetoric and resolutions that destabilise the established constitutional, political and religious regimes. He is an advocate of reform and toleration but only within these established institutions. His stance reflects the divisive nature of such clubs, as one description of the Constitution Society, formed in the 1780s and one of a number of ‘constitutional’ societies with various derivatives of the same name, including the Constitutional Society demonstrates.<sup>33</sup> A contemporary newspaper, the *Freeman’s Journal* describes the members of this society as containing ‘a few licentious idle people, that subscribe without money, and debate on our rights without understanding them’,<sup>34</sup> while another, the *Dublin Evening Post* describes the members of the Constitution Club as men of property and character.<sup>35</sup> Just as Burke sees the combination of religion and state as conducive to stability, this combination of civil association and political teachings contribute to the creation of moral understanding

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 470.

<sup>32</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the revolution in France, and on the proceedings in certain societies in London relative to that event* (10th Edition, London, 1791), p. 2, available at <http://www.google.com/books?id=hMkEbtz3ZSAC> (29 Aug. 2011).

<sup>33</sup> See *Freeman’s Journal*, 23 Nov., 2 Dec., 7 Dec. 1784 and 8 Jan. 1785.

<sup>34</sup> *F. J.*, 6 Jan. 1785, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

through peer connections. Burke is opposed to individualism and considers unaffiliated men open to vanity and corruption. He promotes the individual's participation in multiple spheres of activity and sees this as necessary to moral and national development and considers affiliations based on religion and politics as instrumental to the development of virtue, as individuals gain the 'advantage of mutual scrutiny by one's peers'.<sup>36</sup>

Associations, support the development of principles of morality, ethics and beliefs among these peer groups. However, Burke points to the principles of civil society and of men acting within bodies, as containing both stabilising and destabilising effects. He states that 'when men act in bodies, is power,'<sup>37</sup> but detests principles of extreme revolution. Societies, such as the aptly named Revolution Society, promote revolution as a means to invoke constitutional and societal change.<sup>38</sup> Indeed it is the Revolution Society in London, which support the French Revolution and its ideals, whom Burke addresses in his *Reflections*. On investigation Burke discovered that the Revolution Society was founded to commemorate the 1688 Revolution and he describes the members as a 'club of dissenters but of what denomination' he 'know[s] not'.<sup>39</sup> In his analysis, Burke states that the members of the Revolution Society have 'little regard to the obvious consequences of their doctrine, though they must see, that it leaves positive authority in very few of the positive institutions in this country'.<sup>40</sup> Thomas Paine responds to Burke's criticism of the Revolution Society and states that the 'strange doctrine he has advanced in his book...though he points it at the Revolution Society, is effectually directed against the whole Nation'.<sup>41</sup> Paine's response to Burke demonstrates the diametrical opposite levels of support for French Revolutionary ideology. The doctrines promoted and supported by the Revolution Society are transmitted through sermons, one of which, delivered by Dr. Richard Price, a prominent member of the Revolution Society, is described by Burke as

a very extraordinary miscellaneous sermon, in which there are some good moral and religious sentiments, and not ill expressed, mixed up in a sort of porridge of

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<sup>36</sup> Boyd, 'Edmund Burke's defense of civil society', p. 484.

<sup>37</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 9.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Paine, *Rights of man: Being an answer to Mr. Burke's attack on the French Revolution* (7th Edition, London, 1791), p. 129.

various political opinions and reflections: but the revolution in France is the grand ingredient in the cauldron.<sup>42</sup>

Burke is not only displeased with the contents of the sermon but also with the fact that religion and politics are being mixed – ‘no sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that of religion by this confusion of duties’.<sup>43</sup> Dr. Price also advises his audience to ‘improve upon non-conformity; and to set up, each of them a separate meeting-house upon his own particular principles,’ a prospect which Burke considers ‘not for the diffusion of truth, but for the spreading of contradiction’<sup>44</sup> and states that ‘such arrangements, however favorable to the cause of compulsory freedom, civil and religious, may not be equally conducive to the national tranquility’.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Burke received a response to his publication from a member of the Revolution Society, identified as John Scott. *A letter to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, in reply to his ‘Reflections on the revolution in France, &c.’*, by a member of the Revolution Society (1791) is now presented in CRADLE.<sup>46</sup>

It is clear from Burke’s tracts that religion and the state have a place together in instilling order, peace and morality in society but that they should remain distinct entities. Burke advocates any established religion which provide values and virtues to its congregation but considers atheism and new religions as detrimental to public order. He places religion and God above the authority of the state and the sovereign which can be replaced or overthrown by the people, which he advocates as long as these actions can be justified within the established constitution. For Burke, public space is also religious space and both state and religion work together to create civil liberties and ‘civil government’ and although part of the same whole, they must remain distinct entities. Religion must remain passive to state functions to avoid corruption, so ‘that the provision of [the] establishment might be as stable as the earth on which it stands, and should not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions’.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>46</sup> John Scott, *A letter to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, in reply to his ‘Reflections on the revolution in France, &c.’*, by a member of the Revolution Society (Dublin 1791) available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

<sup>47</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 150.

Attachments to these ‘intermediary bodies’<sup>48</sup> bridge the gap between the state and religion and provide viable links to political and national sentiment while instilling civic virtue, liberty and confidence. They provide services to the civil/social and political sphere and develop community and national identity, dispersing ideologies which promote both social order and social upheaval. Burke acknowledges both facets of associations and for obvious reasons is more critical and vocal about the negative outcomes of associational participation. Intermediary bodies may bridge the gap between religion and state but they must endeavour to retain the boundaries between the two, which can become blurred with revolutionary rhetoric or calls to political and religious action. Burke supports the protection of the authority of these institutions. Indeed, the National Assembly in France outlined drastic steps to ensure state authority, in their 1791-92 directives which ‘dissolved and suppressed’ ‘all religious corporations and secular congregations of men and women, religious and secular’.<sup>49</sup> An additional law in 1793 ‘added academic and literary societies, as well as economic and industrial organizations, to the list of suppressed associational forms’.<sup>50</sup> Indeed the *Freeman’s Journal* published an article in 1793 which advises the ‘approaching session of [the Irish] Parliament to pass a law for the suppression of all factious associations which have arisen’.<sup>51</sup> The article describes these associations as ‘similar to clubs and confederacies’ which ‘all the misfortunes and crimes of France are to be attributed’, stating that ‘had its government crushed them in their infancy they never would have acquired strength sufficed to destroy all order’.<sup>52</sup>

These directives, however, were published after Burke’s *Reflections* but they are very much in line with his publication which expresses the ferocity with which he condemns the revolutionary clubs and societies in France. Burke states that,

it is beyond doubt, that under the terror of the bayonet, and the lamppost, and the torch of their houses, they [National Assembly] are obliged to adopt all the crude and desperate measures suggested by clubs composed of a monstrous medley of all conditions, tongues, and nations.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Boyd, ‘Edmund Burke’s defense of civil society’, p. 478.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> *F.J.*, 3 Jan. 1793, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 101.

Burke, however, would have disagreed with the suppression of all civic associations on grounds of violation of civil liberty as he considered

every sort of moral, every sort of civil, every sort of politic institution, aiding the rational and natural ties that connect the human understanding and affections to the divine, are not more than necessary, in order to build up that wonderful structure.<sup>54</sup>

Participation in associational culture fosters participation in the larger political and national whole, ‘the love for the whole is not diminished by’ participation in intermediary bodies<sup>55</sup> but it is the dichotomy between ‘faction’ and ‘connexion’ which ultimately dictate how associational bodies are perceived and judged by government and state bodies.<sup>56</sup> Associational culture supports and develops relationships within society, politically and culturally. However, it can also make manifest social disconnections or faction, as it supports the myriad causes which obstruct the course of government and social order, whether perceived as being in the national interest or not. This is no more amply demonstrated than in the aftermath of the 1798 Rebellion which instead of uniting Ireland, exposed the tenuous links which the United Irishmen based their national insurrection on. Indeed, the failed rebellion exposed ‘faction’ instead of promoting ‘connexion’ between Catholics and Protestants, and the North and South.

‘Faction’ and ‘connexion’, however, are essential to the development of ‘political engagement’<sup>57</sup> where participation in associations fosters attachments essential to social and national development. Connection and faction provide moral scrutiny and societal change. Association is an inalienable right which helps protect society. As Boyd states associations are ‘a bulwark against tyranny’.<sup>58</sup> They protect political and social liberty as they ‘function to check and balance power’ through the ‘diversity of members and interests’ which produces ‘that action and counteraction which, in the natural and in the political world, from the reciprocal struggle of discordant powers, draws out the harmony of the universe’.<sup>59</sup> Burke provides important observations on the motive and role of associational culture or civil society, despite no

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>55</sup> Boyd, ‘Edmund Burke’s defense of civil society’, p. 478.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 481.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 482.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 485.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 487.; see also Burke, *Reflections*, pp 50-1.

clear reference to either notion. His analysis of the relationship between church and state outlines the intermediary position of associational culture as providing important links and cultivating activity and mobility outside the structures of state institutions. Burke supports the creation of and participation in civil associations and sees this interaction as beneficial to moral and political development in society. However, he condemns activity which promotes revolution or reform outside the realms of established practices for constitutional or political reform. Although the United Irishmen carried out their ill-fated rebellion a year after Burke's death in 1797, Burke's letters and correspondences in the early 1790s provide insight into his view on the United Irishmen, their cause and the prospects of insurrection. Conor Cruise O'Brien in *The great melody* (1992) quotes Burke's letter of November 1796 to John Keogh, a leading member of the Catholic Committee in the early 1790s, which 'implicitly warns Keogh against his Protestant friends in the United Irishmen' when he writes,

I conceive, that the last disturbances...do not originate...amongst the Catholics; but there is, and ever has been, a strong Republican, Protestant Faction in Ireland, which has persecuted the Catholics as long as persecution would answer their purpose; and now the same faction would dupe them to become accomplices in effectuating the same purposes; and thus either by Tyranny or seduction would accomplish their ruin.<sup>60</sup>

Burke is certainly at odds with the United Irishmen's radical and republican views and is cautious of the 'Protestant Faction', which no doubt included the most famous United Irishmen leader, Theobald Wolfe Tone, who sought to galvanise Irish Catholics and Protestants alike. However, a year before his letter to Keogh, Burke wrote of his opposition to disarming the Defenders, a Catholic secret society who by 1796 were linked to the United Irishmen as their military wing, stating that, 'the Catholics have foolishly, in all senses disarmed themselves'.<sup>61</sup> Burke and Tone shared aspirations for repeal of the penal laws but had differing opinions on the long term effects of repeal. According to O'Brien, 'Burke hoped that the removal of all Catholic disabilities would have a tranquilising effect, diminish the attractions of Jacobitism, and strengthen the connect between Ireland and Great Britain', in comparison to Tone who 'hoped that the struggle of enfranchisement, the resistance to it, and the spread of revolutionary ideas,

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<sup>60</sup> Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The great melody, a thematic biography of Edmund Burke* (London, 1992), p. 570.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 530.

would destroy sectarian differences, and produce a new Ireland'.<sup>62</sup> Burke's position as a British statesman and politician, his pro-Catholic stance and previous connections to the Catholic Committee complicate his relationship with Ireland and Irish politics. Burke's writings reveal his complex relationship with Ireland and the Catholic question.

Consideration of Burke's contributions to the understanding of associational culture in society and to the theory of civil society is supplemented with a consideration of G.W.F. Hegel's 1821 publication *Philosophy of right*. In this work, Hegel, a luminary of the philosophical movement called German idealism which developed as a response to Kant, deals directly with civil society theory and discusses the individual's social interaction as the logical forerunner to political society. His writings are used to support and enhance the discussion of civil society and provide a theoretical focus which helps explain the development and proliferation of associations for the mutual satisfaction of members' interests. Hegel's philosophical theories explain the transformation of the family into a community, and the subsequent expansion of local and regional spheres of influence through the individual's participation and involvement with associations. Hegel's ideas, philosophy and theory on civil society, and indeed his theories on patriotism, enforce ideas of universal and collective wills generated through constant participation and interaction with various social groups. It is this respect that his theories offer an important lens through which to view the stimulants for and motivations behind the establishment of clubs and societies and provides important rationale into individual and group participation in society.

Hegel also describes the important idea and concept of *Bildung* in the '*Philosophy of right*'. *Bildung*, which has no direct English translation, is used in chapter 5 to describe the cultural experience and personal development with which the Historical Society of Trinity College provides its members. It describes the individual's indoctrination into society, not only through education but through social and cultural experience and participation.

Hegel refers to civil society as pertaining to 'the [stage of] difference which intervenes between the family and the state,' where individual relations to others develop the economics that make up the 'system of needs'.<sup>63</sup> He defines civil society by three distinct properties; 'the system of needs', 'the administration of justice' and 'the

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 500.

<sup>63</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel's philosophy of right*, T.M. Knox (trans), (Oxford, 1967), §182.

police and the corporation'.<sup>64</sup> While Hegel does not make direct references to Ireland in his writings on civil society he does refer to, as Terry Pinkard (2000) outlines, 'the English treatment of the conquered Irish Catholic population' in his 1831 work *On the English Reform Bill*.<sup>65</sup> Hegel asserts that the English treatment of the Irish is 'unprecedented in a civilized and Protestant nation'.<sup>66</sup> It is in this sense that Hegel's 'administration of justice', which defines the use and construction of universal laws, is of particular relevance to the penal laws in Ireland, as it is the same 'administration of justice' which create these "un-universal laws", as we will discuss shortly. The first characteristic of civil society, 'the system of needs', as outlined by Hegel, will now be considered.

Hegel's 'system of needs' is concerned with the development of economies that sustain the needs of the individual in a reciprocal transaction or relationship between production and consumption. Hegel states that economic development relies on the connections and relations between the individual and those around him and while initial self-serving or individualistic motivations subsist, the connections which realise these individual goals create and manifest civil society and transform individual goals to universal or collective ones. Hegel states that 'individuals can attain their ends only in so far as they themselves determine their knowing, willing, and acting in a universal way and make themselves links in this chain of social connections'.<sup>67</sup> Individuals acting to fulfill their own or their family's needs must engage with society that is outside of their immediate social or family unit. It is only through making 'social connections' outside of the private sphere that individuals can hope to 'attain their ends' or fulfill certain goals. It is this expansion of the family unit, as individuals and their family reach out and negotiate with the 'external world', which Hegel describes as the creation of a nation or a people, tied by 'needs and the reciprocity of their satisfaction'.<sup>68</sup> As the individual becomes indoctrinated into society, his/her goals become universal ones and it is through 'social connections' within society that the universal aims as determined by individuals, or members 'acting in a universal way', are achieved or fulfilled. These universal needs vary and as such the activities carried out by associations reflect the

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., §188.

<sup>65</sup> Terry Pinkard, *Hegel, a biography* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 646.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §187.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., §181.

various economic, social, political and educational needs in society. It is through clubs and societies that individuals make ‘social connections’, fulfill individual and collective needs, and perceive themselves as belonging to an external world.

Hegel’s assertions are reflective of Dublin’s associational world as we see many clubs and societies ‘acting in a universal way’ rather than acting on individual self-interests. Associations such as the Dublin Society, later the Royal Dublin Society, contribute to the creation and dissemination of new knowledge in the realms of agriculture and industry, resolving economic or educational needs, while charity associations, such as Charitable Musical Society for the Relief of Distressed Families, contribute to the ‘unsolved problem of poverty’,<sup>69</sup> or go toward addressing certain social needs. These associations, and others like them, support the realisation of an individual’s goals in the context of universal society and enhance society at all levels, socially, economically and politically. Indeed, the Royal Dublin Society provided important modernising functions in the absence of strategic state or government initiatives to enhance agricultural and industrial methods and implementations.<sup>70</sup>

As the individual’s needs (the family unit included) become more complex, the satisfaction of these needs depends upon a commitment to interact within various ‘social connections’ and it is within this social interaction or participation that an abstract notion ‘for equality of satisfaction with others’ emerges.<sup>71</sup> The system of needs is concerned with the satisfaction of material demands but also civil liberties, as ‘equality of satisfaction with others’ refers both to the satisfaction of material needs and to the societal needs or civil rights which individuals attain, or hope to attain, within and from society. Belonging to and interacting with ‘an imagined community’ or society, bound by certain criteria i.e. territory, politics, nation, etc., enables individuals to recognise their rights and the rights of others within the same society. Hegel’s system of needs demonstrates the interdependencies of individuals and inaugurates a sense of belonging to the universal whole and is responsible for ‘increases in the general capital’<sup>72</sup> and universal freedom.

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<sup>69</sup> Peter G. Stillman, ‘Hegel’s civil society: a locus of freedom’ in *Polity*, xii, no. 4 (1980), p. 623.

<sup>70</sup> T. Barnard, ‘The Dublin Society and other improving societies, 1731-85’ in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds) *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010).

<sup>71</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §193.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, §199.

Through interaction in the system of needs abstract notions of rights develop which are protected and defined within ‘the administration of justice’ and thus rights, become law. Customs of a nation are codified and presented as written or unwritten law which are universal unless otherwise stated (e.g. Irish penal laws). They therefore reflect the individual’s abstract position within society. Universal laws determine the role of the individual in society, in effect defining the citizen and the nation. Any infringements of these universal laws, ‘does not alter the conception of wrongdoing, but it does alter it in respect of its existence as an injury done, an injury which now affects the mind and consciousness of civil society as a whole’.<sup>73</sup> An injury or a wrong doing carried out against one individual and perpetrated by another individual is considered an injury against society and it is this enactment of collective justice rather than individual retribution which protects an individual’s and society’s civil rights and freedoms. Interactions with legal institutions, both positive and negative, encapsulate the individual in the universal laws as defined by the state. The individual must recognise the legal institutions to participate as a citizen but it is an individual choice, or even right, to abide by them.

Conscientious objectors to the law or civil rights do so for the benefit of the universal and not just individuals as ‘the right at issue and the judgment therein, affects the interests of everybody’.<sup>74</sup> This describes the contradictory notion of ‘liberty and slavery within the same country’<sup>75</sup> and efforts in Ireland to solve this paradox of citizen participation. The rhetoric of liberty and patriotism grew from a society stifled by the cultural, political and economic reality of a two-tiered system of citizen participation, defined by “un-universal” laws. Hegel states that ‘given good laws, a state can flourish’.<sup>76</sup> The repercussions of bad laws (good or bad laws may be a subjective interpretation) are nowhere more evident than in the penal laws which created this paradoxical Ireland. A contemporary newspaper describes one view of the penal laws as a system which saw ‘a million and half of Roman Catholics smarting under the most oppressive laws that the human heart could ever devise’.<sup>77</sup> Yet, whether these laws were

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., §218.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., §224.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland, voices against England in the eighteenth-century* (Dublin, 1999), p. 155.

<sup>76</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §229[A].

<sup>77</sup> *F.J.*, 14 Mar. 1780, p. 1.

fully implemented or administrated or not they created a system where the majority of the nation was subservient to the minority. This ‘minority privilege,’ as David Fitzpatrick describes it,<sup>78</sup> is defined within universal laws and uses negative legislation to disassociate the Catholic majority. Ironically, the penal laws supply Catholics with a central focus for protest, as the restrictions imposed by these laws provide a common denominator, apart from religion, for Catholics to identify with one another. This in turn spurred the creation of associative groups, such as the Catholic Committee in the eighteenth-century and Daniel O’Connell’s Catholics Association in the nineteenth-century, among many others, whose central focus was the reform of these universal, yet divisive, laws.

The last elements of Hegel’s civil society, ‘the Police and the Corporation’, are described in two separate discussions. The Police or ‘public authority’<sup>79</sup> is concerned with the realisation of the rights of individuals and the universal whole, and the implementation of universal law. This public authority not only protects the individual but also ensures the protection of society against large scale violations such as rebellion and insurrection. Public authority protects the rights of individuals, but it also ‘imposes duties on every’<sup>80</sup> member, including compulsory schooling for children, so they may also be indoctrinated to the universal state.

The last section of Hegel’s civil society deals with corporations, which are composed of members who are recruited and educated based on particular skills. They are voluntary associations composed of individuals ‘sharing vocation, purpose, or interest’,<sup>81</sup> and contribute to the economic and social development of an individual. Members either are, ‘or will become master of [their] craft’ and individuals become members ‘of the association not for casual gain on single occasions but for the whole range, the universality, of his personal livelihood’.<sup>82</sup> This definition describes the activities of trade corporations or guilds in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Dublin. These corporations were highly influential and omnipresent in the city’s civic and political life and mix the economic system of needs and wants with subsequent social

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<sup>78</sup> David Fitzpatrick, ‘Religion and the Orange Order’, lecture given at Associational Culture in Ireland and the wider world, c.1750-1940’ (NUI Maynooth, 17 May 2008).

<sup>79</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §231.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, §238 [A].

<sup>81</sup> Stillman, ‘Hegel’s civil society’, p. 623.

<sup>82</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §252.

interactions. They were not only important for trade and manufacturing, but also for supporting and engendering social and political identities through affiliation and public displays of affinity, the most prominent being regular perambulations in the city, which expressed identity through material culture and was an active demonstration of affiliation.

Hegel also considers the important idea or notion of *Bildung*, a German word with no direct translation in English, which means education but not in the traditional or classical sense of intellectual education or academia but of indoctrination into society through experience with culture and social interaction. *Bildung* is also seen as spiritual education and personal development rather than mere education in intellectual terms.<sup>83</sup> *Bildung's* meaning and definition is more complex than the mere education of an individual in logical matriculation or academic curriculum and reflects personal and spiritual development. Allen W. Wood (1998) describes the concept of *Bildung* as ““formation”, “development” or “culture”” and goes on to say that it

is part of the life process of a spiritual entity: a human being, a society, a historical tradition. It occurs not primarily through the imparting of information by a teacher, but instead through what Hegel calls “experience”.<sup>84</sup>

It is in this sense and within this interpretation that *Bildung* is an important concept to consider with regard the personal development and the education of members through associational activity.

Hegel's civil society is a complex web of activity and connections within the various economic, educational and associational or voluntary institutions. Participation in a multitude of these institutions involves individuals in various social roles and develops social awareness and consciousness. Individuals become part of the

social context, where he by his activity adds vivacity and objectivity to the universal groups of which he is a member, and the universal groups elicit the individual's capabilities of will and reason.<sup>85</sup>

Unlike Burke, who considers individualism a corrupting force in society, Hegel considers the individual's pursuit of selfish needs as conducive to the creation of social

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<sup>83</sup> Frederick Beiser, 'Romanticism, German' in E. Craig (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London, 1998) available at <http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/DC094SECT4> (17 Sep. 2011).

<sup>84</sup> Allen W. Wood, 'Hegel on education' in Amélie O. Rorty (ed), *Philosophy as Education* (London, 1998), p. 4, available at [www.stanford.edu/~allenw/webpapers/HegelEd.doc](http://www.stanford.edu/~allenw/webpapers/HegelEd.doc) (30 Mar. 2011).

<sup>85</sup> Stillman, 'Hegel's civil society', p. 632.

consciousness through participation in a complex system of production and consumption, figuratively and literally, which in turn creates a complex system of relations based on needs and wants. The complex system of institutions within civil society transforms man from a natural being into a social one. Social interactions within institutions develop a frame of mind which is 'self-conscious, self-determining...rational' and socially aware.<sup>86</sup> Rather than a corrupting force, an individual's pursuits cultivate the connections that develop social and cultural sentiment within localities, regional and national and it is within these multiple interactions that individuals form identity. Social interactions and participation on all levels are seen as a form of associational culture and it is through these links and relations that individuals prosper within society. Civil society, composed of various economic, legal and voluntary associations produce customs and culture which both construct and reflect national identity and interest. The transition from familial associations to civil ones develop new principles upon which nations stand. Hegel describes 'the expansion of the family' into the

external world...until it becomes a people, i.e. a nation, which thus has a common natural origin, or...under the influence of an overlord's power or as a result of a voluntary association produced by the tie of needs and the reciprocity of their satisfaction.<sup>87</sup>

In this statement he makes an important connection between civil society and the development of nationalism and asserts that associations act as intermediaries between the family and the state. It is through these connections and interactions that individuals and groups develop national culture and customs and support Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities' because they facilitate effective connections between members, and ultimately citizens. In Hegel's civil society, man is a universal being, inherently connected. These connections cultivate an awareness of belonging to a wider society and ultimately to the universal whole and instills abstract notions of possessing universal freedoms and rights.

Hegel's 'system of needs' is also seen as a modernising phenomenon. Individuals both consume and produce, effectively creating an interconnected system based on needs and the fulfillment of them. This system, however, is not limited to economic fulfillment. Interaction through needs extends to social, political and the

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 624.

<sup>87</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §181.

intellectual sphere and it is through these links and relationships that modern man is conceived. Driven by economic and material endeavour, man seeks satisfaction in the institutions and associations that develop from and because of this reciprocal system.

Civil society is composed of both expressive and instrumental associations as defined by Dorothy Hammond (1972). Hammond states that associations which are expressive, offer a means of ‘self-expression and recreation for the members’,<sup>88</sup> while instrumental groups have a purpose other than ‘self-expression and recreation’ and are usually active lobbying groups for various social and political goals. Associations can be one or both. Many of the clubs and associations in Ireland during the period under discussion are either expressive or instrumental while others are a combination of the two. It is difficult to categorically define clubs and societies as one or the other; many develop different features or characters over time. In many ways all clubs and societies express the ideas or ambitions of individual members, even societies defined as instrumental, those who lobby for particular causes, cannot help but express the stance of individual members through club manifestos and activity. Reform, agrarian and republican clubs and societies in Ireland may be categorised as both expressive and instrumental associations, as members express identity through affiliation and club activity, which is often politically motivated, and which may result in clubs functioning in an instrumental capacity. These activities may be legal or illegal and especially in the case of agrarian groups, violence and coercion often result. Societies such as the Hist are both expressive and instrumental as they provide ‘self-expression and recreation’ for members and the motions for debate and the act of debating are instrumental to the development of educated, politically minded citizens. The Hist was pivotal to the careers of many former members, who went on to become prominent political figures with impressive oratory and debating skills. Hammond states that members who also ‘serve as leaders, raise funds, and generally administer the organization’ are ‘fostering good citizenship’.<sup>89</sup> The expressive and instrumental outputs of clubs and societies are, however, subjective and often express contested identities that exist in society. Groups such as the Volunteers, the Defenders, the Orange Order and the United Irishmen all profess and express an identity rooted in a form of Irish patriotism or nationalism and are instrumental in progressing their own individual causes but are all essential elements

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<sup>88</sup> Hammond, ‘Associations’, p. 2.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

in mass politicisation and raising public awareness. Indeed the proliferation of one group can spur that of the other through negative disassociation and a compulsion to react to rhetoric and activity. All four groups cited have expressive and instrumental functions but contribute to the development of varying forms of Irish patriotism or nationalism, rooted in religion, agrarian reform, loyalty to the crown and Great Britain and republican radicalism respectively. Indeed their expressive identities change over time but the collective identities created by these clubs mimic and enhance ideas of nationalism.

The expressive and instrumental function of associations provides, as Peter G. Stillman (1980) describes it, 'the locus of activity and conflict' and improves both diversity and conformity in society.<sup>90</sup> The social and political awareness which interaction in associations creates can cultivate social tolerance. However, given the right conditions such as economics, etc., the same awareness can create social intolerance and prejudice, demonstrated in the Catholic Protestant divide in Ireland which intensified after the 1798 Rebellion. This reverts to Hegel's universal laws, where social tolerance and prejudice are both results of interaction with the various associations and institutions in civil society.

Later proponents of the concept of civil society such as Jürgen Habermas also describe the universalisation of man in this system of associations and institutions and conceive of it as a highly democratising phenomenon. Hegel's civil society may be a utopian description of acceptance, conformity and participation in universal laws and rights, but the multifarious identities which man forms because of these associative interactions define rational man as one who interacts with associative groups, within both local and national communities. Irrespective of the theories or definitions we attach to these interactions, associational culture or civil society can be seen as the process or act of association. Whether defined as entirely voluntary, purely for economic or selfish gain, or political or intellectual development, these interactions solidify identity which is rooted in the links and relationships man develops outside his familial group. A 2001 publication by Caroline Hodges Persell, Adam Green and Liena Gurevich defines civil society as consisting 'of all the associations to which people belong'.<sup>91</sup> In accordance with Hegel all social connections and interactions made outside the familial group as

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<sup>90</sup> Stillman, 'Hegel's civil society', p. 643.

<sup>91</sup> Caroline Hodges Persell, Adam Green and Liena Gurevich, 'Civil society, economic distress and social tolerance' in *Sociological Forum*, xviii, no. 2 (2001), p. 206.

conducive to the creation of the universal class, creating an external world of social and political interactions until it becomes a nation. Hammond reiterates this as she describes the ability of associations to ‘cross-cut family membership to make wider integration more feasible,’ which in effect allows for greater participation in social and political organisations.<sup>92</sup>

#### *Associational culture - a literature review*

Hegel considers and discusses associational culture and civil society as an abstract concept which features in modern society and develops social rights and harmony. Burke on the other hand communicates indirectly the idea, but conveys the benefits and effects of associational life through his direct experiences with France, Britain and Ireland and his personal interactions with various clubs. While these contemporaries of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century are an invaluable source we must also consider the writings and works of two influential twentieth and twenty-first century writers on associational culture, Peter Clark and R.J. Morris. Both provide a critique and an important survey of clubs and societies in Britain which corresponds to the timeframe of this research. Morris outlines the nature of associations in Britain during the period 1780-1850 which he cites as a distinctive period for associations, while Clark’s *British clubs and societies 1580-1800; the origins of an associational world* (2000), an essential starting point for any research on associational culture, provides significant contextual and comparative information between Britain and Ireland, also echoed in *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (2001). (Clark is both joint editor of and a contributor to that volume).

Clark’s seminal work *British clubs and societies 1580-1800; the origins of an associational world*, echoes Hegel’s assertions that associational culture is pivotal to the development of modern society and national identity. Clark states that ‘voluntary organizations...are by their nature more effective and better able to meet the needs of fellow citizens’.<sup>93</sup> This statement is key to the theory of civil society and associational culture. Clark’s survey of British associational culture provides essential theory for

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<sup>92</sup> Hammond, ‘Associations’, p. 2.

<sup>93</sup> Peter Clark, *British clubs and societies 1580-1800, the origins of an associational world* (Oxford, 2000), p. vii.

associational functionality and development. Hegel describes the ‘expansion’ or ‘transition...of the family’ from an inward facing social unit into a ‘plurality of families’ which participate in an ‘external world’ rather than an internal one.<sup>94</sup> This expansion encourages and supports participation in an ‘external world’ which in itself develops notions of involvement with ‘a people’ or ‘a nation’.<sup>95</sup> Clark reiterates this notion and states that interaction in social structures outside the family creates an ‘outward-looking’ society which is focused on this ‘external world’ rather than on ‘narrow local particularism’.<sup>96</sup> This supports Hegelian indoctrination of the individual into a universal society and promotes modern participation in large social groups rather than just insular family units. Clark also states that countries which participate in universal structures and develop strong associational ones are ‘more likely to develop a civil society with flourishing local and political structures, social solidarity and public stability on Western lines’.<sup>97</sup> It is the individual’s awareness of his/her involvement within these universal structures which directly contribute to the development of national structures and an individual’s national self-awareness and identity. But rather than focusing on the theoretical formalities of associational culture, Clark concentrates on the physical proof of ideas of civil society and takes a comprehensive look at the various clubs and societies which emerge across Britain and Ireland.

Clark specifies the clubs and societies which he considers in his study and states that by excluding ‘commercial and religious organisations and administrative trusts’, it allowed him to ‘focus more clearly and meaningfully on...core associational group[s]’.<sup>98</sup> This associational core is described as consisting of

private associations, overwhelmingly male, meeting on a regular, organized basis, mostly in public drinking-places, where they combined a common sociability with a more specific purpose, whether recreational, locational, educational, political, philanthropic, or whatever.<sup>99</sup>

This definition is essential to condensing Clark’s field of study as associational culture and the study of associational groups is a vast given the depth, range and scope of the

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<sup>94</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §181

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 6.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. vii.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

topic. Other difficulties associated with the study of associational culture are problems related to the reconstruction and analysis of associational life, which, as Clark points out, include the fact that, ‘many societies were informal or short-lived’ and as such yield ‘few documentary traces. Internal records – minute books and correspondence, along with other official papers – survive for no more than a tiny proportion’.<sup>100</sup> Clark cites the press as the metaphorical ‘oxygen’ of clubs and societies, both for their proliferation and evidence for present analysis. Newspapers are used to advertise meetings and recruit members and it is these advertising strategies which preserve evidence for study today. The difficulty, as Clark states, is that many clubs are sporadic and informal - they do not keep records, meet irregularly and advertise or publish even less so.

In spite of these difficulties Clark provides an extensive overview of associational culture in Britain from 1580 to 1800. His introduction launches straight into an associational world and describes one of the many clubs that formed in the eighteenth-century. He relates how a small club in 1730, gathered in a Westminster alehouse to learn mathematics. ‘The society’s aim, along with drinking and socializing, was collective improvement...before tackling mathematics they had taught themselves French’.<sup>101</sup> The theme of ‘drinking and socializing’ is one that appears repeatedly and is often one of the main impetuses for the development of club and societies. As stated, the clubs and societies Clark describes are overwhelmingly urban, voluntary and for the most part male.

Clark describes three distinct periods in the development of an associational world. The first, ‘Emergence: to 1688’, describes social and family conditions that led to the emergence of clubs and societies which met on a regular basis. Interaction with local structures reiterates Hegel’s system of needs and wants and their fulfillment outside the family home and, according to Clark, it is ‘the constant social interplay between household and neighbourhood’ which leads to local advances in sociability.<sup>102</sup> ‘Life-cycle events’ were often the centre of these local interactions and supported and generated local sociability and as with most social interactions, eating and drinking were at the centre of these events.<sup>103</sup> ‘Marriage feasts’, as well as funeral ceremonies brought local communities together as ‘relations, friends, neighbours, and outsiders’

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

were united.<sup>104</sup> Clark reiterates the importance of the ‘local parish church’<sup>105</sup> for social interactions and while this remains an important locus of activity, its significance in the Irish case must be reconsidered given the Catholic-Protestant divide. The next chapter looks at ‘National Expansion, 1688-1760’ and tracks developments which leads to ‘An Associational World 1760-1800’, described in chapter 4. The early eighteenth-century is credited with formalization which established ‘weekly meetings...a maximum membership size...rotating presidency and club regalia’, among others, such as subscription payments and member fines for nonattendance.<sup>106</sup> The eighteenth-century is also described as promoting ideas of respectability and social improvement on all levels, this movement being reflected in the number of philanthropic endeavors of many clubs and societies, both as their primary or secondary function. Furthermore Clark discusses the period 1700-50 as important for club interaction between Ireland and England, mainly between the Freemasons but also as many clubs in Ireland and indeed Scotland had corresponding clubs in London.<sup>107</sup>

In another he explores the finer detail of an associational world as chapter 5 looks at the ‘Engines of Growth’ and uncovers the myriad reasons for the establishment of clubs and societies:

Fads and fashions might be vital - hence the surge of pseudo-masonic societies following the success of modern freemasonry; while local and regional factors also had an effect. Societies could rise and fall as a response to short- and medium-term shifts in the cultural and political agenda, and as a result of tough competition between associations’.<sup>108</sup>

Clark’s next chapter explores club ‘Membership’. It considers rules and regulations attached to club affiliation, the growth and decline of certain clubs and includes an important discussion of the role of women in associational life. Chapter 7 focuses on club ‘Organization’ and examines various qualities and peculiarities which contribute to an associations success or failure. These features include club attendance and absenteeism, financial constraints, internal organisational structures and disputes among others. As Clark states, the ‘third part of this book examines three contrasting types of

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

society’, ‘Regional and Ethnic Societies’, ‘Freemasons’ and ‘Benefit Clubs’ and discusses these with issues of membership and organisation in mind.<sup>109</sup> The second last chapter considers associational culture ‘Overseas’, namely in America while the last chapter, ‘Impact’, ‘investigates some of the economic, social, political and cultural implications of the rise of clubs and societies in the British world’.<sup>110</sup>

Another study which warrants attention and discussion is that of R.J. Morris (1983), ‘Voluntary societies and British urban elites, 1780-1850: an analysis’. Indeed Clark references Morris in his own work and credits him with creating ‘critical links between the growth of associations and class formation’.<sup>111</sup> In this study, Morris considers three cities in Great Britain, Leeds, Newcastle and Edinburgh, and investigates the social, economic and political variations across the three cities. The social and political nature of these cities is reflected in the type of clubs and societies that proliferate during the period, indeed as the period progressed, the required functions of these associations change also, demonstrating the ability of associations to evolve quickly and on demand. Different economic and social conditions produced various social responses in the guise of different clubs and societies, the activities of which included, ‘poor relief, medical aid, moral reform, public order, education and thrift, to the diffusion of science and culture and the organization of leisure’.<sup>112</sup> This reflexive relationship between associations and social and economic conditions is reflected in Dublin’s associational world, where close interaction and an acute awareness of local and national concerns are embraced by clubs and societies who adhered to Hegel’s civil society system of needs, as fulfillment is succeeded through a ‘sharing of general resources’, facilitated by the various clubs and societies of the city.<sup>113</sup>

In accordance with Hegel’s civil society theory, Morris describes the various clubs as institutions of civil society, i.e. those which distinguish between state and civil institutions. However, Morris states that unlike

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 431.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>112</sup> R.J. Morris, ‘Voluntary societies and British urban elites, 1780-1850: an analysis’ in *The Historical Journal*, i, no. 1 (1983), p. 96.

<sup>113</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §200.

voluntary societies in twentieth century Britain which tend to act as pressure groups upon government in addition to promoting their social activities, the major societies of this period were designed to achieve their aims without reference to government aid or authority.<sup>114</sup>

While this may be true of mutual benefit societies and the like, it is difficult to concede that radical reform groups, etc., functioned without reference to government, given the obvious fact that their purpose entailed governmental reform. Noteworthy perhaps is that many of the philanthropic or charitable functionality carried out by many clubs and societies complemented and supported 'government aid or authority'.

Moving beyond the overt functionalities carried out by associational groups, Morris states that class interactions, both in terms of membership and as a powerful locus of disassociation with the lower classes, fomented strong affiliation and identity between members. Voluntary societies,

were the basis for the formation of a middle-class identity across the wide status ranges, and the fragmented political and religious structure of the potential members of that class. They enabled the elite to assert their economic and cultural authority within that middle class...[and] enabled the middle class, under the supervision of the elite, to assert their identity and authority against and over the working class.<sup>115</sup>

These assertions of identity rooted in the dichotomy of association and disassociation are important in later discussions on nationalism as rooted in alterity politics, especially in performative subjectivity as purported by clubs and societies.

Similar to Dublin, all three cities which Morris considers, experience some form of economic distress which instigates a reaction from the middle class in the form of various voluntary bodies. T.C. Barnard states that Dublin has 'parallels with the urban centre of eighteenth-century Edinburgh',<sup>116</sup> and while this is evident in the numerous philanthropic bodies of both cities, Dublin and Edinburgh also enjoyed educational club interaction as links between the Speculative Society at Edinburgh University and the Hist at Trinity College, Dublin existed. The instigators of this connection, Thomas

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<sup>114</sup> Morris, 'Voluntary societies and British urban elites', p. 96.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> T.C. Barnard, "Grand Metropolis' or 'Anus of the World'? The cultural life of eighteenth-century Dublin' in Peter Clark and Raymond Gillespie (eds), *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (Oxford, 2001), p. 187.

Addis Emmet, older brother of Robert Emmet, was a medical student at Edinburgh and was expelled as an honorary member of the Society in 1798 when he, ‘acknowledged himself a member of the Executive Directory of the Irish Union and had confessed himself privy to carrying on a treasonable correspondence with France’.<sup>117</sup>

Morris also considers the writings of Adam Smith (1723-90), Thomas Paine (1737-1809), and Robert Malthus (1766-1834), as influential in questioning social authority and the ‘old power structures of British society’ by ‘a changing network of societies’.<sup>118</sup> The republication of Paine’s *Rights of man* (1791) by the Whig Club in the 1790s demonstrates the same influence in Dublin and is evidence of the politicization and growing social consciousness of many urban voluntary societies. At a price of only ‘one penny’, a contemporary newspaper describes ‘Paine’s incendiary pamphlet’, now ‘within reach of the lower orders’.<sup>119</sup> The emergence of relief societies in Britain, as in Dublin demonstrates the influence of Paine’s *Rights of man*, even if opposed to Burke’s *Reflections* and brings to the fore the Hegelian hierarchy of the reciprocal system at the centre of civil society. It is this hierarchy which Morris alludes to when he describes the various identities derived from interaction within this system, as the ‘urban middle class elite’ held a ‘beneficial domination’ over the ‘subordinated classes’,<sup>120</sup> in effect categorising those who require relief and those who can provide it.

Morris describes the ‘formation of a network of voluntary societies’ as a ‘carefully chosen response to...pressures and needs’ as they developed and something which enforced social relationships outside the family and neighbourhood but which also supported these structures.<sup>121</sup> The ability to rapidly respond overshadowed the usefulness of state action and intervention and created powerful, flexible bodies which could operate outside of government policy, or lack thereof. Indeed, Morris states that,

nineteenth-century Britain developed the bulk of its educational, poor law and hospital systems by using the experience of voluntary organizations and the tactics and values evolved through those organizations as a guide for state action.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> T.C. Dagg, *College Historical Society, A history (1770-1920)* (Trinity College, 1969), p. 50.

<sup>118</sup> Morris, ‘Voluntary societies and British urban elites’, p. 100.

<sup>119</sup> *F.J.*, 7 May 1791, p. 4.

<sup>120</sup> Morris, ‘Voluntary societies and British urban elites’, p. 110.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

Morris reiterates the important distinctions between associational bodies which emerge and state bodies or agencies which were slow to develop or coordinate productively, and although associations develop a class consciousness, they also advance local and national identities which support and encourage co-operation between ‘out-groups’, such as Dissenters. Relating this logic to Dublin does not require much discussion, although an appreciation of the Irish context and local idiosyncrasies will provide a richer analysis on the topic of identity and associational culture in later sections.

Clark and Morris discuss associational culture predominantly within the British context. Their publications and explorations of the British associational world are essential to any discussion within the field of associational culture. However, cultural context or cultural relativism dictates that we understand any form of social phenomena within its own frame of reference. Clark makes numerous references to Dublin and Ireland and we can draw parallels between the cities which Morris analyses and Dublin. However, a recent publication, *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (2010), edited by James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell, provides essential cultural context to associational culture in Dublin and Ireland during the eighteenth-century.

This work is a collection of essays which range from a broad, general look at the associational world in Ireland during the period, to specific essays on the various categories of clubs and societies that appear in Ireland, including improving societies, political societies, commercial societies and sociable societies among others. A brief overview of some of the essays which are of obvious significance for this study will now follow.

James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell, editors and contributors to *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland*, begin the introduction by recognising and acknowledging Peter Clark’s seminal work and commenting that there is ‘no Irish equivalent’.<sup>123</sup> Kelly and Powell set out by contextualising Irish associational culture within the framework of civil society and the public sphere and cite sociability as a driving feature of the multitude of clubs and societies which developed. It is Habermas and de Tocqueville that Kelly and Powell reference and while this may be a deliberate ploy to reduce the glut of literature that exists on civil society, it is perhaps an omission which robs this work of Hegelian perceptions on civil society and a contemporary

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<sup>123</sup> James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell, ‘Introduction’ in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 17.

commentator on the subject. That said, Kelly and Powell point to the important use and development of public space, as discussed by Habermas for ‘coffee houses, reading clubs and salons’.<sup>124</sup> The use of salons, etc., for public discourse and gatherings was a prominent feature of the French enlightenment and a practice adopted in Dublin. Máire Kennedy also points to this in her article ‘Politicks, coffee and news’: The Dublin book trade in the eighteenth-century’ (2005). Discussing the relationship between newspapers and coffee houses, she states that the latter were ‘centers of news and information, providing newspapers and pamphlets for customers’.<sup>125</sup> Yet, as Kennedy states, this influence was not one way as,

printing houses often shared the premises with a coffee house in the first half of the eighteenth-century. Some printers, and booksellers, such as Richard Pue, Richard Norris, and Thomas Bacon, were also coffee house proprietors.<sup>126</sup>

Kelly and Powell, however, do not cite Kennedy’s work and instead refer to coffee houses in Britain and Brian Cowan’s article on the topic. The requirement to think about associational culture in Ireland within its cultural context is reiterated by Kelly and Powell as they relay how Ireland’s position within the British Empire had implications for the functions and political nature of many of the clubs and societies which developed and emerged over the period. But it is this political context which also has implications for the use and allocation of public space, stimulated by the penal laws and the division of Irish society along religious lines. Kelly and Powell cite Joep Leerssen’s work *Hidden Ireland, public sphere* (2002)<sup>127</sup> and state that Leerssen

maintains that Irish Catholics were absent both from the physical public sphere, “the areas of concourse open to the public-at-large” and its imagined equivalent, created by newspapers and periodicals, were...a “virtual form of coffee house table talk”.<sup>128</sup>

The Irish public sphere in the eighteenth-century then was mainly Protestant while ‘native Ireland was fragmented into countless pockets of “private spheres”’.<sup>129</sup> Leerssen states that print culture of the time supported the Protestant ascendancy and was geared

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>125</sup> Máire Kennedy, ‘Politicks, coffee and news’: The Dublin book trade in the eighteenth-century’ in *Dublin Historical Record*, lviii, no.1 (2005), p. 79.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland*.

<sup>128</sup> Kelly & Powell, ‘Introduction’, p. 19. ; (S.12.2.f1)

<sup>129</sup> Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland*, p. 36.

towards promoting this Irish identity rather than a Catholic one. Leerssen's description, however, of 'native Ireland' may be over simplistic and does not reflect the complex nature of Irish identity during the period. This idea raises important questions about Benedict Anderson's communities imagined through print capitalism. In what way does print capitalism provide Irish Catholics with this vision of an "imagined community" if print culture and publications are supportive of Protestants? In this case then Benedict's 'national print-language' pertains not only to the actual language, e.g. English, Irish, etc., which has in itself 'ideological and political importance' but also to the rhetoric expressed through the particular 'national print-language'.<sup>130</sup>

Kelly and Powell cite the importance of sociability and describe how the act of 'feasting, toasting and general conviviality', a frequent occurrence among associational groups, combined with 'a visible public presence-manifest in charitable undertakings, processions, balls and other entertainments...expressed not only the Irish clubman's civic virtue, but also his status and position in the urban world'.<sup>131</sup> These activities and the inherent sociable aspect of club life belong to what Kelly and Powell describe as the 'conventions of reciprocity and obligation that were bound together in networks of credit (social and financial)'.<sup>132</sup> Yet, while this may be true, this 'network of credit (social and financial)', seems like an obvious reference to Hegel's system of needs and wants, which are fulfilled and satisfied through interactions with and within the public space or public sphere. However, but this is not explicitly stated by the editors. Perhaps it is an implicit reference to Hegel but a reference which should nonetheless be acknowledged.

Kelly and Powell also discuss how 'sociability' effects politeness as it often means congregating in a tavern and consuming alcohol. Rules and regulations on drunkenness within certain clubs may have protected their "polite" character but intoxication induced quarrels were frequent, as newspaper articles can testify. Theobald Wolfe Tone illustrates this in his journals, often commenting that he is writing "this" entry after a night of drinking. A political club which preceded the United Irishmen, formed by Tone and others, and 'designed to accommodate political opinion'

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<sup>130</sup> Anderson, *Imagined communities*, p. 67.

<sup>131</sup> Kelly & Powell, 'Introduction', p. 19.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

‘degenerated into a mere social club, as Tone called it “an oyster club”’.<sup>133</sup> Tone’s frustrations at this ‘mere social club,’ which collapsed after a few months, led him to Belfast and the Society of United Irishmen, as one contemporary notes that ‘there is a difference between eating and drinking, and gormandizing and guzzling’.<sup>134</sup> Despite leaving this ‘oyster club’ Tone also grew dissatisfied with the sociability aspect inherent in associational clubs, as he states in a letter to John Chambers, ‘we [the United Irishmen] journalize everything but nothing more than eating & drinking has yet gone forward’.<sup>135</sup> Yet, even given these occasional slips of alcohol over-consumption and boisterousness associated with it, Kelly and Powell state ‘the sociability that occurred within the confines of a club room could be liberating – free of the restrictions of rank and status. Conversations could be radical’,<sup>136</sup> although not necessarily political.

Chapters in this collection also include a survey of associational culture c. 1680-c.1730 by Patrick Walsh, a study of the Dublin Society by Toby Barnard, charitable societies by James Kelly, annuity societies by Jennifer Kelly and book clubs by Joanna Archbold and several other chapters focusing on patriotic, Masonic and hunting clubs. Jacqueline Hill’s chapter, ‘Loyal Societies in Ireland, 1690-1790’ confronts the difficult and ideologically contested notion of “loyal” within Irish associational culture and will be discussed to gain insight into the complex nature of Irish loyalism and patriotism.

Hill outlines the early years of these “loyal” societies, which are defined as societies ‘who proclaimed, or suggested, a rejection of Jacobitism and support for the Protestant succession’.<sup>137</sup> Loyal societies include those who support the Protestant ascendancy and demonstrate or show support through anniversary parades, dinners, plays, etc.<sup>138</sup> The commemoration of events such as the Battle of the Boyne and the Battle of Aughrim substantiate or reiterate claims of a Protestant ascendancy in Ireland.<sup>139</sup> Many of these loyal societies either supported the various Volunteer Corps or

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<sup>133</sup> Nancy J. Curtin, *The United Irishmen, Popular politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791-1798* (Oxford, 1994), p. 43.

<sup>134</sup> *F.J.*, 24 Aug. 1790, p. 4.

<sup>135</sup> T.W. Moody, R.B. McDowell and C.J. Woods (eds), *The writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, 1793-98, Volume 1, Tone’s career in Ireland to June 1795* (Oxford, 1998), p. 132.

<sup>136</sup> Kelly & Powell, ‘Introduction’, p. 22.

<sup>137</sup> Jacqueline Hill, ‘Loyal societies in Ireland, 1690-1790’ in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 181.

<sup>138</sup> *Dublin Courier*, 27 Oct. 1787, p. 629.

<sup>139</sup> Hill, ‘Loyal societies in Ireland’, p. 181.

indeed became a Volunteer Corp.<sup>140</sup> National and international events in the 1780s and 90s, however, call into question their '*raison d'être*' as revolutionary movements in America and France, which held enlightenment rhetoric, argued against sectarian divisions and political and social inequalities - even if enlightenment rhetoric and reality held contradictions. The alleviation of some penal laws and the admittance of Catholics into the Volunteer Corps, which indicated 'support among the Protestant population at large for the widening of the polity',<sup>141</sup> increasingly meant the principles upon which loyal societies were based were not wholly compatible with societal change, instigated by these national and international events. The pressure to embrace nonsectarian principles proved divisive, so much so 'by 1785 the Volunteers had effectively departed the political scene'.<sup>142</sup> Their downturn also led to a decline in commemorative parades and other activities of the loyal societies. Some loyal societies would continue into the nineteenth-century but rather than being radically liberal, these would become or remain radically loyal.

Martyn J. Powell considers one of these societies, The Aldermen of Skinner's Alley or Skinner Alley's Club, in one of his essays and describes it as an ultra-Protestant society 'before the Orange Order'.<sup>143</sup> Named after the tavern at which redundant Protestant aldermen met in the 1680s following James II's 'efforts...to restore Catholics to political and civic power,' they met, just like the loyal societies described by Hill, on 'key Protestant commemorative days' and 'by the second half of the [eighteenth] century' on a monthly basis.<sup>144</sup> Their origins suggest, as Powell points out, a society of an ultra-Protestant or ultra-loyal persuasion. Yet, Hill states 'until the early 1790s the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley embraced many members on the opposition side of politics, including James Napper Tandy'.<sup>145</sup> Indeed at a dinner in 1792, the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley dined with members of the United Irishmen, the Catholic Committee and the Whig Club,<sup>146</sup> an event discussed in a later chapter. Similar to the Volunteers,

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>143</sup> Martyn J. Powell, 'The Aldermen of Skinner's Alley: ultra-Protestantism before the Orange Order' in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 203.

<sup>144</sup> Powell, 'The Aldermen of Skinner's Alley', p. 204.

<sup>145</sup> Hill, 'Loyal societies in Ireland', p. 198.

<sup>146</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 47.

the 1780s and 90s saw the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley divided between those who embraced the ideologies of radically loyal supporters and those who endorsed the liberal rhetoric emerging from the founders of the Society of United Irishmen and other radical groups. Powell's third contribution to this collection, 'The Society of Free Citizens and other popular political clubs, 1749-89' is also be used in later sections.

Another work, *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (2010), edited by Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford, must also be considered. Derived from papers presented at the 'Associational culture in Ireland and the wider world' conference, at NUI Maynooth in 2008, the publication, and indeed the conference, were motivated by the online database and research project, 'Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c.1940: a database', (see [www.irishassociations.ie/history/](http://www.irishassociations.ie/history/), principal investigators R.V. Comerford and Jennifer Kelly). This project, an important contribution to historical knowledge and research in content alone, demonstrates the important use of technology in historical research, as a tool for collecting and disseminating data and information in a manner which makes content accessible but also extensible. The online environment allows intelligent querying of "data" and the retrieval of important historical "information" through the development and use of a domain specific query language, "Associational Culture Query Language" or ACQL.<sup>147</sup> The modus operandi of ACQL was that it 'must be accessible and usable by non-expert users' and as a result it was decided that the 'web interface' and 'query input system would support automatic query generation and query complete'.<sup>148</sup> Different log in levels allow certain users to read only and others to read and write. This feature ensures that the content is not only up to date but also verified, as content is only uploaded by trusted users. Establishing a community of active users will ensure the longevity and relevance of this project, as it creates a hub of on-line activity on associational culture and addresses some key issues in digital humanities today, namely sustainability and data preservation (physical and digital data). Indeed, working on this project as an undergraduate researcher was the inspiration for my own research. 'Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c1940: a database' is one of a number projects undertaken by the History Department in conjunction with An Foras Feasa which establishes an important collaboration between history and computer science. This collaboration not only informs the development of

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<sup>147</sup> Ciaran Power, 'Design and implementing of a domain specific language for an associational culture database' (MSc. thesis, NUI Maynooth, 2007).

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

the on-line database, but helps develop skills and expertise in both fields. An Foras Feasa's strong ethos of collaboration establishes a lexicon that both humanists and programmers converse in, and nurtures an environment which acknowledges the importance of both the humanities data and the digital home it is rendered in, creating digital humanities projects with both technological style and content substance.

*Associational culture in Ireland and abroad*, offers a range of historical studies into associational culture, many of which consider clubs and societies outside of the period or the geographic boundaries set for this research. However, the 'Introduction', 'Sites and rites of associational life in eighteenth-century Ireland', by T.C. Barnard, 'Associate for the purposes of deliverance and glory': The club life of the Irish Volunteers' by Martyn J. Powell and 'Loyalist associational culture and civic identity in Belfast, 1793-1835', by Allan Blackstock, are considered for this research.

Kelly and Comerford's introduction to this collection reinforces the importance of 'social networking' to the individual in society, whose participation in public life not only increases 'civic virtue' but also develops 'social capital'.<sup>149</sup> They support the case of sociability as the driving force and a primary momentum of associational culture and state that this urge to coalesce in social circles also results in important acts of exclusion and separatism within society, or more accurately acts which defined who is "in" and who is "out". Clubs and societies cultivate 'social exclusivity' and it is this act, as Leersson discusses, that defines an Irish public sphere which, similar to club membership, is not always inclusive especially when clubs and societies recruited among political, sectarian or social lines.<sup>150</sup> Yet, even given these divisions, Kelly and Comerford assert that,

formal voluntary associations were also often a vehicle for disseminating the concepts of a new civil society among the lower social strata while also providing some scope for upward social mobility for members.<sup>151</sup>

This demonstrates that while sometimes divisive, associational culture can assist all parts of society which supports Burke claim that associational affiliations are necessary for the moral and national development of individuals.

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<sup>149</sup> Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford, 'Introduction' in Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010), p. 1.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

The importance of civil society and associated individuals, which Burke discusses, is repeated in T.C. Barnard's chapter 'Sites and rites of associational life in eighteenth-century Ireland'. Barnard supports the notion of the development of public space and the public sphere along the theoretical lines of Jürgen Habermas and in so doing aligns himself with Kelly and Powell's modern definition of civil society and public sphere.

Martyn J. Powell's chapter, entitled "Associate for the purposes of deliverance and glory": The club life of the Irish Volunteers', begins with a Burkean quote on the nature and benefit of associations as expressed by Lord Maitland in 1781 during a House of Commons debate; 'it was to associations and combinations of men, associated and combined for a good purpose, that we owed all we now possessed'.<sup>152</sup> Powell places the Volunteers at the center of Irish associational development and Irish civil society and cites their importance as an institution which nurtured and cultivated facets of civil society throughout eighteenth-century Ireland, both through the functionality and the structures of the clubs themselves and through the political and regional, local and national, identities they expressed. The Volunteers functioned and 'existed outside of the government orbit and had a broadly liberal, progressive credo' - a design which fits neatly into the 'civil society model'.<sup>153</sup> Powell discusses their associational facet as a by-product of their primary military function. Indeed, Jacqueline Hill explores this aspect of the volunteers and loyal societies in her chapter in Kelly and Powell's collection, recently discussed. Hill supports Powell's view that the Volunteers developed multiple personalities over their life time. Their initial character, that of a military organisation, was soon accompanied or even superseded by a club personality which called for legislative and trade reform, a feature which developed after the threat of French invasion dissipated.<sup>154</sup> Powell discusses the interaction between members of the Volunteers and other clubs and societies in Dublin, including the Block and Axe Club and the Freemasons, before discussing the last, and perhaps most durable, manifestation, that of Volunteers groups becoming convivial or social clubs.<sup>155</sup> Formed to bolster the military presence in Ireland after the regular army was deployed to

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<sup>152</sup> Martyn J. Powell, "Associate for the purposes of deliverance and glory": The club life of the Irish Volunteers' in Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010), p. 27.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

America during the War of Independence, the Volunteers, formed in 1778 initially drew support from urban and rural Protestants, due to penal law restrictions which prevented Catholics from carrying arms. Officers include Henry Grattan and Henry Flood, both prominent members of the Irish Parliament, which demonstrates the patriotism and sense of civic duty attached to participation and membership of the Volunteers. Organised into various corps the Volunteers quickly developed a political agenda and helped to reform trade restrictions. They were also instrumental in the 1782 Constitution which provided Grattan's Parliament with greater legislative freedoms. As the eighteenth-century progressed so did the character of the Volunteers. Powell argues they developed an associational character which complemented but more often than not, overshadowed their initial military 'credo'. Support for and indeed recruitment to the Volunteers declined during the 1780s until the French Revolution and the development of radical politics in the 1790s, as the United Irishmen revived the old Volunteers and encouraged the development of new Volunteer groups who held the United Irishmen's radical beliefs born from French influence. This development of the Volunteers and the complex identities which they expressed reflect the complex identities inherent in Irish society. Powell makes an implicit reference to Leerssen's work, *Hidden Ireland, public sphere*, as he discusses how the Volunteers participation in associational life and culture was not without membership barriers and restrictions. Powell speaks of a 'militant public sphere', nurtured by a Protestant middle and upper class, which adhered to civil society theory of civic activism by promoting civic virtue but only through the exclusion of the esoteric 'Hidden Ireland, public sphere': in essence the Volunteers promote an 'implicitly Protestant' public sphere.<sup>156</sup> The political and indeed social sphere in which the Volunteers interacted often created contradictory perceptions of them within the Irish public sphere, as noted by Powell. Yet, although contradictory, both attest to the Volunteers participating in civic activism, an essential ingredient when establishing civil society. The Volunteer's social and military activities were inextricably linked to the rapid societal and political change in Ireland and created a body of members who acted as or became citizens of a perceived 'imagined community', albeit within a contested public sphere.

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<sup>156</sup> Powell, "Associate for the purposes of deliverance and glory": The club life of the Irish Volunteers', p. 38.

Allan Blackstock, noted for his work on loyalism in Ireland, also contributes to this collection with an essay entitled, ‘Loyalist associational culture and civic identity in Belfast, 1793-1835’. Blackstock describes how associational activity, linked to volunteerism stimulated by the French wars, encouraged civic virtue and enhanced ‘local autonomy, facilitating the formation of civic consciousness and identity’.<sup>157</sup> This identity is said to be of a specifically British inclination and forged through the Volunteers and yeomanry corps operating as ‘subscriber democracies’.<sup>158</sup> Blackstock references an important idea put forward by John Cookson, describing ‘British volunteer infantry corps’ as

an ideal model where “the well-drilled ranks of the lower orders” were commanded by “high-status members of the community” and “national defence patriotism” enabled these mercantile elites to create a respectable civic identity, rather than ‘agencies of class conflict’.<sup>159</sup> Yet, what is important here is not whether Irish Volunteers or the Dublin corps can be described as agencies of class tolerance and integration but the idea of ‘national defence patriotism’ and what this meant for Irish nationalism and Irish identity among the Volunteers and indeed other militia groups. This idea encompasses the very nature of Hegel’s civil society, as an associative group collaborates for the good of the collective rather than just the individual. Perhaps this idea opens more questions than it answers. If the Volunteers are described as promoting an implicitly Protestant public sphere then it remains a Protestant public sphere in defence also. In what way does this affect patriotism built on ‘national defence’?

Blackstock’s article focuses on Belfast and describes it as an area of rapid urbanisation and commercialisation during the eighteenth-century and a hub of associational activity. Belfast promoted and prompted many of the associational impetus in Dublin. Although perhaps on the periphery of later Irish nationalism, associational tendencies in Belfast coerced and coaxed Irish patriots in Dublin to lead from their example, inspiring library societies, constitutional societies, loyal societies and of course producing one of the most important associative groups in the 1790s, the United Irishmen.

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<sup>157</sup> Allan Blackstock, ‘Loyalist associational culture and civic identity in Belfast, 1793-1835’, in Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010), p. 48.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Blackstock's article demonstrates the importance of comparative analysis, as although specific to the associational impulse in Belfast provides background information and context for associational compulsions in Dublin during the same period. This comparative methodology echoes R.J. Morris's work on the associational culture in Edinburgh, Leeds and Newcastle and indeed Peter Clark's important survey of an associational world in Britain. Both publications, *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* and *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad*, reference Clark and Morris throughout and demonstrate the importance of these two authorities on the subject. Initial research into Irish associational culture yielded few comprehensive results of the scope and manner provided by Clark, until Kelly and Powell, and Kelly and Comerford's, respective publications. Both of these publications provide an enormous wealth of knowledge and insight into the associational world in Ireland. However, this literature review not only demonstrates the wealth of material which now exists on the subject of associational culture, it also demonstrates the enormity of the topic. Kelly and Powell and Kelly and Comerford's recent volumes highlight the vast array of clubs and societies which existed in the period under discussion.

In this literature review a number of civil society theorist, including Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-59), Jürgen Habermas (1925-) and Robert Putman (1941-) are cited in the publications discussed. It is notable that despite these references to civil society theorists, there is no extensive review or analysis of Irish associational culture through this lens and no Anglo-Irish writers, including Burke, are discussed to any great extent. However, James Livesey's 2009 publication, *Civil society and empire*, provides additional information on civil society in the Irish context and highlights, not only the difficulty of defining civil society, but of locating a theory of it with or through Anglo-Irish writers during the period under review.

His study includes a chapter on 'Improvement and the discourse of society' in which he refers to the establishment of the Dublin Society (1731) and to the writing of three of its founders, Arthur Dobbs, Thomas Prior and Samuel Madden, who 'envisaged the Society as a response to the curious position of Ireland within the emerging British Empire'.<sup>160</sup> Through these writers Livesey highlights the utility of associations for

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<sup>160</sup> James Livesey, *Civil society and empire: Ireland and Scotland in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world* (Michigan, 2009), p. 60.

developing civic virtue and social capital, and while it does not provide a contemporary late eighteenth, early nineteenth-century account necessary for this study, it highlights the development of civil society in the Irish context.

Chapter six, however, ‘Civil society and empire in revolution’, details civil society as a feature of the United Irishmen’s propaganda and asserts that their ‘political thinking...was conditioned by their civil society point of view’.<sup>161</sup> Yet, rather than a theory on civil society, the United Irishmen provide an expression of it, or as Livesey articulates, ‘they were practitioners of a new “science of politics,” one based in the insights of civil society’.<sup>162</sup> He points to the writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, William Drennan and Arthur O’Connor, all prominent United Irishmen figures, and illustrates their use of social theory born from French revolutionary experience and rhetoric. He also cites their references to Adam Smith and Thomas Paine, as well as the Scottish politician and writer James Mackintosh (1765-1832) who wrote *Vindiciae Galliae* (1791) in response to Burke’s *Reflections*.<sup>163</sup> Indeed, Livesey states that the work of Edmund Burke formed the Irish debate on civil society.<sup>164</sup> The work of Arthur O’Connor, who later became a General in the French Army under Napoleon, is discussed in further detail by Livesey. O’Connor’s work is described as containing important writings on civil society but as wholly at odds to Burke:

Both men were interested in the survival of civil society but each understood the problem differently. Where Burke saw civil society as an assemblage of customs and habits, O’Connor saw it as the sphere of application of social knowledge. Burke could only see revolution as a disaster; but O’Connor understood it as a particular kind of challenge.<sup>165</sup>

Livesey’s publication reveals the existence of civil society in Ireland as evoked by associations such as the Dublin Society in the early eighteenth-century and the United Irishmen in the late eighteenth-century but also shows the difficulty in defining the theory. While O’Connor provides important contributions on the subject, his revolutionary experience and the aftermath of the 1798 Rebellion forced him to reconsider ‘the demands of citizenship’ within the context of civil and political society,

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p. 180.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

again illustrating civil society as a theory in flux.<sup>166</sup> Livesey's publication reinforces the need to focus on particular theorists on civil society and also the difficulty of finding Anglo-Irish writers of the calibre of Burke. As such Hegel is used to supplement Burke's theoretical perspective on civil society. Burke and Hegel then, provide a theoretical guide to analyse and interpret aspects of associational culture and nationalism in this study.

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

## CHAPTER 3

### ASSOCIATIONAL DUBLIN IN A DIGITAL WORLD.

Our previous chapter on associational culture provides the theoretical framework and the lens through which associational Dublin will be considered in the proceeding chapters. This chapter describes the methods, applications and software components which creates an associational Dublin within a digital world. Where possible a software solution was used to support the creation, development and presentation of the historical research presented in chapters 2, 4-7. The creation of an XML schema, referred to as the global schema, which uses a structured annotation model called a factlet to capture historical interpretation, supported research into associational culture. The same schema was reused to support the use of XSLT and XSL-FO templates in order to present particular aspects of the historical narrative. It is this encoding of historical narrative which allows for multiple representations of research as discussed in DH2011 paper and considered in chapter 8. Articles such as ‘The Hist and radical politics’ are now presented within the CRADLE framework which provides access to a PDF as well as a digital article and to digitised primary sources related to the Hist and other associational groups. BibDesk, an open source bibliographic database manager, was used to store all data related to primary and secondary sources used in this research. Foreign keys were used to link the BibDesk record, which creates a BibTex file which is converted into XML using BibTextConvertor (open source software), to the XML schema developed and the converted BibTex file (XML) is used with an XSLT transform to create the bibliography related to this research and presented in the last section of this PhD.

#### *‘Constructing the past’ in a XML framework*

Through publications, conferences, seminars and workshops the digital humanities community, both locally and internationally, provide and promote support in the theory and implementation of computer science applications in humanities research. The use of technology such as XML, XSLT, text analysis software and the development of bespoke software such as CRADLE within humanities research, merges traditional humanities methodologies with those of computer science. Representing the past using

XML is the first stage of the historical process to store and encode sources and ensures that gathered sources are primed and ready for analysis at a later stage. The way in which text is marked up determines what questions can be asked of it later. This project implements and develops John Bradley and Harold Short's system of representing information derived from source text as 'factoids'<sup>1</sup> by adding an extra layer to the XML encoding, called a factlet. Factlets reflect the interpretation of the researcher. They provide the means to preserve transparency between 'facts of the past' and 'facts of history'<sup>2</sup> and are used to inform user based queries. Factoids are then used as a visualisation technique, where the factoid type reflects the user query. This visualisation is implemented within the CRADLE environment and uses a springGraph to show the connections and relationship between different factlets as specified by the user. This chapter considers the use of XML and discusses a methodology which is rooted in computer technology but informed by history theorists and ideas on systemic functional linguistics.

Traditional historical research uses both quantitative and qualitative procedures as part of defined methodologies. Unlike the sciences, history methodologies can be a loose alliance of theory and practice and are not as stringent or as well defined as their scientific counterparts. History methodologies include the basic task of looking at certain primary and secondary sources on a certain predefined theory or predicate; indeed it could be argued that history is its own methodology. Questioning the relationship between "Associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism", requires us to look at traditional sources but the use of a digital methodology in all aspects of research is informed by the historical research. Both the history and the digital methodology are not mutually exclusive as history and historiography informed the development of the factlet and factoid structure. The principal basis of any historical research is the formulation of a question which can be answered through interaction with primary and secondary source material. Locating sources to develop theories is vital in historical research. As such, how we manage these sources is of paramount importance, both for theoretical development and historical accuracy and continuity. Since this project is an historical investigation and an exercise in developing software for historical research, it is important to note that software development and historical

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<sup>1</sup> John Bradley and Harold Short, 'Texts into databases: the evolving field of new-style prosopography' in *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, xx, Suppl. Issue (2005), pp 3-24.

<sup>2</sup> Elton, *The practice of history*, p. 50.

research on sources were carried out simultaneously. The software was not developed and then used to carry out historical research. However, the factlet structure was used and queried in its native XML form. An example of the XML, including factlets, can be viewed in the appendix. As previously stated it was first envisaged that software, MIHS, would be developed solely as part of this research, as such development began in 2009 on this.

MIHS, Mining Interactive Historical Sources, was programmed with Flex 3. This is an open source framework created by Adobe which uses ActionScript, MXML and Flash to rapidly create Flex applications or RIA (Rich Internet Applications). The Flex framework, which allows for rapid prototyping and interface design, contains many classes and methods to deal with XML and has in built functionality to control and create http requests and web services. The following screen shots were taken from the last prototype of MIHS developed before it was decided to implement the factlet, factoid structure within the CRADLE environment instead. Rather than just presenting the textual data related to particular sources as demonstrated in figure 1 - 6 within MIHS, CRADLE focuses on the fact that factlets are attached to objects or sources and as such centers on archiving, preserving and presenting digital objects such as digitised documents and images. The next series of figures walks us through the main window in MIHS;

Figure 1 - Screen shot from MIHS which shows the navigation bar containing different project folders and associated sources. The main window outputs the text from the XML file containing, in this case, entries from the *Dublin Chronicle*.

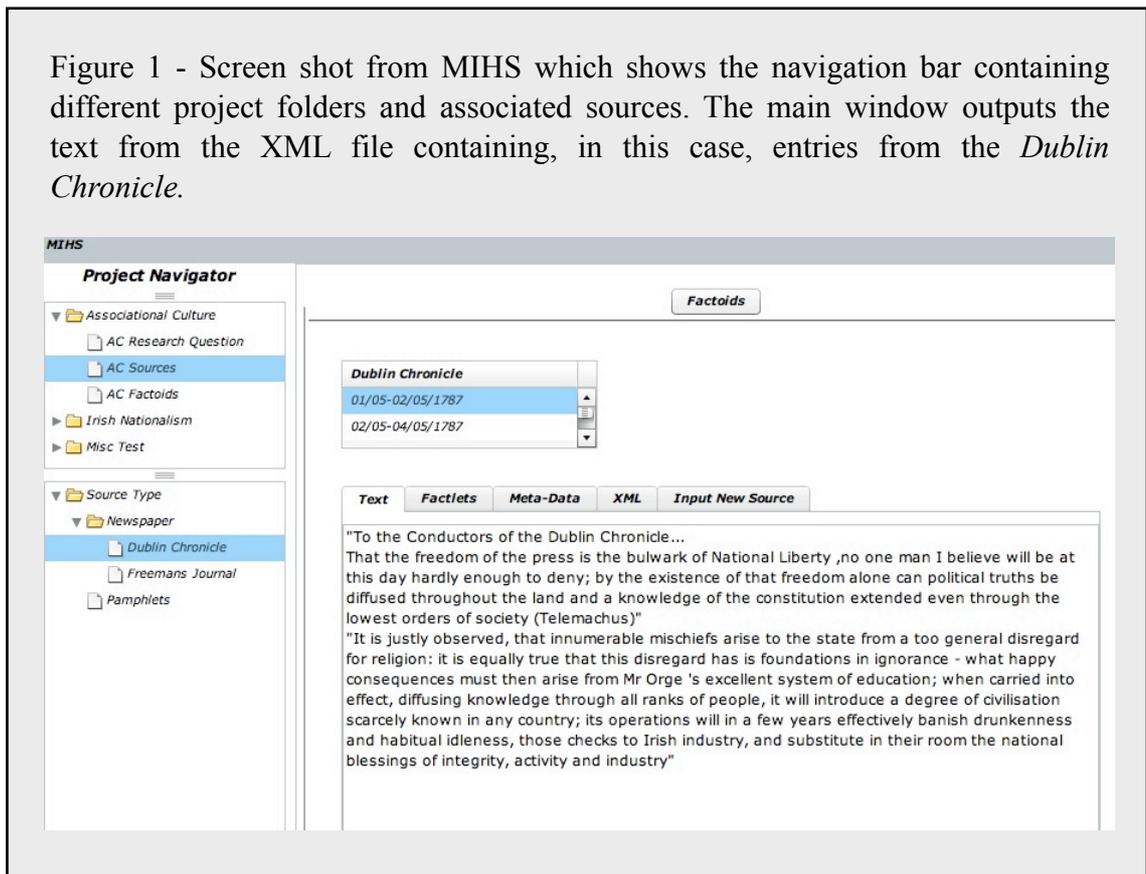


Figure 2 - Screen shot from MIHS which shows the factlet associated with the *Dublin Chronicle* entry for 2 May 1787.

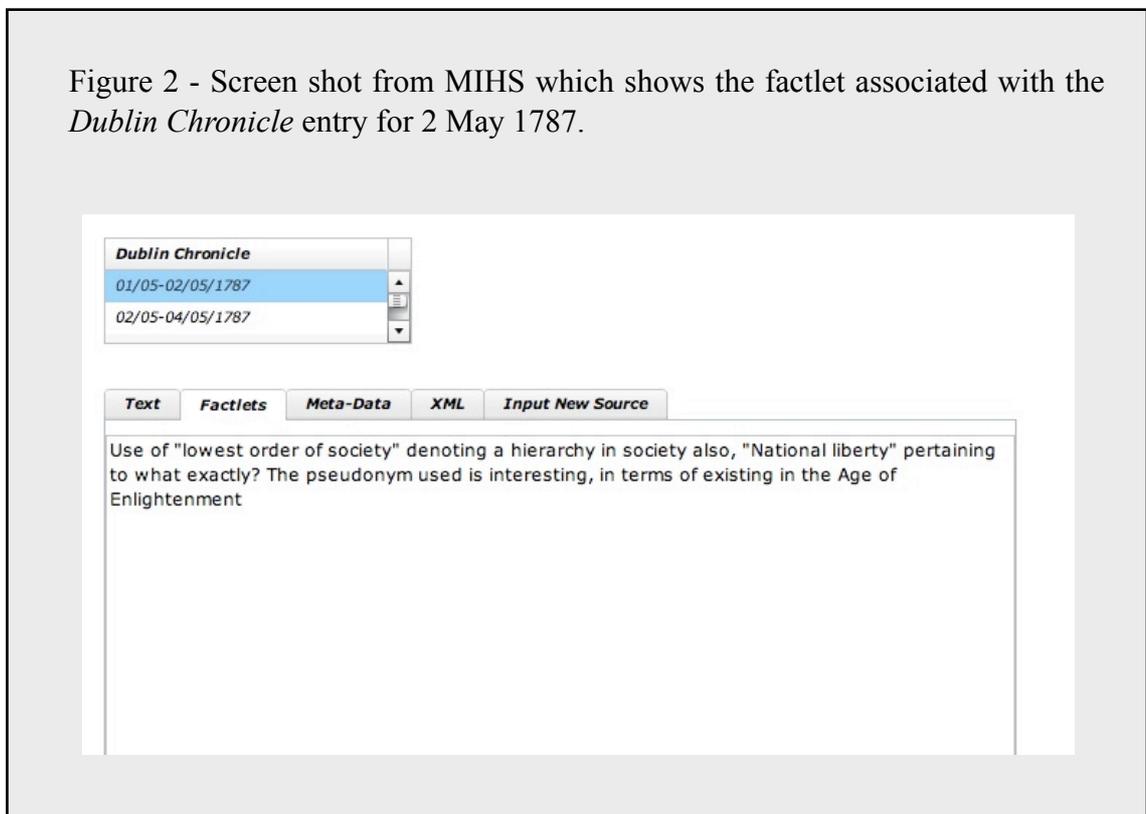


Figure 3 - Screen shot from MIHS which shows meta data associated with the *Dublin Chronicle*.

The screenshot shows a web interface with a dropdown menu at the top left containing 'Dublin Chronicle', '01/05-02/05/1787', and '02/05-04/05/1787'. Below the menu is a horizontal tabbed interface with tabs for 'Text', 'Factlets', 'Meta-Data', 'XML', and 'Input New Source'. The 'Meta-Data' tab is selected, displaying the following information:

Newspaper: Dublin Chronicle  
 Location: National Library, Dublin  
 Format: Micro-film  
 Issue Date: 01/05-02/05/1787  
 Page Number: <page>2</page>

Figure 4 - Screen shot from MIHS which displays the XML structure of the *Dublin Chronicle*. In this example the factlet structure only contains the 'deduction' element.

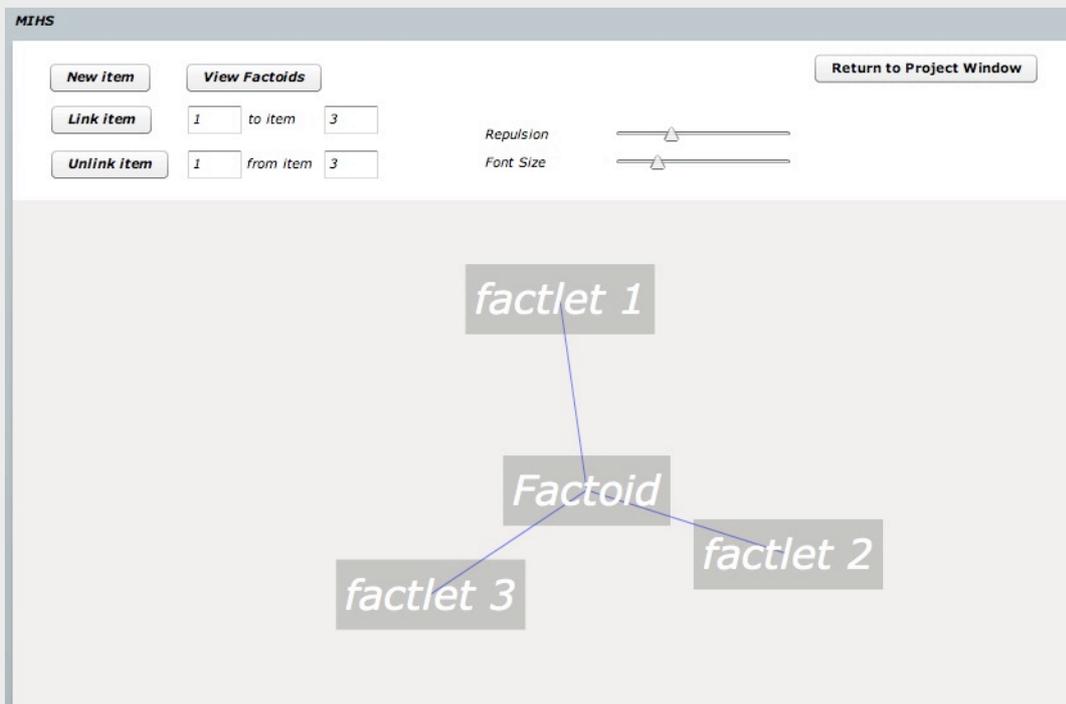
The screenshot shows the same web interface as Figure 3, but with the 'XML' tab selected. The XML content is displayed in a text area:

```
<entry id="PDC00001" date="01/05/1787">
  <date>1 May 1787</date>
  <page>2 </page>
  <author>Telemachus </author>
  <transcription>
    <p>"To the Conductors of the Dublin Chronicle...</p>
    <p>That the <t>freedom of the press is the bulwark of National Liberty</t>
    ,no one man I believe will be at this day hardly enough to deny; by the existence of that
    freedom alone can political truths be diffused throughout the land and a knowledge of the
    constitution extended even through the <t value="language">lowest orders of society</t>
    (Telemachus)"
    </p>
  </transcription>
  <factlet Fid="F001">
    <deduction>Use of "lowest order of society" denoting a hierarchy in society also, "National
    liberty" pertaining to what exactly? The pseudonym used is interesting, in terms of existing in the
    Age of Enlightenment</deduction>
  </factlet>
  <subject>
    <key>print capitalism</key>
    <key>othering</key>
  </subject>
</entry>
```

Figure 5 - Screen shot from MIHS which shows the input screen for a new entry which uses the same structure created and used in the global schema.

The screenshot shows the MIHS interface for entering a new source. At the top, a dropdown menu is open, showing 'Dublin Chronicle' as the selected source, with two date ranges: '01/05-02/05/1787' (highlighted) and '02/05-04/05/1787'. Below this, there are four tabs: 'Text', 'Factlets', 'Meta-Data', and 'XML'. The 'Input New Source' tab is active. The form contains several input fields: 'Issue ...', 'Club/S...', and 'Transcr...' on the left; 'Page', 'Factlet Ref', and 'Factlet' on the right. The 'Factlet' field contains the text: '<narrative>, <deduction>, <a

Figure 6 - Screen shot from MIHS which shows the factoid window and the use of the Flex springGraph component. The same visualisation technique is used in CRADLE and demonstrates the relationship between factlets as defined by the user.



The MIHS prototype represents an individual attempt to engineer a system to support historical research. Yet, while historians are used to working as individuals, working as part of a software team in a collaborative environment is the norm within software engineering projects and it was decided that aspects of this project should be produced within the context of the RDI (Research Development Initiative Strand 5) cofunded by the IRCHSS and Intel and project managed by Dr. John G. Keating, Associate Director for An Foras Feasa. Sharon Webb worked with Damien Gallagher, senior software engineer and Danny Fallon, software engineer, and as stated implemented the factlet/factoid branch now presented in CRADLE (the working title of the software developed for RDI).<sup>3</sup> Working within this collaborative environment not only provided invaluable software experience but meant this project could use many of the complex features which CRADLE supports, including visualisation, browsing and search techniques, not to mention the CRADLE's functionality as a digital repository and digital archive. It provided a software infrastructure to implement the factlet/factoid structure, linked directly to primary documents, but also helps to address issues surrounding sustainability and preservation of digital projects beyond the individual researcher.

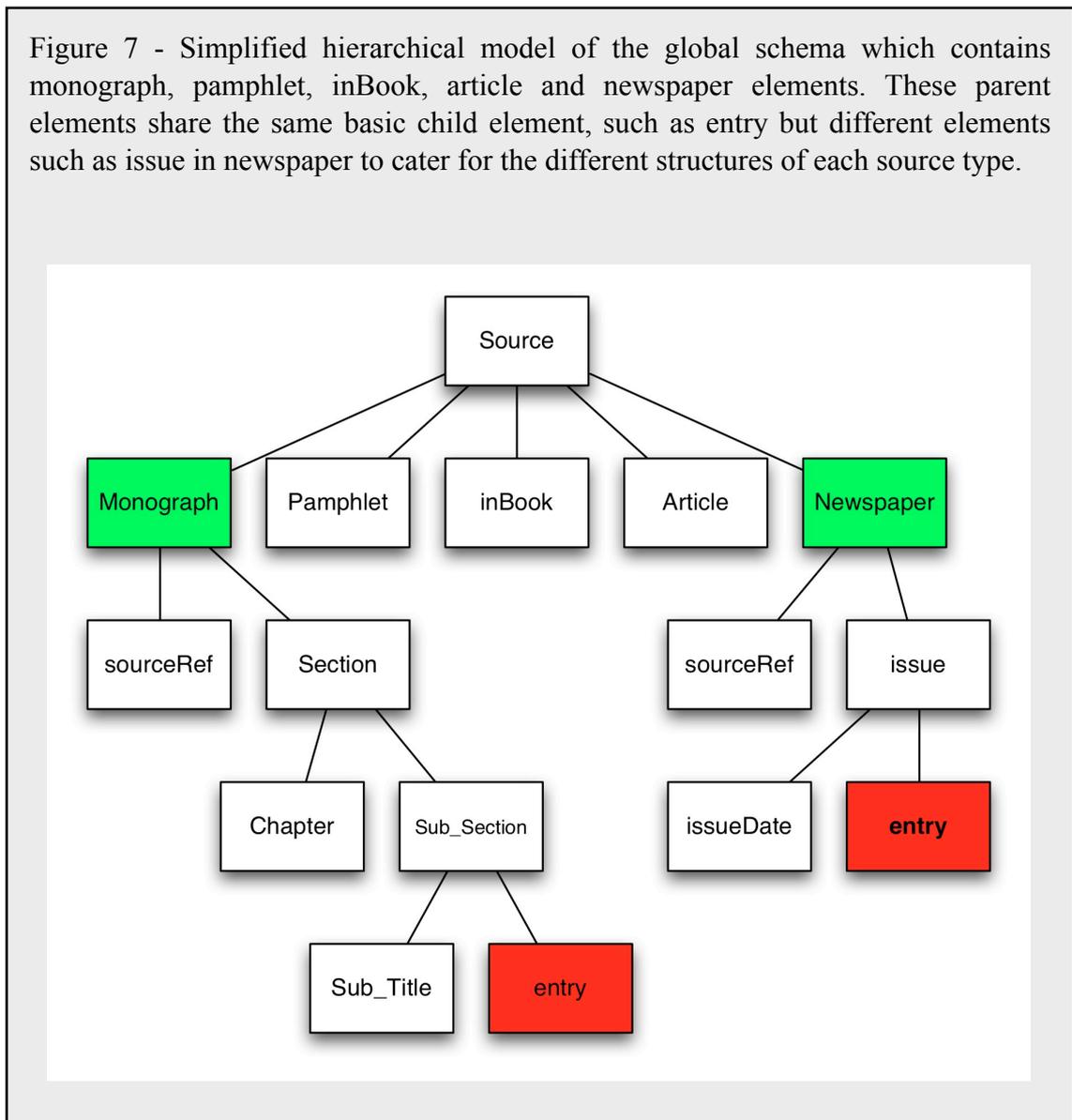
Work began on MIHS in 2009 and in early 2011 this project began programming the factlet/factoid branch for the CRADLE environment. In the interim period all primary and secondary material were gathered and encoded using a custom XML schema, referred to as the global schema. This schema was developed to enable future mining and visualisation features within MIHS and this activity reflects the act of gathering sources (in XML) and the subsequent analysis of sources (within MIHS). The mere fact of encoding sources and factlets within a highly structured XML framework allows for source analysis but is also supported by XQuery and XSLT. However, we must not consider the development and use of the XML schema as an activity now made redundant by the implementation and development of CRADLE but as an important methodological approach to source management and argument development where sources are text based and not available as a digital source (which CRADLE supports). Indeed it is possible to upload the numerous XML files created in support of this historical research into CRADLE but given copyright restrictions on secondary

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<sup>3</sup> CRADLE (Collaborate, Research, Archive, Develop, Learn Engage) available at An Foras Feasa, NUI Maynooth [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie) (23 Aug. 2011).

sources and articles it was decided that presenting a number of digitised primary sources, along with factlets and factoids in the CRADLE environment would present a richer experience to readers and users alike. The first step in this methodology was the development of the custom XML schema, which we will now discuss.

Figure 7 is a simplified hierarchical model of the global schema, examples of this are provided in the appendix.



While it is up to the individual how a text should be encoded, which is in many ways a subjective activity, it is important to consider the types of questions we would like to ask of the text, or more specifically the desired use cases, before encoding is started. With this in mind the global schema implements the factlet structure which is an abstract element and reflects data modeling in contrast to document. The factlet use case

is the incorporation of John Bradley and Harold Short's system of representing information using factoids. As factoids are used as a visualisation tool in MIHS (figure 6), their construction and utilisation are based on the structure given to sources in XML, encoded using the global schema. As stated CRADLE supports the use and creation of factlets and the subsequent visualisation of factoids. We will consider factlets and factoids later in this chapter. Other elements within the global schema include address, publication and date, examples of which are now presented in figure 8, 9 and 10.

Figure 8 - Example of the address element in the global schema which contains attributes to contextualise the address which can be used for future use, including mapping to Google maps as the address is normalised and structured accordingly. The 'norm' attribute stores the full address while the 'addressType' provides contextual information about the address in the text.

```
<transcription>
  <p><clubSociety ref="C.130">IRISH HARMONIC CLUB</clubSociety></p>
  <p>The first meeting (this session) of the Irish Harmonic Club will be held
  on Tuesday, next, the 29th instant, at <address norm="Morrison's, Dawson
  Street, Dublin 1, Ireland" addressType="meeting_address">Morrison's,
  Dawson Street.</address></p>
  <p>Dinner on the table at 6 o'clock</p>
</transcription>
```

Figure 9 - Example of the publication element which gives data context and adds meaning to data embedded in the text. This extract from an article in the *Freeman's Journal*, 21 Nov. 1827, also demonstrates the use of 'quote' and 'f' which has a 'lang' attribute.

```
<clubSociety ref="C.10">The Hist</clubSociety>
  <transcription>
    <p ref="FJ.332.fl"><publication ref="P.0">LADY MORGAN'S NEW WORK</
  publication></p>
    <p>We subjoin an extract from the spirited and patriotic production of this talented
  Lady, and while we express the pleasure which the perusal of its volumes afforded us, we
  cannot but condole with the fair authoress on her imprudence....</p>
    <p><quote author="Rosseau" ref="Lettre a Mon. de Beaumont"><f lang="fr">Quel
  est done, l'objet do vos colleges, do vos academies, de tant de fondations _savantes ?
  Est-ce de donner lo change aupeuple, d'alterer d'avance sa raison, de l'euipeclier
  d'aller au
  vrai?— Rosseau, Lertre a Mon, de Beaumont.</f></quote></p>
```

Figure 10 - Example of the date element with the 'norm\_date' attribute which ensures that all dates have the same structure regardless of how it appeared in the original text.

```
<transcription>
  <p>.....</p>
  <p>Speech of <person individualRef="I.101">Mr. Bushe</person>, delivered on
  Wednesday, Evening the <date norm_date="24-06-1794">24th June, 1794
  </date>, being the close of the 24th Session of <clubSociety ref="C.10">the
  Historical Society of the University of Dublin</clubSociety>, instituted in the
  year <date norm_date="00-00-1770">1770</date>.</p>
  <p>....</p>
</transcription>
```

The date attribute is defined by the following type in the global schema, this controls the pattern which 'norm\_date' must adhere to and results in dd-mm-yyyy.

```
<xs:simpleType name="dateType">
  <xs:restriction base="xs:string">
    <xs:pattern value="([0-9][0-9]-[0-1][0-9]-[0-9][0-9][0-9][0-9])"/>
  </xs:restriction>
</xs:simpleType>
```

However, because 'xs:date', which is native to XML, is mm-dd-yyyy, we need to cast 'dateType' to match the 'xs:date' pattern in order to query by date. The following is a snippet from the code to do this;

```
($dateString as xs:string?) as xs:date {
  xs:date(
    let $dateWithoutSeps := replace($dateString,"[^\d]", "")
    return concat( substring($dateWithoutSeps, 5,4), "-",
      substring($dateWithoutSeps, 3,2), "-",
      substring($dateWithoutSeps, 1,2))
  )
};
```

Other elements included in the examples above are 'individual' and 'clubSociety'. These elements include an attribute which contain a reference number. Each reference number is unique to a particular society or a particular individual. This allows us to build another XML file which uses the reference as a foreign key to identify an instance of a club or society or an individual. Figure 11 demonstrates the use of 'individual' in a XML file which uses the global schema, in this case Charles Kendal Bushe who is discussed in greater detail as a member of the Hist and a renowned Irish writer and lawyer. Figure 12 is the corresponding entry in 'members\_and\_clubs\_lists.xml' which extracts information from the text and presents the user with a list of the sources in which an individual appeared and information about any clubs or societies which they may be associated with. This schema imports the global schema and as such shares the same basic structures, such as factlets, name and keywords. It is therefore

possible to create a factlet in the ‘members\_and\_clubs\_list.xml’ file. Elements imported from the global schema use the ‘mm’ prefix which denotes the elements namespace and provides its corresponding structure.

Figure 11 - Example of the individual element in a file that uses the global schema.

```
<entry id="HIST.41.19">
  <page>-</page>
  <date norm_date="27-04-1791">27th April</date>
  <transcription>
    <p><person individualRef="I.101">Mr C.[k].Bushe</person> in the Chair</p>
    <p>76 members present...</p>
    <p><question>Was the invention of money advantageous to mankind?</question>
  </p>
    <p><answer>For the Ayes, Mr J Smith - 13, for the noes Mr Graydon - 16. Passed in
  the negative.</answer></p>
  </transcription>
  <subject> <key>debates</key> </subject>
</entry>
```

Figure 12 - Extract from ‘members\_and\_clubs\_list.xml’ file which shows Charles Kendal Bushe’ entry. The ‘members\_and\_clubs\_list.xml’ file allows us to build a biography for individuals and can help us build a picture of an individuals involvement in certain clubs.

```
<mc:individual individual_id="I.101">
  <mm:name> <mm:title>Mr</mm:title> <mm:firstName>Charles</mm:firstName>
  <mm:middleName>Kendal</mm:middleName> <mm:surname>Bushe</
mm:surname>
</mm:name>
  <mc:details entry_Ref="HIST.41.19">
    <mc:club_society club_id="C.10">The Hist</mc:club_society>
    <mc:position date="27-04-1791">Chairman</mc:position>
  </mc:details>
  <mc:details entry_Ref="FJ.324">
    <mc:club_society club_id="C.10">The Hist</mc:club_society>
    <mc:position date="24-06-1794">Chairman</mc:position>
    <mm:factlet factletRef="I.101.fl">
      <mm:narrative>
        <mm:p>Charles Kendal Bushe presented the closing speech for the 1793/94
        session at the Hist. His speech, which is republished in 1820, is concerned
        with the events during 1794 which resulted in the Hists expulsion from
        Trinity College.</mm:p>
      </mm:narrative>
      <mm:deduction><mm:p></mm:p></mm:deduction>
      <mm:consequence><mm:p></mm:p></mm:consequence>
      <mm:fSubject><mm:key>proceedings</mm:key>
        <mm:key>publication< mm:key> </mm:fSubject>
      <mm:date_stamp>13-04-2011</mm:date_stamp>
    </mm:factlet>
  </mc:details>
</mc:individual>
```

Figure 13 - Another example from 'members\_and\_clubs\_list.xml' which explicitly highlights Theophilus' involvement with the Hist and the Gaelic Society.

```
<mc:individual individual_id="I.110">
  <mm:name>
    <mm:title>Mr</mm:title> <mm:firstName>Theophilus</mm:firstName>
    <mm:surname>O'Flanagan</mm:surname>
  </mm:name>
  <mc:details entry_Ref="M.16.16">
    <mc:club_society club_id="C.10">The Hist</mc:club_society>
  </mc:details>
  <mc:details entry_Ref="M.16.16">
    <mc:club_society club_id="C.98">Gaelic Society</mc:club_society>
    <mc:position>Secretary</mc:position>
  </mc:details>
</mc:individual>
```

Figure 14 - An extract of an entry in the members and clubs XML file for the Historical Society of Trinity College which highlights to the user the various sources in which the society is mentioned and gives an account of information derived from source text e.g. type of association, alias etc. This provides extra contextual information and can inform the reader of links to other clubs and societies.

```
<mc:association club_id="C.10">
  <mc:clubName>Historical Society of Trinity College</mc:clubName>
  <mc:alias>The Hist</mc:alias>
  <mc:alias>College Historical Society</mc:alias>
  <mc:status>formal</mc:status>
  <mc:type>debating</mc:type>
  <mc:foundedOn>00-00-1770</mc:foundedOn>
  <mc:linkedTo linkRef="C.164">Burke's Club</mc:linkedTo>
  <mc:entry entryRef="FJ.9"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="M.1.42"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="M.7.1"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="M.15.2.fl"/>
  <!-- HIST.6 etc, all entries unless otherwise stated refer to the hist (journals of the
society-->
  <mc:entry entryRef="HIST.2"/>
  <!-- all entries for unless otherwise stated refer to the hist (Dagg) -->
  <mc:entry entryRef="M.16"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="S.4.5"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="J.23.5"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="S.6.1.fl"/>
  .....
  <mc:entry entryRef="FJ.331"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="FJ.332"/>
  .....
</mc:association>
```

As we can see the 'individual' element also contains a reference to particular clubs or societies which corresponds to entries within the various files encoded using the global

schema and the members and clubs XML file. Figure 14 is an extract from the Hist's entry in the members and clubs XML file.

Figure 15 - Another example from members and club XML file, which shows the entry for the Society of Free Citizens and demonstrates the use of the factlet structure, as imported from the global schema.

```

<mc:association club_id="C.3">
  <mc:clubName>Society of Free Citizens</mc:clubName>
  <mc:status>formal</mc:status>
  <mc:type>enlightenment</mc:type>
  <mc:entry entryRef="FJ.4"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="FJ.5"/>
  <mc:entry entryRef="S.15.3">
    <mm:factlet factletRef="C.3.fl">
      <mm:narrative>
        <mm:p></mm:p>
        <mm:p>The Society of Free Citizens <mm:quote>&quot;promoted political
          reform</mm:quote>, and drank to <mm:quote><mm:t
value="toast">&apos;the glorious and immortal memory of King William&apos;</
mm:t>.</mm:quote>
        </mm:p>
      </mm:narrative>
      <mm:deduction/>
      <mm:consequence/>
      <mm:fSubject><mm:key>meeting_activities</mm:key><mm:key>club/society
        </mm:key>
      </mm:fSubject>
      <mm:date_stamp>24-12-2010</mm:date_stamp>
    </mm:factlet>
  </mc:entry>
</mc:association>

```

The XML, described above, makes explicit links between sources, people, places, clubs and societies and highlights these relationships to the user. The XML files are used as source management but become an invaluable tool when carrying out source evaluation that directly informs and supports the development of the historical argument or narrative presented in the following chapters. Chapter 2 also used these structures to support its creation and argument development, as such figure 16 demonstrates an entry in the XML files which directly corresponds to a paragraph in chapter 2, simply search 'S.12.2.fl' in chapter 2 (p. 85) to find the place in which figure 16 informed the historical narrative.

Figure 16 - This example is taken from an XML file which uses the global schema and the factlet, S.12.12.f1, directly corresponds to a paragraph presented in Chapter 2 on associational culture.

```

<entry id="S.12.2">
  <page>19</page>
  <transcription lang="en">
    <circa><start>1700</start><end>1800</end></circa>
    <p>In <author sourceRef="M.21"><firstName>Joep</firstName>
<surname>Leerssen </surname></author>'s <publication ref="M.21">Hidden Ireland,
public sphere</publication>, the author maintains that Irish Catholics were absent both
from the physical public sphere, <quote ref="M.21">&quot;the areas of concourse open to
the public-at-large&quot;</quote>, and its imagined equivalent, created by newspapers and
periodicals, which were, he maintains, a <quote ref="M.21">&quot;virtual form of coffee
house table talk&quot;</quote>. He asserts that <quote ref="M.21">&quot;whatever,
public sphere there was, existed in Ascendancy Ireland&quot;</quote>, and that <quote
ref="M.21">&quot;parliament , the playhouses, societies, learned and benevolent, and most
importantly the pamphlets, papers and debates, were by and for Protestants&quot;</quote>
Gaelic sociability - rural, oral, or if expressed in words, in manuscript from - awaited the
transformative power of print culture before it could claim its place in the public sphere.
</p>
  </transcription>
  <factlet factletRef="S.12.2.f1">
    <narrative> <p>Irish public sphere in the <century c="18">eighteenth century</
century> is divided between Protestant public sphere and that of the hidden Catholic or
Gaelic one. Leerssen describes how the print culture established in Ireland supports the
Protestant ascendancy and is geared towards this Irish identity rather than a Catholic one.</
p>
  </narrative>
  <deduction> <p>If <author sourceRef="M.18"> <firstName>Benedict</
firstName> <surname>Anderson</surname> </author>'s communities are imagined
through print capitalism amongst other things, what provides Irish Catholics with this
vision of an imagined community? Faction? Disassociation? Language? An esoteric
identity, outside the mainstream but pushing in.</p>
  </deduction>
  <consequence><p/></consequence>
  <fSubject>
    <key>Catholic_identity</key> <key>Protestant_identity</key>
    <key>print_capitalism</key> <key>othering</key>
    <key>associations</key> <key>factionalism</key>
    <key>public_sphere</key> <key>conflicted_identity</key>
  </fSubject>
  <date_stamp>25-11-2010</date_stamp>
</factlet>
</entry>

```

Structuring primary and secondary sources in this manner enables the user to track various links between historical figures and the various associations. Elements such as clubSociety, person, etc., demonstrate the existence of associational culture, that is the abstract notion of the links and relationships or the social networks individuals create through participation in intermediary bodies. The member and clubs list file demonstrates the links between individuals and the various clubs. Future research, based on these XML file, could visualise the links and relationships between these elements as

a network of nodes, similar to the springGraph. To enable future research or visualisation it is important that the initial text encoding can handle future use cases, for instance as visualisations based on ‘address’.

Figure 17 - A number of XQuery examples used throughout this research to support the production of the historical narrative.

1. This query returns the transcription of the entry where subject keyword is Edmund Burke, this query can be reused depending on the users requirements e.g. change the subject keyword or the input document. It is important to note here that keywords are restricted by a controlled vocabulary.

```
for $key in doc("Articles.xml")//entry
return if ($key/factlet/fSubject/key = 'Edmund Burke' or $key/entry/subject/key = 'Edmund Burke')
then <transcription>{data($key/transcription)}</transcription>
else ()
```

2. This query returns the name and id of associations of type political in a list, again this can be reused for different ‘types’ and different input document. The list this query, and other versions of it, creates was used when creating the overview of Dublin’s associational world.

```
<ul>{
for $x in doc("member_queries.xml")//association
return if ($x//type = 'political')
then <li>{data($x//clubName)} <b>Club Id</b> {data($x/@club_id)}</li>
else()
}</ul>
```

3. The following query is used to output all the newspaper entries related to a specific club, in this case C.1, the Protestant Association, again be changed in accordance to the user’s requirements at the time of research development.

```
for $club in doc("news.xml")//entry
where $club//clubSociety/@ref="C.1"
return $club
```

The ‘association’ and ‘individual’ elements described above play an important role in modeling the logical data inherent within the text. As stated, elements such as ‘person’, ‘address’ ‘date’ etc., give contextual information to the XML document and provide meaning and semantics to the encoding which would otherwise be impossible to extract through automated means. A general reader can decipher the contents of a text and the existence of a person or a club or society is implicit or implied. However, in order for us to carry out any meaningful queries, using XQuery or XSLT, we need to ensure that signifiers in the text, which are implicit to the reader, are made explicit to

the software. Figure 17 contains some XQueries used during this research to inform the historical narrative at various stages of development.

The XML files, along with the use of XQuery, enable the user, or researcher, to interrogate the sources encoded in the structures described above. The encoding of primary and secondary sources encourages close analysis of the sources and preserves the interpretations of the historian or the user. This is an invaluable tool in the creation of historical narrative. It can also be used to reverse engineer the narrative, as we other users or researchers can see the steps taken to create a particular argument. This idea is discussed in chapter 8 which looks at ways to present historical research beyond the traditional printed form and suggests ways in which we can enhance learning and exploration of history through the presentation of historical narrative in parallel with source documents and the evidence which informed it.

#### *The creation and use of factlets and factoids*

One of the major advantages of creating a custom XML schema, as described above, was the ability to include specific structures not developed elsewhere. We have already mentioned the factlet and factoid structure on a number of occasions; indeed a number of examples have illustrated the factlet structure and its use within this research. Factlets and factoids, which were discussed in the DH2009 paper, are derived from John Bradley and Harold Short's use of factoids for the representation and management of information extracted from narrative text for prosopography purposes, described as a simple method which 'connect[s] different kinds of structured information'.<sup>4</sup> The term factoid may be perceived as a misnomer, as one definition ironically defines it as a fact, that the fact, is not a fact. The contradictions associated with the use of this term are well known and somewhat celebrated as a curious reminder of the faith we historians endow in "factual" information. Bradley and Short state 'it reflects the historian's worry when a tiny extract is taken out of the context of a larger text and the historical period in which it was written and presented as a 'fact''.<sup>5</sup> This awareness is known and codified when using traditional sources; similar caution should be taken when using digital sources.

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<sup>4</sup> Bradley & Short, 'Texts into databases: the evolving field of new-style prosopography', p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.8.

Digital prosopography, as Bradley and Short state, is not about presenting a digital edition of the source. Rather it is about preserving transparency between the source and the analysis or assertions made of it. Digital prosopography extracts ‘facts’ from a source but requires the prosopographer to make assertions about the people, events, etc, that appear. As such, the prosopographer is aware that contradictions in the sources may exist.

Bradley and Short use factoids to reconstruct the source narrative and create an overview of individuals and associated information. ‘The Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire’ project builds ‘a database of information about people mentioned in sources associated with the Byzantine empire from 642 to 1261’.<sup>6</sup> They are concerned with creating associations and links between people and events in order to reconstruct the intricate relationships that existed. Factoids are used to present information to final users of the prosopography and it is left to the user to provide a scholarly overview. The factoids represent the need for the creators of the prosopography to make certain assertions or assumptions of historical “facts” as they present themselves in the text.

The migration from print to digital form meant that individuals in the prosopography could be cross referenced and further associations could be made through religion, profession, and geography. The hypertext structure of the database allows users to ask different and altogether new questions. The digital form brings the relationships and connections to life. Rather than relying on the prosopographers analysis, the connections can be highlighted through the text. The final publication is not a set of articles but a relational database. Evidence is recorded,

as a series of factoids - assertions made by the project team that a source “S” at location “L” states something (“F”) about person “P”... A factoid is not a statement of fact about a person; a collection of factoids does not record a “scholarly overview” of a person that a scholar has derived from the sources that s/he has read. Instead, each one records an assertion by a source at a particular spot about a person. Factoids may contradict each other - if one source says a person was an Armenian, and another that s/he was Bulgarian, then both factoids will be present in the database.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> John Bradley & Harold Short, ‘Using formal structures to create complex relationships: The prosopography of the Byzantine Empire, as case study’ available at <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/humanities/cch/jdb/papers/pbe-leeds/index.html> (12 April 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Bradley & Short, ‘Text into databases’, p. 8.

Factoids are based on different criteria including, people, events, religion and geography. They present pure information taken from the source and are not presented in a theoretical framework. The preservation of information in factoids means that subsequent users can use the sources in much the same context as they were originally presented - with contradictions in tact, it is therefore up to researchers to deduce an educated scenario based on the “facts” provided.

Sources present themselves in two distinct ways, structured and unstructured. Structured information, such as census returns, are easily transferred into a database format. Extraction and representation is not a huge task as their original structure lends itself well to digital representation. Narrative, however, requires a different approach. Factoids represent the various information contained in a narrative and present the user with a collection of factoids rather than a linear text. Sources consulted to investigate associational culture are narrative in nature rather than tabular. The proceedings and minutes of the Historical Society of Trinity College, or *The Hist*, are presented in journals and are handwritten entries consisting of date, members, debate topic, transcriptions of said debates and speeches, etc., newspapers such as the *Freeman's Journal* and the *Dublin Chronicle* are also consistent with this narrative structure, as are the various periodicals and pamphlets also consulted. A decision was made that the XML schema would represent the logical information of the sources rather than the physical representation and text would incorporate tags to mark-up “factual” or concrete pieces of information such as the club or society, person, dates, address, as previously discussed but also more abstract ideas such as concepts and linguistics. Bradley and Short maintain that the actual task ‘of categorising, grouping...ordering’<sup>8</sup> and tagging sources opens a conversation between the user, the sources and the research question and is the first step immersing the researcher in the historical sources. It was first envisaged that a single tag, <factoid> would be used to represent the user’s interpretations on source text. Further analysis questioned how a single tag, <factoid>, was any different then just using a tag called <note> or <summary>. To encapsulate the essence of Bradley and Short’s system of factoid representation, an extra layer of abstraction was added which coerces the user to think logically and systematically about the source text. Instead of the factoid being embedded within the encoding, an extra tag, <factlet>, is used. A factlet, represents information deemed important but which is not a

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

direct transcription of the source. It encapsulates scholarly interpretation and provides interaction between different sources. Each factlet inherits core information from the original source and is directly linked to a piece of text, transcription or in the case of factlets in CRADLE a digital object or source document. Factlets from different sources that are related by subject or category, for instance, then merge to create a factoid, which is essentially the visualisation of the links and relations between factlets, sources and text. Within CRADLE the user extracts information from encoded sources whilst preserving the integrity of the information through easy access to the original source image, thus maintaining source context. Factlets also reflect the worry of presenting information as fact and consider the different type of “facts” that exist within historical research. The factlet structure, presented in figure 18, is not an arbitrary allocation of tags as it takes into account historical theorists and practitioners G.R. Elton and E.H. Carr and their definitions of historical fact.

Figure 18 - Basic factlet structure as presented in the XML schema as well as MIHS and CRADLE.

```
<factlet id="F...">  
    <narrative> </narrative>  
    <deduction> </deduction>  
    <consequence> </consequence>  
</factlet>
```

What makes a “fact” - fact? Is it inconclusive evidence or the mere process of knowing? Are historical events “fact” or a series of related, coexisting features which together create a narrative based on the correlation of sequential events, that is not entirely fact or fiction but interpretation, deduction, selection, distortion and explanation?

Carr maintains that

the difference between facts about the past and facts of history hangs upon ‘the element of interpretation’, which the historian adds to the former in order to create the latter, though general acceptance of the interpretation offered is required before the fact’s new status is secure.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Elton, *The practice of history*, p. 50.

Carr differentiates between ‘facts of the past’, which exist independently of history, and ‘facts of history’ which require interpretation by historians. Elton argues that if ‘an event can be known’ that is all ‘that is required to make it a fact of history’, ‘interpretation, or general acceptance of a thesis has nothing whatsoever to do with its independent existence’.<sup>10</sup> Certainly both have their merits but it is difficult to agree with either fully. Carr maintains the difference between facts of the past and facts of history is the process of interpretation while Elton insists that ‘historical facts’ exist independently of interpretation but yet he does not consider how ‘facts’ can acquire different meanings in reconstruction, and perhaps this is what Carr alludes to.

Is history then the interpretation of events or the events as they exist independently? As Elton asks ‘do historical facts have an existence independently of the thinker about the facts?’<sup>11</sup> Can software then, present both the “fact” as it exists independently and the “fact” as it exists through interpretation? This distinction between “fact” and “interpretation” is also reflected in Christine Borgman’s keynote presentation at the Digital Humanities 2009 conference, Maryland.<sup>12</sup> Quoting Clifford Lynch, Borgman addresses issues between ‘raw materials’ and interpretation, as

raw materials are more likely to be curated for the long term than are scholars’ interpretations of those materials. It is the nature of the humanities that sources are reinterpreted continually.<sup>13</sup>

Interpretations and presentation of primary sources are distinct and separate entities. Interpretations cannot exist without the primary source yet the primary source may exist without interpretation. Although we continually reevaluate and interpret certain sources, interpretations can also enter the fray and become part of the overall argument related to the original source. Interpretations themselves can inform us of trends in writing and theory. Objectivity and subjectivity remain a constant concern in interpretation and reinterpretation.

The use of factlets within the XML source structure described above and implemented within CRADLE maintains this division between ‘facts about the past’ and ‘facts of history’. Transcriptions of the source or the digitised document are independent

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Preface.

<sup>12</sup> Christine L. Borgman, ‘The digital future is now: A call to action for the humanities’ in *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, iii, no. 4 (2009), available at <http://digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/3/4/000077/000077.html#> (29. Aug. 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

to the factlets which contain the interpretations, deductions and assertions of the source text. Rather than rely on the factlet structure to store indisputable ‘facts’ such as date, place, person etc., the factlet structure relies on the functional movements which historians take when considering and evaluating sources and historical evidence.

The historian, as Elton sees it, are servants to their evidence, and must build and maintain a close relationship to sources. The historian must open

his mind to the evidence both passively (listening) and actively (asking). The mind will indeed soon react with questions, but these are the questions suggested by the evidence, and though different men may find different questions arising from the same evidence the differences are only to a very limited extent dictated by themselves.<sup>14</sup>

We must be aware how the simple act of selection distorts subjectivity and objectivity. Transparency then, between an interpretation and the evidence, can invigorate objectivity. Although, can we ever be truly objective? We are always influenced by our subconsciousness and ethnocentrism. Listening and actively asking is inherent in the factlet structure. A factlet is based upon readings and source material, it cannot exist without a transcription or the digitised image. This helps the research build on arguments that are based in a solid foundation of evidence and a transparency between the evidence and the interpretation. The benefit of this, as Clifford sees it, is the ability to differentiate between raw material and interpretation and reinterpretation.

In *The practice of history* Elton considers the idea of the existence of a hierarchy of historical “facts” and while he dismisses this as ‘a game not worth playing’,<sup>15</sup> it is worth considering in terms of the different types of “facts” that exist. As stated above, indisputable “facts” (in so far as they cannot be interpreted any differently), such as place, date, etc., are distinctly different to, ‘the textual forms and linguistic resources of narrative, explanation or argument as a means of positioning and persuading a reader to accept interpretation as “fact” or “truth”’,<sup>16</sup> which Caroline Coffin, in her systemic functional linguistic analysis of historical writing, sees as inherent in historical study. It is these types of “facts” (interpretations) which are recorded in the factlet structure.

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<sup>14</sup> Elton, *The practice of history*, p. 56.

<sup>15</sup> Elton, *The practice of history*, p. 54.

<sup>16</sup> Caroline Coffin, ‘Constructing and giving value to the past: an investigation into secondary school history’ in Frances Christie and J.R. Martin (eds), *Genre and institutions, social processes in the workplace and school* (London, 2002), p. 201.

Coffin outlines the different genres that exist within historical writing as the genre of argument and the genre of narrative and details the difference between historical recount and historical account, as explaining (account) rather than recording (recount) the past. CRADLE records sources and therefore past events but the use of factlets and subsequent factoids, explain them. Within the factlet structure, it is the 'writer's role' to 'ascribe significance' to the text, which is 'ideological rather than logical', infusing 'ideological encoding'<sup>17</sup> to the past/text.

This 'ideological encoding' is the difference between 'constructing the past as story' and 'constructing the past as argument'.<sup>18</sup> Yet, although Coffin discusses this as a linguistic movement for secondary school writing, from story telling (recount) to a more complex and comprehensive consideration of past causes and consequences, Elton describes this move as occurring in the wider realm of historical study in the nineteenth century. He describes the shift from the story telling of the past to a 'scientific, ordered, systematic study of history'.<sup>19</sup> CRADLE uses the factlet structure to reflect this 'scientific, ordered' system and considers some of the genres as outlined by Coffin. By including a <narrative> tag, the factlet encapsulates, the pure logical aspects of the source text that contribute to the overall narrative of the research question. This is followed by <deduction>, which reflects the need to draw 'out the significance of the...evidence',<sup>20</sup> part of challenge genre and is 'ideological rather than logical'. The <consequence> tag then considers the cause and effect and reflects thinking in the abstract: this is part of explanation genre.

This structure opens up a conversation between the historian, the research question and the source material and can decrease the possibility of gathering information for its own sake. Computer technology, as Mawdsley and Munch discuss, enables us to easily 'amass large amounts of data' without thinking about the content.<sup>21</sup> The factlet structure makes the researcher think about the information or sources being gathered and although this is the first step in the analysis process, it can deter researchers from straying too far from the central research theme and open up forms of debate early on in research.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>19</sup> Elton, *The practice of history*, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> Coffin, 'Constructing and giving value to the past', p. 226.

<sup>21</sup> Mawdsley & Munck, *Computing for historians*, p. 6.

Figure 19 - The factlet structure explained in systematic functional linguistic terms.

```
<factlet id=*example structure*>
  <narrative> 'logical' rather than 'ideological', what Coffin terms recount, the
  logical information contained in the text that contribute to a narrative of the past
  </narrative>

  <deduction> 'drawing out the significance of the' 'evidence', part of challenge
  genre, 'ideological rather than logical', this can draw on the <narrative> of the
  original text or the source.
  </deduction>

  <consequence> Part of explanation genre, (thinking in the abstract), cause and
  effect (consequence)
  </consequence>

  <subject><key></key>'subject' contains the <key> words which correspond to the
  text. </subject>

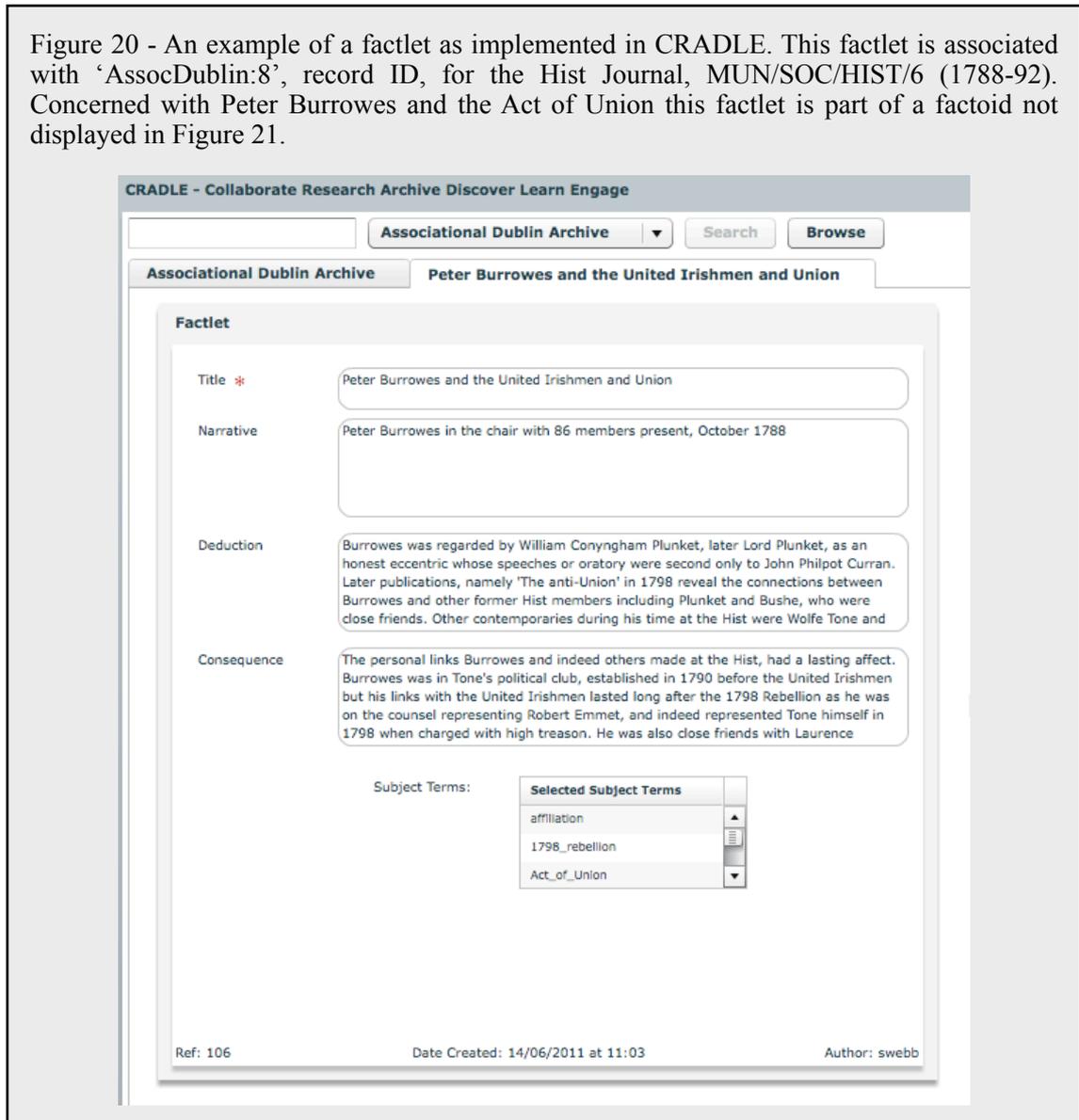
  <datestamp>records the date the factlet was produced, for the purposes of
  mining and tend analysis </datestamp> [date modified, may also be
  required]
</factlet>
```

Tags, <subject> and <key> contain key words that are associated with the factlet e.g. Othering, Memory and are used to provide contextual information to the primary user as well as any subsequent readers/users. Again, even this simple task of allocating keywords and meaning to the information contained in the factlet may be inherently subjective, as such a controlled vocabulary must be used. The Irish History Online subject classification is used to provide subject keywords for historical text and factlets and since software development and digital humanities/history is also part of the knowledge domain for this research, another controlled vocabulary is required, derived from the digital humanities History and Computing. Keywords and subject specification broadens and narrows links and relations between text, sources and factlets and tag 'visible literary features'<sup>22</sup> of the text. They need to be specific enough not to be ambiguous but conversely, not too specific to be arbitrary. A controlled vocabulary also ensures that keywords and tags used in the XML structure reflect the knowledge domain in which the sources and text exists and ensures continuity of language.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 171.

Figure 20 - An example of a factlet as implemented in CRADLE. This factlet is associated with 'AssocDublin:8', record ID, for the Hist Journal, MUN/SOC/HIST/6 (1788-92). Concerned with Peter Burrowes and the Act of Union this factlet is part of a factoid not displayed in Figure 21.



The last tag used in the factlet structure is the <date-stamp>. This tag records the date in which the factlet was created and can be used for pattern analysis. A factoid likely contains factlets with different entry dates - trend analysis, can potentially identify if a user has developed or changed theories over time and potentially track these movements. XML files which use the global schema contain an explicit data-stamp element while CRADLE records this information, as well as any editing automatically.

Figure 20 provides a real example of a factlet as implemented in the CRADLE environment. This factlet is linked to the Journals of the Historical Society of Trinity College, for the date 22 Oct. 1788, for which Peter Burrowes, a close friend of the United Irishmen's Theobald Wolfe Tone and later part of Tone's defence council after the 1798 Rebellion, is in the chair. The factlet, concerned with the United Irishmen and



based ‘more securely on the sources, and less on the prejudices of the editors’.<sup>23</sup> The Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire is an online database consisting of factoids which range from text containing narrative, alternative names, authorship, death, education, kinship and language skills and provides a wealth of information for users to produce further analysis and research. In this context the factoids represent pure information and are not driven or shaped by any research question or agenda.

In contrast factlets and subsequent factoids created within this project are driven by a research statement and are produced in the context of associational culture and Irish nationalism. Factlets and factoids are based on ‘scholarly overview’ and scholarly interpretation, which is encapsulated in the factlet structure. Similar to Bradley and Short, ‘each factoid forms a record’,<sup>24</sup> but unlike Bradley and Short, CRADLE produces factoids based specifically on user requirements, which in turn informs the creation of a specific historical narrative e.g. ‘Hist debates and Union’. Factlets are used to capture scholarly interpretations and overviews and in the context of this work are placed within the theoretical and historical framework of associational culture and Irish nationalism. Factoids created, which demonstrate links and relations between factlets, source and text, through the springGraph visualisation technique as illustrated in figure 22, are driven by this project’s specific research statement. Yet the ability to allow new users to create their own factlets and factoids in the same environment means that the documents stored in CRADLE can be reused for different projects as interpretations and source analysis can extend from one thesis statement to another and each new project can be informed and learn from each other.

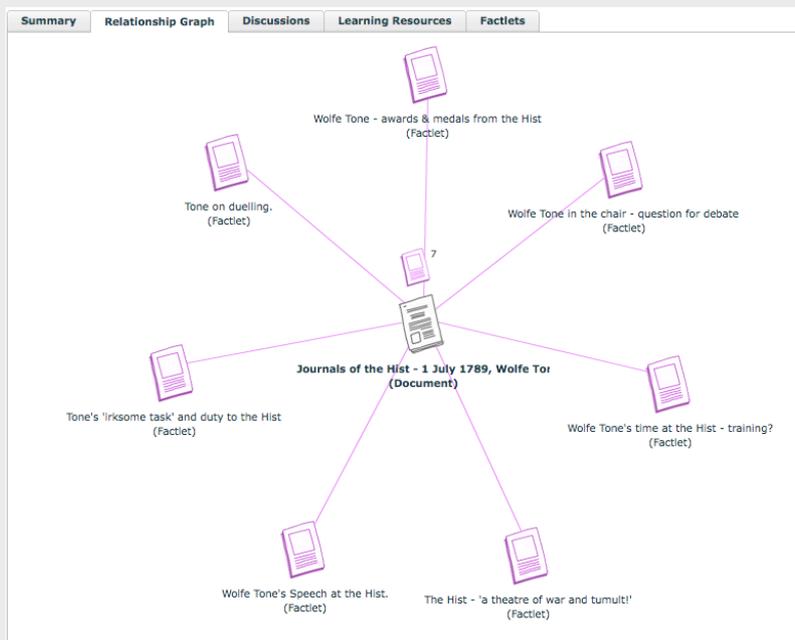
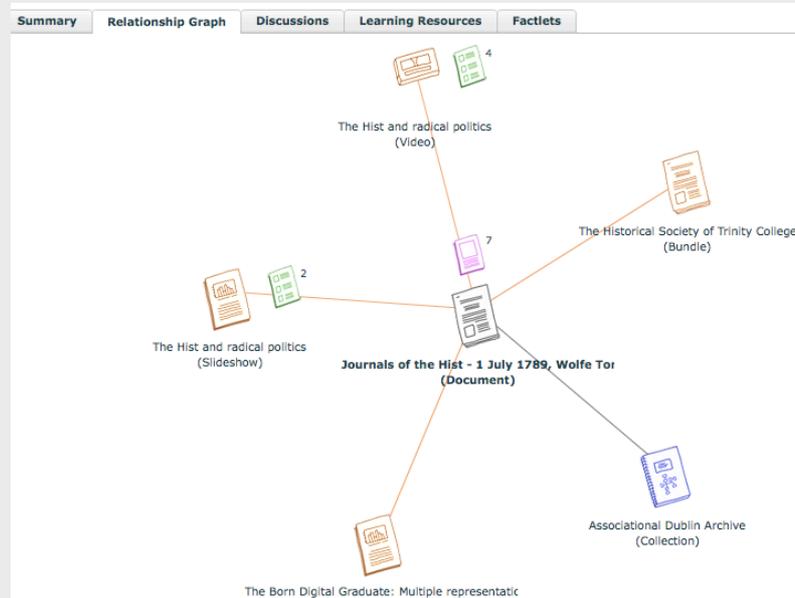
The same visualisation techniques used to presents links and relationships between factlets as factoids are used to show links between digital objects, factlets, factoids, collections and learning resources, which includes the use of the Bundle Object, discussed in chapter 8 and for which a user guide is attached in the appendix. Figure 22 demonstrates the visualisation of these various boundary objects within CRADLE and while we will discuss this in greater detail in chapter 8 it is worth providing a quick example here to contextualise the use of factlet and factoids within the CRADLE environment.

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<sup>23</sup> The prosopography of the Byzantine Empire project, available at <http://www.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/> (3 Mar. 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

Figure 22 - demonstrates the visualisation of the links between an object in CRADLE e.g. the journal of the Historical Society of Trinity College and other boundary objects in the system including factlets (denoted by the small purple icon, the second image displays the various factlets related to the source) the Bundle object, a slideshow and a record lecture. It also shows the existence of a discussion forum, all of which we will discuss in chapter 8.



This chapter described the methods used in this research to support the first phase of historical inquiry. The XML approach represents one technique or technical choice, made over alternative technologies, namely relational databases. The proliferation and use of database systems within historical research is discussed in chapter 1 and as noted many digital humanities and digital history projects are based

upon the development of a database to store, query and present information. Nonproprietary relational database systems, such as MySQL or PostgreSQL, offer an open source solution to data management and while the database system used is project dependent, it is recommended that open formats are used where possible. These can also be used with web applications such as Drupal and WordPress, both open source content management systems, allowing for content reuse and manipulation. However, unlike XML which can be viewed in any browser and most text editors, database systems rely upon their underlying infrastructure. In this regard XML offers more flexibility as it is inherently portable, can be used across platforms and can be processed by various applications and programming languages, highlighting the fact that it has been readily adopted by industry. XML also provides an exchange format between different systems and applications and is seen as a long-term solution for digital preservation, as highlighted in chapter 1. However, XML should not be viewed as a replacement for database systems. XML is not a database. It does not index data, a feature which makes database systems efficient for searching and manipulation, and on its own does not provide any functionality. It relies upon XQuery, XSLT, XSL-FO among others to query and present information.

Whether a project uses XML or a relational database depends wholly on the sources being considered and the data model derived and developed. The hierarchical tree model presented in figure 7 is a simplified data model of the global schema used to structure primary and secondary material used during this research. Yet, this hierarchical tree can be developed or translated into an entity relationship diagram and can provide the data model for a relational database. However, given the fact that source material related to this research consisted mainly of text documents XML was the most suitable solution. As Bradley asserts in ‘Document and data: modelling materials for humanities research in XML and relational databases’ (2009), XML is ‘well suited when project materials are “document oriented” and involve marking up written text, whereas’ a relational database is ‘well suited when project materials are “data orientated”’: looking at materials outside the textual framework’.<sup>25</sup>

The data model in figure 7 includes elements which did not appear in all entries, as such a database solution would pose problems for data redundancy and white space.

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<sup>25</sup> John Bradley, ‘Documents and data: modelling materials for humanities research in XML and relational database’ in *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, xx, no. 1 (2005), p. 133.

It was also important that a number of features could be identified and tagged in the source text, including person, address and club/society as highlighted in this chapter. Embedded tags in the XML allowed for this. The use of foreign keys in the members and clubs XML file provides the same functionality as foreign keys used in relational databases. Indeed foreign keys are essential to relational databases and are inherent to the rules of normalization which guide their development.<sup>26</sup> While XML was used for preliminary research, the underlying structure enabled the use of XQuery to query the data and XSLT and XSL-FO to present the data and as such provided consistency throughout the research process. The decision to use XML in this research was not dictated by any particular software or infrastructure e.g. CRADLE, but because XML offered a flexible method to organise primary and secondary material. The fact that CRADLE is built upon FEDORA means that it can interact with database systems including MySQL. Therefore any additional research utilising database structures can operate in the same research environment.

The methods we have discussed in this chapter directly correspond to the methods used to create the historical argument on associational culture and Irish nationalism. The use of simple XML structures allow us to manage sources and evidence in a way which allows close interrogation of the sources and utilises simple methods to present the researcher with the links between sources, argument and the research question. Simple markup enables researchers to transform individual research processes and similar to Manfred Thaller's workstation, supports the intellectual and academic processes of the historian. The CRADLE environment and the use of factlets and factoids also maintains the integrity of the sources as it preserves the difference between 'facts of the past' and 'facts of history' and can handle the continued interpretation and reinterpretation of sources. This implicit functionality ensures that, where possible, historical research is centered on access to sources and returns the historian to the origins of the argument - the primary sources and, as Elton promoted, the focus and control to the source and not a distortion of it. Structuring the past using XML constitutes a small, but nonetheless important, part of a digital methodology. The factlet structure allows the user to interact with the sources and text that are being considered for historical research and differentiates between Elton and Carr's 'facts of

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<sup>26</sup> Keating, Clancy, O'Connor & Lyons, 'Problems with databases and the XML solution', p. 270.

the past' and 'facts of history'. As such it relies heavily on the theory and practices of history theorist and as such reflects the idea of digital history.

## CHAPTER 4

### A GLIMPSE INTO DUBLIN'S ASSOCIATIONAL WORLD

Our previous chapter described the digital world which supports research into associational Dublin and it discussed some of the digital humanities methodologies used, focusing on methods to support historical research and argument development. The next four chapters concentrate on historical inquiry into associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism, 1780-1830. This chapter considers an overview of associational culture in Dublin during the period with specific attention paid to a number of themes, including expressions of identity through associational activity, collective action, civic virtue and ideas of civil society which are developed and implemented through associational structures. The various forms of Irish nationalism, supported through associational endeavors, are also examined, including cultural and consumer nationalism. We will first provide a brief overview of public life in Dublin during the late eighteenth-century with reference to Clark, among others.

#### *Dublin during the eighteenth-century*

Clark describes the 'engines of [associational] growth'<sup>1</sup> in Britain as a reactive movement to a mixture of local, regional, and global, events and occurrences. He specifies the imitation, reproduction and support of 'fads and fashions' as a vital motivation in the formation and creation of clubs and societies in England, as well as Ireland. The capacity of these associational groups to rapidly assemble and address societal and political issues, supporting as well as preempting governmental action, created powerful groups who could 'carefully' choose 'responses to...pressure and needs' as they developed.<sup>2</sup> Many clubs and societies in Dublin were established to support local and regional needs and often mimicked foreign interests, political ideals and ideologies. It is these 'fads and fashions' which engage the associational world of London and Dublin and are discussed in Clark's work as bidirectional influences between clubs and societies in both capitals. Clark and Morris provide the means to

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<sup>1</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> Morris, 'Voluntary societies and British urban elites', p. 100.

analyse associational culture in England and Ireland comparatively. However, it is essential that Dublin is discussed within the context of its own idiosyncrasies.

Clark and Morris both link rapid urbanisation and industrialisation to the growth of associational culture in England. This process also resulted in the expansion of Dublin's associational life during the late eighteenth-century. Dublin, like London, expanded in terms of population and infrastructure during the period 1550-1750, as the urban centre spread far from the original city walls.<sup>3</sup> Political and economic stability allowed for the development of commercial, residential and governing facilities which were encouraged and supported by municipal and commercial endeavors. Areas such as Temple Bar, which expanded as a result of land reclamation in the seventeenth-century, and St. Stephen's Green benefited from this development and by the eighteenth-century were prominent quarters of commercial and social activity. Dublin's population more than doubled during the period 1700-1820 from 100,000 to 250,000. This growth established Dublin as the unequivocal capital of Ireland, in name and reality, which in previous years it could not strictly claim due to deficiencies in port access and poor residential and commercial development. Its population, composed of artisans, tradesmen, merchants, students, clergy and an aspiring political elite, left an indelible mark on the city in terms of infrastructure and related activity, the most significant of which the political faction left in the form

of the set-piece public buildings (Parliament House, Four Courts, College and Castle) and in the refashioning of the central thoroughfares by means of the enlightened despotism of the wide streets commissioners.<sup>4</sup>

As Ireland's main educational centre, founded in the sixteenth-century, Trinity College contributed to the burgeoning political elite in Dublin and produced some of the finest orators in Irish history. Many were members of the Historical Society of Trinity College or the Hist. Students at the College were given a free pass to the gallery of the House of Commons, as their gown acted as a 'passport'.<sup>5</sup> College Green metaphorically and physically represented the proximity between the students and politicians. Trinity College was the playground for many of Ireland's most prestigious and well known

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<sup>3</sup> Colm Lennon, 'The changing face of Dublin, 1550-1750' in *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (Oxford, 2001), p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> 'Dublin' in *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 2004), p. 170.

<sup>5</sup> John Edward Walsh, *Ireland sixty years ago*, (2nd Edition, Dublin, 1849) p. 175. (available at Google Books).

politicians and reactionaries, including Henry Grattan, Theobald Wolfe Tone and Isaac Butt. The political hub established in Dublin was destroyed by the implementation of the Act of Union 1801, yet despite this ‘Napoleonic Dublin saw more signs of expansion than contraction’ in contrast to a downturn suffered in the postwar era.<sup>6</sup>

The expansion and proliferation of associational culture enjoyed throughout major towns and cities in England and described by Clark and Morris was mirrored in Ireland’s metropole, Dublin, albeit on a smaller scale when compared to London. This expansion, like in England, is rooted in the seventeenth-century, providing Dublin with associational impulses and development similar to London. It is noted, by Kelly and Powell, that in 1672

the lord lieutenant, John, Lord Berkeley and the leading lights of the privy council were so bothered by reports that ‘men have assumed themselves a liberty, not only in coffee houses, but in other places and meetings, both public and private, to censure and defame the proceedings of state, by speaking evil things they understand not’.<sup>7</sup>

In response the Privy Council announced they would reprimand those responsible for the spread and proliferation of such treasonous or seditious speeches communicated at public or private meetings and even warned those merely listening.<sup>8</sup> Yet, regardless of this threat associational activity continued and developed throughout the seventeenth-century. One club founded in the seventeenth-century by William Molyneux, the Dublin Philosophical Society (1685-1708), established an important tradition of ‘collaborative scientific work in Ireland, and inspired other Irish learned societies of the [eighteenth] century’.<sup>9</sup>

The Dublin Philosophical Society, however, was not founded in isolation from the influences and associational traditions developed in London, as this Dublin society had close ties and correspondence with the Royal Society of London. This relationship demonstrates the colonial influence which also generated and developed sophisticated societies such as the Dublin Society (est. 1731) and the Royal Irish Academy (est. 1785) which had direct links to London counterparts. These corresponding societies

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<sup>6</sup> David Dickson, ‘Death of a Capital? Dublin and the consequences of Union’, in *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (Oxford, 2001), p. 125.

<sup>7</sup> Kelly & Powell, ‘Introduction’, pp 24-5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Dublin Philosophical Society’ in *The Oxford companion to Irish history*, p. 173.

complemented and sustained communications between societies of similar interests and functions, so much so that ‘many contemporaries could move between the two cities [London and Dublin] and feel at home in each’.<sup>10</sup>

This proliferation of associational culture is linked to an increase in living standards ‘among the upper and middling groups of society’<sup>11</sup> where urban growth and development fostered ideas of public sociability. Ireland as a whole remained predominantly rural up to 1800 and beyond and while associational growth is linked to urban growth and development, rural Ireland supported a multitude of associative groups in the form of agrarian secret societies. Rural social and political concerns required and produced societies which addressed the persisting issues of the rural population, such as exorbitant tithes and rent. While Dublin remained the centre for associational growth in Ireland, notwithstanding growth in Belfast, rural Ireland, produced agrarian societies, many of which were secret, oath bound, militant and organised. Agrarian secret societies such as the Whiteboys and the Peep O Day Boys not only indicate the existence of rural unrest but reflects the growing rift between Catholics (represented by the former) and Protestants (represented by the latter) in Ireland. This division intensified after the 1798 Rebellion and demonstrates the existence of conflicting ideas of national identity and patriotism as expressed by the various interest groups in Irish politics and society.<sup>12</sup> The development of groups with diverse functions and ideologies reflect the needs and preoccupations of rural and urban Ireland and highlights the developmental gap between urbanised Dublin and the rest of the country. Groups such as the famous United Irishmen demonstrate the politicised nature of associational culture and how it reflects the concerns and beliefs of individual members who propagate political or national causes through these organised, oath bound groups.

Even before the boom of associations in the 1790s, linked to political and national upheavals, Dublin in the 1750s, as Clark points out, boasted numerous ‘religious, improvement, musical and Masonic bodies’, as well as ‘other elite societies,’ ‘school alumni societies, catch clubs’, trade clubs and unsurprisingly, ‘heavy drinking

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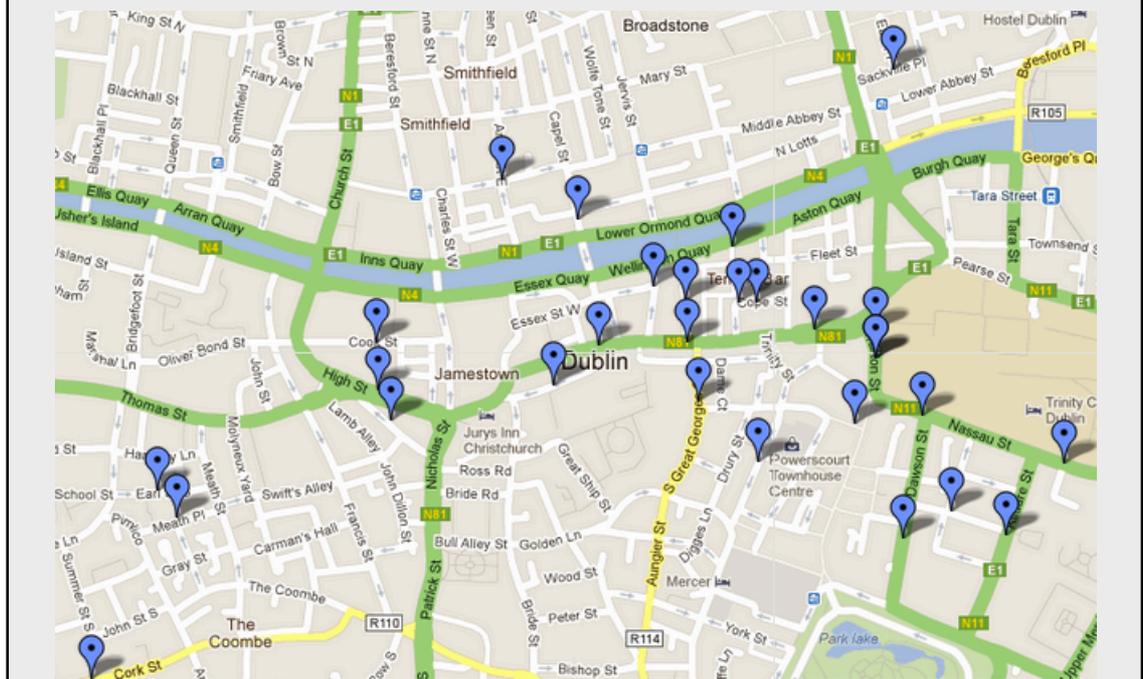
<sup>10</sup> Peter Clark and Raymond Gillespie, ‘Introduction’ in Peter Clark and Raymond Gillespie (eds), *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (Oxford, 2001), p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly (eds), *Irish peasants and violence and political unrest, 1780-1914* (Manchester, 1983).

clubs'<sup>13</sup>, many of which were based or heavily influenced by their counterparts in London. Coffee houses and taverns located in Dublin's Temple Bar area were frequented by many clubs and societies. According to *A short history of Temple Bar*, the Dublin Philosophical Society met at a tavern in Crow Street, the Hell Fire Club was established in a tavern called the old Eagle Tavern on Cork Hill, while the Freemasons Coffee House was near Essex Bridge, all of which are in close proximity to each other (see figure 1).<sup>14</sup> Daly's tavern, on College green, played host to many clubs and developed its own club aptly named, Daly's Club.<sup>15</sup> Morrison's on Dawson Street also played host to numerous club meetings. Debating societies, such as The Hist, the Devils Club and the Debating Society of High Street, in the late eighteenth-century, and reading clubs provided an important sphere for political discussion and dialogue and promoted the use and development of public space as a means to promote civic virtue and awareness, outlined in Hegel's civil society.

Figure 1 - Screen shot of 'Associational culture in Dublin (1780-1830)' Google map created using the primary source material gathered during this research. This is not a complete list but demonstrates the geographical locations of Dublin's associational world. This map is also reusable and can be added as an object in a digital article. Available at <http://g.co/maps/ezgxj> (22 April 2012)



<sup>13</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 92.

<sup>14</sup> Sean Murphy, *A short history of Dublin's Temple Bar*; available at <http://homepage.eircom.net/~257Escanjmurphy/dublin/templebar.htm> (28 Apr. 2010).

<sup>15</sup> *F.J.*, 11 June 1789, p. 3.

This use of public space for associational activity ‘helped create a new “public discourse” of the kind posited...by Jurgen Habermas’, as outlined by Clark,<sup>16</sup> and it is this idea which is essential to the development and maintenance of a universal, or more specifically, national consciousness. Public space and public discourse indoctrinates participants into the universal state, as individuals visualise themselves belonging to a large, imagined, social group. Associational activities centered around coffee houses and taverns promote an ‘outward looking’<sup>17</sup> modern society and generate modes of thinking which are linked to collective interests rather than individualistic ones. Referring again to Benedict Anderson, who asserts that an ‘imagined community’ transcends physical public space, we can view public associational activities in taverns and coffee houses as an example of the abstract extension of public space and the subsequent extraction of identity linked to this imagined, public space. Newspapers which report on this associational activity reinforce the link between public space and an imagined community of readers and members.<sup>18</sup> Kelly and Powell also reiterate Leerssen’s discussion of an ascendancy-biased public sphere, as they state that ‘in associated terms, it is clear that urban-dwelling Protestants were the dominant force, and that the emerging public sphere primarily benefited well-off Protestant men’.<sup>19</sup> However, it is true that associational activity in Dublin in the late eighteenth-century increasingly became politicised and while the majority of members were these ‘urban-dwelling Protestants’, many were also liberal Protestants who drew influence from the American and French Revolutions and sought to extend and incorporate Catholics in the public sphere dominated by ‘Protestant men’.

Increasingly the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century produced a cultural shift which incorporated Irish Catholics into the mainstream public sphere. This ‘cultural transfer’<sup>20</sup> also pertains to the reinvigoration and reestablishment of Gaelic Ireland within the public sphere through and within print culture and the public dissemination of various Gaelic manuscripts and written works. This ‘cultural transfer’ is also evident in the public sphere carved out by many associations during the period, including the United Irishmen but perhaps more explicitly through societies such as the

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<sup>16</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland*, p. 34.

<sup>19</sup> Kelly & Powell, ‘Introduction’, p. 19.

<sup>20</sup> Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland*, p. 22.

Gaelic Society, who were founded in Dublin in 1806, ‘for the preservation and publication of ancient, historical, and literary documents’.<sup>21</sup> Charitable societies are also involved in this ‘cultural transfer’ as many professed non-denominational membership, functionality and identity e.g. The Charitable Association for the Relief of the Sick Poor of all Religious Denominations (f. 1815).<sup>22</sup>

While Dublin’s subservience to London and Westminster was ever present in economic and political contexts, Dublin was on par with London in terms of social capital and its capacity to cultivate and invigorate associational culture. Dublin’s associational world did not operate within the same subserviences as its legal, religious, economic or political spheres. Significantly, even after the 1782 Constitution, which was celebrated for providing the Irish Parliament with legislative freedoms, the Irish government was still appointed by the British cabinet. Yet, Kelly and Powell assert that ‘developments in the 1720s paved the way for the quickening of the associational pulse and once it reached critical speed...it continued to beat rapidly’,<sup>23</sup> concluding that by the close of the eighteenth-century associational culture in Ireland had matured.<sup>24</sup> They also attest to the ‘dynamic character’ of Irish associational culture as it prompted and encouraged ‘radicals, moderates and conservatives to participate in political clubs and societies’.<sup>25</sup> It is in this respect that Dublin was not subservient to London, as associational culture flourished in the eighteenth-century despite subordination in other aspects of legislative and civil life. Clark and Gillespie assert that in London as in Dublin ‘centers for sociability, such as coffee-houses and a range of clubs and societies thrived in both places’,<sup>26</sup> and that Dublin boasted ‘music societies and concerts, learned and improvement societies and great public buildings’ which ranked Dublin ‘in cultural contention with the greater cities of early modern Europe’.<sup>27</sup>

Ireland’s evolving political and religious situation created a vibrant, politically motivated class which sought the social and national clarification and identity within clubs and societies that they could not find in government institutions. The construction

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<sup>21</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 60.

<sup>22</sup> *F.J.*, 28 Dec. 1815, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> Kelly & Powell, ‘Introduction’, p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>26</sup> Clark & Gillespie, ‘Introduction’, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

of the new Parliament House at College Green in the early to mid-eighteenth century was symbolic of its grand achievements, culminating later in the repeal of the Declaratory Act in 1782. This structure, purposefully built for both houses of parliament, also provided a political impetus for clubs and associations and the political interactions within the building provided many with political if not sometimes radical identities.

### *Consumer nationalism and associational activity*

Commercialisation of the urban centre and a revolution in consumerism promoted in Dublin, as in London, the use of associational frameworks to encourage and support consumer activity. Involvement in clubs and societies provided access to a network of potential customers who were acutely aware of the prestige associated with certain clubs and commodities. Material culture pertained not only to ‘luxury and high quality commodities’<sup>28</sup> but also to the powerful symbolic badge engendered through affinity and association and both can be used as a marker of inclusion in ‘imagined communities’ and socially define public spheres or spaces. Social networking and consumerism were inextricably linked. Clark shows this relationship between ‘high quality commodities’ and associations through various illustrations of goods such as highly decorated chairs, balloting and finance boxes, which were commissioned specifically for a society or club. Medals and honorary ribbons were also commissioned for specific societies and became a feature of freemasonry. Other Masonic type clubs, including the Friendly Brothers of St Patrick, used ribbons and medals which featured British and Irish iconography, reflecting the relationship between ‘knots’ in England and Ireland.<sup>29</sup> Figure 2 demonstrates this fine mix of commercialization, consumerism and identity, as commemorative goblets were engraved with “Success to the Irish Volunteers”. Indeed Stephen O’Connor’s PhD dissertation on ‘The Volunteers of 1778-1793, iconography and identity’ explores the use of material objects such as flags,

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<sup>28</sup> Dickson, ‘Death of a capital?’, p. 111.

<sup>29</sup> Victoria Solt Dennis, *Discovering friendly and fraternal societies: Their badges and regalia* (Malta, 2005), p. 12.

uniforms and ceramics related to Volunteer companies and the symbolism they engendered.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, an article in 1812 describes a

piece of plate voted by the Catholic Board, to the Hon. Captain Stanhope, in approbation of his liberal sentiments on religious liberty [as a] magnificent specimen of Irish workmanship...in the form of a covered cup; and in point of excellence and richness of embellishment...the entire height is 22 Inches.<sup>31</sup>

These artifacts not only represent commercial endeavor and a highly skilled artisan populace but are expressions of patriotism, national identity and associational affiliation. Expressions of identity through material culture are at the forefront of nationalist rhetoric and the use of objects, such as those described above, are the externalization of national identities. The use of material objects, as Ian Woodward states in *Understanding material culture* (2010), ‘mediate and assist’ individuals ‘in the performance of...personal and social identities’ and help construct a conceptual model of individuals and groups in the context of various communities.<sup>32</sup> In this sense we can separate the aesthetic value of the object from the cultural, social or political markers which the material artifact represents and perceive it as a symbol of an individual’s identity linked to group affiliation as signified by the object.

Figure 2 – Image of two engraved goblets, demonstrating the use of material objects to convey identity. Image from Sarah Foster, “Consumer nationalism in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Dublin.”

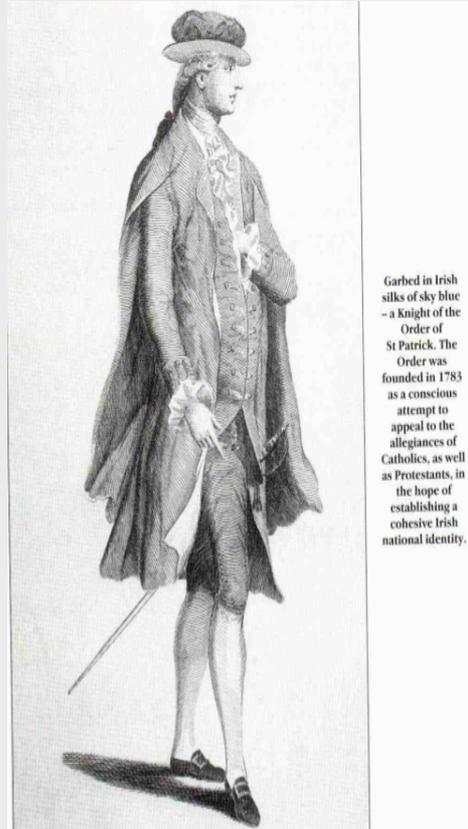


<sup>30</sup> Stephen O'Connor, 'The Volunteers of 1778-1793, iconography and identity' (PhD, NUI Maynooth, 2008).

<sup>31</sup> *F.J.*, 24 Nov. 1812, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> Ian Woodward, *Understanding material culture* (London, 2010), p. 134.

Figure 3 – Image of a Knight of the Order of St Patrick, who are more akin to a royal order than a conventional association, demonstrating their support of Irish Manufacture by wearing Irish made clothes. Image from Sarah Foster, “Consumer nationalism in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Dublin.”



In figure 2, the goblet on the left clearly indicates an affiliation to a group - the Irish Volunteers, while the goblet on the right, although supportive of the Irish linen trade, is not obviously linked to any one club or society. However, the inscription, ‘may the linen industry ever thrive’, leads us to another feature of associational culture as many clubs provided support and encouragement for Irish trade and manufacture as a secondary function or as a by-product of their associational activity. Support for the Irish linen industry, attracted the attention of many clubs including the Funny Club,<sup>33</sup> the Kildare Street Club,<sup>34</sup> the Gleeg Club<sup>35</sup> and the Club of Druids,<sup>36</sup> who all supported Irish manufacture by instructing their members to dress only in clothes of Irish manufacture. In 1784 the Kildare Street Club resolved ‘not to purchase or wear, for the

<sup>33</sup> *F.J.*, 24 June 1784, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Apr. 1784, p. 3.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Mar. 1801, p 3.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 June 1793, p. 4.

space of twelve months, any but the manufacture of Ireland'.<sup>37</sup> The Daly Club made a similar resolution in the same year,<sup>38</sup> while nearly a decade later in 1793, the Club of Druids, advertise their meeting at Luttrellstown with the Earl of Carhampton, as a dinner 'in that usual festive happiness what has always distinguished their meetings'.<sup>39</sup> This 'respectable body' adds to their 'credit' and image as true patriots by appearing in 'new clothes of Irish manufacture'.<sup>40</sup> In 1801 the Glee Club made similar assertions, as the

ancient, loyal, and respectable society of Citizens...[showed] an exemplary humane feeling, in resolving to appear in new dresses of Irish manufacture on their annual day of festivity...[St. Patrick's day]. It shews that in conviviality they have a generosity of heart that wishes to impart comfort to their distressed countrymen...their principles are loyal, [and] their spirit patriotic.<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, on numerous occasions the Glee Club instruct their members to 'appear as usual in Spick and Span Irish Manufacture'.<sup>42</sup> Sharing the same feast day as the Glee Club, the Order of the Knights of St Patrick, whose 'choice of St Patrick was a conscious attempt to claim the allegiances of Catholic and Protestant alike', also supported Irish manufacture as illustrated in figure 3 and promoted, as A.T.Q. Stewart terms it, 'non-sectarian nationalism'.<sup>43</sup>

Cloth was also used as a marker of social identity and allegiance within the Volunteers and was initially used as a display of prestige, wealth and political aspiration as each Volunteer company commissioned their own uniform, flags and banners. This use of cloth also represents the growth of the linen industry in Ulster and while full uniform was commissioned initially, over time this was reduced to a simple sash which represented a change in Volunteer membership from predominantly middle class to working class.<sup>44</sup> Although not all regalia was supportive or an expression of consumer nationalism. The Cherokee Club, a club in Dublin during the 1790s, on one occasion,

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 20 Apr. 1784, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 29 June 1793, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 10 Mar. 1801, p 3.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 10 Mar. 1803, p 3.

<sup>43</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 32.; see also A.T.Q. Stewart, *A deeper silence: the hidden roots of United Irish movement* (London, 1993).

<sup>44</sup> Neil Jarmen, 'Material of culture, fabric of identity' in Daniel Miller (ed.) *Material Culture, Why some things matter* (London, 1998)

‘determined to imitate savages in their actions as well as their name, paraded Abbey Street...[and] wore no hats, but a...black hood[s] which they drew over their head.’<sup>45</sup> An earlier article states that the Cherokees dressed in black ‘faced with red’ and wore ‘ornamented...buttons’.<sup>46</sup> While the Cherokees chose black the agrarian secret society, the White Boys, wore white shirts to hide their identity. Expression of identity through material culture was not just restricted to the wearing of Irish manufacture, as the Sackville Street Club was listed as a funding contributor to Nelson’s monument, which commemorated Lord Nelson and the Battle of Trafalgar.<sup>47</sup> The Hibernian Catch Club (flor. 1800s), a musical society, the Irish Harmonic Club and the Anacreontic Society (flor. 1800s) also pledged their support for Nelsons monument in 1806 at a grand concert in aid of its construction.<sup>48</sup>

Associational encouragement for local and national industry supports Clark’s notion of an ‘outward looking’ society but as Lisa Marie Griffith notes it is the ‘commercial community’ who not only generate trade and had the ‘leisure time and money to spend’ but who were the most active and ‘enthusiastically...engaged’ members of the various clubs and associations.<sup>49</sup> Clubs like the Ouzel Galley Society, whose sign can still be ‘seen affixed to the side of the reconstructed Commercial Buildings facing Dame Street’,<sup>50</sup> represent a burgeoning commercial class which generated and developed identity linked to attaining Irish commercial and trade status within the British Empire. Their significance, however, transcends their economic importance, as their domain of influence and membership ‘provided a forum where Catholics, Protestants and Dissenters could participate together’,<sup>51</sup> an important feature given the overwhelming sectarian nature of Irish society in the eighteenth-century.

Commercial clubs and trade benefit societies which support both local and national economic ventures are an important aspect in the development of Irish nationalism. Their implicit, and often explicit, support of home manufacture indicates the political and national consciousness of associations and corresponds to individual

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<sup>45</sup> *F.J.*, 13 Oct. 1792, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Mar. 1792, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Mar. 1808, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Jan. 1806, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Lisa Marie Griffith, ‘Dublin’s commercial clubs’, in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 109.

<sup>50</sup> Murphy, *A short history of Dublin’s Temple Bar*.

<sup>51</sup> Griffith, ‘Dublin’s commercial clubs’, p. 110.

members acting as true patriots, engaged in the maxims of civil society through reciprocal fulfillment of universal needs and wants - protecting the individual by supporting the collective. Sarah Foster describes these patriotic acts of 'buying Irish' as the politicisation of goods and states that the choosing, 'colouring and decoration of clothing, glass and furniture reflect the economic and political turmoil of the 1780s and 1790s, and yields insight into the formation of nationalist and unionist identities'.<sup>52</sup> Indeed these campaigns yielded more success in presenting and promoting a sense of Irishness than in having any 'dramatic economic effects'.<sup>53</sup> This consumer nationalism supported by the various clubs and societies indicates a strong commitment to national prosperity outside the imperial core and encouraged a nationalism based on the requirements and mutual concerns of a functioning economy and trade market, rather than on ideological disparities in religion. It also emphasises the relationship between material culture and ideas of nationalism through the support of national trade and endeavour and the proliferation of a home manufacture movement.

*Associational culture and respectability - improving societies, charity and education.*

Clark states, the 'pursuit of improvement...figures, to a greater or lesser extent, in the activity of virtually every associational type'.<sup>54</sup> This "improving" manifesto reflects the prevalent theme of societal improvement during the reign of George II, culminating as Victorian ideals of respectability. Ideas of improving various aspects of individual, communal or societal life is a fundamental concern of the majority of associations. These improvements include, the improvement and promotion of knowledge, whether religious, historical, agricultural or manufacturing, e.g. the Dublin Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (est. 1717) the Historical Society of Trinity College (est. 1770) and the Dublin Society (est. 1731), the improvement or protection of political and civil rights (which is contextually biased and determined) e.g. the United Irishmen (est. 1791) and the Orange Order (est. 1795), and the improvement of the arts, e.g. Musical Society of the Sons of Handel (flor. 1780s) and the Society of Musicians (flor 1780s). Clark mentions the Dublin Society as an exemplary body which

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<sup>52</sup> Sarah Foster, 'Consumer nationalism in 18th-century Dublin' in *History Today* (1997), p. 44.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 85.

‘endeavored to promote changes in agriculture, trade, and industry through numerous premiums and pamphlets’, and states that their *Weekly Observations* published advice on ‘road-building’ to ‘brewing’.<sup>55</sup> However, their most important contribution was undoubtedly publications which ‘focused on agriculture, trying to boost Irish output in order to feed the growing national population’,<sup>56</sup> as it is these activities which form part of the system of needs identified by Hegel and directly contribute to the development of national infrastructure, complementary to government or parliamentary policy and provide essential progress in agriculture but also in political thought and discourse. The (Royal) Dublin Society can be seen as a ‘quasi-governmental’<sup>57</sup> society providing essential national services and participating in an early form of civil activism.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, James Livesey describes the Dublin Society as pursuing ‘many of the activities we normally associate with states’, acting as ‘the principal agent of economic development in the country’.<sup>59</sup> Toby Barnard details the history and importance of the Dublin Society in his contribution to Kelly and Powell’s collection, *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland*, and points to the ‘civic-minded’ nature of the society.<sup>60</sup> Kelly and Powell, and Blackstock, refer to this function of associations as akin to ‘variants of democratic governance’,<sup>61</sup> yielding as it were state like functionality and support from civil, associational endeavors.

Yet, as Barnard states in his contribution to Kelly and Comerford’s 2010 publication, even this ‘civic-minded’ society may have implicitly excluded Catholics from membership ‘before the end of the eighteenth-century’.<sup>62</sup> Often described as a society which ‘incubated a public sphere alongside’,<sup>63</sup> but separate from, the political arena, Barnard argues that although it wished to act like a national organisation it failed

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>58</sup> T.C. Barnard, “‘Grand metropolis’ or “‘The anus of the world’”? The cultural life of eighteenth-century Dublin’, in Peter Clark and Raymond Gillespie (eds) *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (Oxford, 2001), p. 195.

<sup>59</sup> James Livesey, ‘The Dublin Society in eighteenth-century Irish political thought’ in *The Historical Journal*, xlvii, no. 3 (2004), p. 615.

<sup>60</sup> Toby Barnard, ‘The Dublin Society and other improving societies, 1731-85’ in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 57.

<sup>61</sup> Kelly & Powell, ‘Introduction’, p. 18.

<sup>62</sup> T.C. Barnard, ‘Sites and rites of associational life in eighteenth-century Ireland’ in Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds) *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010), p. 12.

<sup>63</sup> Barnard, ‘The Dublin Society and other improving societies, 1731-85’, p. 53.

to do so because of the Society's (unofficial) exclusionary approach. Notwithstanding this, the Dublin Society were committed to establishing an Irish past rooted in Gaelic history and tradition through antiquarian pursuits, forging a national identity rooted in Gaelic culture. Barnard reveals that an antiquities committee was set up in 1772 to 'rescue "that ancient nation [Ireland]...from the darkness in which it has lain buried so long a time"' and as such set about collecting old documents which included Irish language text and manuscripts.<sup>64</sup> In many ways, although the Dublin Society effectively excluded Catholics as members, endeavors to reveal Ireland's ancient past contribute directly to establishing a public sphere which recognised, as Leerseen asserts, Catholic Ireland as a domain of historical and cultural influence within the abstract notion of an Irish public sphere.

Other associations such as the Beef-Stake Club, which formed in Dublin 1791, also professed their support for home industry and improvement as an expression of civic patriotism and through newspaper publications expressed these patriotic principles. Upon their formation in October 1791, the *Freeman's Journal* published the Beef-Stake Club's request that,

all useful works are to be warmly patronized, and encouragement given for improvements in mechanics, husbandry, trade and manufacture. For this purpose a certain sum is to be deposited by each of the members, which will form a stock purse, as the fund for carrying the patriotic intention into full effect.<sup>65</sup>

The Beef-Stake Club, 'composed of the principal Lords and Gentlemen in both houses of Parliament', stated that, 'no political subjects whatever is to be introduced, or made the topic of conversation – the principal object in view being to established a friendly intercourse',<sup>66</sup> a sentiment reiterated in 1794 and 1795 - 'at our Club we shall have no political jar'.<sup>67</sup> Although the Beef-Stake Club professed to meet for the sake of civic patriotism and for the improvement of manufacture, contemporary newspapers report on their eating and drinking or conviviality rather than achievements in improving Irish manufacture or trade. In 1810 the *Freeman's Journal* reports on their 'first dinner of the season' and state, 'this association' is 'so eminently distinguished for its musical and

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>65</sup> *F.J.*, 4 Oct. 1791, p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 24 Feb. 1794, p. 2.; 9 May 1795, p. 1.

social enjoyment'.<sup>68</sup> In 1817 it is described as a 'harmonic and festive society', 'displaying a great preeminence over every, other Instruction of vocal harmony in the empire',<sup>69</sup> and after investigation the *Freeman's Journal* concludes that the Society 'in the strictest sense' is 'a musical and convivial association'.<sup>70</sup> At what point this society becomes a convivial association, with no reference to the improvement of national industry, is unclear. However, as we have seen sociability and conviviality is also an important part of associational culture, providing essential outlets, networks and forums for debate and discussion for members and citizens alike.

Dublin's associational world was also the center of the city's social life. Music and theatre organised by clubs and societies were not only for philanthropic purposes but provided members with a social outlet and an opportunity to mix with like minded citizens. Clubs, such as the Irish Harmonic Club (est. 1803), the Phil-Harmonic Society (flor. 1780s) and the Society of Musicians organised formal plays and orchestral music, while many other societies, including the Beef-Stake Club and the Freemasons used song as an essential part of their meetings. As Kelly and Powell discuss, sociability is an essential part of associational activity and all clubs, regardless of their manifesto, provided a social function for its members.

This sociability feature also supports philanthropic endeavors and as such many 'improvement societies' carry out important civic duties through fund raising activities. Societies such as the Society of Musicians and the Musical Society of the Sons of Handel, can be described as improving the arts in society, but their involvement in raising money, for such benefits as the Fund for Relieving the Sick Poor of the Methodist Society, in which they performed the Oratorio of the Messiah for free, demonstrate the interactive nature of charity and "improvement" societies.<sup>71</sup> Many associations held benefits or banquets as a means to raise funds for various charities in the city, even though this was not necessarily the association's primary objective or purpose and represents the many facets or roles individual associations fulfill. As such, the student debating society, the Historical Society of Trinity College, which is not at charitable organisation per se, also contributed to charity and reflects the multifaceted nature of associations. In their session, October 1770 to June 1771,

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 8 Dec. 1810, p. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 15 Jan. 1817, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 1 May 1817, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> *D.C.*, 5 Jan. 1788, p. 863.

a committee of ten members was appointed “to collect subscriptions for the relief of the poor at this period of distress and misery”, and at the meeting following their appointment they placed a sum of £6 at the disposal of the Society.<sup>72</sup>

More explicit charity societies, such as the Society for the Relief and Release of Poor Confined Debtors (flor. 1780s), the Dublin Society for Promoting the Comforts of the Poor (flor. 1790s), and the Association for Promoting the Comforts of the Poor of Finglas and its Vicinity (flor. 1800s) characterised the desire to improve the poor and wretched, by the well off and benevolent part of Dublin’s burgeoning society. Other societies such as the Royal Irish Academy, established in 1785, characterised self-improvement for the elite and upper-class, while trade guilds or corporations provided some of the same social interactions for merchants and tradesmen and reflect Hegel’s interaction between these institutions and civil society.

The work carried out by charity clubs and societies in Dublin provided essential services and support to Dublin’s poorest citizens and provided an opportunity for patriots to exercise their civic and moral duties in society. Hospitals, orphanages and other institutions were established throughout Dublin during the eighteenth-century, many of which were established or funded through voluntary subscriptions, charity sermons and the funds raised by clubs and associations. The Freemasons were among many clubs which sponsored the establishment of various hospitals and orphanages including the Masonic Female Orphan School (1797).<sup>73</sup> The longest running and oldest Dublin charity, the Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers Society (est. 1790), stated in 1797 that they alone assisted 18,430 individuals.<sup>74</sup> Figures for 1815 from the Charitable Association for the Relief of the Sick Poor of all Religious Denominations reveal that this association alone, ‘afforded aid to 2,650 families consisting of 6,526 individuals’.<sup>75</sup> Another society, the Stranger’s Friend Society, was established in 1790 to

lessen the calamities of life; to afford relief to the deserving object; to snatch from the jaws of death the creature hurrying untimely to the tomb, the victim of

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<sup>72</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 23.

<sup>73</sup> Joseph Archer, *Statistical survey of the county Dublin, with observations on the means of improvement* (Dublin, 1801), p. 132. (available at Google Books).

<sup>74</sup> M.J. Tutty, ‘Dublin’s oldest charity’ in *Dublin Historical Record*, xvi, no. 3 (1961), p. 75.

<sup>75</sup> *F.J.*, 28 Feb. 1815, p. 2.

cold, famine and disease; for the relief of the sick and indigent of every description of religion, sect and party.<sup>76</sup>

Their only requirement for assistance was ‘evident distress’ and in 1801 stated ‘in the last year, they relived 2,284 families, including 5,244 persons’.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, the 1801 publication, *Statistical survey of county Dublin with observations on the means of improvement*, provides a full list of charitable organisations set up to tackle the condition of the poor in Ireland’s capital and stands as testament to the important work which voluntary societies carried out during the period, as does *New picture of Dublin...* (1821), which describes charitable societies such as the Association for the Suppression of Mendicity in Dublin (est. 1818).<sup>78</sup> The sheer volume of clubs and societies with philanthropic functionality reflects the scale of Irish poverty during the period. One contemporary observer wrote ‘few capitals in Europe...have in proportion to their population more charitable foundations that Dublin has at present’.<sup>79</sup> Numerous contemporary, late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century, accounts from visitors and tourists to Dublin comment on the extent of destitution and pauperism which existed in the city. One account by an Englishman, Curwen, made shortly after the Union, reveals ‘poverty, disease and wretchedness exist in every great town...but in Dublin the misery is indescribable’.<sup>80</sup>

Each of these “improving” societies contribute to the identity and social status of their members but can also stigmatise and label those they seek to help. As stated numerous societies in Dublin during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century were expressly and specifically established to address the growing problem of poor and indebted families or individuals. Societies such as the Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers Society, reflect the humanity and charitable nature of Dublin’s population. Their resolutions, however, distinguished between the ‘honest poor’ and the ‘vagabond and the beggar’,<sup>81</sup> as they would only help, ‘persons who had never begged abroad, industrious mechanics, and indigent roomkeepers, who, above all others, are the most

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<sup>76</sup> Archer, *Statistical survey of the county Dublin*, p. 134.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> John James McGregor, *New picture of Dublin: comprehending a history of the city, an accurate account of its various establishments and institutions* (Dublin, 1821) (available at Google Books).

<sup>79</sup> Constantia Maxwell, *Dublin under the Georges (1714-1830)* (London, 1946), p. 169.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 138.

<sup>81</sup> Tutty, ‘Dublin’s oldest charity’, p. 73.

pitiable objects of distress'.<sup>82</sup> Their decision to change their name to, the Charitable Society for the Relief of the Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers of all Religious Persuasions in the City of Dublin, in 1799, may be a consequence or direct influence of the ideals upheld by the United Irishmen during the 1790s but they still relied upon sermons to boost their income.

Philanthropic endeavors then, were not always so "charitable". Societies such as Incorporated Society for the Relief of the Poor, and for Punishing Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars (flor. 1780s) reflected this two-tiered system and in many ways were more about "improving" the image of Dublin rather than the fate of its inhabitants. The Corporation for Badging the Poor (flor. 1780s) clearly held contemptuous views of the visible poor on the streets of Dublin as they proposed to stamp the poor with a degrading declaration of their destitution. This society, however, because of their links to Parliament, might not technically come under the umbrella of associational culture but their existence serves to demonstrate how voluntary societies such as The Charitable Society in 1774 came to hold views which discriminated between 'the different classes of industrious poor'.<sup>83</sup> One citizen asserted, 'that there are numbers of honest poor creatures out of place, it is not less true, that there are numbers equally idle and vicious who are a daring pest to the community'.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, the work carried out by the Association for the Suppression of Mendicity in Dublin (est. 1818), was described as introducing the

habits of industry and morality, and restored [individuals] to society as sound members, thousands of who, but for this Association, had continued to infest the community as mendicants, or worse characters; and it has protected your children, your wives, and your daughters, from the impertinent importunities, and depraved discoursed of the sturdy and determined beggar.<sup>85</sup>

Views such as this fed into the stereotype of the poor Irish beggar, a view held not only in Ireland but across Europe, which categorized the indigenous Irish as lazy and naturally idle.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, another address in 1787, printed in the *Dublin Chronicle*, on the

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> *F.J.*, 5 July 1774, p. 2.

<sup>84</sup> *F.J.*, 12 Sep. 1786, p. 1.

<sup>85</sup> McGregor, *New picture of Dublin: comprehending a history of the city*, p. 243.

<sup>86</sup> Eamon Ó Ciosáin, 'Attitudes towards Ireland and the Irish in Enlightenment France' in Graham Gargett and Geraldine Sheridan (eds), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment 1700-1800* (London, 1999).

establishment of Sunday Schools, reflects the ridicule and discrimination felt towards the lower class in society. An ‘Address to the Ladies, Recommending the Establishment of Sunday Schools and Schools of Industry under Female Inspection’, indicates the existence of ‘different ranks among mankind’ consisting of the ‘superior’ and the ‘poor’ as appointed by ‘our all-wise and beneficent Creator’.<sup>87</sup> Although this address stems from Britain, the reprinting of such an article may indicate the existence of similar views of the poor as ‘ignorant and indigent fellow-creatures’.<sup>88</sup> It is these typologies, consisting of a rank or hierarchy in society which, later in the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century, propagate ideas of inferior and superior national race and religion.

As this 1787 address indicates, the establishment of Sunday schools and the education of the poor was also a feature and activity of many associational clubs. Associations or societies which educated the poor, contributed directly to Dublin’s social capital and economic development. Charter or Charity schools, usually sponsored by a combination of parliamentary grants and private donations, were often run by religious organizations. Educating the poor was seen as an important civilising process. A proposal for an Irish education system in 1787, put forward by Thomas Orde, the chief secretary, predicted that such a system, ‘when carried into effect’, would diffuse ‘knowledge through all ranks of people’ and

introduce a degree of civilisation scarcely known in any country; its operations will in a few years effectively banish drunkenness and habitual idleness, those checks to Irish industry, and substitute in their room the national blessings of integrity, activity and industry.<sup>89</sup>

Although a national education system would not be put in place until the 1830s, this proposal shows the importance education prefigured to national development. Indeed, education is a central feature of Hegel’s civil society. As an educator he saw education as the main conduit for the individual’s transformation from existing only within the family unit to participating in the universal or external world and emphasises *Bildung*, cultural experience and education, as the means to transform individuals from the ‘innocence’ imposed by ‘the state of nature’ to participants in the complex system of

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<sup>87</sup> *D.C.*, 22 Dec. 1787, p. 814.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *D.C.*, 1 May 1787, p. 5; Also see James Kelly, ‘The context and course of Thomas Orde’s plan of education of 1787’ in *Irish Journal of Education*, xx, no. 1 (1986), pp 3-26.

needs and wants.<sup>90</sup> Education, in Hegel's eyes, was not just about schooling per se but about the indoctrination of the individual into the system of universal laws, rights and social parameters set out in the civil society, encapsulated in the idea of *Bildung*.

Hedge schools across Ireland also made important advancements in education, as did established Sunday Schools scattered across Dublin. Both provided important educational services in the interim to national education. A contemporary commentator notes the utility of Sunday schools and observes their success:

The operation of Sunday schools on the tempers and the dispositions of the children in them, is already visible in its best forms. And it is very plain that these children which have been tutored to a knowledge of their duty to God and man, will have a better chance to prove good men and good citizens, than those who have been brought up in ignorance.<sup>91</sup>

The connection between religion and education was an important feature of charity or Sunday schools but the majority offered instruction to 'poor children of every persuasion'.<sup>92</sup> An ability to read and write offered the poor obvious benefits in employment and many instructors saw literacy as a means to protect children from ignorance and deviance. Occupying these children on the Sabbath protected them against 'untimely deaths' as one news writer commented: 'It is well known that to the mis-spending of Sunday has been attributed most of the untimely deaths of malefactors'.<sup>93</sup>

This diffusion of knowledge through the establishment of Sunday schools was also supplemented by improving societies which sought to provide education through the promotion of literature, reading and the establishment of more permanent schools. Societies such as the Incorporated Society in Dublin for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland (founded 1733),<sup>94</sup> the Society for the Education of the Poor of Ireland (1800-1830), Irish Society for the Promoting of the Education of the Native Irish through the medium of their own Language (1818),<sup>95</sup> etc., symbolise the expressions of a particular form of civic duty or activism by a particular portion of the population.

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<sup>90</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, p. 125.

<sup>91</sup> *D.C.*, 7 Aug. 1787, p. 352.

<sup>92</sup> *D.C.*, 31 July 1787, p. 312

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 82.

<sup>95</sup> Brian Ó Cuív, 'Irish language and literature, 1691-1845' in T.W. Moody and W.E. Vaughan (eds), *A new history of Ireland, eighteenth-century Ireland, 1691-1800* (Oxford, 1998), p. 377.

These improving societies sought to educate and improve the situation of the lower classes in Irish society and express a form of civic patriotism built upon class divisions. The diffusion of knowledge, seen as beneficial to morality and therefore of universal concern, was a subject which attracted great interest, not least in the debates and discussion at the Historical Society of Trinity College, but within society at large. The Dublin Library Society (est. 1791), also provided important services to a more sophisticated clientele, as did the Dublin Institution (est. 1811), ‘for the purpose of enlarging the means of useful knowledge, by the establishment of a select and extensive library, and of lectures on the most useful subjects of science’.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, *Daniel O’Connell: His early life and journal, 1795 to 1802* (1906) by Arthur Houston, reveals that Daniel O’Connell, leader of the Catholic Association in the 1820s and whom we will discuss in greater detail in later sections, used the collections at the Dublin Library Society.<sup>97</sup>

Clubs and societies which promoted education to all members of society often did so for proselytising purposes. This is reflected in bible societies which emerged in the early nineteenth-century, including the Bible Society in Belfast and the Hibernian Bible Society or the Dublin Bible Society (1806).<sup>98</sup> In 1808, the *Freeman’s Journal* published some of the resolutions of the Bible Society in Belfast, which stated

we are associated on the [broadest] basis, without distinction of sect or party, embracing all who consider the Scriptures as the word of God; we are associated for the most important purpose, the circulation of the Holy Bible.<sup>99</sup>

The society also stated that its aim was to make available copies of the scriptures, for ‘all classes and denominations’.<sup>100</sup> Brian Ó Cuív states that many bible societies in the early nineteenth-century used Irish to promote the teaching of religion, yet despite this, or perhaps because of this, ‘for the most part the Bible societies were opposed by the Catholic clergy, and they were viewed with abhorrence by the majority of the people’.<sup>101</sup> The Catholic Book Society, who published their first report in 1828, was

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<sup>96</sup> John Watson Stewart (ed.), *The gentlemen and citizen’s almanac, for the year of our Lord, 1815* (Dublin, 1815), p. 203.

<sup>97</sup> Arthur Houston, *Daniel O’Connell: his early life, and journal, 1795-1802* (London, 1906), p. 130, available at <http://www.archive.org/details/danieloconnellhi00oconiala> (18 Mar. 2011).

<sup>98</sup> *F.J.*, 15 Sep. 1808, p. 3.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Ó Cuív, ‘Irish language and literature, 1691-1845’, p. 377.

also concerned with ‘the diffusion of useful knowledge throughout Ireland’ (this pamphlet is now available in CRADLE).<sup>102</sup> The Society’s stated objectives include,

to furnish to the people of Ireland, in the most cheap and convenient manner, useful information on the truths and duties of the Christian Religion...to supply to all classes of persons, satisfactory refutations of the prevailing errors of the present age...to assist in supplying to schools throughout Ireland, the most approved books of elementary instruction.<sup>103</sup>

To achieve this, the Society proposed to ‘print, re-print or purchase for distribution, such works as any of three of the Guardians [Catholic bishops] may consider suited to promote the objects of the Society’.<sup>104</sup> The Catholic Book Society’s activities and those of the Bible Societies and other societies, which promoted the diffusion of knowledge through print, represent and reflect the importance in which Benedict Anderson places in print capitalism and is an activity which is linked to the promotion of nationalism and the creation of collective identity. Creating an imagined community of readers, with similar interests fortifies notions of belonging to a universal society and engages both the reader and the clubs and associations which promote this activity in a reciprocal relationship within Hegel’s system of needs.

Debating societies also provided important forums for public debate and discourse. One of the most influential and important debating societies for which we have a substantial body of evidence, the Historical Society of Trinity College forms the basis of our case study chapters 6 and 7. Other debating societies in Dublin included the Devil’s Debating Society and the Debating Society of High Street who in 1780 debated, ‘Whether France be politically justifiable in forming an alliance with the revolted British Colonies?’<sup>105</sup> The utility and importance of debating to the development of the public sphere, public discourse and political ideology will be looked at in the next chapter on the Historical Society of Trinity College.

The voluntary or civic nature of these charitable associations confirms the classical tradition of civil society as supporting the development of principles of morality and is echoed through Burke’s assertions that ‘when men act in bodies, is

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<sup>102</sup> *First report of the Catholic Book Society, for the diffusion of useful knowledge throughout Ireland* (Dublin, 1828), available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> *F.J.*, 25 Nov. 1780, p. 3.

power'. Clark echoes this sentiment and states that during the last 'decades of the [eighteenth] century there was a consensus that the surging tide of social problems was best repulsed not by the state but by philanthropic and social control associations'.<sup>106</sup> Civic virtue again is intrinsic to Hegel's system of needs. The development and continued existence of these charitable clubs and societies reflect the complex structures of this system, as one which transcends individual needs and through social participation becomes the satisfaction of others needs. Voluntary action of this nature is seen as superior to intervention by the state.<sup>107</sup>

Yet, however altruistic these outward expressions of improvement were, supported and propagated through associational activity, they also served to contradict the notion that Ireland was 'backward compared to England'<sup>108</sup> and portrayed Dublin as a progressive metropolis, encouraging the improvement of all aspects of public and private life. Societies such as the Dublin Society highlighted the intellectual and technological capabilities of the Irish intelligentsia and while admittedly restricted to the upper and middle class, their achievements highlighted in their vast publications on various topics, provided an important sense of "national" achievement and academic success and confidence.

Improvement societies or reformist bodies 'from the 1770s' were, as Clark states, 'often linked to Masonic lodges, [and] presaged the upsurge during the early 1790s of United Irishmen clubs, which were associated with local reading and trade clubs',<sup>109</sup> such as the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge, and the Belfast Reading Society.<sup>110</sup> The importance of Freemasonry is highlighted by Clark's dedication of a full chapter to the Masonic tradition. Their achievements as a transnational society highlight the importance of rigorous associational structures. Their use of local, regional and grand lodges imposed a hierarchical structure, which maintained order and stability. While their secrecy led to conspiracy theories enveloped in mysticism, magic and pagan witchcraft, it also served, as Clark asserts, to 'heighten public interest and attract a flood of new members'.<sup>111</sup> Their philanthropic endeavours are well noted and confirmed by

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<sup>106</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, pp 178-9.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>110</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 145.

<sup>111</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 262.

the grand officer's declaration in 1793 that, 'charity is the basis of our order',<sup>112</sup> charity for non-members as well as their brethren.

Another type of association discussed by Clark are benefit societies which provide mutual aid or relief to contributing members in times of sickness and inability to work. Yet, as Clark states, they are not a feature of Irish associational culture in the eighteenth-century and only develop substantially in the early nineteenth-century.<sup>113</sup> It is telling that neither Kelly and Powell, or Kelly and Comerford's volumes contain any discussion of benefit societies. However, in his discussion of Irish freemasonry, Petri Mirala refers to this deficiency in Irish associational culture and states that the scarcity of benefit societies may have contributed to the proliferation and success of Irish freemasonry.<sup>114</sup>

#### *Irish Freemasonry, the United Irishmen and non-sectarian nationalism*

Dublin during the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries established itself as 'the main hub' of Freemason activity in Ireland, with links between Irish and English lodges persisting.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, Clark points to a bi-directional influence and interaction, as Irish lodges based their structures on the Grand Lodge in London during the early eighteenth-century, only to return this structural favor in 1751, when,

Irish masons, led by Laurence Dermott, played a key role in setting up in London a rival grand lodge of Ancients which proceeded to divide English freemasonry during the late eighteenth-century.<sup>116</sup>

Irish Freemasonry not only provided important associational benefits but also grounds for political and social interaction between Catholics and Protestant, indeed Daniel O'Connell joined the Irish Freemasons in 1799.<sup>117</sup> Thomas McLoughlin writes that the Masonic lodges were 'almost the only sphere in which Catholics and Protestants could

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 350.

<sup>114</sup> Petri Mirala, 'Masonic sociability and its limitations: the case of Ireland' in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 317.

<sup>115</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 317.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>117</sup> Patrick Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant country, the papist constituency in eighteenth-century Dublin* (Dublin, 1998), p. 144.

meet on equal terms' as they banned religion and politics from lodge discussions.<sup>118</sup> However, 'religious tolerance shown by some lodges was counterbalanced by others that refused to admit Catholics',<sup>119</sup> as Mirala explains in Kelly and Powell's publication. That said, lodges which admitted Catholics created an important setting of cooperation and mutual respect which contributed to the development of political networks and aspirations. In spite of a papal decree forbidding membership, according to Patrick Fagan Catholics made up 40% of Freemason membership in Dublin, which not only provided lodges for the upper, professional and middle class but also lodges 'with a distinctly proletarian bias'.<sup>120</sup> Freemasonry also provided an important infrastructure and network for the United Irishmen to imitate and infiltrate. After their suppression in 1794 the United Irishmen used the Mason's system of lodges with limited numbers or members and many units of the United Irishmen in Dublin used 'freemason lodges as fronts for their own activities';<sup>121</sup> indeed the newly appointed deputy grand master was Walter Wade, a United Irishman no less.

Yet, even before the establishment of the United Irishmen there is evidence that freemasons were involved with other militia groups in Dublin. The funeral of a Mr. David Corbet, leader of the Dublin Independent Volunteers band, in August 1787 was attended by 'Knights Templar, Master and Wardens of several lodges and other freemasons', indicating affiliations.<sup>122</sup> This relationship is also confirmed by Powell.<sup>123</sup>

A publication in the *Northern Star*, January 1793, as highlighted by Nancy Curtin, demonstrates not only club interaction between the freemasons and other bodies, but their involvement with political, social and charitable issues;

At an assembly in Tyrone, "while expressing their loyalty to the constitution in theory, the Tyrone masons called for practical reforms to alleviate the stark conditions of the Irish lower class", they also expressed their thank to the Volunteers and supported all efforts to achieve Catholic emancipation.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 32.

<sup>119</sup> Mirala, 'Masonic sociability and its limitations', p. 328.

<sup>120</sup> Patrick Fagan, 'Infiltration of Dublin Freemason lodges by United Irishmen and other republican groups' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, xiii (1998), p. 68.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

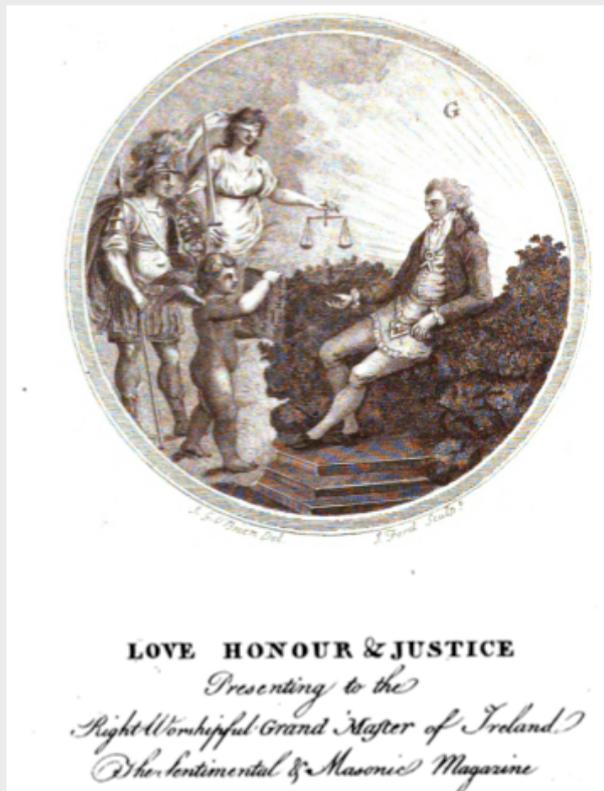
<sup>122</sup> *D.C.*, 9 Aug. 1787, p. 360.

<sup>123</sup> Powell, "Associate for the purpose of deliverance and glory", p. 30.

<sup>124</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 56.

Although a Tyrone lodge, this declaration is echoed in Dublin lodges which were numerous and linked to United Irish activity after 1794. An important observation made by A.T.Q. Stewart was that ‘the influence of Freemasonry from northern Ireland on the Irish Volunteers in the closing decades of the [eighteenth] century generated a new sense of non-sectarian nationalism which led to the 1798 rebellion’.<sup>125</sup> This non-sectarian nationalism is important for the United Irish cause and is seen reflected in the United Irish dogma and their roots in the north of Ireland. Very much at the forefront of Enlightenment theory and articulation, the Freemasons principle of no religion and no politics within the confines of the lodges, set the tone for secular participation and co-operation, certainly maintaining the fundamental ideology of civil society as distinct from state and religion. Enlightenment influence is evident from the frontispiece of the *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, July 1792, which depicts the Grand Master of Ireland receiving love, honour and justice - figure 4.

Figure 4 - Love, Honour and Justice being presented to the Grand Master of Ireland, indicative of Enlightenment sentiment



That said evidence of United Irishmen’s and other republican infiltration of Masonic lodges indicates that rules which banned politics and religion may have been

<sup>125</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 32.

ignored, indeed the Historical Society of Trinity College operated under similar restrictions, as they were banned from debating modern events and people. However, as we will see in the next chapter, modern events and politics was never far from Hist debates. The Freemasons manifestation as a sociable or convivial club is discussed by Mirala and demonstrates the importance of the sociable or leisurely aspect of associational clubs. Indeed the *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, reads more like a hobbyist journal or modern magazine than a publications by the mystical and mysterious freemasons. Articles include a traveler's guide to Rome, 'etiquette for mourners', a number of poems and a number of articles pertaining to Russian and Polish history.<sup>126</sup> The contents of this magazine point to a largely sociable function and in line with their ethos on politics and religion there are no political or religious articles.

The Masonic infrastructures influenced other fraternal groups such as the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick and the Order of St. Patrick, evident in the use of similar material objects and club regalia, illustrated by Victoria Solt Dennis in *Discovering friendly and fraternal societies: Their badges and regalia*, (2005). Both clubs refer to a Masonic type language register, using terms like benevolent, knights, knots, etc., and appointing 'General Grand Knots' to the various lodges.<sup>127</sup> Both societies establish highly structured, hierarchical bodies, and in many ways embody the 'rational-legal associations' described in previous sections.

Founded in the seventeenth-century the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick professed a cross channel membership, patronage and series of lodges or knots at various locations in England and Ireland. They formed to 'promote friendship and benevolence amongst all men and with this view inculcating and encouraging loyalty between man and man to put down the barbarous practice of dueling'.<sup>128</sup> This opposition to dueling reflects much public opinion on the practice in the late eighteenth-century and was a topic much debated at the Historical Society of Trinity College. The laws and statutes of the Friendly Brother of St. Patrick reveal the benevolent and amicable nature of the society. A series of 'lessons' in their pamphlet refer to the importance of friendship:

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<sup>126</sup> *The Sentimental and Masonic magazine, for July, 1792* (Dublin, 1792).

<sup>127</sup> *The fundamental laws, statutes and constitution of the ancient and most benevolent Order of the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick*, Third Edition (Dublin, 1799), available at Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.

<sup>128</sup> A.M. Fraser, 'The Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick', in *Dublin Historical Record*, xiv, no. 2 (1956) p. 34.

IX. Forsake not an old Friend, for the new is not comparable to him: a new Friend is as new Wine; when it is old, thou shalt drink it with Pleasure...

XIII. Love thy Friend and be faithful unto him: but if thou bewrayest his Secrets follow no more after him, and warn of the use of profane language.<sup>129</sup>

The Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick are described as ‘welcoming’<sup>130</sup> and in line with freemasonry rhetoric their laws state that,

XVI. No Person whatsoever shall be admitted into this ORDER who does not profess himself a Christian. Nor shall any Religious, Political, National, or Party Debates, be permitted in any Knot.<sup>131</sup>

Similar to the Freemasons the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick endeavored to promote non-sectarian cooperation and association, yet to what extent this occurred is unclear. However, it is this reluctance or refusal to enter into party or national politics, or indeed follow national or political ‘fads and fashions’, which may have secured the Friendly Brothers survival into the nineteenth and twentieth century. However, regardless of their political or national affiliations, the statutes and laws of the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick provide an important and almost ideological replica of Hegel’s civil society.

Man being in his natural State, the most naked and helpless of all Creatures, is forced to fly to Society for Assistance; where, by Means of the Benefits mutually paid and received, his Weakness is protected, his Infirmities relieved, and all his Wants comfortably supplied: He therefore, that is the best Member of Society, is consequently the best Man...it is hoped it may prove somewhat conducive to the good of Society in general.<sup>132</sup>

This statement points to the interaction of the individual in a social system which benefits the whole of society and the individual, and in this respect the ideological rhetoric of the Friendly Brothers holds significance to civil society theory, but also nationalist theory.

The Friendly Brothers of St Patrick demonstrate a type of associational patriotism which strived to achieve a form of non-sectarian identity as they banned politics or national debate from their meetings. Yet, while societies such as the Friendly Brothers of St Patrick, the Freemasons and indeed the Beef-Stake Club declared

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<sup>129</sup> *The fundamental laws, statutes and constitution*, p. 20.

<sup>130</sup> Barnard, ‘Sites and rites of associational life in eighteenth-century Ireland’, p. 12.

<sup>131</sup> *The fundamental laws, statutes and constitution*, p. 14.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

themselves free from politics and national debates, Dublin during the late eighteenth-century was highly politicised and socially motivated, and the radicalism of the 1780s and 90s generated interest in a number of clubs and societies which were highly political and concerned with national interests.

### *Political clubs and societies in Dublin*

Clark and Morris indicate urbanization and industrialization as an invigorator of associational impulses. However, with urbanisation and industrialisation comes politicisation. This process is evident in the resolutions, toasts and functions of many of the burgeoning clubs and societies in Dublin including the Society of Free Citizens (circa 1750-1784), the Constitutional Society (est. 1784), the Gleeg Club (circa 1760 - 1800), the Aggregate Club (flor. 1780s), the Congress (flor. 1780s), the Whig Club (est. 1789), the Whigs of the Capital (est. 1791) and of course the United Irishmen (est. 1791). Of the many clubs and societies we have considered in this overview of associational culture in Dublin, political clubs are the most important in terms of promoting nationalism and developing political and social spheres which are both inclusive and exclusive. Associations represent the collective interests of members, yet these interests are not in isolation from the wider public sphere and are reflective of universal interests which affect all citizens and not just those of particular members. Public discourse on political clubs and societies, however, reflect conflicted political stances and the ambivalence with which some viewed these radical, political groups. In 1785 the *Freeman's Journal* described the Aggregate Club as 'a set of idle turbulent fellows, of neither property nor consequence, and the scum of public fermentation', while the *Dublin Evening Post* and the *Volunteers* and *Hibernian Journal* think them, 'worthy and respectable citizens – friends to freedom and the rights of mankind'.<sup>133</sup> In the same article the Congress, a constitutional club, is described by the *Freeman's Journal* as 'an illegal assembly of factious demagogues, to subvert Parliament and establish a democracy' while the *Dublin Evening Post* and the *Volunteer* and *Hibernian Journal* describe them as 'the real representation of the people – virtuous reformers of the state- men of honor and principle'.<sup>134</sup> This article, printed in the *Freeman's Journal*

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<sup>133</sup> *F.J.*, 6 Jan. 1785, p. 1.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

and under the authorship of ‘The Centinel’, may be propaganda but the ‘exceedingly contradictory’ views of these clubs represent the ideological contradictions which existed in Irish society at the time. Analogies can be made between associational culture in England and Ireland during late eighteenth-century, but political and religious turmoil in Ireland, contributed to distinct advancements in associational culture along political and national lines.

The multitude of politically motivated clubs and associations, however short lived or politically inactive (usually because sociability takes over), is testament to the civil, political and social functions which associational culture sought to fulfill. Many of the political clubs and associations which emerged during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century sought to politicise and address the political and social issues which created a two-tiered legal system in Ireland. The utilisation of public space and the public sphere, in terms of print capitalism, plays an important role in determining the political and social identities of these clubs and feed notions of Anderson’s ‘imaged communities’ developed through print. Clubs like the Protestant Association, which formed in Scotland during the 1780s in opposition to Catholic relief acts, enjoyed republication of their letters and pamphlets in Dublin. The *Freeman’s Journal* reprinted one such letter in 1780, the accompanying letter to the editor reads as follows:

As the many dangers too justly to be apprehended from a toleration of Popery, cannot but appear doubly alarming to every friend of the Protestant interest in your country, where the Romanists are much more numerous than in England; it is requested you will give the following letter in Defense of the Protestant Association a place in your useful paper. It has been already published in the English prints, and is exceedingly well received here, as tending to throw some new and interesting lights on a subject of so much important.<sup>135</sup>

The letter itself warns against the toleration of Catholics and although not the rhetoric or ideology of a Dublin or Irish based society, the contents of this letter and its republication are evident of a public sphere which supported the Protestant cause but what is more important, marginalised the Irish Catholic public sphere.

This association is not a reflection of the political ideologies of the majority of the clubs and associations and while loyal societies persisted and grew in Ireland during the period, as demonstrated by Hill and Blackstock, radical clubs which supported

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<sup>135</sup> *F.J.*, 26 Feb. 1780, p. 2.

reform and acceptance of a unified public sphere, emerged and grew in support. Clubs like the Constitutional Society, founded in the 1780s, established their ‘society upon constitutional and liberal principles’.<sup>136</sup> Indeed the 1780s and 90s saw the formation and renaming of more than one constitutional society in Dublin, making it difficult to differentiate each iteration of these associations. In October 1784, the anonymous writer in the *Freeman’s Journal*, the Centinel, sees freedom of the press as the most valuable asset to the public, purposed to form the Constitutional Club, ‘to defend that grand pass, against all its false friends and open enemies’.<sup>137</sup> A month later the *Freeman’s Journal* states that a Constitutional Society was found in Dublin and would be ‘an example to the whole Kingdom’.<sup>138</sup> However, when ‘the most respectable meeting of patriotic characters was announced to assemble...what has the results?...seventeen members’, none of which would commit any money to the Society as the meetings failed to rouse the sentiment of the Society.<sup>139</sup> At a meeting a week later, eight people are reported to be in attendance, including Napper, Molyneux and Ashenhurst.<sup>140</sup> Of these three members, Powell confirms that Napper, is Napper Tandy, who was later cofounder of the United Irishmen.<sup>141</sup> Whether the Constitutional Society and the Constitutional Club were the same club is unclear. The Block and Axe Club is also discussed by Powell in his chapter ‘The Society of Free Citizens and other popular political clubs, 1749-89’, and he states that it consisted of members who were described as ‘seditious wretches, who aped the abominable glory of being thought king-killers’.<sup>142</sup> In 1786 the *Freeman’s Journal* states that they wanted to change their name to ‘that of a constitutional society for the propagation of commercial knowledge’.<sup>143</sup> Napper Tandy was also a member of this club. Powell also states that the Block and Axe Club met in Cook Street during the 1780s and probably met at the Struggler’s tavern where a group called the Patricians met during the 1780s. The Patricians are described in Archer’s *Statistical Survey of county Dublin* as ‘a large and useful body of men, who contribute towards

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<sup>136</sup>Ibid., 2 Dec. 1784, p. 4.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 2 Oct. 1784, p. 1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 20 Nov. 1784, p. 4.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 20 Nov. 1784, p. 4.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 25 Nov. 1784, p. 4.

<sup>141</sup> Martyn J. Powell, ‘The Society of Free Citizens and other popular political clubs, 1749-89’ in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 258.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>143</sup> *F.J.*, 13 Apr. 1786, p. 4.

maintaining a number of orphans, destitute of friends and support' and their meeting place, 'Struggler in Cook-street',<sup>144</sup> was the inspiration for the Struggler's Club which in 1796 became a pseudo name for the United Irishmen, as Powell and indeed Curtin point out.<sup>145</sup> James Kelly also discusses the Constitutional Society in 'Elite political clubs, 1770-1800' and states that in December 1784, 'the Society made explicit commitment to promote the cause of parliamentary reform and to the maintenance of a "free press"'.<sup>146</sup> Despite efforts to maintain the Society by the spring of 1785 the Constitutional Society was defunct and dissolved.<sup>147</sup>

The Constitutional Society and similar societies during the 1780s, including the Society of Free Citizens who expressed 'sentiments of Independence, and a desire to preserve the freedom of election',<sup>148</sup> represent politics of the French revolutionary period. Powell states the growth of these clubs and the Volunteers 'was genuinely radical' and he observes that it was during the 1780s 'and not post-1789...that references to "the rights of man" began to appear in the press'<sup>149</sup> and represented the support for the French Revolution and its ideals, which societies such as the Whig Club and the United Irishmen promoted in the 1790s and are more commonly associated with.

The Whig Club, which formed before the United Irishmen also signaled an important change from the parliamentary reform politics of the 1780s to a more radical version which emerged in the 1790s. The Whig Club stems from the Whig versus Tory tradition in British politics and the formation of an extra parliamentary club, Irish Whig Party, in 1789 following the regency crises in Britain. The Irish Whig Party, or the Whig Club of Ireland, was supported by patriots such as Grattan and Lord Charlemont and, as McDowell states, the Whig Club, declared 'that is upheld the constitution of 1689 as established in Ireland by the revolution of 1782' and the club was 'determined to preserve for Ireland a parliament of its own "exclusively invested with all parliamentary privileges and powers"'.<sup>150</sup> Across Ireland other whig clubs formed, 'in order to give

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<sup>144</sup> Archer, *Statistical survey of the county Dublin*, p. 133.

<sup>145</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 109.

<sup>146</sup> James Kelly, 'Elite political clubs, 1770-1800' in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 276.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277.

<sup>148</sup> *F.J.*, 19 Feb. 1782, p. 3.

<sup>149</sup> Powell, 'The Society of Free Citizens and other popular political clubs, 1749-89', p. 261.

<sup>150</sup> R.B. McDowell, 'Parliamentary independence, 1782-9' in T.W. Moody and W.E. Vaughan (eds), *A new history of Ireland, eighteenth-century Ireland, 1691-1800* (Oxford, 1998), p. 286.

resistance to despotic authority'<sup>151</sup> and in February 1790 the Northern Whig Club formed in Belfast. The Irish Whig Party called for modest reforms and as such were not necessarily radical, yet despite promoting moderate reform there is evidence to suggest that the original Whig Club was not unaffected by the radical politics merging during the 1790s:

A member of the Whig Club, had so often toasted, at their late meetings, the constitution, as to render him utterly unmindful of his own constitution, and talked to much about revolution, as to make a number of evolutions in returning to his chair. But this was perfectly in character, as no man can be a downright patriot unless intoxicated with the subject.<sup>152</sup>

This reference to revolution may indicate French revolutionary influence and reveals an important feature of club life, that of eating and drinking and the detrimental effect this had on the Whig Club's reputation and utility. Curtin states that in February 1791, William Drennan, cofounder of the United Irishmen, 'complained that the Whig Club in Dublin "literally does nothing more than eat and drink"'.<sup>153</sup> A report later in the year further attests to this and states,

the Whig Club seriously tell the public their eating and drinking parties are for the good of their country! We should rather think them for the good of their landlords. Patriotic intentions are not to be judged of by the enormity of a tavern bill!<sup>154</sup>

While eating and drinking is certainly part of associational culture and club life, this report and Drennan's complaint indicate the dissatisfaction felt towards the Whig Club. Events in France, namely the French Revolution and dissatisfaction with the original Whig Club, prompted the formation of a more radical Whig Club, the Whigs of the Capital in 1791, who proceeded to publish Tomas Paine's *Rights of man*, at such a low price 'to reduce it within the reach of the lower orders',<sup>155</sup> indicating their radical inclinations or as Curtin describes it, 'the radical spirit which infused the new association'.<sup>156</sup> The establishment of the Whigs of the Capital and the Northern Whig

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<sup>151</sup> *F.J.*, 14 Nov. 1789, p. 4.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Feb. 1790, p. 4.

<sup>153</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 42.

<sup>154</sup> *F.J.*, 1 Dec. 1791, p. 4.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 July 1791, p. 4.

<sup>156</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 42.

Club signaled a new departure and the demise of the Whig Club. In June 1793 it was reported that the Whig Club ‘will entirely dissolve in a few days. Seditious and faction being in a galloping consumption, whiggism of course, must share in the decline’.<sup>157</sup> The renaming of the Whig Club to the Friends of the Constitution, Liberty and Peace in June 1793, saved them, as Kelly states ‘from a messy split’.<sup>158</sup> However, even this attracted disdain from contemporary prints who described the change of name, ‘like a nest of serpents, [who] have cast their old skins’ and state that this was necessary for the club to so as it was ‘impossible to do anything on the score of popularity in a Whig uniform’.<sup>159</sup> A few months later they reverted to their original name and newspaper reports indicate that the Whig Club, in some form or other, met with the Aldermen of Skinner’s Alley in November 1793 to ‘very patriotically get drunk together once a week’.<sup>160</sup>

Despite their eventual demise, the Whig Club, which was perhaps too radical for the conservatives in parliament and too conservative for the radicals, influenced a number of prominent radical figures, including Tone who signed his 1790 publication, ‘An Independent Irish Whig’ and his 1791 publication, ‘A Northern Whig’. Tone and the United Irishmen dominated popular politics during the 1790s and the United Irishmen had dealings with other clubs including the Whig Club, the Catholic Committee and indeed the ultra-Protestant society, the Aldermen of Skinner’s Alley. The United Irishmen and the 1798 Rebellion is dealt with in greater detail in the next chapter in terms of the relationship between members of the Historical Society of Trinity College and the United Irishmen but a brief outline of the Society will provide contextual information and detail for one of the most important associational societies in Ireland during the period under discussion. Many monographs, detailed articles and survey’s exist on the United Irishmen, including Nancy Curtin’s *United Irishmen, popular politics in Ulster and Dublin, 1791-1798* (1994), already cited in this chapter. Other works include Thomas Bartlett and R.B. McDowell.

The Belfast Society of United Irishmen was established in October 1791 and its radical politics, influenced by the French Revolution and French ideals of republicanism, represent the move from moderate parliamentary reform, as advocated

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<sup>157</sup> *F.J.*, 13 Apr. 1793, p. 4.

<sup>158</sup> Kelly, ‘Elite political clubs, 1770-1800’, p. 286.

<sup>159</sup> *F.J.*, 2 June 1793, p. 4.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Nov. 1793, p. 4.

by the Whig Club, to radical reform reflected in the 1791 declarations of the Belfast Society of United Irishmen, which

I. Resolved, that the weight of English influence, in the government of this country, is so great as to require a cordial union among all people of Ireland, to maintain that balance which is essential to the preservation of our liberties, and the extension of our commerce.

II. That the sole constitutional mode by which this influence can be opposed, is by the complete and radical reform of the representation of the people in parliament.

III. That no reform is practicable, efficacious, or just, which shall not include Irishmen of every religious persuasion.<sup>161</sup>

The Society's declarations outline their views of radical reform which sought to abolish the minority privilege which prevailed and extend rights and civil liberties to all citizens regardless of religious persuasion. Following the establishment of the Belfast Society, the Dublin Society of United Irishmen was established in November 1791 and its establishment not only signals the spread of the Society and its principles but also the influential nature of Belfast politics and its vibrant associational activity. As noted, the French revolutionary politics influenced the Society and even though Edmund Burke expressed his opposition to the French Revolution in his publication, *Reflections*, it was Burke, as R.F. Foster points out, who provided the United Irishmen with 'the intelligent conservative rationale' for Catholic emancipation and reform.<sup>162</sup> Indeed Conor Cruise O'Brien states that,

Burke and Tone – who met only once – were radically opposed to one another, in relation to the French Revolution. But they were allies, in the early 1790s, in relation not only to Catholic enfranchisement in principles but in supporting the Catholic Committee's programme for securing it, through popular agitation, with an implicit threat behind it.<sup>163</sup>

The Catholic Committee played a crucial role in the 1770s and 1780s in terms of Catholic agitation and the passing of a number of Catholic Relief Acts. Burke and Tone

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<sup>161</sup> 'Association and declaration of the Society, 9 Nov. 1791' in *Society of United Irishmen of Dublin* (Dublin, 1794), p. 4. (available at Google Books)

<sup>162</sup> R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (London, 1989), p. 260.

<sup>163</sup> Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The great melody: a thematic biography and commented anthology of Edmund Burke* (London, 1993), pp 499-500.

were both involved in the Catholic Committee and as O'Brien indicates, the Catholic Committee played a crucial role in establishing connections between the United Irishmen and the Defenders. O'Brien describes the Catholic Committee as a 'possible catalyst, or agent of cross-fertilisation'<sup>164</sup> for the revolutionary and rebellious links between the United Irishmen and the Defenders. Burke's 1792 'Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe on the Catholics of Ireland' outline his position on Catholic emancipation and the penal laws. Of the penal laws, Burke states,

their declared object was to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education...They divided the nation into two distinct bodies, without common interest, sympathy or connection; who of which bodies was to possess all the franchise, all the property, all the education.<sup>165</sup>

It is this idea of a divided nation which the United Irishmen sought to overcome. Indeed Burke's letter and publications by Tone, namely, *An argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland* (1791), in which he outlines his argument for Catholic emancipation, were both published by the Catholic Committee and represent the use of print for propaganda purposes but also the radicalisation of the once conservative Catholic Committee.<sup>166</sup> This use of print and the effective dissemination of propaganda was a key element in the United Irishmen's campaign and strategy. The use of the *Northern Star*, a newspaper in Belfast and the *Press*, established after the *Northern Star* was suppressed in 1797, along with the publication of numerous pamphlets and handbills which addressed the people and indeed, the nation, disseminated the United Irishmen's ideals and politics. Yet, as James S. Donnelly Jr. points in his article, 'Propagating the cause of the United Irishmen' (1980), while 'the great majority of the population was technically illiterate', the practice of 'public reading of the press, by the literate for the unlettered' was standard practice in Ireland as elsewhere. Societies such as the Belfast Reading Society (1788), the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge (1792) provided formal settings for book clubs or reading groups, but as Johanna Archbold states in 'Book clubs and reading societies in the late eighteenth-century' (2010), the United Irishmen used the

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p. 499.

<sup>165</sup> Edmund Burke, 'A letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe on the Catholics of Ireland' (London, 1792) available at <http://www.econlib.org/library/LFBooks/Burke/brkSWv4c6.html> (19 July 2011)

<sup>166</sup> R.B. McDowell, 'Reform and reaction, 1789-94' in T.W. Moody and W.E. Vaughan (eds), *A new history of Ireland, eighteenth-century Ireland, 1691-1800* (Oxford, 1998), p. 313.

less formal reading clubs and societies ‘as surrogate bodies to recruit and to inform supporters’.<sup>167</sup> This use of public space provided the means to disseminate content and thus by-pass attempts by the government to stop the spread of seditious content. The practice of reading in public, in the taverns and coffee houses of the city and indeed in rural areas, is an important part of Anderson’s imagined communities. It also contributes to the development of public discourse and as discussed through Máire Kennedy’s article, public arenas such as taverns and coffee houses were ‘centers of news and information, providing newspapers and pamphlets for customers’.<sup>168</sup>

After the Catholic Relief Act of 1793, which removed most restrictions on Catholics bar the holding of certain positions in authority and the ability to sit in parliament, the Catholic Committee was effectively no more. However, in the same session, as war between France and Britain was drawing ever closer, a series of acts were implemented which effectively suppressed the United Irishmen, Volunteer movements and other such assemblies or associations which were seen as promoting radical activity and extra-parliamentary strategy or policy.<sup>169</sup> Government harassment of many prominent United Irishmen figures including Drennan reduced the effectiveness of the Society but a newly regrouped Society of United Irishmen, now with rebellion in mind, emerged in 1795 and their activities, supported by the Defenders and radical Volunteer groups culminated in the 1798 Rebellion, as discussed in the next chapter. It was during this period that the Orange Order, a Protestant loyalist group, was formed in 1795 after the victory of the Peep O Day Boys at the Battle of Diamond. The Orange Order, famous for their commemoration of King William and the Battle of the Boyne in 1690s, were a militant organization which used Masonic structures and professed an ultra Protestant identity, reflecting heightened animosity along sectarian lines. The Orange Order was also used as a counter-revolutionary force by the government in the suppression of the 1798 Rebellion.<sup>170</sup>

The failed 1798 Rebellion highlighted the ‘divided nation’ which Burke describes and exposed the difficulties of harnessing national sentiment, organised through associational links and networks, in a society which was so deeply separated.

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<sup>167</sup> Johanna Archbold, ‘Book clubs and reading societies in the late eighteenth century’ in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 142.

<sup>168</sup> Kennedy, “‘Politicks, coffee and news’”, p. 79.

<sup>169</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 58.

<sup>170</sup> Allan Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829* (Suffolk, 2007).

The United Irishmen was a social movement which mobilised the masses through associational structures and networks. The Society built upon Burke's assertions that men acting in bodies is power and although the rebellion failed, it provided one of the most powerful, enduring symbols in modern Irish nationalism and history. The United Irishmen's movement symbolises the utility and effectiveness of associational structures which intervene between the citizen members and the state, reflecting Hegel's civil society theories. Through publications and propaganda they conceived of a nation or a people and attempted to negotiate the equal satisfaction of civil and material needs and wants of members of Irish society by 'acting in a universal way'. However, the 1798 Rebellion, in spite of the secular republicanism promoted by Tone and the United Irishmen and attempts by the Society to act 'in a universal way', only emphasised sectarian divisions and accentuated the north-south division, establishing a long-term division in Irish society, politics and identity.

Despite this, the United Irishmen represent one of the most important political, revolutionary, associations in Ireland during the eighteenth-century. Following their demise and the introduction of the Act of Union in 1801, popular politics in Ireland turned to repeal of the Union and increased pressure for Catholic Emancipation (which was promised in return for passing the Act of Union but failed to materialise after it was in place). The most important political association which emerged in the first half of the nineteenth-century was the Catholic Association (1823), led by Daniel O'Connell. Indeed there are suggestions that O'Connell was also a United Irishmen, as discussed by C.J. Woods in *Historical revision: was O'Connell a United Irishmen?* (2006).<sup>171</sup> Yet, following the 1798 Rebellion and the Act of Union in 1801, agitation from political clubs and the formation of a new associational society of the scale of the United Irishmen was slow to foment. Instead the early nineteenth-century saw the proliferation and rejuvenation of agrarian violence carried out by agrarian societies. Yet rather than just a feature of rural life, James S. Donnelly states that agrarian societies, such as the Ribbon lodges and societies which emerged in the early nineteenth-century, appeared in 'many Irish cities and towns'.<sup>172</sup> Indeed, one account states that in 1811 'Ribbonmen' were the new United Irishmen<sup>173</sup> and while categorised as an agrarian secret society,

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<sup>171</sup> C.J. Woods, *Historical revision: was O'Connell a United Irishmen* (Dublin, 2006).

<sup>172</sup> James S. Donnelly, *Captain Rock: the Irish agrarian rebellion of 1821-1824* (London, 2009), p. 20.

<sup>173</sup> 'Ribbonism' in *The Oxford companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 2004), p. 512.

Ribbonism or Ribbon Society's held a 'strong urban bias' and drew support from tradesmen, publicans, shopkeepers as well as farmers.<sup>174</sup> Donnelly states that, 'Ribbonism was a form of nationalism combining popular political radicalism or republicanism with anti-Orange Catholic sectarianism',<sup>175</sup> yet, as Jennifer Kelly's *The downfall of Hagan': Sligo Ribbonism in 1842* illustrates, by the 1840s Ribbon Societies were less radical than before and were often concerned with localised issues, providing a local network to support its members and their interests.<sup>176</sup> However, the networks and links which Ribbonism and other agrarian societies established, and the underground movement which it nurtured, provided O'Connell's Catholic emancipation movement with a strong basis from which to draw support.

Other clubs which operated during the early nineteenth-century, such as the Shamrock Club in 1808, provide evidence of associational activity which promoted non-sectarianism. The *Freeman's Journal* states the Club was,

composed of members who differ widely in their political and religious sentiments and their union is founded on principles of the highest liberality, connected with the honorable and benevolent desire of repressing those animosities which so frequently spring from diversity of opinion, and which are always so injurious to the harmony of social intercourse.<sup>177</sup>

As such, the gentlemen or members did not care what

a man's religious creed may be, or to what party in the State his attachments are directed, provided there be nothing in either inconsistent with the general welfare, or inimical to the Constitution of his country. Such is the nature of this respectable association, allied to the principles of equal freedom and equal rights, and presenting a laudable example to their countrymen.<sup>178</sup>

The Shamrock Club promoted interaction between the different religious denominations in Ireland and saw animosity based on this as detrimental to Ireland's political, social and economic progress. Their ethos reflects increased divisions in Irish society after the

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<sup>174</sup> S.J. Connelly, 'Aftermath and adjustment' in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, v, Ireland under the Union, I, 1801-70* (Oxford, 1989), p. 19.

<sup>175</sup> Donnelly, *Captain Rock*, p. 20.

<sup>176</sup> Jennifer Kelly, *The downfall of Hagan': Sligo Ribbonism in 1842* (Dublin, 2008).

<sup>177</sup> *F.J.*, 13 Aug. 1808, p. 3.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

Act of Union and is evidence of associational activity which tried to reconcile the deep sectarian divisions which emerged.

Despite the attempts of associations such as the Shamrock Club to promote social harmony and non-sectarianism, the *Freeman's Journal* reveal the existence of ultra-Catholic societies which defined themselves as 'anti-Orange club[s]'.<sup>179</sup> This, coupled with the existence of ultra-Protestant societies, reveals the associational landscape in the early nineteenth-century as containing deep sectarian divisions. Clubs such as the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley, described by Powell as ultra-Protestant, and the Orange Order and Orange Societies, also reflect these sectarian tensions. Yet, as noted previously, the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley were not always ultra-Protestant as it dined and drank with members of the Catholic Committee, the Whig Club and the United Irishmen in the early 1790s. Powell also indicates their radical or even liberal inclinations before events in the 1790s forced 'the Aldermen to take tough decisions on the nature of the club's whiggish and Protestant principles'.<sup>180</sup> Powell states that an advertisement to celebrate King William's birthday in February 1792 encouraged members who were 'not yet ashamed to drink "the glorious and immortal memory of the great King William" and who are firmly attached to the illustrious house of Hanover and the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland,' to join their celebrations.<sup>181</sup> This event caused the society to split 'between United Irishmen and Protestant ultras'.<sup>182</sup> By 1793 the Society resolved to dissolve and to 're-establish it [self] on its pure and original foundations'.<sup>183</sup> This episode and the renegotiating or realignment of the Aldermen's Protestant identity from a liberal Protestant stance to an ultra Protestant one epitomises the pace with which divisions and sectarianism infiltrated political and social ideologies during the 1790s. It also demonstrates the conflicted nature of loyalism and indeed Protestant Irish identity. Despite supporting elements of the United Irishmen ideologies pre-1793, by 1812 newspaper articles demonstrate the extent to which the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley became ultra Protestant, as described by Powell. Titled, 'Bigotry on a low scale', the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley are described by the *Freeman's Journal* in

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<sup>179</sup> *F.J.*, 10 Dec. 1813, p. 2.

<sup>180</sup> Powell, 'The Aldermen of Skinner's Alley', p. 213.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 213-4.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

1812 as an ‘obscure club’ which passed ‘resolutions hostile to the Catholics claims’.<sup>184</sup>

A later article makes reference to the Aldermen’s history, stating that,

this club was formerly composed of men distinguished for patriotism, liberality; and respectability; and as there may be some in this city unacquainted with the change that has taken place of late years, we stated the circumstances, in order that such persons may know what, these Aldermen are at present – and appreciate them accordingly.

This account was prompted by the Aldermen’s latest meeting at which they presented ‘an illiberal petition against the Catholics’ for members to sign.<sup>185</sup> The proliferation of the Orange Order and Orangeism during the early nineteenth-century is evident. But what is more important, the existence of strong anti-Orange sentiments, like those expressed by the Ribbonmen and apparent in contemporary newspapers, reflects the demarcation of Irish society and intensified divisions along religious as well as regional lines. An article in the *Freeman’s Journal* in 1813 describes ‘the temper of these Orange Times’ and efforts to reprobate and discountenance “those dark, dangerous and insidious” associations called Orange Clubs’ by erecting placards supporting the ‘Downfall of Orangeism’.<sup>186</sup> Yet, by 1825, ‘under the terms of the Unlawful Societies Act’, the Orange Order was suppressed.<sup>187</sup> However, the formation of Brunswick Clubs in 1828 replaced the Orange Order and circumvented the Unlawful Societies Act, indeed the existence of a Brunswick Club within Trinity College is confirmed an article in December 1828.<sup>188</sup> Indeed, Blackstock deals with the Brunswick Club movement and states that ‘recent work on Irish popular politics gives sparse attention to Brunswick, concentrating, understandably, on its successful rival the Catholic Association’.<sup>189</sup>

Daniel O’Connell and the Catholic Association, founded in 1823, as stated, is one of the most important associational movements in nineteenth-century Irish history, not least because it mobilized and politicised the masses but also because it provided a figure head for Irish Catholics and their grievances, i.e. Daniel O’Connell, who later became known as the Liberator. O’Connell was linked to the United Irishmen, the

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<sup>184</sup> *F.J.*, 9 Dec. 1812, p. 3.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Feb. 1813, p. 2.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Jul. 1813, p. 2.

<sup>187</sup> ‘Orange Order’ in *The Oxford companion to Irish history*, p. 435.

<sup>188</sup> *F.J.*, 19 Dec. 1828, p. 2.

<sup>189</sup> Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland*, p. 225.

Historical Society of Trinity College, the Freemasons and the Catholic Board (formed by O'Connell in 1811) and capitalised on the networks and links which associational culture encouraged to rally support from Catholics across the country. Against the backdrop of growing Orangeism and the political instability which Union brought, O'Connell and the Catholic Association harnessed the power of print and association through subscription to establish connections between Catholic communities in Ireland, creating a single imagined community of Irish Catholics. A pamphlet published in 1825, *Ghosts of the Catholic Associations*, describes the background to the Association's formation, including Orangeism and the formation and membership of agrarian societies. This pamphlet, available in CRADLE, was published in 1825 by W.J. Battersby a Catholic book seller, a firm supporter of O'Connell, printer and seller for the Catholic Book Society<sup>190</sup> and most likely the pamphlet's author. The 'ghost' addresses four specific sections of Irish society, his Majesty's Ministers, the Orangemen, liberal Protestants and the Catholics of Ireland and speaks of 'the origin, nature, principles and suppression of its body'.<sup>191</sup> The ghost describes some of its success:

At the period of my (Catholic Association) formation there was a general discontent throughout Ireland, Orange fury and violence prevailed; the peasantry goaded to insurrection, were combined in secret and illegal societies; no property was secure, no property was safe...By my integrity, perseverance, exertions and union, I soon obtained the co-operation not only of the Catholics, but of the liberal Protestants of Ireland; I united the people in a bond of love, that never before was effected.<sup>192</sup>

Indeed the 'ghost' also advises against 'all private combinations, and from all species of Whiteboyism or Ribbonism',<sup>193</sup> and as such the 'ghost' provides a glimpse into contemporary views on the Catholic Association, Orangeism and agrarian societies. Throughout the pamphlet the 'ghost' quotes verses by Thomas Moore, who we will discuss later as a member of the Hist alongside Robert Emmet. Moore's songs and

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<sup>190</sup> C. J. Woods, 'Battersby, William Joseph', in James McGuire and James Quinn (ed), *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge, 2009), available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a0498> (13 Sep. 2011).

<sup>191</sup> W.J. Battersby, *Ghosts of the Catholic Association* (Dublin, 1825), p. 1, available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

poems were used in later years by romantic nationalists. The 'ghost' uses the following excerpt on the title page of the pamphlet:

Like the bright lamp that lay on Kildare's holy shrine,  
And burned through long ages of darkness and storm,  
Is the heart that sorrows have fronwn'd on in vain:  
Whose Spirit outlives them unfading and warm.  
Erin! Oh Erin! thus bright through tears,  
Of a long night of bondage, thy spirit appears.<sup>194</sup>

This publication reflects the use of print capitalism within the nationalist cause for emancipation, an effort which was supported and funded through the Catholic Association's 'Catholic Rent', a small subscription of a penny a month, which as Foster states, 'provided the masses with a sense of commitment, and gave the leaders a barometer of support'.<sup>195</sup> The main focus of the Catholic Association was Catholic emancipation which sought to repeal the civil injustices of lingering penal laws and legislation which excluded Catholics from holding positions of high office, including senior government positions.<sup>196</sup> The 1825 Unlawful Societies Act, which made the Orange Order unlawful, also affected the legality of the Catholic Association and it is perhaps in this sense that the 1825 pamphlet uses the metaphor of a 'ghost' for the Catholic Association. The Association, however, reemerged shortly after, regrouping under the new terms as set out by the Act. By 1829 the last Catholic Relief Act was passed. This was prompted by O'Connell's election to the British House of Commons following the Co. Clare by-election in 1828 and his inability to take his seat because the law required him to take the Oath of Allegiance. Also, by 1829 the Catholic Association was dissolved. Yet despite the introduction of the relief act, the Catholic vote, through the 'raising of the threshold' from forty-shilling freeholders to ten pounds, was reduced significantly, so rather than granting Catholics the vote the relief act further disenfranchised most of the Catholic population and as Foster states, in 'many areas of public life' there 'remained a Protestant monopoly'.<sup>197</sup> O'Connell's attention now turned to the repeal of the Act of Union and as Foster states 'Liberal Clubs' which emerged in the late 1820s to promote and support the Catholic Association in local areas, turned

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>195</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 298.

<sup>196</sup> 'Catholic emancipation', *The Oxford companion to Irish history*, p. 79.

<sup>197</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 302.

into “‘News Rooms’, “Reading Clubs” or “Independent Clubs”” after 1829 and provided ‘political education’ and promoted the ‘language of separatism and republicanism in accents unwelcome to O’Connell’.<sup>198</sup> In 1840 O’Connell established the Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland and this time rather merely creating an imagined community, O’Connell created a physical, tangible community through monster rallies which attracted approximately 100,000 people at Tara, Co. Meath, the seat of the ancient high king of Ireland.

O’Connell’s Catholic Association epitomises the success and proliferation of associational culture during the period 1780-1830 and the mass movement which it generated demonstrates the utility and importance of associational culture to the development of national politics and indeed identity. Yet while R.T. Anderson asserts that associations do not start social movements it is clear from this brief overview of Irish associational culture that associations were vital to the development and evolution of the Irish public sphere and political discourse. Associations supported and encouraged civic virtue and established public space as a forum of debate on social, economic and political reform and issues. Political and social improvement on the restrictions on Irish Catholics were by far the most important groups and characterised the pattern of associational culture after the American War of Independence and the French Revolution, as containing ever more radical and revolutionary clubs and societies. Associational Ireland developed and consolidated the networks and alliances required to develop a national consciousness to reform the inequalities that existed between Catholics and Protestants. It fashioned a sense of local and regional cooperation that was required for national campaigning on change and the means to consolidate Irish identity.

*Difficulties of associational culture studies and associational strength, membership numbers and occupation*

This survey reveals the sheer volume and number of associational bodies which operated in Dublin during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century, however, the associations discussed represents only a fragment of these clubs. During this research over two-hundred clubs and societies were recorded, with the majority based in Dublin

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 308.

(see figure 1). This is not at all an exhaustive or definitive list and does not reflect the number of clubs and societies that actually existed during the period. It does not include individual Freemason Lodges, Volunteer Corps, Yeomanry Corps, United Irishmen Committees, Guilds and Corporations of Dublin, Orange Societies or all charitable and musical societies. The challenge of determining an aggregate number of societies in Dublin during the period is confounded by incomplete and often nonexistent records such as club minutes or journals. Clubs like the Friendly Society of O'Briens, who advertised their club meeting in the *Freeman's Journal*, 10 July 1787, and stipulated only gentlemen with the surname O'Brien attend,<sup>199</sup> emerged once during the course of this research. This lack of substantial source material is a problem not only for this club but for many others. Clark, Kelly and Powell, and Kelly and Comerford, all state the major difficulty with associational culture studies lies in the sporadic nature of the remaining sources for many clubs and societies. Many groups were informal bodies with informal records and informal administrative structures and while newspapers provide the bulk of the source material for many clubs, the sporadic articles, advertisements, letters and reports published in contemporary newspapers provide only snippets of important information and do not illustrate the full picture. Yet, the limited newspaper articles or entries that we do have often contain rich content which can offset the scarcity of alternative source material such as pamphlets published by more formal (and perhaps more financially viable) groups but which exist for only a fragment of the various associational bodies. The unpredictable manner in which clubs and societies meet or congregate can lead to the scattered or patchy generation and survival of source material.

Kelly and Powell's 2010 publication attests to this difficulty. They note that although their volume provides an extensive review and discussion of clubs and societies in the eighteenth-century, 'the picture it paints is inevitably incomplete'.<sup>200</sup> They also refer to the scarcity of records and as a result 'there is much that is as yet unclear about the process' of associational culture, 'about those who participated in it, and about what it was like to be a participant'.<sup>201</sup> Accordingly, for the majority of clubs and societies it is difficult to ascertain membership numbers. However, in 'The Bar

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<sup>199</sup> *F.J.*, 10 July 1787, p. 1.

<sup>200</sup> Kelly & Powell, 'Introduction', p. 35.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

Club, 1787-93: a dining case study', Kelly refers to an account from 1791 which asserts 'as many as 20,000 men in the city belonged to "societies or clubs"'.<sup>202</sup> How accurate this number is, is unclear, but coupled with figures from James Whitelaw's 1798 census of Dublin, which approximates Dublin's population at 182,000 in 1798,<sup>203</sup> and suggests that at least 75,000 were male,<sup>204</sup> we can estimate, tentatively, that perhaps thirty percent of Dublin's male population, over eighteen, were involved in associational activity.<sup>205</sup> However, given that this figure is provided for the year 1791, 20,000 may be a conservative figure when we consider the proliferation of political, radical clubs during the 1790s.

Providing a breakdown of membership numbers for individual societies proves difficult because of the lack of formal, consistent, records for many clubs. However, associations with more formal structures, such as the Freemasons, the United Irishmen, as well as the Historical Society of Trinity College, reveal membership figures, as well as the occupation of some members.

As discussed, Dublin established itself as 'the main hub' of Freemason activity in Ireland. Fagan describes the proliferation of Freemason lodges in Dublin and reveals '82 separate lodges were established' in the city during the eighteenth-century.<sup>206</sup> These lodges were centrally located in Dublin and include meetings points at Capel Street, Meath Street, Cork Hill, as well as Cook Street,<sup>207</sup> which was also the location of the Block and Axe Club and the Strugglers Club. By 1800, there were an approximately 30,000 masons across Ireland and as Kelly and Powell assert 'the combined ranks of the various Masonic lodges in Ireland exceeded that of Great Britain and was one of the largest in Europe'.<sup>208</sup> In Dublin, the lodges admitted 5,300 members between the years 1758-99, with 1,500 active members at any point in time.<sup>209</sup> Mirala refers to the difficulty of establishing a comprehensive social profile of Freemason members despite the existence of records in the Freemasons' Hall, Molesworth Street, Dublin:

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<sup>202</sup> James Kelly, 'The Bar Club, 1787-93: a dining case study' in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 379.

<sup>203</sup> Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, p. 40.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>205</sup> The figures are divided into male and female but do not provide a break down of age.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>208</sup> Kelly & Powell, 'Introduction', p. 33. : see also Mirala, 'Masonic sociability and its limitations', p. 323.: Mirala suggests that 30,000 is a conservative figure for freemason membership across Ireland.

<sup>209</sup> Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, p. 132.

It is not easy to establish who could or could not be a freemason in eighteenth-century Ireland. Most Masonic sources offer few personal details on those who were members. Records were not kept for posterity but for the immediate practical needs of the lodge - keeping track of admissions and the payment of fees.<sup>210</sup>

He asserts that any ‘assessment of the social breakdown of Irish freemasons must be sketchy’, however, ‘occupations as diverse as carpenter, grocer, shopkeeper, printer, ship master, sail maker, innkeeper, glazier, labourer, carman, smith, and whiskey-seller could be found among their ranks’.<sup>211</sup> ‘Attorneys, physicians and clergymen’ are also listed by Fagan, attesting to the diversity of the social and occupational background of freemason members.<sup>212</sup>

Similarly, Curtin reveals the diverse occupational composition of the United Irishmen, which in Dublin includes, ‘ministers, priests, merchants, farmers, doctors, publicans, artisans, clerks...labourers’,<sup>213</sup> and of course students from Trinity College. Of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen 425 members were ‘admitted to the club between 1791 and 1794’, though Curtin states ‘only about 200 can be described as active members’.<sup>214</sup> The Dublin Society of United Irishmen met at Tailors’ Hall fortnightly, where they actively recruited new members and rotated the various posts, including chairman and secretary, every three months among its members.<sup>215</sup> As stated, after their suppression in 1794 the United Irishmen reorganized and used Freemason lodges among other associations as fronts for their activity. In 1795, one such club, ‘the “Committee” consisted of about seventy members’.<sup>216</sup> Further developments in the organisational structures created provincial directories and in 1797 a national directory was established in Dublin. By 1798 it is estimated that the Leinster region could count 68,272 ‘active insurgents’ among its ranks.<sup>217</sup> However, even these numbers are

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<sup>210</sup> Mirala, ‘Masonic sociability and its limitations’, p. 323.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., pp 324-5.

<sup>212</sup> Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, p. 133.

<sup>213</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 140.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., p. 255.

problematic as there are suggestions that the United Irishmen exaggerated their numbers for propaganda purposes.<sup>218</sup>

Other secondary sources reveal membership numbers for some societies discussed in this summary. Kelly states that the Monks of the Screw, who were linked to the Order of St. Patrick, had 53 members in 1780,<sup>219</sup> the Whig Club had 48 original members, composed of '32 MPs, 12 peers, 2 bishops and 2 judges' and by 1790 totaled 66 members.<sup>220</sup> Clark reveals that the 'Dublin United Charitable Society for the Relief of Indigent Room-keepers had nearly 1,500 members by 1796'.<sup>221</sup> The *Freeman's Journal* also provides some membership numbers but there is no consistency in the reports on clubs and societies: a meeting of a Constitutional Society in 1784 attracted seventeen members,<sup>222</sup> the Irish Harmonic Club (est. 1803) attracted 126 members in March 1803,<sup>223</sup> and 200 in May of the same year.<sup>224</sup>

Despite these membership numbers, it is difficult to supply a comprehensive overview of membership numbers for all the associations discussed here, for many clubs the records simply do not exist. It is this difficulty which prompts Kelly and Powell to declare that it is only through explorations of societies like the Friendly Brothers of St Patrick and a 'forensic scrutiny of individual societies' that we can 'expand further our understanding of the contribution' of associational culture to the development of 'modern society in Ireland'.<sup>225</sup> This declaration supports the need for a case study within this research and as such the Hist is discussed in the next two chapters.

In previous sections the Hist or the Historical Society of Trinity College was described as a 'rational-legal association' because of its codified rules and regulations and the enforcement of same: it is this adherence which has created a large body of source material to review and study today. The importance of the Hist does not merely lie in the fact that source material remains but its contribution to the education and personal development of a number of important Irish figures including Henry Grattan,

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> James Kelly, 'Elite political clubs, 1770-1800', p. 270.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>221</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 197.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 20 Nov. 1784, p. 4.

<sup>223</sup> *F.J.* 5 March 1803, p. 3.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 7 May 1803, p. 3.

<sup>225</sup> Kelly & Powell, 'Introduction', p. 35.

Theobald Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, Thomas Moore, Charles Wolfe, Issac Butt, Thomas Davis and in later periods Oscar Wilde, Edward Carson, Douglas Hyde and W.E.H. Lecky, not to mention Bram Stoker and Conor Cruise O’Brien. The litany of Irish patriots, politicians, orators and writers, and their historic achievements exemplifies the important debating and oratory skills which the society nurtured but also testifies to the open and liberal nature of the club, as its members ranged from the dialectically different Tone and Carson. This club warrants attention for the reasons stated above but also because it provides an in-depth study of an individual society, as suggested by Kelly and Powell.

*A brief comparison with Edinburgh associational culture*

Andrew J. Dalgleish’s 1991 PhD dissertation, ‘Voluntary Associations and the Middle Class in Edinburgh’, provides information to supplement this chapter and can contribute to a comparison between Edinburgh and Dublin; reiterating Barnard’s assertions that Dublin has ‘parallels with the urban centre of eighteenth-century Edinburgh’.<sup>226</sup> In his introduction Dalgleish provides a list outlining incidences of ‘new voluntary associations in Edinburgh, 1780-1870’ and reveals the slow growth of associational culture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century (see table 1).<sup>227</sup>

Period	Number
1780-89	9
1790-9	16
1800-9	7
1810-9	30
1820-9	25

Table 1: The number of new associations established in Edinburgh as described by Dalgleish.

<sup>226</sup> T.C. Barnard, ‘“Grand Metropolis” or “Anus of the World”? The cultural life of eighteenth-century Dublin’ in Peter Clark and Raymond Gillespie (eds), *Two Capitals: London and Dublin 1500-1840* (Oxford, 2001), p. 187.

<sup>227</sup> Andrew J. Dalgleish, ‘Voluntary Associations and the Middle Class in Edinburgh’ (1991) PhD dissertation,

However, Dalglish asserts that this ‘survey should not be regarded as exhaustive’ as it ‘necessarily excludes Societies which had neither the incentive nor the resources to publicise their activities’.<sup>228</sup> A useful comparison with Dublin is problematic because Dalglish’s figures are non-comprehensive but also because the same problem applies to establishing figures for new clubs in Dublin during these periods. Of radical political clubs in Dublin alone this research has counted over twelve new clubs established during the period 1790-1799. This includes, Tone’s “Oyster Club” (est. 1790), the Dublin Society of United Irishmen (est. 1791), Whigs of the Capital (est. 1791), the Brotherhood (est. 1791), the Originals (est. 1792), the Sons of Freedom (est. 1792), a Jacobin Club (est. 1792), the Philanthropic Society (est. 1793), the Athenian (est. 1794), the Telegraph (est. 1794), the Struggler’s Club (flor. 1795) and the Committee (flor. 1795). Indeed, we can also add the establishment of two freemason lodges, the Barristers’ Lodge (1790) and the Medical Lodge (est. 1794), which Fagan argues were both ‘fronts for the United Irishmen’.<sup>229</sup> However, even though this list of radical clubs is not exhaustive or definitive, it demonstrates the strength of associational activity in Dublin, especially when compared to Dalglish’s estimate of 16 new clubs in total during 1790-9. Yet, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide a definitive count of the number of new clubs established and it is only through projects such as ‘Associational culture in Ireland, c.1750-c.1940: a database’ that these numbers can be usefully determined. In November 2010 the project listed over three thousand associations.<sup>230</sup>

Dalglish describes the diversity of associations in Edinburgh which include, ‘social clubs, libraries, medical charities, friendly societies, debating clubs, poor relief societies, political societies, societies for suppressing begging,...societies for relieving debtors,...societies for promoting art and signing’, among others.<sup>231</sup> Our summary of associational culture in Dublin demonstrates similar growth and developments of clubs and societies of the categories here described are reflective of associational developments in Edinburgh. His thesis considers a case study on the Society for the Suppression of Beggars, who formed in response to ‘perceived threats of public disorder

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>229</sup> Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, p. 129.

<sup>230</sup> R.V. Comerford, ‘Associational Culture Database’. Email to Sharon Webb (Nov. 2010).

<sup>231</sup> Dalglish, ‘Voluntary Associations and the Middle Class in Edinburgh’, p. 2.

around the year 1812'.<sup>232</sup> Similar to Dublin based associational bodies, such as the Association for the Suppression of Mendicity in Dublin (est. 1818), they provided poor relief 'to persons who satisfied the Society's criteria of being in "genuine" distress'.<sup>233</sup> Dalglish also describes religious voluntary associations in chapter 5 and states there were three main types: 'missionary Societies, those promoting religious education, and those encouraging the distribution of bibles and religious tracts'.<sup>234</sup> This categorization is reflective of a number of associations in Dublin already discussed, including the Hibernian Bible Society, the Dublin Bible Society (1806) and the Catholic Book Society (flor. 1828). Chapter 6 then describes educational voluntary associations which includes the development of Gaelic Schools and of particular interest to the Irish perspective, the Edinburgh Society for Promoting Education of the Poor in Ireland, which was established in 1814.<sup>235</sup>

Dalglish's thesis focuses on the impact of or the relationship between associational culture and the middle class, and while this focus is different to that of nationalism discussed here, useful comparisons can be made. As Dalglish concludes in chapter 3, Voluntary Associations, 1780-1810, the middle class 'made sense of and accommodated changes in Society, and defined and expressed various kinds of social identities' through participation in voluntary associations.<sup>236</sup> Similarly, Irish identities are expressed and formed through this participation, as we will discuss in more detail in chapter 7. Dalglish also echoes earlier points made of civil society, as he states that through associational activity, the middle class define 'their role...in providing for the material and spiritual welfare of the community' and were engaged in 'social action'.<sup>237</sup> Similarly, these impetus provided the motivation for participation in many of clubs and societies in Dublin as outlined above.

Our summary of associational culture in Dublin during the period under discussion considered the different types of clubs and societies that operated in the city. It described the development and proliferation of social, improvement, philanthropic, educational, musical as well as political, radical and debating associations. These

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., p. 184.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

associations enable and strengthen connections between members and create the notion of belonging to an imagined community composed of individuals sharing certain characteristics, preoccupations and concerns. Yet, it is this politics of sameness which also established and emphasised the politics of difference. This is evident in the political radicalism and sectarianism which manifested in the 1790s and which was reinforced in the early nineteenth-century. Associations such as the United Irishmen relied on the assumption that Irish national identity could be re-imagined on their terms and failed to recognise that the politics of difference, which divided Ireland along sectarian, class and regional lines, was much stronger than the politics of sameness, which the United Irishmen hoped to harness. The Aldermen of Skinner's Alley provide tangible evidence of the conflicting nature of Irish identity as they flirted with the liberal, radical politics promoted by the United Irishmen only to become ultra Protestant in the early nineteenth-century. The Orange Order and the Catholic Association in the 1820s also demonstrate this demarcation of Irish society. Yet, while political clubs are an important element of Dublin's associational world and indeed essential to the development of Irish nationalism, political clubs which are reactive are in many respects impractical for establishing long-lasting associational bodies. Societies which ban politics and religion from their association have a greater chance of standing the test of time when compared to reactive political clubs, as demonstrated by the Freemasons, Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick and the Order of St. Patrick. Charitable organisation also demonstrates this. Yet, as Clark points out it is contemporary 'fads and fashions' which often dictate the nature and purpose of associational bodies, including trends in politics, social reform and poor relief and indeed this is reflected in many of the associational bodies which we have considered including political and social fads and fashions.

What is clear from this glimpse into Dublin's associational world during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century is that Dublin was host to an active, vibrant and political and socially motivated set of clubs and societies. Associational culture provided the residents of Dublin with a litany of social, political and economic benefits. Even though members of these clubs and societies were mainly male, upper-class and Protestant, recipients of the benefits, because of charitable work, including education, and political, religious and social reform, far exceeded this limited category of members. The successes of charity societies, who carried out essential poor relief work, and societies with a purely social agenda contributed to the creation of public discourse

and maneuvered successfully in Hegel's definition of civil society, between the family and the state.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, 1780-1830

The Historical Society of Trinity College is the oldest student debating society in Ireland and can trace its roots back to 1747 when Edmund Burke, then a student at the college, established the 'Club' along with Matthew Mohun, William Dennis and Andrew Buck.<sup>1</sup> As described in the laws and minutes of the 1747 society, which are mostly in Burke's hand, the 'Club' was

a weekly club instituted for the improvement of its members in the more refin'd, elegant, and useful part of Literature, these seeming the most likely means for attaining the great end in view - the formation of our minds and manners for the functions of Civil Society.<sup>2</sup>

The 'Club', or 'Burke's Club' as it is sometimes referred to, was the first of three debating societies established in Trinity College during the eighteenth-century and is considered to be the parent or ancestor of the other two which claim the Club's lineage. The Minute Book of 1747 is the only surviving record of the 'Club' but it is unclear how long it remained active. It certainly ceased to operate before the establishment of the Historical Club in 1753, of which it is claimed Henry Grattan was a member.<sup>3</sup> Evidence for the Historical Club of 1753 remains scarce but it seems that in 1770, with the establishment of the Historical Society of Trinity College, the Historical Club ceased to exist and was superseded by the Historical Society. The closing speech of the tenth session of the Historical Society, otherwise known as the Hist, refers to the existence of previous societies, as Christopher Temple Emmet, brother of Thomas Addis Emmet and Robert Emmet, both later members of the Hist and prominent members of the United Irishmen, states - 'Ten sessions this Society has seen, since from the embers of another Institution is shone a fairer Phoenix in a purer Flame'.<sup>4</sup> It is this society, the Historical Society of Trinity College, still active today, which is now considered in this case study of associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism.

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur P.I. Samuels and Arthur Warren Samuels, *The early life correspondence and writings of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> Declan Budd and Ross Hinds, *The Hist and Edmund Burke's Club* (Dublin, 1997), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

In conjunction with this case study on associational culture, the Historical Society of Trinity College, provides a case study for the research methods described in chapter 1, the features of CRADLE described in chapter 3 and the realisation of the Bundle Object in chapter 8. This chapter considers the history of the Society and deals with three periods which represent distinct epochs in the Society's history; 1780-98, 1798-1815 and 1815-43. Although the timeframe for this research is 1780-1830, it is important to consider 1830-43 in this history of the Hist because, as we will discover, important nationalist figures, who were members of the Hist, emerge during this period and play a vital role in the consideration of associational culture and its impact on Irish nationalism. Within our discussion of the 1780-1798 period we will consider the political and social back drop in which the Historical Society of Trinity College existed and discuss the Hist and radical politics which emerged during the 1780s and 90s. 1798-1815 will deal with the Society after the Act of Union and the internal and external disputes which resulted in the Society's exclusion from Trinity College, while the section on the 1815-43 period discusses the Society as it existed outside the college walls. We will first consider a brief overview of the Hist, its sources and its activities.

### *The Hist - an overview*

Edmund Burke's political rhetoric is well known and revered for its support of the establishment and institutions, such as religion, which promote virtue and morality. Yet even before his publications in the later eighteenth-century Burke, the college youth, advocated these principles, as the original historical club at Trinity College rules state that, 'decency and good manners, virtue and religion, must guide their whole behaviour, and no word, gesture, or action contrary thereto pass uncensured'.<sup>5</sup> Of the original Club, Burke envisioned an arena of open debate. However, after debating the subject of 'Irish manufactures' and 'the injury inflicted by English legislation on Irish industries,' Andrew Buck, student and cofounder of the Club, declared that 'such subjects are not fit matter of debate in this assembly' and that they should avoid debates or questions 'relating to the Government of our country' which could demonstrate 'any dislike to his Majesty or his Ministry'.<sup>6</sup> While Buck succeeded in passing regulations to

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp 163-4.

enforce this moratorium on questions pertaining to modern politics, Burke objected profusely to this, contending ‘that such a restraint would “take away their spirit” and “destroy their oratory”’.<sup>7</sup> The issue surrounding debates on modern politics would persist for many decades and continue to be a point of disagreement between the members of the Hist and the university Board well into the nineteenth-century. While the minutes of Burke’s club remain, there is little other evidence to construct a definitive account of the first iteration of the Hist or indeed the second which emerged in 1753, named the Historical Club. 1770 then was celebrated in 1970 as the year of the Hist’s bicentenary. However, even though it existed in some form or other over two centuries, 1794 and 1815 defined two more episodes of the club which may constitute a break in the continuity of the Society. Expelled from the University on one occasion and pushed to dissolution by the college authorities on the next, the Society operated outside the walls of the college for over a year in 1794 but for a considerably lengthier period from 1815 to 1843.

The chronological continuity of the Hist also exists in the continuity of its records, held in the manuscript department at Trinity College Dublin. The records consist of the journals of the Society, which contain debates motioned, members list, some speeches from the opening and closing sessions of academic years and any formalities relating to the laws of the Society or infringements of these laws by students, from the years 1770-1906. As well as separate journals which contain treasurer reports, book rentals from the Hist’s library, lists of officers and medalists, laws, and some poems, compositions and prize essays. As stated the collection also contains the original minutes of Burke’s Club. Apart from these prized and informative primary sources there also exists an anthology, *The Hist and Edmund Burke’s Club* (1997), by Declan Budd and Ross Hinds, commissioned to correspond with the clubs bicentenary. Budd and Ross’ publication, and indeed this research, is indebted to the work of T.S.C. Dagg, auditor of the Hist in 1906, who dedicated his life’s work to producing a history of the Hist. ‘The first draft of his book ran to some fifteen hundred pages and he was reluctantly persuaded to condense it’.<sup>8</sup> After his death in 1964, a condensed version of his work was published privately, with only 25 copies being printed. A copy of the *College Historical Society, a history (1770-1920)*, remains in the manuscript department

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

at Trinity College and provides a comprehensive and thorough examination of the history of the club. Dagg's privately published work, which is not available to buy, is a necessary companion to any study on the Hist, indeed the first 126 pages of the Budd and Hinds publication are direct extracts from Dagg's work.

The Hist's extensive primary records demonstrate the formal structures which the Society adhered to and reflect structures modeled on British associational culture, previously described as 'rational-legal associations'. It is these formal structures which create and preserve the journals and minutes of the Historical Society of Trinity College. A number of interesting features emerge from the journals, the most important of which are the topics of debate, the history studied at the Society, the essays and poems by members, the speeches made at the start and end of the academic year and of course lists of the individuals who sign the Society's members list. Budd and Hinds state the 'motions for debate are evidence of the Society's avant-garde spirit'<sup>9</sup> and establish the Hist as a forum for free speech, toleration, liberalism and radicalism.

Debating, along with the study of history and the creation of compositions, formed an intrinsic part of the society's meetings. Debates were held weekly during the academic calendar. Motions for debate include; 'Whether Universal toleration should be encouraged by a wise legislature?',<sup>10</sup> 'Whether Ireland could possibly subsist independent of any other nation?' (1780), 'Is it consistent with political freedom to force men to military service?' (1781),<sup>11</sup> 'Are popular discontents a benefit to Liberty?' (1786),<sup>12</sup> 'Ought the slave trade to be countenanced?' (1788),<sup>13</sup> 'Whether any restraint on the liberty of the press is necessary in a free state?' (1789),<sup>14</sup> 'Is the conquest of Barbarous states, on the principle of civilisation justifiable?' (1790),<sup>15</sup> 'Should women have a share in the government of a country?' (1792),<sup>16</sup> 'Should capital punishment be entirely abolished?' (1811),<sup>17</sup> 'Should females receive a learned

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. xix.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>13</sup> 3 Dec. 1788, 'Journals of the Historical Society of Trinity College' (1788-92) (T.C.D. Manuscript Department, MUN/SOC/HIST 6)

<sup>14</sup> 30 Dec. 1789, 'Journals of the Hist' (1787-93) (HIST 41)

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 26 May 1790

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 21 Nov. 1792

<sup>17</sup> 11 Dec. 1811, 'Journals of the Hist' (1811-12) (HIST 20)

education (1812),<sup>18</sup> among many others pertaining to ancient history and other abstract debates such as ‘Whether does traveling or the Study of History contribute to the improvement of the human mind?’ (1797).<sup>19</sup> These debates are interesting in and of themselves and express liberal or enlightenment tendencies within the club but they are also reflective of, as Thomas McLoughlin describes it, the ‘topical talking points in the streets and coffee houses of Dublin’.<sup>20</sup> It is in this sense that the Hist can be seen as the main venue for debate and discussion in Ireland, reflecting similar movements across Europe including the *salons* and coffee houses in France and Britain respectively. Clark also discusses the importance of debates which came ‘to be recognized as a precondition for an effective polity’ and as such states that ‘learned societies and student clubs included discussion and debate of moral and political issues’ and that although many societies ‘had injunctions to avoid political disputation’ they ‘carried on discussing political news *sotto voce*, often as part of that general conversation which was the quintessence of club life’.<sup>21</sup> As we will discuss later, equivalent student debating societies to the Hist include a debating society at Oxford, which formed in 1810 and the Cambridge University Political Society (circa early 1800s), which both established connections to the Hist in the nineteenth-century.

Apart from the debates serving as an indicator to identity, the topics for historical study and the importance endowed in this also reveal a great deal about the Society and its members. The study of history, one of three principles upon which the Society was founded, occupied a significant amount of their time. The seriousness with which they took the study of history is reflected in the fiscal penalties given to individual members who answered questions inaccurately or insufficiently. Burke’s original club held the study of history in high regard and was one object which he wanted to promote ‘speaking, reading and writing’ in. In his publications and speeches, Burke pays particular attention to history and its importance. In *A vindication of natural society* (1756) Burke simply states ‘examine history’, to understand present conflicts.<sup>22</sup> The study of history he believes, not only allows us to understand contemporary conflicts

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 15 Jan. 1812

<sup>19</sup> 5 Apr. 1787, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (1794-96) (HIST 12)

<sup>20</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 216.

<sup>21</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 462.

<sup>22</sup> Edmund Burke, *A vindication of natural society: or, a view of the miseries and evils arising to mankind from every species of artificial society* (London, 1756), p. 35, available at <http://books.google.ie/books?id=6OZbAAAAQAAJ> (9 Sep. 2011).

but provides readers of national histories a sense of national awareness or national heritage. The Hist predominantly used David Hume's *History of England* but on occasion studied other works such as William Robertson's *History of America* but also Thomas Leland's *History of Ireland*, studied briefly in 1808. The works chosen for study are of interest. Were particular works chosen merely to reflect contemporary trends in historical studies, or were they chosen carefully to ensure a particular interpretation of history was studied and absorbed by members?

The Hist's manuscript collection at Trinity College also contain two volumes of prize essays, poems and writings and they document another activity which the Society encouraged. Similar to the journals, a selection of some of these essays and poems are available in CRADLE, including a song about the Battle of Clontarf, translated and entered into the poems and compositions journal of 1813 and an essay on 'The improvement of the human mind by mechanical means a possibility' (no date specified).<sup>23</sup>

As stated the journals contain some of the opening and closing speeches for particular academic years which offer insight into public politics and debate as well as the internal affairs of the club. Yet, while not all speeches are entered into the journals, and more often they are not transcribed, we are lucky to have in our possession Tone's closing speech of the 20th session, July 1789, an extract of which now follows:

Dark and gloomy as are our prospects, I do not yet despair of the republic. Let us set ourselves seriously to the work of reformation...Be assiduous in history; be bold, yet temperate, in debate; be candid and cautious on the merits of compositions. Think of your past glories, the infamy of desertion, the greatness of reward, the easiness of acquisition. This do, and ye shall live! Omit it, and ye are nothing! <sup>24</sup>

Tone received more than three medals for skills in writing and speech making in the Hist and his last speech within the Hist, points to the republican rhetoric that would follow a few years later.

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<sup>23</sup> 'The improvement of the human mind by mechanical means a possibility' (HIST 62) available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

<sup>24</sup> 1 July 1789, 'Journals of the Historical Society of Trinity College' (1788-92) (T.C.D. Manuscript Department, MUN/SOC/HIST 6); see also 'Journals of the Hist - 1 July 1789, Wolfe Tone in the Chair' in *Associational Dublin Archive* available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

Other primary documents, namely, *Laws of the Historical Society of the University of Dublin, instituted in the year 1770* (1770) and *An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College, Dublin* (1795), were digitised from the Russell Library at NUI, Maynooth at the An Foras Feasa imaging lab and are now available in the Associational Dublin Archive in CRADLE. These documents can be viewed along with selected digital images of entries from the Hist's journals, which are referenced throughout this chapter.

While the speeches and journals inform this chapter and the next one, we will consider the debates, the study of history and creation of compositions in a separate discussion. We will now consider the Hist during the period 1780-98 and establish the links between radical politics and the Hist. The existence of Orange Societies, as well as volunteer corps within Trinity College, will also demonstrate how the Hist was an intrinsic part of a wider political scene.

#### *1780-1798 - The Hist and the United Irishmen and other political clubs in Trinity College (the Orange Order and the Volunteers)*

The late eighteenth-century was a political and socially intense period in Ireland. The American War of Independence (1775-83) and the French Revolutionary period (1789-99) stirred liberal and radical politics in Ireland as elsewhere and influenced a new era of Irish republicanism based on the French model of *liberté et égalité*. Large scale group assemblies in the form of the Volunteers, necessitated by the deployment of the regular army to the American colonies, produced in Ireland a new organisational base from which to express patriotic sentiment as well as demonstrate against economic dissatisfaction (with trade restrictions). Influenced by the French Revolution many Volunteer groups, including the Dublin Volunteers, celebrated Bastille Day through public parades and marches. As R.B. McDowell notes, in 1791 the Dublin Volunteers paraded on Bastille Day, with James Napper Tandy, later a prominent United Irishman, as their commander under a banner 'bearing the inscription "we do not rejoice because we are slaves; but we rejoice because of the French being free"'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> R.B. McDowell, 'The age of the United Irishmen: reform and reaction, 1789-94' in T.W. Moody and W.E. Vaughan (eds), *A new history of Ireland, eighteenth-century Ireland, 1691-1800* (Oxford, 1998), p. 290.

It is against this back drop of spirited and energetic public displays of liberal and radical sentiment that the members the Historical Society of Trinity College met weekly to debate history, politics and philosophy, encouraging the *belles lettres* - eloquent speaking and writing, as oratory and composition. The study of history, oratory and composition can be described as the Hist's *raison d'être* and as such all three will be considered separately in chapter 6. The Hist secured rooms in Trinity College, which is positioned in the center of Dublin and situated at College Green overlooking the Houses of Parliament. This central location provided the Hist with access to the debates and politics of the House of Commons and with firsthand experience of the Volunteer parades but perhaps what is more important, access to burgeoning politically radical groups such as the United Irishmen as well as Orange groups and other loyal societies. One account details how

from their places in the House of Commons, the members of the Historical Society listened night after night to the eloquence and shared the enthusiasm with which Henry Grattan and his associates stirred the Irish people to assert their independent nationality.<sup>26</sup>

From its central location, the Hist, enthralled by the 'intense political and social excitement'<sup>27</sup> of the moment, maintained a forum for discussion and debate between polarised political agendas and identity through its informal influence on its members. The diverse distinguished members of the Hist reflect the liberal and tolerant nature of the Society. The Hist fostered the ideals of several Irish patriots and republicans including Tone and Emmet during the late eighteenth-century. Indeed a tangential link between the Hist and Daniel O'Connell exists. In the nineteenth-century the Hist also played a role in the development of Irish nationalist leaders including Isaac Butt and Thomas Davis. The fact that these nationalist, apart from O'Connell, were Protestants sympathetic to the Catholic cause, reflects the diverse and often complicated nature of Irish society during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century.

An article published in 1888, in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archeological Association of Ireland*, by George D. Burtchaell, 'Theobald Wolfe Tone and the College Historical Society', states the Hist 'became the training school of the *alumni* of the University, who rose to eminence in the Senate, in the Church...at the

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<sup>26</sup> David Plunket, *The life, letters and speeches of Lord Plunket*, i (London, 1867), p. 34, available at <http://www.google.com/books?id=IMwJAAAAIAAJ> (29 Aug. 2011).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

Bar’ and ‘the medical profession’.<sup>28</sup> Yet beyond these academic and professional achievements the Hist was also a training school for many of Ireland’s most famous, influential, national, radical figures. A list of the *alumni* who became prominent figures in Irish history has already been recounted in the previous chapter: among these Theobald Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet and Thomas Addis Emmet stand out for their membership in the United Irishmen. Indeed other members such as Peter Burrowes and Whitley Stokes, had close affiliations with the United Irishmen and its leaders. This overlap of membership demonstrates the extent to which the members of the Hist were influenced by the political and social upheavals of the day. It also shows that although ‘every allusion to contemporary persons or events was strictly and uniformly prohibited’ since the Society’s establishment in 1770, it did not remain unaffected by contemporary politics or events.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the years leading up to the 1798 Rebellion had such an impact on the College that ‘by 1795 the political excitement already ran so high that the Board forbade students to attend meetings outside the college’, and by 1798 it was ‘evident that the disaffection within the walls was deep and far-spread’.<sup>30</sup> Connections between the Hist and United Irishmen reveal that Trinity College was completely immersed in the political wrangling of the 1790s, while the presence of Orange Societies, ultra Protestant and loyal to the Crown, formed in 1795 and a College Corps, part of the Irish Yeomanry established in 1796 to combat the threat of revolution and foreign invasion, within Trinity College also supports this claim and demonstrates the multifarious political identities within the college as in Irish society.

Yet, before the events of the 1790s and the establishment of the Society of the United Irishmen in 1791, Theobald Wolfe Tone, founder of the United Irishmen and republican leader, was actively involved in the Hist. Tone is one of the most celebrated United Irishmen. He has, as R.F. Foster states, ‘been interpreted both as founder of Irish nationalism and as a frustrated imperialist’.<sup>31</sup> Tone, born in Dublin in 1763 and educated at Trinity College, became a member of the Hist in 1783 and played an active role in the debates, administrative duties at the Society and in 1785 became Auditor of the Society. As we know, he also presented a speech for the closing of the 1788-9 session and was in

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<sup>28</sup> George D. Burtchaell, ‘Theobald Wolfe Tone and the College Historical Society’ in *The journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, viii, no. 75 (1888), pp 391-9.

<sup>29</sup> *An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin, 1795), p. 4. ; see *Associational Dublin Archive* at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie) (4 Sep. 2011).

<sup>30</sup> William Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College, Dublin* (London, 1902), pp 127-8.

<sup>31</sup> R.F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (London, 1989), p. 175.

attendance during this period as an ex-student of the College and honorary member of the Society. Tone received a number of medals for oratory and history during his tenure at the Society and we know from his own journals that he viewed the Society in the highest regard, calling it a ‘most admirable institution’.<sup>32</sup> He also states that he ‘had the honor to be Auditor and to close the session with a speech from the chair’, of which he states is the ‘highest compliment which that society is used to bestow’.<sup>33</sup> Tone’s speech from the chair closed a ‘troublesome and tempestuous session’.<sup>34</sup> He explained that it was his task to speak of the societies recent faults and that it was ‘time for the plain voice of unadorned truth to be heard from the Chair; the season of compliment and flattery is over’.<sup>35</sup> The ‘most admirable institution’, as Tone describes it in 1796, was in his opinion in 1789 in ‘total and absolute neglect of the great principles’ upon which the Society was established.<sup>36</sup> In *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence* (1989) Marianne Elliott refers to this period in the Hist and states that ‘the increasing polarisation of Irish politics was bringing the Whiggish Society into conflict with Hely-Hutchinson, the government’s appointee as College Provost’.<sup>37</sup> According to Elliott Tone’s speech was provoked by the ‘petty internal bickering’ which now occupied the Society.<sup>38</sup> Tone’s scolding of the Society lasts the full length of his address, the eloquence of which demonstrates why he received medals in oratory. His confident use of powerful and authoritative language is a brass and unapologetic rhetorical condemnation of ‘the vindictive spirit of sanguinary personal resentment which has through this whole Session disgraced’ proceedings.<sup>39</sup> Tone refers to the eminent members of the past and asks should this society, as it now stands, be remembered for its ‘genius’ or ‘shall the Historical Society be no more mentioned but as a theatre of war

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<sup>32</sup> Theobald Wolfe Tone, *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, William Theobald Wolfe Tone (ed.), I (London, 1831), p. 26, available at <http://books.google.com/books?id=JVANAAAAYAAJ> (5 Sep. 2011) ; see also Theobald Wolfe Tone, *The writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, 1763-98: America, France and Bantry Bay, August 1795 to December 1796, Volume II*, T.W. Moody, R.B. McDowell and C.J. Woods (eds) (Oxford, 2001).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Journals of the Hist - 1 July 1789, Wolfe Tone in the Chair’ in *Associational Dublin Archive* available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie) (3 Sep. 2011).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Marianne Elliott, *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence* (London, 1989), p. 63.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 396.

and tumult?<sup>40</sup> Tone's denunciations are centered on the Society's attention, or lack thereof, to the study and examination of history, the art of debate and to composition and comments negatively on the Society's conduct and behavior. As such he pleads with the members to act now and save the Society from ruin, stating that the principles and tradition of oratory, composition and history, the *raison d'être* of the Society, have of late failed to be displayed with the skill and genius bestowed through the Society's reputation. Of history he asks;

What has been your attendance at History? A wretched evasion of the spirit of your laws by a thin attendance of members, not half prepared, endeavouring to distribute the poor modicum of information, which one or two had collected, among the needy remainder, and so to impose on the chairman and save sixpence!<sup>41</sup>

Their attendance to debate fares no better, as Tone is struck by their lack of enthusiastic interaction with discourse and discussion;

Night after night have they been begun and concluded by the two pleaders, not infrequently by one single pleader; and if they extended beyond those narrow limits, instead of clear and spirited investigation of the question, running into commonplace harangues, or more ruinous contention and invective.<sup>42</sup>

On composition, he merely states, that 'of composition, silence is mercy - this is not your era of composition!'<sup>43</sup> Tone chastises the Society for the degenerative state of 'the three great branches of the institution' and advises that in future

if any troublesome and petulant member breaks the good order of the Society with his personal resentment, instantly remove the evil thing from amongst you, and dismiss him to his proper station - the bear-garden.<sup>44</sup>

Tone is uncompromising in his objective of condemning any behavior which risks the continuation of the Society and embraces the important skills which the club can nurture and develop when it is functioning in the correct manner. As stated Tone's speech is made as an ex-student, an honorary member of the Society who had received medals for history and oratory. Shortly after his speech, Tone was called to the bar but as Thomas

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 398.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp 398-9

Bartlett states he quickly became ‘sick and weary of the law’ and turned to ‘politics and pamphleteering’ instead.<sup>45</sup>

Dagg refers to Tone’s speech as evidence that ‘the Society did not remain altogether unaffected by the spirit of the times, and that there may have been some justification for Tone’s picture of it as “a theatre of war and of tumult”’.<sup>46</sup> This may be a metaphor for the quarrels and internal disputes in the Society but as Dagg suggests may also refer to the ‘brawls and riots that were so common in the streets of Dublin in the eighteenth-century’, in which the students often become involved, especially in the feud between the Ormond Boys and the Liberty Boys, on which the students usually sided with the latter.<sup>47</sup> Tone also talks about the practice of duelling in his speech and states he hoped ‘the demon of duelling was laid’ down to rest and that it ‘would walk within these hallowed walls no more’.<sup>48</sup> Tone’s condemnation of this practice may stem from personal experience - in 1781 he was suspended from Trinity for his involvement in a duel in which a fellow student was killed.<sup>49</sup> Is this Tone's mature reflections? In his 1995 publication, *That damn'd thing called honour: duelling in Ireland, 1570-1860*, James Kelly deals extensively with the practice of duelling. He shows that the practice was at its height in the 1770s and 1780s but by the early nineteenth-century ‘a steadily growing percentage of the population perceived duelling as “barbarous”’ and linked to old aristocratic forms of behavior.<sup>50</sup> Kelly also states that by the 1820s Daniel O’Connell represented the rejection of duelling as a rejection of ‘such quintessential aristocratic mores’ in order to identify with ‘the more egalitarian and disciplined way of life espoused by the middle class’.<sup>51</sup> Indeed a number of Hist debates focused on the practice and questioned its utility as a method of social discipline and control. Motions on this include ‘Whether the practice of duelling be of advantage to society?’ (1780),<sup>52</sup> in which 13 members voted no and 9 voted yes. Ten years later another motion, ‘Is duelling justifiable in a civilised country?’ was defeated by 44 votes against and only 6

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Bartlett, ‘Tone, Theobald Wolfe’ in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, James McGuire & James Quinn (eds) (Cambridge, 2009), available at <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a8590> (9 Mar. 2011).

<sup>46</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 64.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Burtchaell, *Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 397.

<sup>49</sup> Bartlett, ‘Tone, Theobald Wolfe’.

<sup>50</sup> James Kelly, *That damn'd thing called honour: duelling in Ireland, 1570-1860* (Cork, 1995), p. 278.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> 23 Feb. 1780, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 3).

in favour,<sup>53</sup> while the 1806 motion ‘Should duelling be permitted in a Christian country’ was also defeated by 65 votes to 15.<sup>54</sup> These motions not only demonstrate a decline in support for the practice of duelling during the period under review but also show the relevance and context sensitive nature of Hist debates as well as Tone’s 1789 speech which criticised the practice.

Not long after this speech Tone published his first pamphlet titled *A review of the conduct of administration during the seventh session of parliament* (1790), in which he defended the principles of the Whig Club and ‘attacked the government as reneging on the trust of the people’.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, Foster states that Tone’s ‘first nationalist pamphlet attracted the attention of the Whig Club, 1790, but his ideas were soon far in advance of theirs and he came to regard republicanism as a necessary adjunct to pure patriotism’.<sup>56</sup> During the Society’s bicentenary celebrations in 1970, R.B. McDowell describes Tone as the type of man

which the Society prides itself on producing. He was a man of action and a man of ideas, he was an able politician and soldier, and he was a very successful writer, producing, I think, in his diary, one of the great masterpieces of the eighteenth-century.<sup>57</sup>

Tone’s role in the United Irishmen is very well documented and he is certainly one of its most celebrated members. Tone, like many others, used the Hist as a training ground for later life and gained invaluable experience which propelled them to national prominence. In *Contesting Ireland* (1999) Thomas McLoughlin maintains that ‘Tone was not a strikingly original thinker’ and his political views were learned and acquired from the people and literature around him.<sup>58</sup> What then did Tone learn and acquire from the Hist? How much of his political views and liberal sentiment did he assimilate from his time at the Hist? While we may not be able to answer these questions definitively, the motions for debate which Tone was involved in may help glean some light on these issues. Tone’s first question for debate in 1784 at the Hist, ‘Is an absentee tax admissible in a Free State’ was ‘carried in the affirmative’; Tone was ‘one of the

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<sup>53</sup> 3 Mar. 1790, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 41).

<sup>54</sup> 19 Feb. 1806, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 17).

<sup>55</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 216.

<sup>56</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 175.

<sup>57</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 303.

<sup>58</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 216.

pleaders on the question'.<sup>59</sup> However, the *Life and speeches of Lord Plunket* curiously reveals that Tone maintained 'the Conservative side of the old debate, 'whether property should be a necessary qualification for power',<sup>60</sup> a date for this debate is not provided. Plunket's biography also states that Thomas Addis Emmet argued 'strongly that it was impossible for Ireland to exist as a free state independent of Great Britain', continuing that 'a few years later he paid the penalty of exile for endeavoring to prove in practice that she might do so'.<sup>61</sup> Given both Tone and Emmet's later involvement with the United Irishmen and the spirit and practice of republican rhetoric and reform which they advocated, these conservative views are representative of the spirit of debate which the Hist encouraged and, rather than an inconsistency in their personal ideology, may reflect their development from young students to the liberal reformers they became.

Tone's first debate at the Society in 1784, 'Is an absentee tax admissible in a Free State', may outwardly allude to a debate concerning foreign states or countries but a comparison with Ireland and its absentee landlords is not unfathomable. It is this nonspecific interpretation on the rules regarding modern politics and events, ('every allusion to contemporary persons or events was strictly and uniformly prohibited'), which ensured that the Hist would have to answer to the college board on more than one occasion. Charles Kendal Bushe, Hist member during the 1780s with Tone, later a 'lawyer, judge, MP, and political writer'<sup>62</sup>, addressed the Hist during its sojourn outside the college in 1794. In his address Bushe indicates that while all measures were taken to ensure adherence to the laws, modern politics or events were never far from the minds of the Society's members,

it is very true that in the discussion of an historical question, the warm mind of a young man may be struck by some analogy to present times and be tempted into observations which in cooler moments he might disapprove.<sup>63</sup>

This is also demonstrated in Robert Orr's closing speech for the 1791-92 session. According to Dagg, Orr, who was Tone's contemporary at the Society when they were both students in mid-1780s and who was allegedly linked to the United Irishmen,

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<sup>59</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 25.

<sup>60</sup> Plunket, *The life, letters and speeches of Lord Plunket*, p. 37.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 37-8.

<sup>62</sup> James Quinn, 'Bushe, Charles Kendal' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a1222> (4 July 2011).

<sup>63</sup> *F.J.*, 13 Oct 1820, pp 3-4.

explicitly reveals his personal ‘political opinions’ within his closing speech.<sup>64</sup> Orr’s speech, available in CRADLE, states that,

the present state of this kingdom is favourable to exertion. Ireland has begun to know herself and is conscious she has a rank to support among the nations of Europe...I therefore call upon you to exert yourselves in the name of your country, which has the right to the assistance of all her sons to maintain and improve the situation she has so lately acquired after having emerged from bondage of centuries.<sup>65</sup>

The ending of this ‘bondage of centuries’ may refer to the introduction of the 1782 Constitution and the limited freedoms this installed in the Irish Parliament, yet is this call to assistance in military terms or calling on their skills of oratory and debate? While the rule books states there should be no allusion to modern politics or events we can see that this was not always observed. Elliott states that Tone also helped devise questions for debate, which included, ‘Whether a Union with England would be of advantage to this country?’ and ‘Whether exiles are justified in bearing arms against their country?’<sup>66</sup> Despite the Hist’s prohibition on debates which alluded to modern politics, both of these questions referred to contemporary politics of the late eighteenth-century.

The motion on union was debated in November 1789 and defeated by an overwhelming majority, 70 to 8.<sup>67</sup> A similar motion was debated in 1792 which also defeated. The proposal for a union in Ireland was supported throughout the eighteenth-century by many publicists, including Arthur Young, who wrote *A tour in Ireland* (1780). R.B. McDowell quotes Young (1999) and states that ‘that in the event of a union Ireland would probably lose “an idle race of country gentlemen, and in exchange their ports would fill with ships and commerce”’.<sup>68</sup> Adam Smith (1723-90), Scottish philosopher and political theorist, also supported the implementation of a union, stating that ‘without a union with Great Britain...the inhabitants of Ireland are not likely for many ages to become one people’.<sup>69</sup> Rejecting a union with England is in line with

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<sup>64</sup> ‘Journals of the Hist - 27 June 1792, Robert Orr in the Chair’ in *Associational Dublin Archive* available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie) (3 Sep. 2011).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Elliott, *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence*, p. 64.

<sup>67</sup> 25 Nov. 1789, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (1794-96) (HIST.41)

<sup>68</sup> R.B. McDowell, ‘Revolution and the union, 1794-1800’ in *A new history of Ireland, IV, eighteenth-century Ireland, 1691-1800*, iv (Oxford, 1999), p. 362.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 363.

national independence and the republican tendencies for which Tone became famous, but how much the results of this debate indicate the political feelings of other members of the Hist is difficult to tell. If we are to analyse political affiliation based wholly on this negative vote, we must remember that the Orange Order (est. 1795) was against a union with England until after the Union (1801) when repeal became an issue for Irish Catholics and the Orange Order became increasingly Unionist.

The latter debate which Tone helped devise, ‘Whether exiles are justified in bearing arms against their country?’, was, as Elliott states, ‘a reference to the revolts which were beginning to dismantle the old order on the Continent’ and had a ‘prophetic significance for Tone’.<sup>70</sup> Another debate which Tone helped to devise ‘Whether the establishment of a free constitution in France, would be of advantage to this country’ reflects increased interest and sympathy for the French cause. In June 1789, shortly before Tone’s closing speech of that session, the Hist also debated ‘Ought we wish for the Establishment of a free constitution in France?’.<sup>71</sup> The motion, however, was defeated. Tone’s participation in these debates is significant and indicates the development of political rhetoric which informed the many publications which the United Irishmen published in the 1790s.

Tone’s speech in 1789 was the closing speech of that session but also his closing words within the Society. In October 1791 Tone was co-founding member of the Belfast Society of United Irishmen and a month later the Dublin Society of United Irishmen was also established. Tone’s second publication, *An argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland* received much attention and was republished by the Society of United Irishmen. In 1792 Tone also became Secretary to the Catholic Committee and as such worked closely with them on issues of Catholic emancipation.

The founding of the United Irishmen signaled a new direction for Tone but also for the Hist. The United Irishmen found support from various sections in Irish society, not least among members of the Hist. Although this connection would have serious implications in 1798 for a number of the Hist’s members, even before the events of 1798 the Hist were embroiled with public denunciations of them as a political club akin to the United Irishmen. Bushe’s 1794 speech reveals how some perceived the Hist:

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<sup>70</sup> Elliott, *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence*, p. 64.

<sup>71</sup> 24 June 1789, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 6)

Will you believe that the Historical Society has been represented [as] a political society prophaned by a comparison with the Whigs of the Capital, United Irishmen, and such other Jacobin associations? I ask you, would you believe it?...As such we have been represented to the board.<sup>72</sup>

It is unclear from where or from whom these accusations originate as Bushe does not reveal why such accusations began or even persisted. In response to this Bushe gives a description of the type of men the Society was composed of, thereby rejecting any affiliations with ‘Jacobin associations’:

The Historical Society is composed of as loyal and constitutional men as any other body whatsoever...the homage paid to the king and constitution is not more pure than generous loyalty which beats high and honest in the liberal and ingenious breasts of the educated youth of Ireland.<sup>73</sup>

Three years after this speech was delivered Robert Emmet and Thomas Moore would become two of these ‘loyal and constitutional men’ which the Hist so avowedly vouched their society were composed of. This is not meant as a condemnation but rather a demonstration of the quickening pace and spread of the United Irishmen’s revolutionary and republication ideas: as Moore himself put it, ‘the political ferment that was abroad through Ireland...found its way within the walls of the University’.<sup>74</sup> Both men are important Irish historical figures, famous, though for very different reasons. Robert Emmet is famous for his United Irishmen connections, his failed insurrection in 1803 and his subsequent execution, while Thomas Moore is famous for his poetry, prose and music.

Thomas Moore and Robert Emmet became close friends during their time at Trinity College. Moore, who came from a Catholic background, was not a United Irishmen himself but was supportive and sympathetic to their cause, and indeed active in United Irishmen politics despite not being a member. Harry White states that Moore published (pseudonymously) two articles in December 1797 and January 1798 in which he gave explicit support to the idea of rebellion, and addressed Henry

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<sup>72</sup> *F.J.*, 15 Oct. 1794, p. 3.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’ in *Irish Quarterly Review*, iv (1854), p. 505.

Grattan (qv) on the removal of the viceroy and the threat of dissolution of the Irish parliament.<sup>75</sup>

Indeed *Thomas Moore: his life, writings, and contemporaries* (1860), by Henry Riddell Montgomery, states that upon the establishment of the ‘United Irish Society’ newspaper, *The Press*, Moore,

impelled by the ardour of his patriotism and the growing consciousness of the power of wielding the pen, took the dangerous step (as tending to identify him with the party) of dropping a letter into the editor’s box.<sup>76</sup>

The publication dates which White refers to and the inaugural publication of *The Press* in September 1797, indicates that perhaps the articles or letters referred to in both accounts, White’s and Montgomery’s, may be the same. When it was revealed to Moore’s mother that he was the author of these pseudonymous articles, she urged him ‘never again to venture on such dangerous ground’.<sup>77</sup>

These publications demonstrate Moore’s political astuteness and indeed indicate his involvement with contemporary politics and concerns and indeed his ability to interact with the United Irishmen from a peripheral stand point. It also reveals his ideological position during his time at the Hist. Yet even before these publications, evidence suggests that Moore may have been involved with the Catholic Committee. In *Revolutionary Dublin, 1795-1801, the letters of Francis Higgins to Dublin Castle* (2004) Thomas Bartlett identifies a ‘Mr. Moore’ as Thomas Moore ‘(1779-1852) poet and composer’ in a letter from Francis Higgins, proprietor of the *Freeman’s Journal* and government spy, to Mr. Secretary Hamilton.<sup>78</sup> The letter first states that the Catholic Committee ‘are busy this day in sending instructions to the County Delegates to procure all such as possessed of freeholds (of their persuasion) to immediately apply to those members for counties and for towns to support their claims in Parliament’.<sup>79</sup> Higgins then writes, 10 April 1795, that he omitted in his letter yesterday<sup>80</sup> that

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<sup>75</sup> Harry White, ‘Moore, Thomas’ in *Dictionary of Irish biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a5948> (4 July 2011)

<sup>76</sup> Henry Riddell Montgomery, *Thomas Moore: his life, writings, and contemporaries* (London, 1860), pp 16-17, available at <http://www.google.com/books?id=NB86AAAACAAJ> (5 Sep. 2011).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>78</sup> Thomas Bartlett (ed.), *Revolutionary Dublin, 1795-1801, the letters of Francis Higgins to Dublin Castle* (Dublin, 2004), p. 76.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>80</sup> This letter is missing from the collection.

after students of the university had presented their address to Mr. Grattan, they went in numbers to Francis Street Chapel Vestry where their Secretary, a Mr. Moore...declared that they were ready to join in any act with the Catholics, damning the present administration and calling out Fitzwilliam and Grattan forever!<sup>81</sup>

Without the contextual information contained in the previous letter, which is missing from the collection, it is difficult to elucidate this incident. However, there is evidence to suggest that Moore was at least involved with the politics and the lobbying tactics which the Catholic Committee promoted. Although the Catholic Committee was founded in 1773 as a conservative group lobbying for the relaxation of the penal laws, by the 1790s, owing to a change in leadership and Wolfe Tone's appointment as Secretary in 1792, who was described as their 'most ardent Protestant advocate', the Catholic Committee became more 'aggressive and radical' in 'spirit'.<sup>82</sup> A dinner in March 1792 reveals the societies with which the Catholic Committee associated; Committee members dined with members of the United Irishmen, Whigs of the Capital and Aldermen of Skinner's Alley. This formidable mix of political associations drunk numerous toasts including that 'the glorious revolution in France [may] be realized in Ireland and [that] all Irishmen [may] unite to exterminate an English party influence and become a free and independent people'.<sup>83</sup> Of this event Curtin reiterates earlier discussions on sociability and associational culture stating that, 'even such an orgy of drink was a means of binding participants closer together in their political associations'.<sup>84</sup>

It is during this period of more aggressive and radical spirit that Moore and other students of Trinity declared they 'were ready to join in any act with the Catholics', which clearly indicates support for the Catholic Committee and their doctrine. More conclusive evidence of the connection and affiliation between Moore and the Catholic Committee is presented in Higgins' letter dated 14 April 1795, which states,

last night a meeting of their secret committee [Catholic Committee] and those of correspondence met at Mr. Sweetman's after they entertained Mr. Moore, Mr.

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<sup>81</sup> Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, p. 76.

<sup>82</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 47.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

Leslie and six others of the students of the University who also appeared in the capacity of president and committee of students from Trinity College.<sup>85</sup>

What group of students Moore and his group represent is unclear but what is clear is that Moore is immersed in the political ideologies and activities of the various prominent associations in Dublin and it is this activity which reflects the politicised social networks which Moore and indeed many other members of the Hist participated in.

Moore's *Memoirs, journal and correspondence...*<sup>86</sup> reveals that during 1797, though he 'cannot exactly say at what period of it', he was 'admitted a member of the Historical Society of the University'.<sup>87</sup> Moore also writes that, 'here [the Hist], as everywhere else, the political spirit so rife abroad continued to mix with all our debates and proceedings, notwithstanding the constant watchfulness of the college authorities'.<sup>88</sup> He also reveals a division in the Society as a proportion of the members endeavored to please the college authorities and were devoted to the government, stating that 'a strong party within the Society itself which adhered devotedly to the politics of the government, and took part invariably with the Provost and fellows in all their restrictive and inquisitorial measures'.<sup>89</sup> According to Moore this party included Sargeant and Jebb as 'the most distinguished and eloquent...supporters of power'.<sup>90</sup> Jebb, later the Bishop of Limerick, proposed the adoption of resolutions in November 1794 which appeased the College authorities in an attempt to readmit the Society after its expulsion earlier in the year and return the Society to the favour of the College Board. These resolutions, which include rules on membership, the wearing of gowns, submitting Society journals to the board for inspection and reiterating 'no question of modern politics shall be debated',<sup>91</sup> effectively split the Society. A compromise was proposed to include the following resolution: 'however desirous the Society are of a reconciliation with the Board they cannot consent to purchase such reconciliation by a sacrifice of the

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>86</sup> Thomas Moore, *Memoirs, journal and correspondence of Thomas Moore: 1779-1852*, John Russell (ed.) (London, 1853) available at <http://www.google.ie/books?id=c-oEAAAAYAAJ> (5 Sep. 2011).

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp 50-1.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 75.

essential privileges belonging to any of their members'.<sup>92</sup> After this Jebb, Peter Burrowes, William Plunket and other members withdrew their names from the Society's books. The Hist effectively dissolved and two factions emerged. Jebb and his supporters created the Intern Society in December 1794, which was loyal to the college authorities, while the remaining members of the Hist organised themselves into the Extern Society. By October 1795 the board reinstated the Hist and the Intern Society dissolved as members renewed their affiliation to the newly established Hist. The Extern Society operated independently for a number of years, until 1807 when it merged with the Historical Society of Trinity College and the journals and books of the Extern were reunited with the main Society.<sup>93</sup>

This episode demonstrates the division which Moore describes and the conflict between those who wished to appease the board and those who wanted to promote the autonomy of the Society. The support of 'inquisitorial measures' by some members of the Society which Moore refers to, may be a reference to Lord Clare's 1798 investigation into secret society activity within Trinity College. During this investigation Moore demonstrates his support for the United Irishmen cause and indeed for his close friend Robert Emmet, when he refuses to divulge to college officials the names of those involved with the secret societies found to be operating within the college walls, even though he himself was at risk of expulsion for simply concealing their names.

Yet before this event tested Moore's allegiance, both Moore and Emmet took an active part in the Hist's proceedings and in February 1798 'both spoke in support of the question: "Is unlimited freedom of discussion the best means of stopping the progress of erroneous opinion?"', Emmet was teller for the Ayes which carried the motion by 27 to 20.<sup>94</sup> That Emmet promoted freedom of speech may come as no surprise. Yet, Robert Emmet was not the first Emmet involved with the Hist. His two older brothers Christopher Temple Emmet and Thomas Addis Emmet were both members. Christopher Temple Emmet, whose contribution to the Hist includes a poem, 'Verse to a Lady with a present of Myrtle',<sup>95</sup> died in 1789 while Thomas Addis Emmet was a member of the Hist before attending Edinburgh University, where he was on the committee to set up

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 41.

<sup>94</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 36.

<sup>95</sup> 25 Nov. 1778, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 48)

links between the Speculative Society at Edinburgh University and the Hist.<sup>96</sup> Like his brother Robert, Thomas was also a member of the United Irishmen but as the older brother Thomas played a more senior role, having been a member of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen since 1792. When the Speculative Society discovered this in 1798, by which time T.A. Emmet was an honorary member of the Speculative Society having changed professions after the death of his brother, his name was ‘erased from the List of the Speculative Society’, not only because of his membership of the ‘Executive Directory of the Irish Union’ but also for his ‘treasonable correspondence to France’.<sup>97</sup> After the 1798 Rebellion and T.A. Emmet’s subsequent exile to America, links remained between Emmet and his Hist contemporaries, namely Peter Burrowes who was a member of the Hist at the same time as Tone and T.A. Emmet and with whom T.A. Emmet corresponded with illegally while in exile. Burrowes was also ‘one of the three defence counsel[s]’<sup>98</sup> appointed to Robert Emmet after his failed insurrection in Dublin (1803), demonstrating the close ties which Burrowes developed with the Emmets.

Before the events of 1798 and 1803, for which Robert Emmet’s life is most remembered, like his brothers before him, R. Emmet proved to be a skilled and talented orator. His close friend and ally, Moore, described R. Emmet’s time at the Hist in his journals, and states that his oratory skills were so impressive, describing them as ‘exciting and powerful’, that

so little were the most distinguished speakers among our opponents able to cope with his eloquence, that the Board at length actually thought it right to send among us a man of advanced standing in the University, belonging to a former race of good speakers in the Society, in order that he might answer the speeches of Emmet, and endeavor to obviate the mischievous impressions produced by them.<sup>99</sup>

Moore describes Emmet as ‘of the popular side in the Society’, their ‘chief champion and ornament’,<sup>100</sup> again alluding to a division within the Society. He also states that ‘the

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<sup>96</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 20.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> C.J. Woods, ‘Burrowes, Peter’ in *Dictionary of Irish biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a1212> (4 July 2011).

<sup>99</sup> Moore, *Memoirs, journal and correspondence*, p. 51.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

political horizon had been for some time growing dark and menacing'<sup>101</sup> and that even though

every care was taken to exclude the politics of the day, it was always easy enough by a side wind of digression or allusion, to bring Ireland and the prospects then opening upon her within the scope of the orator's view.<sup>102</sup>

Moore's recollection of his time at the Hist reiterates Bushe's point that while all efforts were made not to discuss modern politics, Hist debates and discussions often digressed to the important political topics of the day, probably to the dismay of Jebb and those who wished to keep favour with the College Board.

As Moore indicates, the Society was not unaffected by the political and social upheavals which dominated the Irish political landscape during the 1790s and United Irishmen activity in Dublin as elsewhere effected all citizens of Dublin, not least the ordinary members of the Hist, as well as those directly involved in radical politics. The Belfast Society of the United Irishmen, founded in 1791, drew support from various sectors of Irish society and quickly established local societies across Ireland, including the Dublin Society. The object of the Society was 'to make an United Society of the Irish nation, to make all Irishmen – Citizens; - all Citizens – Irishmen'.<sup>103</sup> Initially, this was to be achieved through reform of parliamentary legislation but given French revolutionary influence and the tradition of volunteering, which the United Irishmen revived and who became, as Curtin describes it, 'the radical wing of the Volunteers',<sup>104</sup> reform through legislation quickly turned to reform through armed revolution and as such 'a new brand of Volunteers, called the National Guard' emerged in 1792, which was modeled on the French example.<sup>105</sup> The United Irishmen now called on 'citizen soldiers',<sup>106</sup> rather than mere citizens to protect 'your country' but by February 1793, alarmed at the increase in radical Volunteer activity, the 'lord lieutenant, issued a proclamation declaring all Volunteer assemblies unlawful'.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> 'The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era', p. 507.

<sup>102</sup> Moore, *Memoirs, journal and correspondence*, p. 51.

<sup>103</sup> *Society of the United Irishmen of Dublin, the Hon. Simon Butler in the chair, Resolved unanimously, that the following circular letter, reported by our Committee of Correspondence, be adopted and printed* (Dublin, 1792), available at Eighteenth Century Collections Online, pp 1-2.

<sup>104</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 51.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

Further attempts by the government to suppress the (radical wing of the) Volunteers and the United Irishmen meant that by the end of 1794, beginning of 1795, as R.B. McDowell states, ‘Irish radicalism began to transform itself from a constitutional movement into an underground movement’ which sought military assistance from France.<sup>108</sup> Also, because the United Irishmen became an oath bound association it meant that members could be tried with treason. In May 1795 Tone fled to America before moving to France in 1796 to seek assistance for the United Irishmen’s cause.<sup>109</sup> The United Irishmen revived old Volunteer groups and established new ones but the Volunteers were not unified in their ideology or support. Curtin details the response of two Volunteers when asked why they had joined - one replied – ‘Is not it time to arm when three million of our fellow subjects are in chains?’, while the second replied ‘that he did not want to see Ireland become a “popish country”’.<sup>110</sup> These ideologies are completely at odds with one another and reflect the complex nature of the Volunteers and indeed Irish society at the time. Another secret society, the Defenders, who played an important role in the spread of republican radicalism, were seen as the Catholic version of the Protestant Peep O’Day Boys, an agrarian group who attacked Catholic dwellings at the break of day to assert control over particular Protestant industries.

In *Loyalism in Ireland* (2007) Allan Blackstock states that the Defenders and the United Irishmen ‘coalesced’, contributing to the rapid spread of the United Irishmen’s cause.<sup>111</sup> In 1795 a large group of Defenders were defeated at the ‘Battle of the Diamond’ by, as Blackstock describes it, ‘Protestant vigilantes’.<sup>112</sup> This event triggered the formation of the first lodges of the Orange Order and illustrates heightened sectarianism in Ulster, as elsewhere in Ireland. By 1796 the United Irishmen’s attempts to secure French aid came to fruition. Tone, having served as a French officer, returned to Ireland with a 15,000 strong fleet under the command of General Hoche. It was this threat of invasion which prompted many (loyal) Volunteer corps to group and arm and also prompted the creation of an Irish Yeomanry across the country. Blackstock describes the yeomanry as ‘a voluntary, part-time force raised in 1796 for local law-and-

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<sup>108</sup> McDowell, ‘The age of the United Irishmen: revolution and the union, 1794-1800’, p. 339.

<sup>109</sup> Bartlett, ‘Tone, Theobald Wolfe’.

<sup>110</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 52.

<sup>111</sup> Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829*, p. 63.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

order duties, with the potential for full military service during invasion or insurrection' and in his article, "'A dangerous species of ally': Orangesim and the Irish Yeomanry' (1997), investigates the link between the Orange Order and Irish Yeomanry.<sup>113</sup> Unlike the Volunteers, the yeomanry were under government control and when eventually given permission by Trinity College to form, a College Corp emerged in 1797, which we know contained at least one Hist member, John Wilson Croker. The threat of foreign invasion, which promoted the creation of an Irish Yeomanry, however, had failed in December 1796 as General Hoche's expedition from France was hampered by bad weather and was prevented from landing at Bantry Bay. The fleet was forced to return to France, along with Tone and only 34 of the 45 original ships.<sup>114</sup> McDowell states the failed landing

taught the British navy, which had conspicuously failed to intercept the French fleet, a lesson, and its blockading techniques were to be greatly improved. Another result was that the forces at the disposal of the Irish government were appreciably strengthened - shortly before it had to cope with a major insurrection.<sup>115</sup>

Hope of another expedition under General Hoche were dashed when he died in 1797 and although Tone held talks with Napoleon Bonaparte, further French assistance was not forthcoming until the 1798 Rebellion had already started.

The months leading up to the 1798 Rebellion in May were politically intense and as the journals of the Hist indicate. Events unfolded so rapidly that although in February 1798 Robert Emmet was participating in debates at the Hist, two short months later, on April 25, his name was struck off the members list for seditious and treasonable acts. These seditious and treasonable acts refer to Emmet's connections to the United Irishmen, who were at this stage an oath bound society and unlawful. Emmet's name appears in the Hist's role call on 7 March 1798, with 70 members in attendance, after this he is signed as absent until 25 April when his name disappears. His expulsion was a result of an inquisition composed of Lord Clare and Dr. Duigenan. This inquisition set out to prove 'whether the disaffection imputed to the College was founded in reality, or

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<sup>113</sup> Allan Blackstock, "'A dangerous species of ally': Orangesim and the Irish Yeomanry' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxx, no. 119 (1997), p. 393.

<sup>114</sup> Theobald Wolfe Tone, *The writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, 1763-98: America, France and Bantry Bay, August 1795 to December 1796*, T.W. Moody, R.B. McDowell and C.J. Woods (eds) (Oxford, 2001), p. xviii.

<sup>115</sup> McDowell, 'The age of the United Irishmen: revolution and the union', p. 350.

was a mere remour or surmise'.<sup>116</sup> The visit was prompted by the refusal of 'one scholar' to attend a meeting at the Castle and reports of the use of 'seditious language in the College courts' in February 1798.<sup>117</sup> Lord Clare's visit to Trinity College on 19 April 1798 came with serious consequences for a number of Hist members, including Emmet.<sup>118</sup>

Held in the College Hall, all 'members of the college – even the inferior officials and porters' were required to attend.<sup>119</sup> Macnele Dixon describes this event in a history of *Trinity College, Dublin* (1902) and states that an oath was 'tendered to each person, beginning with the Provost'.<sup>120</sup> The inquisition lasted three days and as the number of implicated students and fellows rose to such an alarming degree it was necessary to modify the oath as such 'a large proportion of the members of the University' would otherwise be implicated and expelled for 'contumacious' behavior or intent. According to Macnele Dixon, Thomas Moore was among many students who declined to take the oath in its original format.<sup>121</sup> However, Montgomery's account of this incident states that, although he initially refused to take the oath, claiming 'he did not know how far he might tend to criminate others', intimidated by his inquisitors, he eventually, 'however reluctantly' took the oath.<sup>122</sup> Emmet's absence at the investigation prompted the committee to announce him as 'contumacious' but it was the oath and the cross-examination of each swearer which exposed the extent to which the political sentiment of the day had infiltrated the walls of the college and the sanctum of the Hist's debating room. Each sworn college member was asked about his knowledge of any secret societies in the college or of 'seditious opinions among the members of the Society'.<sup>123</sup> In relation to Moore's inquisition, Montgomery also lists the questions asked of him – 'Have you ever belonged to one of these Societies?'... 'Did you ever hear of a proposal at any of their meetings for the purchase of arms and ammunition?'... 'Did you ever hear of a proposition in one of these societies as to the expediency of assassination?' - to

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<sup>116</sup> Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College*, p.128.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> A copy of the minute book for Lord Clare's visit is held in the manuscript department at Trinity College, Dublin (TCD MS 1203 folio 8)

<sup>119</sup> Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College*, p.128.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Montgomery, *Thomas Moore*, pp 22-3.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

all questions Moore answered, ‘no, my lord’.<sup>124</sup> Unlike Moore’s resilience under cross examination, Whitely Stokes, ‘a Junior Fellow, and a former member of the Society of United Irishmen’<sup>125</sup> and former active member of the Hist, confirmed the existence of secret societies and of seditious and rebellious activity within the College

Stokes’ time at the Hist is not well documented but it is known that he was a close friend of Tone and an early member and supporter of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen. In 1796 Tone wrote: ‘in the full sense of the term, I look upon Whitely Stokes as the very best man I have ever met’.<sup>126</sup> At the time of Lord Clare’s inquiry Stokes had ceased to be a member of the United Irishmen, but of his time in it, Curtin states among his plan for reform, which he recommend to the United Irishmen, were that, ‘a small property qualification [w]as more likely to promote a virtuous, independent, and responsible electorate’.<sup>127</sup> The Hist on more than one occasion held debates on similar topics namely, ‘Should the possession of property be a necessary qualification in a member of Parliament?’<sup>128</sup> (1789). Tone’s journal indicates why Stokes and himself followed divergent paths. This was not because Stokes did not agree with the United Irishmen’s ideologies but because he could not agree with their method, with rebellion.

With an acute feeling of the degradation of his country, and a just and generous indignation against her oppressors, the tenderness and humanity of his disposition is such, that he recoils from any measures to be attempted for her emancipation which may terminate in blood: in this respect I have not the virtue to imitate him.<sup>129</sup>

Stokes’ interrogation is detailed in the *Freeman’s Journal* on two separate occasions, 26 April and 3 May 1798. The former reports that at his conclusion, the Vice Chancellor [Lord Clare] states – ‘Mr. Stokes, I have partly been much deceived respecting you. I confess, that I came down to this hall under the conviction of your being, not merely a member of a treasonable society, but the President of a Committee of United Irishmen’, continuing that he was happy that Stokes had ‘no connection with those men who are

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>126</sup> Tone, *The life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 50.; see also Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 15.

<sup>127</sup> Curtin, *The United Irishmen*, p.25.

<sup>128</sup> 25 Feb. 1789, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 41)

<sup>129</sup> Tone, *The life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 50.

endeavoring to destroy the country'.<sup>130</sup> Stokes, however, did not betray his earlier affiliations to the United Irishmen or renege on his friendship with Tone. In answer to the Lord Clare's inquiry on secret societies in Trinity College Stokes answered - 'Yes', but 'the only societies of that description which I am aware of are Orange Societies',<sup>131</sup> and he proceeded to give their names. Indeed a prominent Orange man, William Blacker, while a student at Trinity College in 1795, 'formed an Orange lodge at Carrickblacker ('No. 12'), took a leading part in the first Orange parade at Lurgan (12 July 1796), [and] helped to form a college lodge'.<sup>132</sup> Other students, afraid of being implicated and tarred as 'recusants', gave information which led to the discovery of 'four committees of United Irishmen',<sup>133</sup> one of which Robert Emmet was leader, as well as the Orange Societies. Out of nineteen students expelled from Trinity College in 1798, for treasonous acts eight were members of the Hist - 'Peter McLoughlin, Thomas Corbet, William Corbet, Arthur Newport, John Browne, Michael Farrell and Martin John Ferrell'<sup>134</sup> and of course Emmet. Stokes was reprimanded for these dalliances with 'recusants' but was restored to favour after three years of academic penalties. Indeed, Tone's diary mentions Lord Clare's inquiry and discusses Stokes' involvement:

During my stay in Paris, I read in the English papers...of a visitation held by the Chancellor in Trinity College, the result of which was the expulsion of nineteen students and the suspension, for three years, of my friend Whitley Stokes.<sup>135</sup>

Tone also states that,

his [Stokes'] crime was having communicated to Sampson, who communicated to Lord Moira, a paper which he had previously transmitted to the Lord Lieutenant, and which contained the account of some atrocity committed by the British troops in the South of Ireland.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> *F.J.*, 26 Apr. 1798, p. 4.

<sup>131</sup> Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College*, p.129.

<sup>132</sup> C.J.Woods, 'Blacker, William' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a0692> (4 July 2011).

<sup>133</sup> Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College*, p. 130.

<sup>134</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 96.

<sup>135</sup> Theobald Wolfe Tone, *The writings of Theobald Wolfe Tone, 1763-98, volume III, France, the Rhine, Lough Swilly and death of Tone, January 1797 to November 1798*, T.W. Moody, R.B. McDowell and C.J. Woods (eds) (Oxford, 2007), p. 256.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

Tone also reveals that Stokes was involved with the ‘Secret Comm[itt]ee long before [Tone] left Ireland’.<sup>137</sup> He admits that he is unsure if he is ‘vexed, or pleased, at this event as with regard to Whitley’ and wishes ‘he [Stokes] had taken his part more decidedly...[he] must be with the people, or against them’.<sup>138</sup>

Following Lord Clare’s investigation, the Hist debated ‘Is a democracy more favourable than Monarchy to the advancement of literature?’ (25 April 1798),<sup>139</sup> with 40 members in attendance. While this debate may pertain to literature, it seems a bold topic to debate given republican politics of the day and the very recent investigation. A month later, 23 May 1798, there were only 30 members in attendance with over 70 members missing. As it happens this date coincided with the projected date of the rising,<sup>140</sup> and by following day, 24 May, Dublin was already placed under martial law.<sup>141</sup> Miscommunication, mismanagement and the arrests of many prominent figures in the ranks of the United Irishmen culminated in disaster, as only some parts of Dublin rose as planned, while the ‘northerners’, thinking ‘that the rebellion had been postponed’, did nothing.<sup>142</sup> Despite this set back rebellion spread rapidly throughout the country. On 30 May, with only ten members in attendance, the Hist could no longer ignore the serious and precarious state the country was in. The ‘ordinary business of the night was suspended by a motion made by Mr Sargent and the Auditor’ with Jebb in the chair.<sup>143</sup> The Society passed the following resolutions unanimously:

1. Resolved. That the Historical Society, entering with the warmest feeling into the common cause of their country and resolved to join heart and hand in defense of these liberties and laws, which at this day are attacked by disaffection and rebellion, have unanimously resolved to suspend their meeting until the happy return of domestic tranquility.
2. Resolved that as nothing but the superior voice of our country could call for this adjournment of our Institution - The Auditor is requested to give public

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> 25 Apr. 1798, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12)

<sup>140</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 264.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> 30 May 1798, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

notice of the first meeting of this Society to take place after the long Vacation, which is now at hand.<sup>144</sup>

In October 1798 the Society reassembled as usual for the new academic year, reflecting both the rapid spread and demise of the rebellion. Within the few short months of the Hist's 'long Vacation' an estimated 30,000 were dead and battles, such as Vinegar Hill in Wexford, as well as the atrocities carried out by government or loyal forces, attained mythic status in Irish history. Yet rather than uniting Irish men, the United Irishmen's 1798 Rebellion exposed the disunity which existed in Irish society, not only perhaps between north and south but also between the middle class and the lower class and indeed Protestants and Catholics. Curtin describes the United Irishmen as highly skilled propagandist 'who could highlight injustices in Ireland and appeal to each aggrieved party separately',<sup>145</sup> unifying different interest groups but only on the surface. The United Irishmen's republican ideologies which promoted a unified nation, where 'all Irishmen' were citizens and 'all Citizens – Irishmen' did not come to fruition and indeed the legacy of the 1798 Rebellion was intensified sectarianism and factionalism along confessional lines, as well as the enactment of Union in 1801.

While the Hist resolved to suspend their meetings 'until the happy return of domestic tranquility' a number of their members met with a less than tranquil fate for their involvement with the United Irishmen and the 1798 Rebellion. As we have already mentioned, Tone returned to France after the failed French landing at Bantry Bay. Further attempts to secure French assistance were hampered by the death of General Hoche and Bonaparte's refusal to commit a new fleet. It was this delay in French assistance, which was perhaps a vague arrangement at best, which delayed the uprising in parts of the country, including Antrim where it was resolved on 1 June 'to wait for the ever-promised French invasion before committing the Antrim United Irishmen to the field'.<sup>146</sup> Yet when the 'French invasion' finally arrived in August with General Humbert landing in Killala with an estimated 1,000 soldiers, the rebellion was already effectively quashed. Humbert's landing managed to rally 'thousands of Irishmen from Connacht' but as Curtin states their valiant attempts to march towards Dublin were defeated by September.<sup>147</sup> A third landing was attempted in October, this time consisting

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 30 May 1798.

<sup>145</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 285.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 277.

of almost 3,000 soldiers including Wolfe Tone. Unfortunately for Tone, the lessons learned by the British Navy from his initial attempts to land with a French fleet in 1796 and the subsequent improvement of 'blockading techniques' by the Navy, meant that his ship was intercepted and Tone was arrested for treason. Tone's defence counsel included Peter Burrowes, previously noted for his membership of the Hist and connections with the United Irishmen. Yet even before Tone and others founded the Society of United Irishmen, Burrowes was closely involved in a political club which Tone founded in 1790, demonstrating the lifelong connections which the Hist was instrumental in forging. *Select speeches of the late Peter Burrowes...*(1850) contains a description of the club, which reads as follows;

The club consisted of seven or eight individuals, all eminent for their talents and patriotism, and who had already more or less distinguished themselves by their literary productions. The experiment satisfied Tone that men of genius, to be of use, must not be collected in numbers; that they do not work well in the aggregate.<sup>148</sup>

Further details of this club are sketchy but we know from Tone's diary that he referred to this political club as 'an oyster club' because it quickly degenerated in to a 'mere social club'.<sup>149</sup> Whitely Stokes is also indicated as a member of this club. In a letter to Thomas Russell, co-founder and leader of the United Irishmen, Burrowes states 'I shall not hesitate to give our friend every assistance in my power'.<sup>150</sup> Tone was sentenced to death by hanging in November 1798 for treasonable acts but before his execution he died from self-inflicted wounds. Burrowes' connections with Tone, however, lasted long after his death: Elliott has shown that as late as 1814 he was 'paying a small annuity to the mother of his old friend'.<sup>151</sup>

At the time of Tone's arrest Thomas Addis Emmet was already in custody having been arrested in March 1798 along with other prominent United Irishmen. He was instrumental in negotiating the Kilmainhaim Treaty which in return for information halted the execution of United Irishmen who were to emigrate now instead.<sup>152</sup> In March

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<sup>148</sup> Waldron Burrowes, *Select speeches of the late Peter Burrowes, Esq., K.C., at the bar and in parliament* (Dublin, 1850), p. 30.

<sup>149</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 43.

<sup>150</sup> Tone, *The writings of*, p. 372.

<sup>151</sup> Elliott, *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence*, p. 412.

<sup>152</sup> James Quinn, 'Emmet, Thomas Addis' in *Dictionary of Irish biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a2922> (5 July 2011).

1799 T.A. Emmet was exiled. Before eventually making his way to America T.A. Emmet, met with his younger brother, Robert, in Amsterdam in 1802 and attempted to rejuvenate or continue the United Irishmen's cause, securing promises again from France that help was at hand.<sup>153</sup> However, before the promised French invasion, perhaps because of repeated failed attempts, in the summer of 1803 Robert Emmet staged an insurrection in Dublin but was quickly defeated. Again, Burrowes was on Robert Emmet's defence counsel yet despite this Emmet was executed on 20 September 1803. Yet not all Hist members, discovered to be United Irishmen, met such fates, as Thomas Corbett and his brother William Corbett fled to France after the outbreak of Rebellion and pursued successful careers in the French army.<sup>154</sup>

That some members of the Hist were United Irishmen is perhaps inevitable given the prominence of the republican society in Dublin and the Hist's central location. The events which led to the expulsion of students, because of their involvement with secret societies within Trinity College, reveal the extent to which the Hist, as well as the College itself, was engaged with national politics of the day. Rather than being just a student debating society, the Hist contributed to the development of politically and socially adept minds, cultivating Hegel's *Bildung* and producing civic minded citizens who participated in collective action which was motivated by national concerns rather than individualistic needs. Yet, the Hist did not just produce revolutionary figures, a fact however which did not stop the public from perceiving the Society, as Bushe stated in 1794, as a political society akin to the United Irishmen. This perception intensified after 1798 given the United Irishmen links and Orange activity within the College and as late as 1821 publications, such as 'Account of the late Historical Society of Trinity College' in the *Dublin Inquisitor* (1821), attempted to win over public opinion. This article at length itemises Hist members who were not radicals, counting among them judges, solicitors, bishops and medical professions, in an attempt to refute claims that the Hist was 'merely' a nursery 'for sedition'.<sup>155</sup> The 1821 account of the Society is a retrospective look at its members which includes 'Dr. Hall, late Bishop of Dromore, Dr. Magee, present Bishop of Raphoe...the present Lord Ross, Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's bench...[and] Judge Jebb, the Attorney General', who are listed to

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Marianne Elliott, *Partners in Revolution, the United Irishmen and France* (London, 1990).

<sup>155</sup> 'Account of the late Historical Society of Trinity College Dublin' in *The Dublin inquisitor* (1821), p. 442.

silence claims that the Society was a hotbed of sedition and radical politics. Hist members were involved with the United Irishmen, as well as the Orange Order and the College Corps, however we must remember that not all Hist members approved of this radical activity and the vast majority were not involved in the political wrangling of the 1790s.

To this end Macnele Dixon states, in *Trinity College Dublin* (1902), that the Hist educated ‘its members for public life’.<sup>156</sup> For some this public life was as distinguished professionals, writers and poets, but for Tone and Emmet, the Hist provided a base for the development of their ideals, oratory skill and provided a network of connections and personnel to exploit for their public life as ‘recusants’ or revolutionaries. Yet the networks or connections were not just among fellow revolutionaries or United Irishmen. As we have already discussed Peter Burrowes defended both Tone and Robert Emmet as a successful barrister, while William Conygham Plunket, a prominent figure in the Hist during the early 1780s, a contemporary of Tone, T.A. Emmet and Bushe and later a prominent politician and Lord Chancellor of Ireland, also defended United Irishmen, namely Henry Sheares and his brother John Sheares. Both Henry and John were educated at Trinity College, and evidence suggests that at least John was perhaps a member of the Hist.<sup>157</sup> Indeed Elliott confirms this and states that Tone met John Sheares on 31 December 1788 at the Historical Society and states that Sheares, a future president of the United Irishmen, was a ‘far more militant republican than ever Tone was’.<sup>158</sup> Another contemporary of Tone and T.A. Emmet at the Hist was Lawrence Parsons, who was described by Lord Rathmore as a ‘liberal and popular Irish patrician, who so brilliantly opposed the Union’.<sup>159</sup> Importantly, T.A. Emmet, as James Quinn explains, was ‘active in a citizen's committee that gathered evidence of military atrocities, which was presented to Sir Lawrence Parsons in March 1798’.<sup>160</sup> This social network which the Hist supported and encouraged included revolutionary figures and distinguished professionals who, as outlined above, also interacted with the United Irishmen and its leaders and demonstrates that even Hist some members who were not

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<sup>156</sup> Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College Dublin*, p. 131.

<sup>157</sup> 24 June 1789 – Question for debate, ‘Ought we wish for the establishment of a free constitution in France?’, a Mr Sheares was teller for the Ayes. (HIST 6)

<sup>158</sup> Elliott, *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence*, p. 63.

<sup>159</sup> Plunket, *The life, letters and speeches of Lord Plunket*, p. 37.

<sup>160</sup> Quinn, ‘Emmet, Thomas Addis’.

‘recusants’ or involved in seditious activity, still played an important role in Irish revolutionary politics.

As Moore and others state, and as the above discussion demonstrates, the Society was not unaffected by the rising political pressure and atmosphere of looming disaster present in the 1790s. The *Irish Quarterly Review* supports Moore’s assertions and states the Society’s meetings did not cease (in 1796) ‘but politics took the place of literature’.<sup>161</sup> As Lord Clare’s investigation revealed, Trinity College played host to a number of United Irishmen committees, as well as Orange Societies, but before the discovery of secret societies, the college and the Hist played host to a number of yeomanry corp, as previously stated. The autumn of 1796 saw students of the college expressing their desire to ‘arm in defence of their country.’<sup>162</sup> Francis Higgins documents this in a letter to Edward Cooke, 19 November 1796, stating,

upwards of one hundred young gentlemen of the university entered into resolutions to arm themselves and signed a memorial to the Provost and Board for leave to offer their services to government. Three of the fellows this day declared their opposition to the measure as tending to idleness and relaxation of academical study...Others have declared themselves in favour of arming, and assert that besides the number that will enroll (upwards of 500), it will be attended with the most salutary effect...arming in defence of their king and country.<sup>163</sup>

At first reluctant the college authorities soon acquiesced in the student’s requests and in January 1797 the College Corps made their first public appearance. The Hist’s rooms were used as an armory, used by the ‘four companies’ of the College Corps, ‘commanded by the four lay Fellows’, all of whom took part in ‘military movements around Dublin’.<sup>164</sup> The existence of a College Corps within the university also indicates political tendencies and indeed the ill feeling which existed toward the prospect of a French invasion, led by those who wished to reform the existing political and social paradigm e.g. the United Irishmen. As mentioned, at least one member of the Hist was known to be a member of the College Corps, John Wilson Croker, whose 1800 speech at the Society will be considered later. Croker joined the College Corp after the outbreak

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<sup>161</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 507.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, p. 116.

<sup>164</sup> Budd and Ross, *The Hist*, pp 35-6.

of the Rebellion. His later publication, *Sketch of Ireland past and present* (1808), as James Quinn asserts, ‘advocated Catholic emancipation [and] a system of education for all sects’,<sup>165</sup> and as such supports some of the United Irishmen’s objectives. Bartlett also quotes a letter written by Leonard McNally, a United Irishmen, turned government informant. McNally writes that ‘the college corps [of yeomanry] are by a great majority for the United’.<sup>166</sup> Does McNally mean the United Irishmen? If so, how do we reconcile this with an account from in the *Freeman’s Journals*, 5 June 1798, which states that

a few nights ago, as some the College Corps were on guard at the Canal Bridge...two of them fell in with a man of suspicious appearance, whom, by a well-timed affectation of the ferocious and assassinating principles of the United Irishmen, they induced to make confession of being one of that traitorous associations...and took him into custody’.<sup>167</sup>

Blackstock’s article ‘“A dangerous species of ally’: Orangeism and the Irish Yeomanry’ (1997) further complicates the identity and political connections of the Irish Yeomanry, stating that the ‘Irish Yeomanry and Orange Order are popularly associated to the extent of being semantically linked in songs’,<sup>168</sup> and while he argues the real extent of these links in 1798, any political or ideological affiliations between the Orange Order and the yeomanry and between the United Irishmen and the yeomanry points to a complicated and complex system of militarism and patriotism evident in Ireland during the 1790s. The journals of the Hist reflect this political uncertainty and intensified military presence in Dublin. On 4 January 1797, ‘the librarian gave notice that on the next night of meeting he will move that no members shall appear in this society in full military dress’.<sup>169</sup>

The Hist controlled the motions they debated but they could not control the external influences which infiltrated its walls. That the United Irishmen and (loyal) Volunteers existed in the same society indicate not only the environment of tolerance and open-mindedness that the Society nurtured but reflects the nature of Irish society at the time, as containing conflicting and incompatible interpretations of Irish nationalism

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<sup>165</sup> James Quinn, ‘Croker, John Wilson’ available at *Dictionary of Irish biography* <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a2195> (6 July 2011)

<sup>166</sup> Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, p. 116.

<sup>167</sup> *F.J.*, 5 June 1798, p. 3.

<sup>168</sup> Blackstock, ‘“A dangerous species of ally’: Orangeism and the Irish Yeomanry’, p. 393.

<sup>169</sup> 4 Jan. 1797, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

and not a cohesive national identity or ideology. Similar to the division which Moore describes in the Hist, containing ‘a strong party’ on one side ‘which adhered devotedly to the politics of the government’ and to the College and those on ‘the popular side in the Society’, consisting of R. Emmet and others who were more liberal, described as radical rather than “loyal”, Irish society in the 1790s was also a complex system consisting of divisions and factions, along confessional as well as political and class ones. The Hist’s ecosystem or micro society reflects the wider society it belonged to. Yet despite the differences in the Society, the Hist’s censure on modern politics and events allowed those of different ideological backgrounds to come together, in essence achieving some of the United Irishmen’s maxim of a united people, in religious and ideological terms.

*The Hist 1798-1815 and exile in 1815.*

The Hist held among its ranks many personalities from the United Irishmen and on more than one occasion demonstrated that political and national developments held significant ramifications for the Society. It contributed greatly to the United Irishmen’s cause, not least because of the education and experience which it provided its members, as it helped to create ‘a politically literate society’ as described by Foster, but also because of the links and networks it helped promote.<sup>170</sup> After the 1798 Rebellion the Historical Society of Trinity College began proceedings as usual in October of the same year. An answer from Samuel Kyle, who later become Provost of Trinity College in 1820 because of his stance against Catholic emancipation,<sup>171</sup> in response to an address from the Hist congratulating him on his recent fellowship, indicates the resilience which the Hist attended, in spite of ‘calumny from without or agitators from within’ who ‘strive in vain to shake’ the ‘stability’ of the club, the Hist remained.<sup>172</sup> Unlike the Hist pre-1798, where external influences and events beyond their control affected the normal running of the Society, it seems internal disputes and disputes with the College effected the Society between 1798 and their second exile from the College in 1815.

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<sup>170</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 264.

<sup>171</sup> ‘Samuel Kyle, 1820-1831 (c. 1771-1848)’, The Provosts Office, Trinity College Dublin available at [www.tcd.ie/provost/former/s\\_kyle.php](http://www.tcd.ie/provost/former/s_kyle.php) (6 July 2011).

<sup>172</sup> 31 Oct. 1798, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

The Hist's 1798-9 session continued as usual and motions during the closing months of 1798 included, 'Was that a good law which punished criminals with transportation?',<sup>173</sup> carried in the affirmative, thirty five to seven votes, 'Is modern learning superior to ancient?',<sup>174</sup> carried in the affirmative, forty-one to one and 'Ought a representative speak his own sentiments or those of his constituents?',<sup>175</sup> which passed unanimously in the negative. Various other debates in the closing years of the eighteenth-century included, 'Is Tyranny allowable in the Prince, who aims at the Reformation of a Barbarous Nation?'<sup>176</sup> (1799), 'Has duelling contributed to the refinement of modern manners?'<sup>177</sup> (1799), 'Is toleration hurtful to the interests of Religion?' (1801-1802), 'Was the abolition of the Order of Jesuits advantageous to Europe?',<sup>178</sup> among many others, some of which will be discussed in chapter 6. In previous sessions the Society discussed motions which pertained to Union, for example, 'Whether a Union with Great Britain would be of advantage to Ireland?' (1788). Yet, the Act of Union, which was implemented in 1801 and unified the kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, effectively closing the Irish Parliament in Dublin, is not mentioned in the Hist Journals and it seems that internal dispute and misconduct, carried out 'by students who were not members of the Society'<sup>179</sup> risked the normal functioning of the Society rather than external activities or political influence. In 1803 Robert Emmet's name makes a brief appearance in the Hist's journals, but this time not for his oratory skills but for actions executed on his behalf (not by his orders) during his 1803 insurrection. Dagg states that 'an echo of Emmet's insurrection appears in the Journal for November 16, 1803, when a medal...was offered for the best elegy on the death of Lord Kilwarden',<sup>180</sup> who was murdered during the insurrection. This implicit reference to Emmet is the one sign of any external influences affecting the Society during the early nineteenth-century.

Of the internal disturbances, Dagg reveals that the Dean requested the Auditor to submit the names of those who disturbed any meetings in order for the college to take

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<sup>173</sup> 20 Nov. 1798, 'Journals of the Hist' (1798-1801) (HIST 13).

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 19 Dec. 1798.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 26 Dec. 1798.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 15 May 1799.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 27 Nov. 1799.

<sup>178</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 102.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 103-4.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

action against such trouble makers. In April 1805 a report referring to the disorder stated, ‘that your Committee has to lament with the deepest concern the disorder that has too frequently disgraced your meetings, and which if not checked will finally dissolve them’.<sup>181</sup> Despite efforts by the Hist, disorder and disputes continued, and on more than two occasions in 1806 the college had to intervene. The Provost reinforced ‘the fundamental laws of the Society’ reiterating that ‘all questions either of a public or private nature tending to promote dissension or irritation may be carefully avoided in the future’ and none other than society members be present at debates and other proceedings, the Provost also asked the Society to remember their *raison d’être*, that of promoting ‘literary exertions and liberal and friendly emulation’.<sup>182</sup> This sense of yielding and relenting to the College Board’s wishes would continue through the early nineteenth-century, as the college wanted reassurances that it controlled the proceedings of the Society. Open dialogue between the College Board and the Society persisted and the Hist demonstrated its desire to comply with the rules and regulations set out and enforced by the university. Letters between the Provost, Dr. Elrington, and Chairman, Richard Graves, Auditor, John Martley and Henry Hart in December 1811 demonstrate this. In this letter the Society acknowledged their connection to the college and thanked the college for supporting their endeavours and for promoting academic discipline, in reply the Provost thanked them for their ‘expressions of complement and congratulation contained in the address’.<sup>183</sup> The Provost also expressed his appreciation for the academic pursuits the Society promoted and announced his devotion to it. These sentiments would not persist and the continued interference and power struggle between Elrington and the Hist resulted in their dissolution and exile from the college in 1815, for an extended period of nearly thirty years.<sup>184</sup> Dagg speaks of an ‘almost unprecedented’ ‘number of speakers’ during the years 1811-12 but along with this rise he notes an increase in ‘a spirit of disorder and irregularity’.<sup>185</sup> According to Dagg the republication of *Memoirs of an island adjacent to utopia* (1811), first published in 1725 by Eliza Haywood, ‘incensed’ the ‘political feeling of the Society’ and in November

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., p. 110-11.

<sup>184</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 517.

<sup>185</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 112.

1811, they passed a motion to burn the publication ‘in the presence of the Society’.<sup>186</sup> Haywood, described as having ‘strong Tory and Jacobite sympathies’,<sup>187</sup> published many works of political fiction in the 1720s and 1730s. *Memoirs of an island adjacent to utopia* is described by Marta Kvande as a political scandal which questions the authority and position of government, in which the protagonist, Cupid, comments on the political establishment as an outsider. Kvande asserts that ‘the opposition of powerless virtue and powerful corruption’, presented in the novel,

is exactly the dynamic that the political opposition of the 1720s and 1730s saw at work in the government of England: the opposition constantly criticized the Walpole government for its corruption and presented themselves as models of the virtue necessary for good government’.<sup>188</sup>

Kvande also reveals that the novel focuses on sexual as well as political relations, as Haywood makes analogies between sexual ‘deception or depravity’ in the private sphere with political deception and misconduct in the public sphere.<sup>189</sup> What was it then that incensed the Society so much about this novel to warrant its burning? Did Haywood’s ‘Tory and Jacobite sympathies’, evident in the novel, incense them? Was it comments on corruption in government or the analogy between sexual misconduct and political corruption? Unfortunately, evidence to answer these questions is not forth coming.

Yet, whether these increases in political tumult, disorder or breach of academic discipline prompted the college to impose, what they termed, ‘fundamental rules’ at the start of the academic year 1812-13, is unclear.<sup>190</sup> The Society themselves claimed that this imposition was ‘unwarranted’ as there was ‘no change to circumstances or conduct on their part’.<sup>191</sup> These rules include orders which stipulate that only students registered and on the college books could be a member of the Society, only members of the Society can attend meetings and members should appear only in academic dress.<sup>192</sup> The Board reiterated the policy which banned motions for debate pertaining to modern

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Marta Kvande, ‘The outsider narrator in Eliza Haywood’s political novels’ in *Studies in English literature, 1500-1900*, xliii, no. 3 (2003), p. 626.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p. 628.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 629.

<sup>190</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 519.

<sup>191</sup> ‘Account of the late Historical Society of Trinity College’, p. 444.

<sup>192</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 112-13.

politics and issued an oath or ‘promise’ which all members had to sign and commit to, this oath read as follows;

I promise to observe the regulations prescribed to the Historical Society by the Provost and Senior Fellows, and I also promise to observe the laws of the Society and to promote its interests.<sup>193</sup>

The Historical Society reacted strongly against some of these stipulations, especially those relating to members who were no longer on the college books but were honorary members having received medals during their time at the Society while a college student. These honorary members traditionally participated in debates and addressed the Society and it was in his capacity as a honorary member that Tone addressed the Society in 1789. The Hist maintained that such regulations were detrimental to the academic and intellectual benefits and experience which returning ex-students brought. In 1821 the *Dublin Inquisitor* declares that the Society felt

that the new regulations tended to diminish the value of the rewards conferred on members, by depriving them of the privilege hitherto enjoyed of attending its meetings - that they thereby deprived the Society of the advice and assistance of the oldest, and consequently the most experienced members.<sup>194</sup>

The same article also states that ‘the declaration of secrecy being removed, was likely to injure the Society, and placed new members in a situation essentially different from the old’.<sup>195</sup> This ‘declaration of secrecy’ pertains to the manner in which compositions and poems were presented to the Society, as members submitted their works of literature anonymously until the work had been reviewed by other members. However, the new rules required submissions to be vetted or approved by a member before being viewed by the rest of the group. The *Irish Quarterly Review*’s account of this event suggests that the implementation of these rules may have been an attempt of sabotage the Society, ‘instigated by a wish to destroy the Society’.<sup>196</sup> Interference by the college board increased as Provost Elrington objected to a number of motions for debate, stating that ‘subjects such as the death of Charles I or the assassination of Caesar, might be productive of serious evils’.<sup>197</sup> Previous motions which were objected to by the college

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> ‘Account of the late Historical Society of Trinity College’, p. 444.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 519.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p. 520.

authorities in December 1812 include ‘Does a standing army contribute to the liberty of the subject’, ‘Should the elective franchise be unlimited?’ and ‘Should capital punishment be entirely abolished?’.<sup>198</sup> To these objections, the Society retaliated by issuing a statement that these debates were intended to support and increase morality and virtue rather than cause injury and that the ‘questions on Caesar and Charles turned upon the political expediency of the act as connected with the benefit to be derived by their respective countries’.<sup>199</sup> Dagg also questions whether the provost was intent on destroying the Society rather than protecting it. One account of Erlington, by Valentine Lawless, later Lord Cloncurry, states that at it was

he [Erlington] who accomplished the suppression of the Historical Society, then obnoxious to all who dreaded progression, as a nursery of genius and patriotism, and as opening a common field whereon the rising generation of Irishmen were learning mutual respect for each other.<sup>200</sup>

He points out that disorder was rife within the Society during the 1812 sessions, especially after debates, so much so that a report on the Society in November the same year asserts that the continuation of disorder would destroy the reputation of the Society.<sup>201</sup> It also reveals that their behaviour was more akin to the ‘tumultuous proceedings of a popular assembly’ rather ‘than the dignified discussions of a literary body’.<sup>202</sup> Indeed this episode is reminiscent of the ‘troublesome and tempestuous’ session which Tone closed in 1789. The *Dublin Inquisitor* attributes this deterioration of order to the fact that former students, who brought mature experience and contributed to maintaining discipline, were no longer allowed to attend. This game between the college authorities and the Society continued until eventually in 1815 the Hist concluded that they had no choice but to dissolve. This decision was taken after the college board issued more regulations for the Society to abide by following a personal dispute between two members. *The Irish Quarterly* asserts that the board took advantage of this dispute in order to issue yet more rules which included, ‘that a committee of five should be appointed, in whose hands the entire management of the private business of the Society should rest’, curtailments of their meeting hours and the

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<sup>198</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 43.

<sup>199</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 520.

<sup>200</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 45.

<sup>201</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 117.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

exclusion of junior sophisters from the Society.<sup>203</sup> The Society maintained that above all, the rules excluding junior sophisters would have a detrimental effect on the Society, as this would reduce their income significantly and lead to bankruptcy because their expenses were so great. One of the biggest expenses the Society claimed was lighting in the rooms provided by the College, the Society also appointed a paid Secretary from 1780 on. To keep up with these expenses each member paid a monthly subscription.<sup>204</sup> The Society ‘implored the Board to reconsider’ these ‘enactments’ and those imposed in 1812 which excluded ex-students from their membership. The appointment of a ‘committee of five’ was considered as tantamount to the destruction of the Society, as

none would enter the Society under the absolute and unaccountable control of any limited number of their fellow students, who would ever be liable to the imputation of favoritism, and ever bear an invidious character among the members of the Society.<sup>205</sup>

The final meeting of the Historical Society of Trinity College, in terms of the period 1770-1815, took place on 15 February 1815. The debate of this last session is transcribed within the journals of the Society but unfortunately, perhaps because of the termination of the Society and a lack of motivation on the scribe’s part, the entries are extremely difficult to read. The college authorities would not yield to the Hist’s appeals for leniency on certain regulations and the Society decided that these regulations were ‘inconsistent with successful prosecution of the objects for which it was instituted’ and that ‘regular business be suspended...until a favourable opportunity occurs for the revival of an Institution, the utility of which the experience of twenty years has most satisfactorily evinced’.<sup>206</sup> This motion was debated at length until eventually the Society ‘adjourned *sine die*’.<sup>207</sup> *The Dublin Inquisitor* states that the adjournment of the Society, forced ‘by a system of inquisitorial tyranny’, deprived the college ‘of its brightest ornament’ and the Society, anticipating the degradation and demise of the club, thought a swift termination of their proceedings would protect the reputation of the Society which a slow disintegration of it would otherwise ruin.<sup>208</sup> These measures also ensured

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<sup>203</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 522.

<sup>204</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 19.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 522-23.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 523.

<sup>207</sup> ‘Account of the late Historical Society of Trinity College’, p. 447.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

any revival of the Society would be based upon their original principles and the protection of their reputation would ensure the legitimacy of any reestablishment. John Sydney Taylor closed the meeting, concluding that,

having existed to this hour in the fullness of reputation and utility, you will leave behind you a spirit to animate the exertions of worthy successors, and a pure and perfect model according to which they may fashion the structure of a future Society.<sup>209</sup>

The *Inquisitor*'s account also states the decisive and swift action to dissolve the Society, and 'the suddenness of the event would excite enquiry, and the public attention would be directed to investigate the cause', resulting in an 'investigation' which would lead to 'its revival'.<sup>210</sup> Whether the college authorities intended to dissolve the Society is not clear but their overzealous and continued interference with the day to day running of the Society forced the Hist to adjourn. The repeated issue over the membership of ex-students, regulations on junior sophisters and the enforcing of an oligarchical regime would effectively close any forum of open debate and remove the advantages of 'mutual scrutiny by one's peers'. The imposition of this oligarchy would ultimately remove the Hist's principles of liberty and free speech and curtail the democratic practices which they advocated and carried out. The dissolution then of the Hist, may be seen as the result of a power struggle between the college authorities and the Society, yet a curious article in the *Freeman's Journal* 30 May 1815, reports that an anniversary dinner for Trinity College, attended by the Provost and Senior Fellow's at Morrison's, included toasts to the king, the British constitution and to the success of the Historical Society. The article states the toast was read as follows: 'may the effects of genius be crowned with success, and merit esteemed the criterion of eminence'.<sup>211</sup> The *Irish Quarterly* also reported on these events and asked whether 'a Society can exist in a University whilst freedom of discussion is its object' as the result of such freedoms is a 'certain independence of thought and action'.<sup>212</sup> Perhaps it is this sense of independence which the Hist exercised that the college took a disliking to. Yet regardless, the dissolution of the Hist was a voluntary action to ensure their liberty and in a bizarre way the Society followed Burke's advice on liberty and power, that when 'men act in bodies' liberty is

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<sup>209</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 136.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 447.

<sup>211</sup> *F.J.*, 30 May 1815, p. 2.

<sup>212</sup> 'The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era', p. 524.

turned into ‘power’. The members of the Hist exercised the power of the body by dissolving it in order to secure its and their liberty from further college interference, protecting their ‘independence of thought and action’ and ultimately their reputation. The Hist would not operate within the college walls until 1843 but there were efforts to continue the Society outside of the College, the period after dissolution will now be discussed.

*The Hist 1815-43 - state of exile.*

In what capacity the Hist reformed outside the walls of the college immediately after dissolution is unclear. Evidence suggests that, as happened after the Society was expelled from the College in 1794, an Extern society (a society external to the College) was established not long after the Hist’s dissolution. Dagg states that an account of the restored Society in 1843 includes a reference to the Society meeting outside the college, in ‘Radley’s Rooms’ in 1818.<sup>213</sup> Yet whether this was a full re-formed society is unclear. Two years later in November 1820, it is stated that ‘six members...met together and formed a revived Historical Society under a similar code of laws to that of the old Society’.<sup>214</sup> An article, which is dedicated wholly to the Hist, in the *Freeman’s Journal* a month before the revival of an extern society, reports that

Scholars and Students are about (as we are authorized to state) unanimously to present a Memorial to the Provost and Board of Senior Fellows, praying for a restoration of the Historical Society – an institution which we do not hesitate to pronounce, as paramount in importance to any department of Education ever promoted in any University.<sup>215</sup>

Whether the formation of a revived Historical Society in November is linked to this petition which ultimately failed in its task is unclear but efforts continued within the college and indeed wider afield to reconstitute the Society within the college. Newspaper articles and journal articles, many of which we have already used including *The Dublin Inquisitor* who published an ‘Account of the late Historical Society of Trinity College Dublin’ in 1821, contribute to a public consciousness and awareness of

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<sup>213</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p.138.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> *F.J.*, 13 Oct. 1820, p. 3.

the demise, but also the importance, of the Society. The *Freeman's Journal* contains a number of articles during the period 1820-30 which communicate to the reading public the prestigious position the Historical Society of Trinity College once enjoyed. These articles transmit the social importance of the Society and confirm the appreciation and popularity which it enjoyed despite its dissolution and state of exile outside the college walls. An article in the *Freeman's Journal*, 13 October 1820, demonstrates the author's recognition of the important training and education the Society provided to its members, especially in the realm of oratory. He writes, 'I shall tremble for my country when the practice or the study of oratory is put down'.<sup>216</sup> This article also reveals that a committee of 'Scholars and Students' are 'praying for a restoration of the Historical Society', and describes it as

an institution in which the most pleasing and improving pursuits of study "which are the Belles Lettres flourished, when they languished in the College" and which effectively contributed to excite an ardent and generous spirit of emulation - most powerful incentive of youthful industry.<sup>217</sup>

Yet, rather than produce a eulogy, the author wishes to convey to the new Provost, Dr Kyle, and to the public at large that this institution needs to be reinstated. The author explains that while little is yet known of the new Provost, it is his belief that Dr Kyle 'entertains a sincere interest for the welfare of the University' and within this context the Historical Society should be restored.<sup>218</sup> The author argues for the 'favourable disposition of the new Provost to restore this excellent and useful school of oratory'.<sup>219</sup> He transcribes the address given by Charles Kendal Bushe in 1794 as an example of the eloquence and unrivaled excellence which the Society produced and while the speech demonstrates oratorical talent, its content is relevant to the Society's state of exile in 1820 since in 1794 the Hist was in a similar predicament. We have already considered Bushe's speech for various purposes but it is worthy to note the manner in which he regards the Hist, with such high esteem and merit. Bushe states the Hist,

have improved their [the university's] system of education, to have polished the severity of academic learning, to have reclaimed their youth from vicious and

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

riotous pursuits by giving a taste for elegant knowledge and making literature the fashion.<sup>220</sup>

The speech is printed over two editions and rather than a mere panegyric, the purpose of reprinting this speech is to incite the public, generate sympathy and express the important contributions of the Hist to society beyond the college. Two years later a similar article appears in the *Freeman's Journal*, which is signed, Lara.<sup>221</sup> This article asks why the newspaper did not keep its promise of keeping the public informed of news regarding the restoration of the Historical Society, describing the Hist as an institution which

stood like “a light a land-mark on the cliffs of fame”, to guide the troubled spirit of this broken country, and lead the fire of our youth from the stormy track it loves to wander in, to another pathway more worthy its pursuits.<sup>222</sup>

Lara speaks of recent attempts to restore the Society, which still await the consideration of the college authorities. This letter is an attempt to ‘meet the eye of someone able and willing to explain the true cause of the delay, on the part of the Board’.<sup>223</sup> The mere fact that the author is aware and conscious of the club and its continued exclusion from Trinity College is testament to the importance of the Hist. Again, similar to the 1820 article, this level of public awareness and discussion in the public domain transforms the Hist from a college society to a society which excited the public imagination and confirms its importance. Lara speaks of the Hist as a guide for the youth in this broken land, is it the education and experience which members received that the author reveres? Even though the Hist is private in a sense and not open to public membership, this certainly points to a greater appreciation and acknowledgement of the Society beyond the boundaries of the college influence and indeed control. Perhaps it is this which the college authorities balked against, this societal claim over a college society, the Hist generating public interest and thereby becoming an entity separate from and perhaps unaccountable to the college. Four days later a printed reply appears in the same newspaper. Signed Academicus, the author expresses delight at seeing the subject of the restoration of the Hist once again in the public eye. Importantly, Academicus, being a member of the University confirms the restoration of the Hist, ‘has been so long

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 24 Oct. 1822, p. 3.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

a desideratum' in the College.<sup>224</sup> A few years later another article signals the continuing fallout from the Hist's exile and recognition from further a field that the college should accept the Society's petitions to regroup. The article, dated 22 January 1825, states 'that the heads of the English universities', namely Oxford and Cambridge, who also have debating societies with which the Hist secured links with,

do not, fortunately, participate in those feelings, which led Provost Elrington to abolish the Historical Society of Trinity College, and which cause Provost Kyle to refuse to restore it, when applied to for that purpose'.<sup>225</sup>

Budd and Hinds refer to a letter received by the Society in 1846 from the Secretary of the Oxford Union Society and highlight that a few nights later 'a motion was adopted making the members of the Oxford and Cambridge Union Societies honorary members of the College Historical Society'.<sup>226</sup> Yet, evidence besides the article dated 1825, cited above, suggests that links between Oxford, Cambridge and the Hist existed before 1846. The article published in *Irish Quarterly Review's* (1853) includes a letter from Thomas Spring Rice, who attended Cambridge from 1809, later a politician with links to Daniel O'Connell and Catholic emancipation,<sup>227</sup> declares that,

during the three happy years I [Thomas Spring Rice] passed at Cambridge, I derived much gratification from an institution of a Society, bearing some resemblances to the Historical Society amongst you.<sup>228</sup>

Spring Rice describes the Cambridge Society as 'founded on the most liberal principles' and reveals 'a similar society (the Attic) exists at Oxford'.<sup>229</sup> Spring Rice describes a union between the Cambridge and Oxford societies which entitled 'a member of the former...to constitute a member of the latter' and of a proposal to invite 'the Historical Society of the University of Dublin to participate in the advantages of our Institution'.<sup>230</sup> The invitation was offered 'as a sincere mark of respect for the liberal course of education pursued in the College of Dublin, and as a token of esteem

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 28 Oct. 1822, p. 3.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., 22 Jan. 1825, p. 2.

<sup>226</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 72.

<sup>227</sup> Bridget Hourican, 'Rice, Thomas Spring 1st Baron Monteagle', in James McGuire and James Quinn (ed) *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge, 2009), available at <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a7661> (6 Sep. 2011).

<sup>228</sup> 'The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era', p. 521.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

for the abilities that adorn it'.<sup>231</sup> The Union Society, which Budd and Hinds refer to, was not established until 1815 according to the Society's website.<sup>232</sup> However, *Memorials of a quiet life* by Augustus J.C. Hare (1872) describes the Cambridge University Political Society which was the influence for the establishment of a similar society at Oxford in 1810, and perhaps these are the societies which Spring Rice refers to but it seems formal links between the Hist and Oxford and Cambridge were not established until 1843.<sup>233</sup>

In March 1825 further attempts were made to restore the Society and a petition to the college requests 'an Historical Society' be established 'for the purpose of improving...knowledge of modern history and acquiring that facility in composition and speaking which the nature of...future professions imperatively requires'.<sup>234</sup> These requests again went unnoticed. Meanwhile, attempts to maintain the Extern Society were met with mixed success, evident in the lack of material evidence until 1831. Dagg refers to an account of the Extern Society by W.B.S. Taylor in *History of the University of Dublin* (1845), in which the author states that although, 'twice under the ban of college authority, [the Society] always preserved a real existence, as we find by the speeches delivered at the openings and closings of various sessions, which have come into our hands occasionally'.<sup>235</sup> A reference is also made to a speech given during a debate 'on the propriety of abolishing the punishment of death', a topic debated on many occasions by the Society.<sup>236</sup> Taylor also states that he

very much regret[s] not being able to obtain copies of all those orations, but from those we have seen, we are decidedly of opinion, that the true spirit of practical improvement in history, poetry and oratory, which characterized the Historical Society in its more palmy days, has always, like the 'sacred fire', has been kept alive – nourished, unquestionably, by the remembrance of 'the mighty dead, that rule us from their urns'.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> The Cambridge Union Club, available at <http://www.cus.org/> (6 Sep. 2011).

<sup>233</sup> Augustus J.C. Hare, *Memorials of a quiet life* (New York, 1872), p. 168, available at <http://www.archive.org/details/memorialsquietli00hare> (6 Sept. 2011).

<sup>234</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 129.

<sup>235</sup> W.B.S. Taylor, *History of the University of Dublin, its origin, progress and present condition* (London, 1845), p. 305, available at <http://www.google.com/books?id=RQ0HAAAAQAAJ> (31 Aug. 2011).

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., pp 307-8.

Despite the enthusiasm described by Taylor, Dagg states that in 1826 some Extern meetings were attended by only a hand full of members and that by December 1827 the situation was so bad a proposal was issued to amalgamate the members of the Dublin Historical Society and the Extern, however this apparently only made things worse for the Extern Society.<sup>238</sup> This reference to the Dublin Historical Society is vague and source material related to it, or another society by the same name, provides conflicting dates of establishment. *The Dublin Almanac and General Register of Ireland, 1837*, describes the establishment of a Dublin Historical Society in 1835 which was the result of an amalgamation between ‘the Philomathic and Athenaeum Societies, the former of which was instituted A.D. 1828’.<sup>239</sup> The Society consisted of ‘gentlemen preparing for the several learned professions’ and as a debating society ‘polemics and party politics of the day’ were ‘expressly prohibited’.<sup>240</sup> The description of this society correspondence to the Historical Society of Trinity College, yet whether it has any connection to the Extern Society is unclear. The dates for this society do not corroborate with the proposed amalgamation of the Hist with the Dublin Historical Society in 1827 and only demonstrates the difficulty of associational culture studies.

This difficulty with source evidence is also demonstrated by the fact that the minutes and records of the Extern Society only exist from 1831 on. However Dagg reprints an address given at an Extern meeting in 1828, sourced from *Lectures, essays and letters of the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Napier, Bart.*<sup>241</sup> This address describes the Historical Society as it once existed within Trinity College and asks, although it does not have the protection of ‘our “Bounteous Mother”,’ should this fact ‘in any way, diminish the utility of the present Society?’<sup>242</sup> The speaker, Mr. Joseph Napier, answers it should not:

Consider that we are not under the fostering care and anxious solicitude of a cautious dean...we are not assailed with inquisitorial scissors, in order to trim the question for discussion into the elegant shape and form which the etiquette of University literature might dictate.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, pp 138-9.

<sup>239</sup> *The Dublin Almanac and General Register of Ireland, 1837* (Dublin, 1837), p. 158. ; with thanks to Clare O’Neill, researcher for Irish associational culture database, for sharing this information.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 139.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

Napier also takes issue with the amalgamation of the Dublin Historical Society and the Extern Society and states that the connection had an unfavorable effect on the Extern Society, as the former society used the Extern for subscriptions and gave no intellectual returns or benefits. Yet, despite being beyond the reach of ‘inquisitorial scissors’ as Napier states in his 1828 address, a ban on politics persisted and it is noted that as late as February 1832 the journals record a motion to request the abolishment of ‘the restrictions on political sentiment’.<sup>244</sup> It was also during this period that the Society was called ‘College Historical Society’, the name Dagg uses for his publication.<sup>245</sup>

A few months after Napier’s address two articles in the *Freeman’s Journal* also point to a connection between the Historical Society and Daniel O’Connell. A tribute to Daniel O’Connell by,

Mr Gutirie, a Protestant barrister, observed that Mr. O’Connell was well entitled to the eternal gratitude of his admiring countrymen...He and Mr. Connell had been, several years back, members at the same time of the historical society of Trinity College...there...on innumerable occasion, showed himself a man of talent, and an ardent admirer of literature.<sup>246</sup>

When Daniel O’Connell was a member of the Historical Society is unclear from this entry but another article published the following day indicates the same affiliation and narrows when this connection occurred. Again, the letter published is ‘for the purpose of paying a national tribute to Daniel O’Connell’ and the author, Samuel Ward, states, that he

had both the honour and the pleasure of knowing and ranking among [his] friends, this ardent, yet steady and sincere, adherent of our country’s interests. Early in the unfolding blossoms of life a passion for literary and intellectual enjoyments, so dear to the heart of thinking man brought us together, as members of the Historical Society of Trinity College. But as the period of Ireland’s dangers, when she was threatened by a foreign enemy, the arts...gave way and he...rushed at once, into the ranks of the Lawyers Artillery Corps.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>246</sup> *F.J.*, 26 Mar. 1829.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., 27 Mar. 1829, p. 4.

This article indicates that O'Connell was a member or attended debates during the mid 1790s. Denis Gywnn also asserts that O'Connell was a member of the Historical Society, and confirms that it was during the 1790s or more precisely 1796:

In the last days of 1796 he had taken his place as a member of the Historical Society, where he continued his former practice in debating, that had made him a fluent and ready speaker at the Cogers' Hall in London.<sup>248</sup>

O'Connell's affiliation to the Hist is ambiguous to say the least, that he was a member in some respect is indicted by the above evidence. Gywnn indicates that in the autumn of 1796 O'Connell 'returned to work as a student for the King's Inns'.<sup>249</sup> O'Connell was not a student at Trinity College but Budd and Hinds also refer to O'Connell attending Hist debates in 1796-7. These dates are confirmed by O'Connell's journals, which in December 1796 states:

I took my seat on Wednesday night in the Historical Society, now metamorphosed into a law society. The admission fee is a guinea and a half. The question was a comparison between biennial and septennial parliaments. I had prepared myself to speak in favour of the former. I did not do it, as there was no debate.<sup>250</sup>

Although Budd and Hinds assert that O'Connell attended Hist debates, the context of the Historical Society is unclear given this reference to it becoming a law society. Another entry in O'Connell's journals later in the same month, however, also state that he attended the Historical Society where he 'spoke twice against the partition of Greece into small portions' and when examined 'knew the part of Blackstone'.<sup>251</sup> Arthur Houston, the editor of O'Connell's journals, tries to 'ascertain' this 'allusion to...examination' and points out that there was,

no examination preparatory to a call to the bar and as O'Connell was not a student in Dublin University, any legal examination in that institution to which he would be admissible is out of the question.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Denis Gywnn, *Daniel O'Connell* (Cork, 1947), p. 53.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>250</sup> Arthur Houston, *Daniel O'Connell: his early life, and journal, 1795-1802* (London, 1906), p. 147, available at <http://www.archive.org/details/danieloconnellhi00oconiala> (18 Mar. 2011).

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*

That Houston refers to ‘Dublin University’ is of significance as this is a reference to Trinity College and while he does not clarify the examination which O’Connell refers to, we know from the journals of the Hist that the Society carried out weekly examinations on historical knowledge, for which members received fiscal penalties for failing. Perhaps this is the examination of history which O’Connell is referring to. Gywnn also calls attention to the Hist’s other main activity, debating, and states that ‘the debates at the Historical Society concerned records of governments, ancient and modern, judging the point of view of the people’s welfare’.<sup>253</sup> Whether the Historical Society is a reference to the Extern Society which existed between 1794 until its merger with the Hist in 1807 is unclear. Budd and Hinds state that O’Connell attended Hist debates during 1796-7 yet after the Society’s expulsion in 1794, their reconstitution into the college in 1795 brought strict rules for membership, which included ‘no persons eligible but students of advanced standing, proposed by two members...but all Fellows of the College were admitted of course as honorary members’.<sup>254</sup> How do we account for O’Connell’s attendance given this stipulation? However, what is clear is that O’Connell attended a Historical Society linked to Trinity College and from Gywnn’s account we can date this connection to circa 1796.

Just as founding and normal members of the United Irishmen were involved with the Hist, the Catholic Association could claim an affiliation with the Hist, even if O’Connell’s participation is open to debate. Richard Lalor Sheil, founding member of the Catholic Association along with O’Connell was also a member of the Historical Society of Trinity College making his debut in November 1809, receiving medals and awards for oratory and composition.<sup>255</sup> Sheil was not the only member of the Society to join O’Connell’s movement, as O’Connell’s Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland (1840) also counted among its first members the following members of the Hist; John Blake Dillion, Thomas MacNevin, James O’Hea, John O’Hagan, John Edward Pigot, Daniel Cangle, Thomas Wallis, not least Thomas Davis, who founded Young Ireland, along with Dillion in later years, indeed all the names mentioned previously

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<sup>253</sup> Gywnn, *Daniel O’Connell*, p. 56.

<sup>254</sup> *An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College*, p. 4.

<sup>255</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 513.

were attached to Young Ireland, a nationalist groups which emerged in 1843 which was centered on nationalist publications.<sup>256</sup>

Despite their state of exile, which lasted until 1843, the Society enjoyed affiliations with a number of important Irish figures, writers, as well as politicians and nationalists. These members include Issac Butt, Thomas Davis and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu. Butt, whom we will consider later, attended Society meetings during 1831 and 1832, while Davis and Le Fanu, later a political writer and a friend of Butt, attended during the late 1830s and early 1840s. Davis, co-founding member of Young Ireland and the nationalist paper, *The Nation* (1842), was President of the Extern Society (1839-40) and presented many papers during his time there, including ‘The constitutions of England and America’ on 25 June 1839, during which time Le Fanu was President,<sup>257</sup> and ‘Developing some interesting passages of Irish history, principally relating to the sixteenth-century’<sup>258</sup>. John Molony states that it was during his time at the Society that Davis developed his nationalist ideas and began writing nationalist rhetoric.<sup>259</sup> Dagg also refers to this pivotal moment in the development of Irish nationalism, as through his addresses at the Society Davis ‘revealed himself as an enthusiastic reformer and as an ardent patriot’.<sup>260</sup> His speeches at the Society also led, Gavan Duffy, cofounder of Young Ireland and *The Nation*, to recognise Davis as a leader among his contemporaries.<sup>261</sup> It seems for Davis, his experience at the Society led directly to his later involvement with Irish nationalism and politics and indeed his friendship with John Blake Dillon, a contemporary of Davis at the Society and another leading Irish nationalist involved in setting up Young Ireland and *The Nation*. Thomas MacNevin, who published *An address delivered before the College Historical Society* (1836) also became friends with Thomas Davis through the Hist and was himself a prominent Young Irelander.<sup>262</sup> Indeed many of the Society members who joined O’Connell’s movement followed Davis and Dillion and joined Young Ireland, including

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<sup>256</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 67.

<sup>257</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 63.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 65-6.

<sup>259</sup> John Moloney, ‘Davis, Thomas Osborne’ in *Dictionary of Irish biography*, <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a2433> (4 July 2011).

<sup>260</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 65.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>262</sup> James Quinn, 'MacNevin, Thomas' in James McGuire and James Quinn (ed), *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. (Cambridge, 2009), available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a5286> (6 Sep. 2011).

John O'Hagan and John Edward Pigot. Similar to the 1790s, the Society provided an important network of alliances and friendships for Young Ireland, as it had for the United Irishmen.

Journals and minutes from the Extern meetings after 1831 (for which the journals exist) illustrate that despite exile, the Society continued debating and provided important training in oratory. Motions for debate include; 'Was the separation of the United States of America from England beneficial to the latter?' - 'decided in the affirmative', 'Ought duelling be restricted by legislative enactment?', also 'decided in the affirmative' and 'Whether emigration so far as it can be put into operation is a remedy for Irish distress', 'decided in the negative', for which Butt was judged the 'best speaker of the night'.<sup>263</sup> As in previous session, the motions list above referenced important concerns in Irish society. The motion of duelling reflects public opinion on the practice and the demise of support for it as illustrated in previous discussions, while the separation of America from England was a motion which held important ideological comparisons with Ireland and its place within the Empire. Emigration then, a feature of Irish life since the sixteenth and seventeenth-century, was also during the 1830s a characteristic of Irish life. In 'Emigration, 1801-70', David Fitzpatrick states that after the Napoleonic Wars, emigration, which had lull during the wars, 'resumed and intensified' and an estimated one million Irish emigrants

crossed the Atlantic between 1815 and 1845, with half that number taking the cheaper British alternative and some 30,000 obtaining state assistance to undertake the much longer journey to Australia'.<sup>264</sup>

Emigration became a permanent feature of Irish life and the above figures demonstrates it as a feature of Irish society long before the Famine and illustrates how the society's motions for debate referenced important Irish social issues and concerns, indeed Irish emigration became a political issue for Butt in the 1860s.<sup>265</sup>

Renewed agitation by W.C. Magee, who later became Archbishop Magee, in the early 1840s to reinstate in the Society to Trinity College was met with success after some reluctance from both the college board and the students, who according to Magee's biographer J.C. MacDonnell, 'were unwilling to give up the freedom from

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<sup>263</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, pp 56-7.

<sup>264</sup> David Fitzpatrick, 'Emigration, 1801-70' in W.E. Vaughan (ed.) *A new history of Ireland, V, Ireland under the Union 1801-70* (Oxford, 2010), p. 565.

<sup>265</sup> Isaac Butt, *Land tenure in Ireland, a plea for the Celtic race* (Dublin, 1866).

collegiate control which they had enjoyed outside the walls'.<sup>266</sup> Overcoming these obstacles the Society was again affiliated to Trinity College and enjoyed continued proliferation. MacDonnell states that soon after they were reinstated, in May 1843, the College provided the Society with 'a separate building, with a library and committee-rooms', after this 'members flocked in and it became the famous institution it still is - the training ground not only for judges and bishops, but of many useful men in less exalted spheres'.<sup>267</sup> In November 1844 the Extern Society held its last meeting.

### *The Hist's organisation - membership, leadership and finances*

As a rational legal society the Hist was a highly formal and structured organisation. Each meeting was presided over by the President or the Chairman of the Society. This was a rotating position that changed on a weekly basis. Members were nominated for this position by the Society but no member was 'eligible to fill the Chair who [had] not attended eight nights, or obtained a medal'.<sup>268</sup> A paid Secretary was used until the 1807-08 session when

the Society came to the conclusion that the proceedings would be recorded more accurately by a Secretary elected from among the members rather than a paid secretary, and they decided to pay [Thomas] Logan a reduced salary of twenty guineas per annum under the title of Assistant Secretary for drawing up the fair copies of the journal.<sup>269</sup>

The most prestigious position was that of Auditor, whose job it was to 'inspect and supervise the laws, journals, and accounts, and to act as Comptroller of the several officers of the Society', namely treasurer, librarian and chairman.<sup>270</sup> On some occasions a vice-auditor, vice-treasurer and vice-librarian are mentioned in the proceedings. These positions were also rotated, the frequency of which changed over time and it was not uncommon to have two or three different auditors, treasurers or librarians during one year or academic session. The *Laws of the Historical Society of the University of*

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<sup>266</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, pp 70-1.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>268</sup> *Laws of the Historical Society of the University of Dublin, instituted in the year 1770* (Dublin, 1770?), p. 16, available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

<sup>269</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 107.

<sup>270</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 10.

*Dublin, instituted in the year 1770*, outlines the roles and responsibility of these positions.

997 members' signatures are recorded in the 'first code of laws' written in 1770 but whether this is an aggregate number over an extended period is unclear, weekly debates were never attended by such high numbers and usually between 60-100 members attended.<sup>271</sup> Other lists of members are found haphazardly in the Society's journals, including the records for the 1796-98, which documents 195 members at the back of the book. Whether this number covers the two year period is unclear.<sup>272</sup> Robert Emmet's name is found in this list, crossed off, as are other members, whose names are indecipherable. Another journal, covering 1806-08, lists 48 original members and 534 new members at the back of the journal.<sup>273</sup> New members were voted in on a weekly basis and the laws state that

gentlemen who have attained the standing of junior Sophisters and are under that of senior Bachelors shall be eligible into the Society, whether their names continue on the College books or not.<sup>274</sup>

The laws also reveal that a candidate must be proposed 'by one member and seconded by another, and balloted for on the following night' and 'one black bean for each seven members who ballot, shall reject'.<sup>275</sup> Each new member was expected to pay one guinea admission fee and thereafter a monthly fee or subscription was 'three shillings "English"'.<sup>276</sup> Members were also fined for non-attendance and 'if any Member be absent from town so long that his monthly subscription exceed half a guinea, he shall not be charged any more on that account'.<sup>277</sup> Other fines include "'standing at the fire', 'for appearing without academic dress', 'for not answering History' - the fine for the last mentioned offence being...the substantial sum of 11 shillings and 4 and a half pence'.<sup>278</sup> The Society had a number of expenses, the dearest of which was lighting of the Common room.<sup>279</sup> The Society's journals also reveal expenditure on: paper, quills,

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>272</sup> 'Journals of the Hist' (MUN/SOC/HIST 12).

<sup>273</sup> 'Journals of the Hist' (MUN/SOC/HIST 17).

<sup>274</sup> *Laws of the Historical Society of the University of Dublin, instituted in the year 1770*, p. 5.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 11.

<sup>277</sup> *Laws of the Historical Society of the University of Dublin, instituted in the year 1770*, p. 5.

<sup>278</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 35.

<sup>279</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 11.

pens, tea, sugar and beans for balloting which totaled £9 in June 1789.<sup>280</sup> In April 1790 the treasurer held £3.18.5d for the Society.<sup>281</sup> Budd and Hinds also reveal that in 1803 the society spent £14.12.6d on a new gown for the Chairman.<sup>282</sup> The financial records of the Society are incomplete and inconsistent, they only exist for the period 1789-90 and 1795-7 but provide some information on the members who owed money to the Society, the amount of which varies considerably; Jan 2 1795 Mr Foote owed £17.10.7d to the Society while Mr Lysaght owed £1.1.1d.<sup>283</sup>

A consideration of three different periods in the Society's records, Oct. 1786 - June 1788, Dec. 1796 - May 1798 and Oct. 1806 - Jan. 1808, provides additional information on club attendance and allows us to detail the members who filled the various positions. Where possible the auditor, treasurer and librarian is listed and a sample set is provided for the chair. Attendance figures for each meeting are visualised in a graph and indicate attendance numbers over the three periods, demonstrating membership trends. A table, containing a brief profile is also provided for the sample set of officers. The additional information provided for the officers is extracted from George Dames Burtchaell and Thomas Ulick Sadlier's 1935 publication, *Alumni dublinenses; a register of the students, graduates, professors and provosts of Trinity college in the University of Dublin (1593-1860)*, (the reference for each student is listed in the table). The proceedings of the Society often provide just the surname of the member being referred to, as such Burtchaell and Sadlier's publication was used to elucidate those names. Where a first name is unclear, square brackets are used to indicate that the first name is extrapolated using the dates provided in the publication. We will begin with the 1786-8 period (see figure 1 for student profile and figure 2 and 3 for attendance graph).

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<sup>280</sup> 'Treasurer's accounts and membership lists' (MUN/SOC/HIST 50).

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

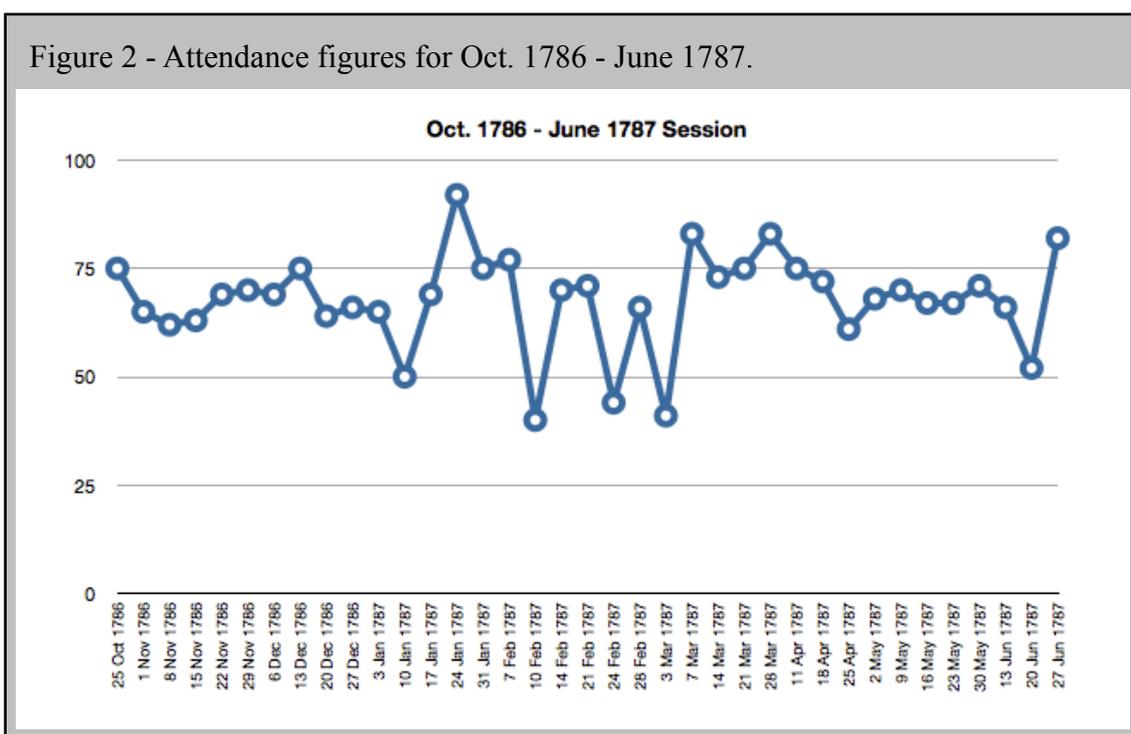
<sup>282</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 41.

<sup>283</sup> 'Treasurer's accounts and membership lists' (MUN/SOC/HIST 51).

Figure 1 - Officer profile - 1786-8.

Student Name	Date entered TCD	AGE	Place of Birth	Father's occupation	Office held, 1786-7	Office held, 1787-8	Additional information	Postgraduate	Ref.
Robert Delacour	1783	16	Cork	Gentlemen	Chair		B.A. 1787, Irish Bar 1788		p. 221
John Radcliffe [Mark]	1782	17	Fermanagh	Clergy	Auditor, Chair		B.A. 1787, Judge Prerogative Court		p. 690
Chartres	1780	20	Fermanagh	Farmer	Treasurer	Treasurer	B.A. 1785	Postgraduate	p. 148
John Franks	1783	15	Dublin	Business	Librarian	Librarian	B.A. 1788, Irish Bar 1792, Knighted 1825		p. 306
Henry King	1783	15	Middlesex		Librarian, Chair		B.A. 1790, Irish Bar 1791		p. 468
Abraham Stewart	1780	16	Kilkenny	Commander/General	Auditor		B.A. 1785	Postgraduate	p. 781
Stephen Rice	1782	14	Co. Kerry	Doctor/Physician	Auditor		B.A. 1787		p. 700
[William] Winter	1778	13	Dublin	Surgeon	Librarian		B.A. 1783	Postgraduate	p. 890
Richard Jebb	1781	15	Dublin	Judge	Chair		B.A. 1786, Irish Bar 1830, Judge of Ecclesiastical Court (Isle of Man)	Postgraduate	p. 436
Thomas Scott	1784	16	Co. Tipperary	Gentlemen	Chair	Chair	B.A. 1787	Postgraduate (1787-8 session)	
William Magee	1781	17	Fermanagh	Gentlemen		Chair	B.A. 1786, Fellow 1788	Postgraduate	p. 545
John Greene	1784	16				Auditor	B.A. 1789		p. 343

The first meeting of the 1786-7 session was attended by 75 members with Robert Delacour in the Chair.<sup>284</sup> Throughout this period William Bruce is identified as the paid Secretary. During first session John Radcliffe, who wrote *Belmont Castle* with Theobald Wolfe Tone and Richard Jebb in 1787, is listed as auditor,<sup>285</sup> while [Mark] Chartres is listed as the treasurer and John Franks, who was knighted in 1825 and became a Supreme Court Judge in Calcutta,<sup>286</sup> is listed as librarian in Nov. 1786. In Dec. 1786 the records state that the office of treasurer and librarian are to expire at the next meeting and as such on 27 Dec., Henry Usher and Henry King are named as treasurer and librarian respectively.<sup>287</sup> A month later, 17 Jan. 1787, the position of auditor expires and Abraham Stewart is elected at the next session. By the end of the 1786-7 session, Stephen Rice was auditor, Beresford was treasurer and [William] Winter was librarian,<sup>288</sup> demonstrating the continued rotation of the offices. Chairmen during this period include Richard Jebb, John Radcliffe, Stephen Rice, Henry Usher, Henry King and Thomas Scott, among others.



<sup>284</sup> 25 Oct. 1786, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 5).

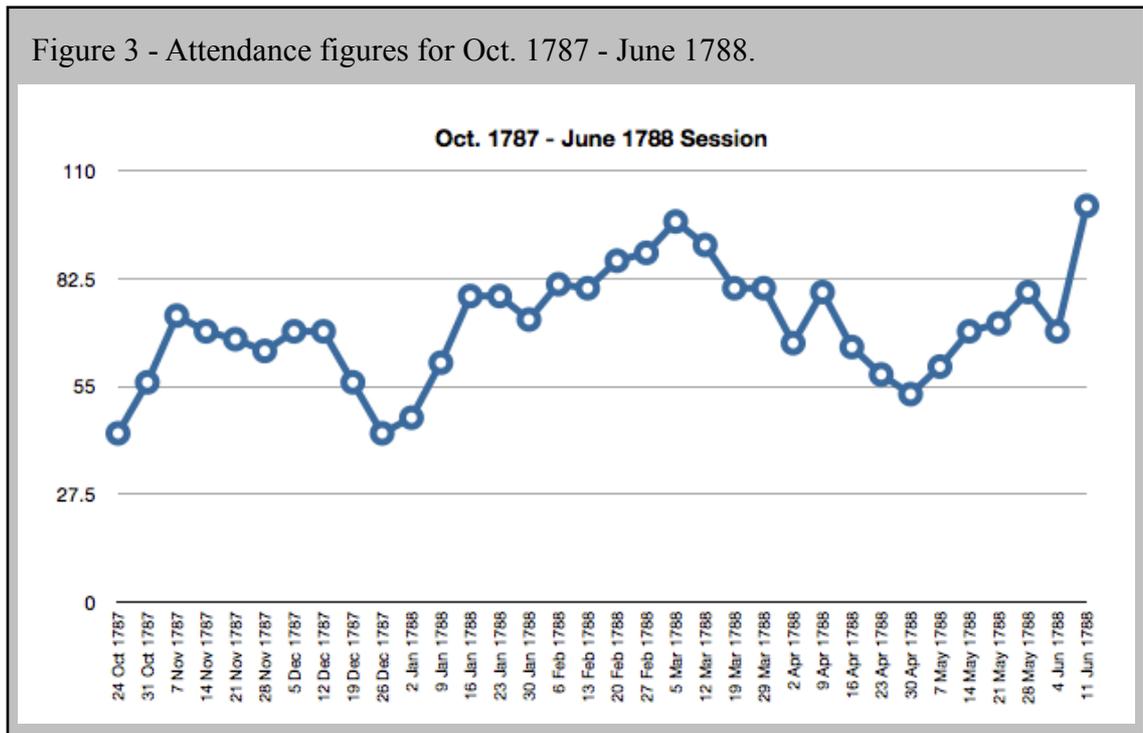
<sup>285</sup> Rosemary Richey, 'Radcliffe, John' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, James McGuire & James Quinn (eds) (Cambridge, 2009), available at <http://dib.cambridge.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/quicksearch.do.jsessionid=E55C36182BDC2B232FBFB7DB81BA849E#> (22 Apr. 2012).

<sup>286</sup> George Dames Burtchaell and Thomas Ulick Sadleir, *Alumni dublinenses; a register of the students, graduates, professors and provosts of Trinity college in the University of Dublin (1593-1860)* (Dublin, 1935), p. 306.

<sup>287</sup> 27 Dec. 1786, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 5).

<sup>288</sup> 27 June 1787, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 5).

Figure 3 - Attendance figures for Oct. 1787 - June 1788.



The next session, 1787-8, began with only 43 members present and William Magee in the chair. In Nov. 1787, John Greene is listed as auditor, William Stopford is treasurer and Winter remained as librarian.<sup>289</sup> By 19 March 1788 Beresford is listed as auditor, Rob Ross, as treasurer and James Ormsby as librarian.<sup>290</sup> Chairmen during this period include Thomas Scott, Henry Usher, John Franks, Mark Chartres, William Stopford, Rob Ross and George Miller (two George Millers are listed during the period - George Miller (entered TCD 1779, aged 14, B.A. Vern. 1784, Fellow 1789) and George Miller (entered TCD 1781, aged 17, B.A. Vern. 1786)).<sup>291</sup>

As figure 1 indicates a number of Hist members who held positions during this period were postgraduates, yet this was not a stipulation for election to the different posts. The average age of members was 20, the youngest, James Ormsby, was approximately 16 and the eldest, [Mark] Chartres, was approximately 26. Figure 1 also offers insight into the diversity of the students geographical backgrounds - students came not only from Dublin but from Fermanagh, Cork, Kerry and indeed Middlesex. The provision of 'Father's occupation' also sheds some light on the student's socio-economic background which ranges from Gentlemen to Farmer and Clergy. It is

<sup>289</sup> 21 Nov. 1787, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 5).

<sup>290</sup> 19 Mar. 1788, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 5).

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 576.

interesting that the occupation, ‘Gentlemen’, which suggests possession of an income independent of work e.g. a rentier or landlord, is the largest social group represented here. Interestingly, of the three ‘Gentlemen’ listed, none are from Dublin. Also, out of twelve officers listed here, five go on to become involved in law and six of the elected officers are listed as postgraduates.

The next period in this snapshot of the Society’s organisational history is Dec. 1796 - May 1798. As we know this period is important because of the development of radical politics in Ireland, which effected not only the normal running of the Hist but had implications for some active members as well as its *alumni*. As figure 5 demonstrates attendance during the 1796-7 period was between 50 to 70 members per session and didn’t reach beyond 70 members as it had done during previous sessions. Figure 6 reveals the dramatic decline in attendance on 23 May, which, as we know, is a direct result of the 1798 Rebellion. Looking first at the 1796-7 session, the 20 Dec. 1796 meeting was chaired by Gerald Fitzgerald with 49 members present. In Jan. 1797, with [Henry] Cowen in the Chair, [Arthur] Crookshank, [Hugh] Macklin and [Archibald] Douglas are stated as holding the position of auditor, treasurer and librarian respectively.<sup>292</sup> A month later, 15 Feb. 1797, Douglas is in the chair with 53 members present and Crookshank and Macklin remain as auditor and treasurer. In the next session, 22 Feb., [Irvin] Whitely is listed as auditor instead. Towards the end of this session, with Whitely in the chair and 50 members in attendance, [John] Jebb is listed as auditor and [Richard] Frizell as treasurer,<sup>293</sup> although it is unclear who the librarian was in June 1797, Moore is designated this position in March, whether this is Thomas Moore or not is unclear.<sup>294</sup>

At the beginning of the 1797-8 session Morris (two possible Morris’ are listed, George Morris, entered TCD 1790 but no further information given,<sup>295</sup> and Thaddeus Morris, entered TCD 1792, aged 23, B.A. Vern. 1796)<sup>296</sup> is in the Chair, with 50

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<sup>292</sup> 4 Jan. 1797, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

<sup>293</sup> 28 Jun. 1797, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

<sup>294</sup> 29 Mar. 1797, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

<sup>295</sup> Burtchaell & Sadleir, *Alumni dublinenses*, p. 599.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 600.

members in attendance.<sup>297</sup> Jebb and Frizell are listed again as auditor and treasurer in Nov. 1797.<sup>298</sup>

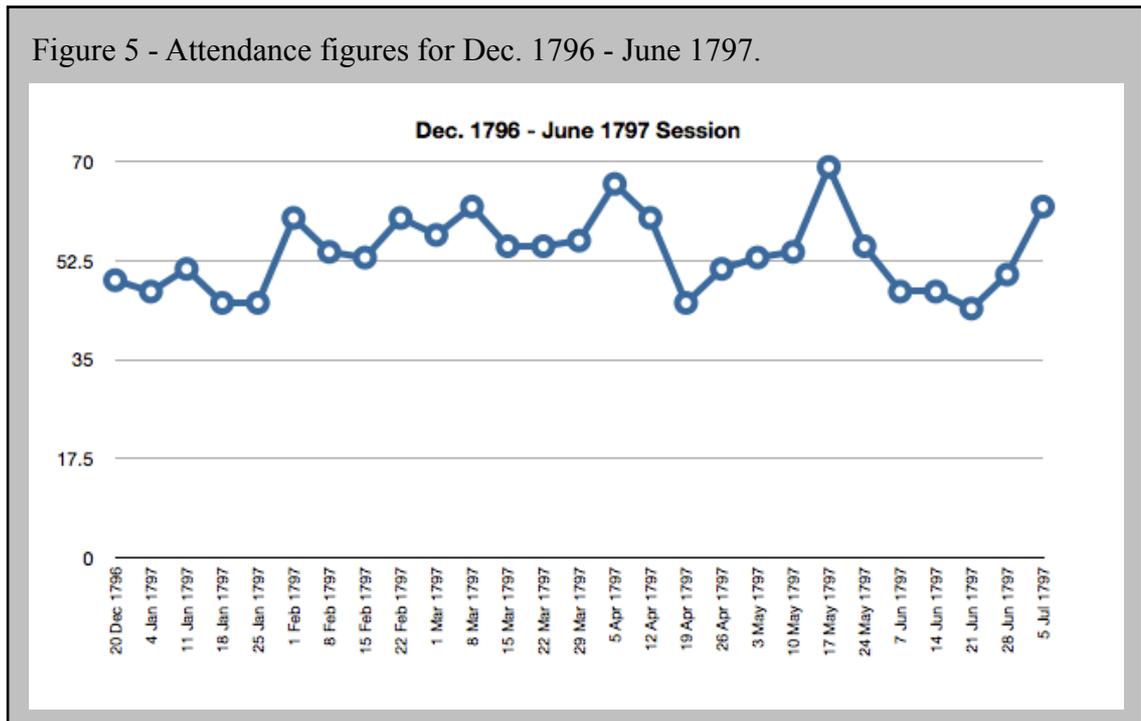
Figure 4 - Officer profile - 1796-8.

Student Name	Date entered TCD	AGE	Place of Birth	Father's occupation	Office held, 1796-7	Office held, 1797-8	Additional information	Postgraduate	Ref.
Gerald Fitzgerald	1790	15		Senior Fellow	Chair		B.A. 1795	Postgraduate	p. 284
[Henry] Cowen	1785	18	Cavan	Farmer	Chair		B.A. 1789	Postgraduate	p. 184
[Arthur] Crookshank	1792	14	Co. Dublin	Judge	Auditor				p. 196
[Hugh] Macklin	1791	22			Treasurer		B.A. 1798		p. 538
[Archibald] Douglas	1793	15	Dublin	Military Officer	Librarian, Chair		B.A. 1798		p. 239-40
[Irvin] Whitely					Auditor, Chair				
[John] Jebb	1791	16	Drogheda	Gentlemen	Auditor	Auditor, Chair	B.A. 1796	Postgraduate	p. 436
[Richard] Frizell	1788	16	Co. Dublin	Gentlemen	Treasurer	Treasurer	B.A. 1797		p. 311
[Anthony] Blackburne	1794	15	Co. Dublin	Lawyer		Librarian			p. 69

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 25 Oct. 1797.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., 1 Nov. 1797.

Jebb remains the auditor until Feb. 1798 and Mason (three possible Mason's)<sup>299</sup> is listed as treasurer from 15 Nov. 1797 - Jan. 1798. In May 1798, Smith holds the auditor's position, Ellison (unclear if this is John or Thomas Ellison) treasurer and [Anthony] Blackburne librarian. On 30 May 1798, Jebb is in the chair and only 10 members are in attendance, revealing the effect of the 1798 Rebellion on the Society. The session after the Rebellion was chaired by John Ellison (entered TCD 1794, aged 14, B.A. Vern. 1800),<sup>300</sup> with only 37 members present.

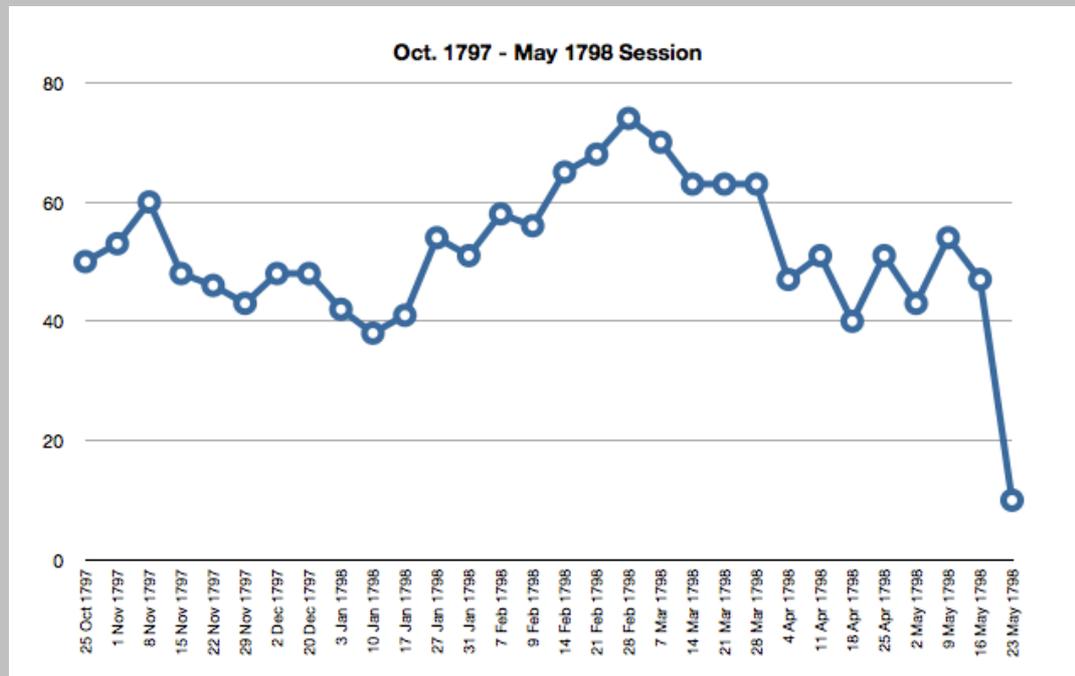


The table in figure 4 again reveals the diversity of the members of the Society, both in terms of age and geographical and socio-economic backgrounds. [Henry] Cowen, who was a postgraduate when he chaired a session, was approximately 29, while [Anthony] Blackburne was only about 17 when he held the office of Librarian. This period also reveals that the Society's offices or positions were not rotated as regularly as the previous period discussed, as such it is difficult to ascertain what, if any, criteria existed for the rotation of these offices. Again, 'Gentlemen' is listed as the most popular family background and three out of the nine officers listed here were postgraduates when they held their positions.

<sup>299</sup> Burtchaell & Sadleir, *Alumni dublinenses*, p. 560.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

Figure 6 - Attendance figures for Oct. 1797 - May 1798, indicating a sharp decline in attendance at the start of the 1798 Rebellion.



The last period for review, 1806-08, again reveals steady attendance of the Society's meetings and, as stated, Thomas Logan was the paid Secretary until the 1807-8 session when the Society reviewed the secretary's role. It is perhaps because of this new arrangement that many of the journals after 1808 are illegible. During the first meeting of 1806-7 session, 29 Oct. 1806, [Thomas] Buxton was in the chair with 66 members in attendance and it is reported that [Joseph] Singer, Clare and [Arthur] Orphen were auditor, treasurer and librarian respectively.<sup>301</sup> Less than two months later, with Thomas Edward Bell in the chair and 80 members in attendance, John Henry North is identified as the auditor, Orphen is still librarian and [Charles] Strong is designated the position of treasurer.<sup>302</sup> In March 1807 the positions were again rotated and North, [William] Stephens and Taylor are confirmed as auditor, treasurer and librarian. In April 1807, with Taylor in the chair and 74 members present, Stephens remained as treasurer, while Auchinleck and [Law] are confirmed as auditor and librarian.<sup>303</sup> The closing

<sup>301</sup> 29 Oct. 1806, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 17).

<sup>302</sup> 17 Dec. 1806, 14 Jan. 1807, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 17).

<sup>303</sup> 8 Mar. 1807, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 17).

meeting of this session, 1806-7, attracted 124 members with W.O. Hamilton in the chair.<sup>304</sup>

Figure 7 - Officer profile - 1806-8.

Student Name	Date entered TCD	AGE	Place of Birth	Father's occupation	Office held, 1806-7	Office held, 1807-8	Additional information	Postgraduate	Ref.
[Thomas] Buxton	1803	16	England	Dead	Chair		B.A. 1807		p. 125
[Joseph] Singer	1802	15			Auditor		B.A. 1806, Fellow 1810	postgraduate	p. 753
[Arthur] Orphen	1803	17	Cork	Gentlemen	Librarian	Chair	B.A. 1808		p. 643
Thomas Edward Bell	1801	14	Dublin	Gentlemen	Chair		B.A. 1810		p. 57
John Henry North	1803	15	Dublin	Gentlemen	Auditor		B.A. 1809, Irish Bar 1810		p. 622
[Charles] Strong	1802	14	Dublin	Clergy	Treasurer		B.A. 1807		p. 790
[William] Stephens	1806				Treasurer		B.A. 1808		p. 779
William Orr Hamilton	1797	17	Co. Antrim		Chair	Chair	B.A. 1801, Irish Bar 1812	postgraduate	p. 366
[Joseph] Stock	1803	17	Co. Dublin	Bishop		Auditor	B.A. 1808, Irish Bar 1812		p. 784

<sup>304</sup> 27 June 1807, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 17).

Figure 8 - Attendance figures for Oct. 1806 - June 1807.

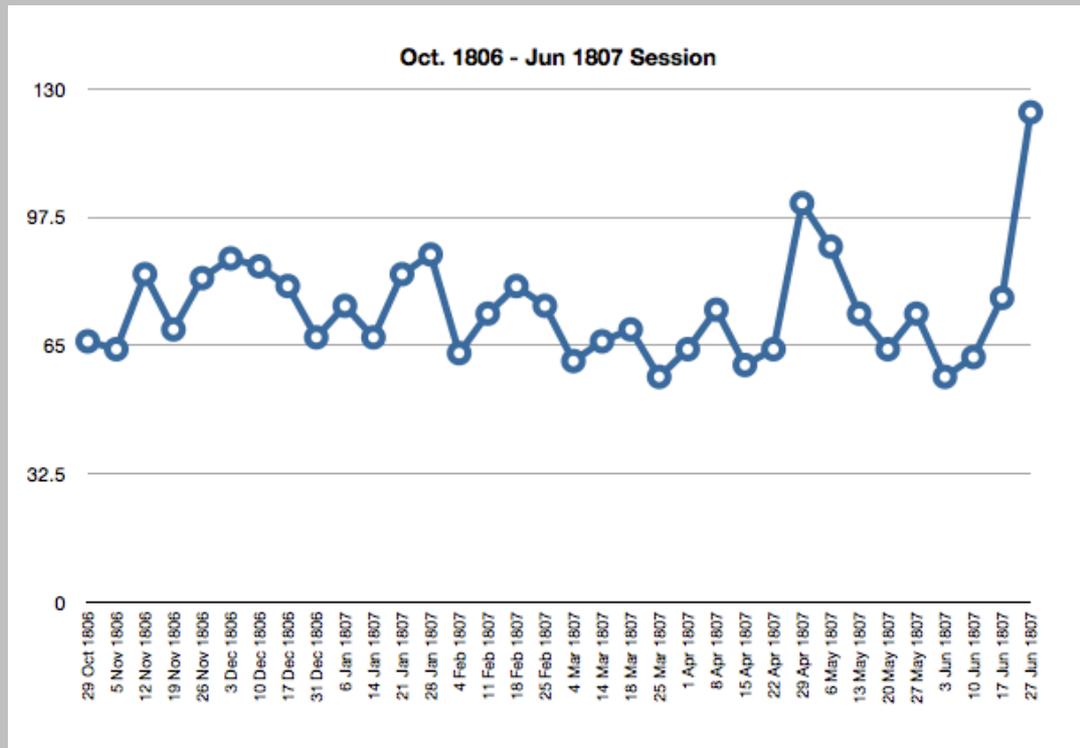
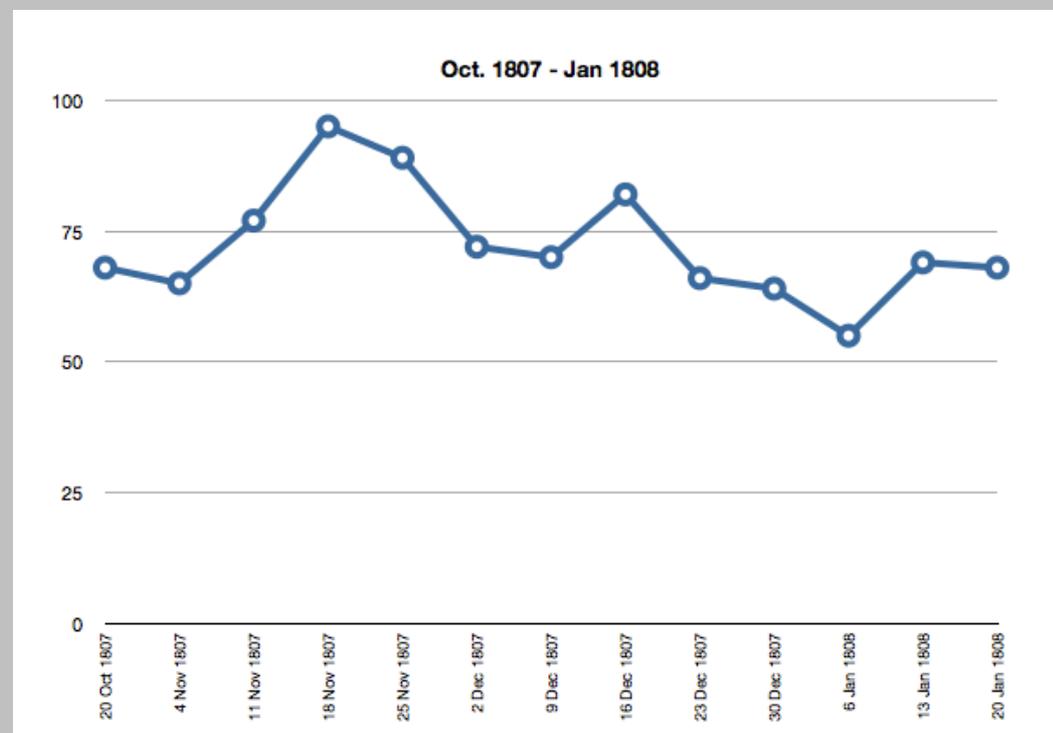


Figure 9 - Attendance figures for Oct. 1807 - May 1808.



The beginning of the 1807-08 session attracted 68 members and Orphen presided the meeting as the Chair/President.<sup>305</sup> Hamilton is listed twice as chairman during this period and in Nov. 1807, [Joseph] Stock and Alcock are designated the position of auditor and treasurer.<sup>306</sup> The meeting on Jan. 20 1808 was attended 68 members and Hamilton is again listed as the chair. The 1806-8 period demonstrates similar trends in terms of father's occupation when compared to the 1786-8 and 1796-8 period, as 'Gentlemen' represents the highest proportion in the 'Father's occupation' field. Interestingly, three out of the nine officers identified entered the Irish Bar later in life but of these officers only two were postgraduates when elected to office at the Hist.

This consideration of three different periods in the Society's history indicates important membership trends. As the membership graphs reveal the Hist's attendance fluctuated over the three periods but the Society was attended on average by 65 members. Most telling in these graphs is the dramatic drop in attendance in figure 6 (1798) and dramatic increase in figure 8. The decrease in attendance in figure 6 is explained by the beginning of the 1798 Rebellion but it is unclear what triggered such an increase in attendance in June 1807. Interestingly, the 1806-8 period seems to consistently attract higher numbers of participants than the previous two periods under review. 'Father's occupation' reveals the diversity of student's socio-economic backgrounds but 'Gentlemen' emerges as the predominate occupation in all three periods, however, there is no indication that any of these officers were from noble families or any of the great landed estates.

The tables also reveal the designation of particular roles to certain individuals. Although the chair was a rotating position, a number of members presided over sessions on more than one occasion and often members who held either the position of auditor, treasurer or librarian, held the chair at some point, indicating that perhaps trusted members ran the Society. The dynamic and democratic nature of these appointments reveal why the Society chose to dissolve rather than enforce the rule that a 'that a committee of five should be appointed, in whose hands the entire management of the private business of the Society should rest'. As stated the Society believed that 'none would enter...under the absolute and unaccountable control of any limited number of

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid., 20 Oct. 1807.

<sup>306</sup> 11 Nov. 1807, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 17).

their fellow students'. This prospect contradicted the very nature of the Society's organisation, as it relied upon sharing responsibility among participating members.

Throughout the period under discussion (1780-1830) the Hist validate many of Burke's theories on civil society and his ideas on associational participation. As discussed, Burke perceives individualism as a corruptive force which promotes vanity in individuals who are unaffiliated. It is his belief that participation in clubs and societies is advantageous to individuals because it exposes them to 'mutual scrutiny by one's peers'. Burke also contends that 'the effect of liberty to individuals is that they may do what they please'; however, when 'men act in bodies' liberty is turned into 'power' and has a virtuous affect on society.<sup>307</sup> Burke contrasts the individual who acts upon selfish impulses, with individuals who act as part of a group and who see themselves as part of a collective rather than an isolated entity. This 'power' gained by men acting in bodies is evident in the Hist. Not only does the Society teach its members the positive affect of group affiliation but it also demonstrates the 'power' of acting in the groups which Burke refers to. The power which the Hist held is evident by the repeated attempts of the college authorities to quell or suppress the influence and the autonomy of the Society. The authorities felt the Hist held too much power over students and it was this which resulted in repeated attempts by the college authorities to disrupt the Hist proceedings, and in so doing exercise the college's absolute authority.

The Hist's activities and proceedings also contribute to the development of civic minded and politically aware citizens. It used formal procedures to vote in new members, elect individuals to various posts, e.g. auditor, secretary, treasurer, to ratify laws and deliberate on various points of concern. This framework prompted William Plunket's (Hist member, later known as Lord Plunket) grandson, Lord Rathmore to describe the Hist as mimicking parliament.<sup>308</sup> The Hist also demonstrate political astuteness and elements of Hegel's civil society. This is reflected in Robert Orr's 1792 speech which reveals the existence of 'political opinion' within the Society. Orr also calls on members to engage in civic virtue and become 'virtuous citizens' and encourages them to engage in national debate and to participate in national concerns and interests.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the revolution in France, and on the proceedings in certain societies in London relative to that event* (10th Edition, London, 1791), p. 9.

<sup>308</sup> Plunket, *The life, letters and speeches of Lord Plunket*, p. 32.

<sup>309</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 67.

Yet in what way did the Hist influence the developing story of Irish nationalism or interact with Irish politics? Although officially banned from debating motions pertaining to modern politics, the Hist could not escape the affects of the political, social and religious sphere in which they existed. Despite this ban, contemporary events and politics permeate the topics for debate but also disrupted the normal functioning of the Society e.g. 1798 Rebellion. The repeated cautions and warnings issued by the College, in respect of the motions for debate, attest to the Society's persistence in discussing contemporary issues and concerns. In many ways it was at the forefront of developments in national rhetoric because of the social networks it nurtured and promoted among its politically and socially aware members. The Hist was certainly not devoid of political or national consciousness and evidence demonstrates that the Society nurtured individuals from various backgrounds, including those who held conflicting ideas of Irish nationalism and differing political beliefs. In this respect the Hist provided a forum for members from different political, social and even religious backgrounds to interact with on issues of national interest and concern.

In many ways it was also a training ground for Irish patriots, republicans and nationalists; one account referred to it as 'a nursery of genius and patriotism'.<sup>310</sup> The term patriotism, however, reflects the difficulty of defining Irish nationalism or indeed Irish patriotism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century given the broad spectrum of identity and affiliations which this covers. Irish patriotism included those of a loyalist identity and as such cannot be described as nonsectarian nationalism. Although Trinity College was established as a Protestant college, from as early as 1793 under the auspicious of the Provost John Hely Hutchinson, Catholics were admitted. Yet even before the official admittance of Catholics, Theophilus O'Flanagan, a Catholic, was a student and member of the Hist during the 1780s, as we will discuss in chapter 6. Dagg describes Hutchinson, as 'a wise and ardent supporter of methods of liberal education', as a steady advocate 'of liberal policy towards Catholics' and 'probably the first Irishman who clearly saw that a system of united and un-sectarian education was one of the chief needs of Ireland'.<sup>311</sup> This toleration and support of liberal education is perhaps the 'open debate' which Kennedy refers to, rather than questions of debate in

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<sup>310</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 45.

<sup>311</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 29.

which modern politics, or more precisely, any ‘allusion to contemporary persons or events was strictly and uniformly prohibited’.

The period 1780-1830, regardless of expulsion and breaks from the college authorities, marks an important era for the Hist and demonstrates the wealth of associational activity in Dublin during the period under discussion. That the Hist continued its proceedings outside the college in many ways transforms the Society from what could be regarded as a private forum for debate. Our discussions of the various clubs and societies in Dublin consider the litany of clubs and societies which legitimately fall under the umbrella of associational culture. Many of these clubs adopted rules for admission and restrict membership in one way or another. That the Hist is a college society, restricted in theory by student registration, does not preclude it as a club for discussion. The Society as an historical society, a debating society, a student society, and at times a political society, helped foment the political and national identities of many young, aspiring Irish personalities. The names on the member’s roll are testament to the important skills of public speaking and writing which the Society honed in its members. This reciprocal relationship between the Society and its members is reminiscent of Hegel’s system of needs and wants which define his theories on civil society and it embodied Burke’s beliefs that it is affiliated men who thrive in society rather than unaffiliated men. The affiliations made in the Hist certainly produce the ‘power’ which Burke speaks of and it is this ‘power’ which the Hist express through their *raison d’être* - oratory, composition and history. As such the next chapter will consider the three principles upon which the Hist is based, looking at topics for debate, poems and essays produced and the history studies and examined.

## CHAPTER 6

### HISTORY, ORATORY AND COMPOSITION; THE HIST'S *RAISON D'ÊTRE*

The previous chapter provided a summary of the Historical Society of Trinity College during the period under discussion (1780-1830) and established the Society's roots in Burke's Club of 1747. This overview also demonstrates the role it played as an educator of prominent Irish figures including Henry Grattan, Charles Kendal Bushe, William Plunkett and Thomas Moore, and established it as a facilitator for the development of political ideology through the debates and discussions it promoted and generated. Our discussion of radical politics during the 1790s and our brief consideration of the 1830s and 40s, which focused on O'Connell, the Catholic Association and Young Ireland, demonstrates the Hist's capacity to support the creation of important social networks between students, who utilised these affiliations outside of the Society for political and nationalist causes. We can trace the friendships and alliances which supported the development of two of the most important nationalist groups of the late eighteenth and nineteenth-century, the United Irishmen and Young Ireland, respectively, to the Historical Society of Trinity College. As we have seen a number of prominent members of the United Irishmen, including Wolfe Tone, Thomas Addis Emmett and Robert Emmett were members of the Hist, while future founders and presidents of Young Ireland met and exchanged and developed political ideals and ideologies as members of the Society. In a real sense the Hist promoted the creation of political and social communities, central to nationalist ideology, through its associational structures. As noted in the previous chapter the Historical Society of Trinity College promoted three main branches of study, history, oratory and composition, all of which reflect the interests of Burke's original club. All three branches of study will be discussed separately but we will first consider an overview of all three in the context of Burke's club and the activities which Burke and the Hist encouraged and their impact or relation to the concept of *Bildung*, which Hegel discusses.

The object of Burke's original club, established in 1747, was to promote 'speaking, reading, writing, and arguing in morality, history, criticism, politics and all

the useful branches of philosophy'.<sup>1</sup> This foundation in the arts in many ways ensured the Society's longevity and continued existence as it was founded not for political purposes or as a reaction to contemporary politics. As we have seen, however, the Society did not exist in isolation from contemporary upheavals or politics which often disrupted their meetings and effected members especially during the 1790s and the lead up to the 1798 Rebellion. The pursuit of these three primary activities, history, oratory and composition, provided a stable and unwavering platform to overcome the internal and external influences which threatened the Society. Accounts of the Hist, including *An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College, Dublin* (1795), available in CRADLE, refer to these three traditions and express the educational utility the Hist provided to students who studied in an educational system which did not cultivate these branches of the *belle lettres*. The importance of these traditions is discussed in John Wilson Croker's closing speech of the 1799-1800 session. Croker, who we have already mentioned as a member of the College Corps in 1798, states that,

in the practice of elocution, all the reasoning of science, the experience of history, and the elegance of composition have the fairest field for their general display. Oratory is in all conflicts a strong defence and a powerful assailant.<sup>2</sup>

These three branches of philosophy stimulate and empower students who gain valuable experience through their membership in the Society. In many respects the Hist provides the transitional lessons and teachings which Hegel identifies in his *Philosophy of right*. Hegel describes education as a means to transform a person from an individual to a participating 'member of society'.<sup>3</sup> Yet rather than part of just education, the Hist provides the essence of *Bildung* and indoctrinates members into the complex systems which create civil society. Rather than imparting mere knowledge, the Hist provides members with the 'experience' that Hegel refers to and it is through these experiences that members become 'rational or spiritual being[s]'.<sup>4</sup> Hegel states that 'man has to acquire for himself the position which he ought to attain; he is not already in possession of it by instinct'<sup>5</sup> - it is through education and the socialisation which this brings that an

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<sup>1</sup> Macnele Dixon, *Trinity College Dublin*, pp 132-3.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era', p. 512.

<sup>3</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §239.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §174a.

individual can acquire his/her place within society. The acquisition of a place in society must be sought by each individual and cannot be the sole responsibility of the state to impose. Individuals must therefore seek education. Hist members received their formal education within Trinity College but are indoctrinated into civil society through participation in the Hist. Here members exchange ideas and experiences and encourage the formation of group and individual identity, and from our previous discussions on the Hist and radical politics we see that this identity, forged through interaction and affiliation with other like minded individuals, can often be a complex expression of identity, given the complex nature of Irish identity politics. Hist members acquire or earn their position in society through the voluntary act of participating in the proceedings and the extracurricular activities which the Hist encouraged and supported and in many ways received a parallel or supplementary education to their official studies at the College. The Hist fosters ‘good citizenship’ and from this point of view can be described as ‘an instrumental association’ as per Hammond’s definition of voluntary associations.<sup>6</sup> It is instrumental in that it provides a specific function for students. Through education in history, experience in composition, the interaction with thought provoking motions of debate and involvement with formal proceedings, the Hist helps to create politically aware and civic minded individuals. A newspaper article in 1827 describes it as a ‘splendid association of youthful, fervid and honest hearts, which’ nurtures ‘the national talent of eloquence’ and fosters ‘the national spirit’ and is ‘a benefaction to the country’.<sup>7</sup>

Hammond states that associations can be expressive as well as instrumental. The Hist then is also expressive as it provides a means of ‘self-expression and recreation for members’, communicated through the history the Society studies, the motions they debate and the compositions members write. As we have already seen, the rules of the Society and those imposed by the College Board restricted its ability to discuss or allude to certain topics, in many ways censoring content. An overview of all three disciplines, history, oratory and composition and the subject matter which the Hist studied and produced can provide insight into the literature and debates which influenced its members and although technically restricted from discussing modern politics and

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<sup>6</sup> Hammond, *Associations*, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *F.J.*, 21 Nov. 1827, p. 3.

events, the Society's discourse was never far from contemporary political or social interests and concerns.

The Society encouraged 'compositions in prose and verse' and, as *An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College, Dublin* states, the Society considered 'an extensive examination in history (chiefly that of Great Britain)' which 'was regularly succeeded on each morning by a debate on a moral or historical question; in which every allusion to contemporary persons or events was strictly and uniformly prohibited'.<sup>8</sup> That the Historical Society of Trinity College, was concerned with the study of history is not in doubt but whether this was their chief concern is debatable. All three areas of study, history, composition and oratory, are equally represented in the Hist's journals and are equally weighted in importance - all disciplines attract medals for competency and penalties for inadequacy. The journals document the period of history chosen for study during a particular session or academic year and the motions for debate, as well as references to the poems and essays submitted by members. Only prized compositions are transcribed in a separate book. Two volumes of poems and essays exist for the period under discussion, 1770-85 and 1809-13, and although not nearly a full chronological record, they can reveal the interests of individual members as well as the group. The motions for debate are listed for each meeting along with the outcome i.e. whether a motion carried or defeated. The record also makes note of who counted for the 'ayes' and 'noes' and in some instances who spoke for each side.

The debates themselves are not transcribed and although limited in scope due to restrictions, motions are still representative of, and often reflect, the concerns and issues in wider society. McLoughlin states that motions for debate in the Hist reflected 'topical talking points in the streets and coffee houses of Dublin'.<sup>9</sup> It is in this sense that we will look at the motions for debate as an expression of identity. The history, which the Society studied and examined, was usually that of Great Britain and what this tells us of collective identity will be discussed shortly. Compositions include, 'an irregular ode on the late restoration of Irish freedom',<sup>10</sup> a translation of an 'Irish war song – sung before

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<sup>8</sup> 'An account of the transactions between the Historical Society and senior fellows of Trinity College, Dublin', p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 216.

<sup>10</sup> 'An irregular ode on the late happy restoration of Irish freedom', 28 May 1783 (HIST 48).

the Battle of Clontarf’<sup>11</sup> and more benign topics including an essay on politeness and friendship. In what sense then can the study of a specific strand of history and the composition of specific essays or poems construct the self and express collective and individual identity?

Each recorded meeting of the Historical Society of Trinity College begins with an attendance list, closely followed by a statement identifying the text which they are using to study history and an outline of which sections members need to study for later examination and questioning. The question for debate is then usually stated, followed by general administrative comments pertaining to issues such as fines, penalties, the approval of new members and the appointment of the various administrative positions including treasurer and auditor. The documentation of the general proceedings of the Society also includes the medals or awards particular members received for their poems and compositions, as well as their contribution to oratory and historical study. Indeed a number of the proceedings of the Society are available in CRADLE which can demonstrate the structure of the Society’s meetings, as outlined above. Following the structure of the Hist’s journals we will first consider their study of history, the subject matter they chose and how, or indeed if, the history they chose reflected identity or contemporary trends in historical research i.e. the success of a particular body of work. We will also consider the importance of history as a communication and transmission of identity, before moving on to look at topics for debate and the poems and essays created by members.

*The study of history – identifying ourselves in the past.*

In February 1780, the Historical Society of Trinity College resolved, with ‘Mr Burrowes in the chair’, that ‘in the study of modern history, the Society ought to confine themselves to the history of Great Britain’, and ‘the present course of ancient and modern history ought be discontinued’, as

the frequent transition from ancient to modern history is an insuperable bar to the acquisition of historical knowledge, as it breaks the chain of events, distracts

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<sup>11</sup> ‘Translation of an Irish war song – sung before the Battle of Clontarf’, 1813 (HIST 62).

the attention, unsettles the mind and consequently prevents a rigorous and effectual application of either species of History.<sup>12</sup>

It also resolved ‘that the first 12 nights in every future session should be assigned to modern history, the succeeding 12 nights to ancient history and the remainder of each session to modern history’.<sup>13</sup> However, while these resolutions are quite clear, that ancient and modern history should be studied together at the Society, modern history was the predominantly studied. David Hume’s multiple volumes of *History of England*, first published between 1754 and 1762 and described as a ‘best-seller’,<sup>14</sup> was predominantly used by the Society, as well as William Robertson’s *History of Charles V* (studied during the 1798-99 academic year). The Society also studied Robertson’s *History of America* (during the 1799-1800 academic year) and for a brief period in 1808 considered Thomas Leland’s *History of Ireland*. Apart from this brief consideration of Irish history, it was not normally studied. This self-imposed restriction on historical study may reflect the restrictions imposed on motions for debate. By limiting their study to texts such as Hume’s *History of England* the Hist avoided ‘every allusion to contemporary persons or events’, as any study of Irish history might question the political, religious and social status quo of Ireland in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century.

Whether the Hist studied history for its own sake or to produce or define, as John Tosh describes it, ‘identity history’<sup>15</sup> is debatable. Certainly the context of their existence within Trinity College alludes to identification within a specific historical narrative, although we must take into account the fact that Irish nationalism or identity was, especially in the late eighteenth-century, an identity in flux. What did being Irish mean? Historically a litany of terms developed to identify specific groups including Gaelic, the Irish Catholics, the Irish referring only to ‘Catholics of Ireland’, as specified by Philip O’Sullivan Beare and highlighted by R.V. Comerford in *Ireland, inventing the nation* (2004),<sup>16</sup> the Old English, the New English – complicated by the fact that the old

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<sup>12</sup> 2 Feb. 1780, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 3).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> William Edward Morris, ‘David Hume’ in *Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* available at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hume/> (7 July 2011).

<sup>15</sup> John Tosh, *Why history matters* (London, 2008), p. 12.; While Tosh uses ‘identity history’ to describe a contemporary hobby to trace family lineage, its use here is looking to the past to formulate identity.

<sup>16</sup> R.V. Comerford, *Ireland, inventing the nation* (London, 2003), p. 59.

were Catholics and the new Protestant, Irish Protestant, Protestant ascendancy,<sup>17</sup> and in the nineteenth-century, Anglo-Irish which suggested ‘racial distinctiveness’.<sup>18</sup> Extracting identity based on an affiliation with Trinity College alone ignores the complicated state of Irish nationalism and Irish identity. The study of history and the construction of national historiographies allow individuals to identify with the past and generate collective identity. Formulating or constructing identity using history defines a group which an individual belongs to – defining “us”, rather than just the individual. Yet in Ireland’s case, and indeed that of many other European states, collective identity and a definition of “us” is not easily determined. Gaelic Ireland, the Old and New English, Irish Catholics, Irish Protestants, all held a legitimate claim to an Irish ancestry but conceived of and formulated identity through different versions or inventions of the past. While the Hist chose to study the history of Great Britain, this decision was not because an alternative history of Ireland did not exist. One of these important works, Geoffrey Keating’s *Foras feasa ar Éireann* (produced in 1634 and published in English in 1725) provided, as Comerford states, ‘the most successful formulation of an origin myth for the Irish Catholic nation’.<sup>19</sup> Importantly, in his text Keating asserts that Henry II’s settlement was a lawful and consensual act between the English monarch and the Gaelic nobles. As an ‘origin myth for the Irish Catholic nation’ then it is not surprising that the Hist did not use Keating’s work, as an identity derived from this historiography would have contemporary implications. James MacGeoghegan, an Irish migrant in France during the Enlightenment, also produced an Irish historiography, *Histoire d’Irlande* (1758). While part of the Enlightenment tradition, the French and English reception of MacGeoghegan’s work highlighted the prejudices and bias held against Ireland. MacGeoghegan produced an Irish history within the Irish context. *Historie d’Irlande* provided, as Vincent Geoghegan (1991) wrote, ‘a host of positive images of Irish people, their culture, and their institutions’.<sup>20</sup> His work was in line with Enlightenment thought, reasoning and methodology, yet was dismissed by Enlightenment intellectuals, including Diderot who concluded that,

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<sup>17</sup> Comerford writes ‘the term ‘Protestant ascendancy’, which has been traced to the 1780s, came later to denote a group of people, the politically privileged Protestants of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’, *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>19</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 59.

<sup>20</sup> Vincent Geoghegan, ‘A Jacobite history: the Abbé MacGeoghegan’s “History of Ireland”’, in *Eighteenth-century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr*, vi (1991), p. 54.

it is impossible to expect a good history of Ireland from an expatriate Irishman and Catholic priest. This is a hotchpotch of erudition, of useless research, of invectives against the English.<sup>21</sup>

MacGeoghegan's work was also closely scrutinised by English censors because of his Jacobite links and sympathies, evident in his writings. Geoghegan states that MacGeoghegan 'sees the revolution of 1688 as an act of usurpation' and that 'James II, "of glorious memory is' 'a legitimate monarch overthrown by the usurping Prince of Orange'.<sup>22</sup> In light of this, MacGeoghegan's *Histoire d'Irlande* did not offer the Historical Society of Trinity College any alternative to Hume's *History of England* as their predominant text for historical examination as it questioned the legitimacy of the monarchy in England and Ireland.

The Hist's study of history is fraught with political and social implications and the restrictions placed upon them concerning debating modern politics and events explain why only certain historiographies were used. The study of Irish history was in essence debating the status quo and pertained to a discussion of modern politics. Indeed, as Comerford discusses even the United Irishmen avoided references to Ireland's past, instead offering 'the prospect of a nation built from scratch without reference to particular origins'<sup>23</sup> despite the fact that Tone had received a medal from the Hist for history in 1786, and again in 1789.<sup>24</sup> The United Irishmen's decision was not from ignorance of history but from an acute understanding of the use and implications of 'identity history'.

Whether for intellectual ends or the pursuit of 'identity history', history was an essential part of the Hist's activities and an essay, titled 'Mr Barton's extract', from 1770 describes the importance the Society assigned to the study of the past;

The advantage of attending history are exceeding[ly] great and particular with this that it raises in us an ardent desire of virtue by the glorious examples set before us and an abhorrence for vice on account of the eternal infamy, that is the consequence of it.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 67.

<sup>24</sup> 4 Feb. 1789, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 6).

<sup>25</sup> 'Mr Barton's abstract', 1770 (HIST 49).

Robert Orr's speech in 1792 also discusses the study of history and describes it as a means to understand contemporary issues and produce rational and reasoned solutions. Orr states that 'history assigns the portion of existence assigned to us by nature' and 'unites the past with the present and instead of being confined within the narrow sphere of your own observations, we have the experience of ages to regulate our conduct'.<sup>26</sup> Both of these members advocate what Carl E. Schorske refers to, and Tosh reiterates, as 'thinking with history'.<sup>27</sup> 'Thinking with history' is the means by which we visualise history as a process, in which we can 'orient ourselves' and evoke history as a 'dynamic' 'narrative' rather than a 'static' one.<sup>28</sup> Tosh also describes how thinking with history 'produces images of the past, against which we position ourselves by difference or resemblance',<sup>29</sup> uniting 'the past with the present' as Orr sees it. He also classifies history as both a resource for citizens and as a scholarly pursuit, yet both are not necessarily the same. National histories perform a social function and provide national and political identities or ideology. However, this may not be a 'valid'<sup>30</sup> history, in that it is constructed as a subjective performance of national identity, subverted or manipulated for a particular ideological or political need or gain.

Yet, whether the Hist use history to construct or evoke identity politics, or use it for purely scholarly purposes as part of the study the *belles lettres*, is not essential to decipher. Both uses are invariably intertwined and in many ways one cannot exist without reference to the other. In this respect it is pertinent to consider Hume's *History of England* as the work of an enlightenment philosopher when investigating both the former and latter uses of history and ask how Hume's influence, through the study of his work, may have influenced their collective, identity or national ideology.

Hume produced, among many other works, his *History of England* in six volumes and is considered to be one of the most important figures in the Scottish Enlightenment. Yet, like so much of the Enlightenment, contradictions existed in Hume's ideologies and historical account. Although a history of England, Hume's work makes numerous references to Ireland and recounts many historical events, including

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<sup>26</sup> 27 June 1792, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 16) [CRADLE 118]

<sup>27</sup> Carl E. Schorske, *Thinking with history* (U.S.A., 1998), p. 3. ; Also see Tosh, *Why history matters*, pp 6-7.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Tosh, *Why history matters*, p.7.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

the Irish 1641 Rebellion, which was sparked not only by the continued imposition of disabilities on Irish Catholics but also by the crisis in England between parliament and Charles I and the Scottish revolt. The 1641 Rebellion or the 1641 Protestant Massacre pitted communities against each other based on religion, yet it was carried out by Catholics who stated they were loyal to the monarch, a fact which highlights the complexities of the event as well as Irish identity. The repercussions of this event were severe and long lasting and included the introduction of more penal laws throughout the seventeenth-century. Volume 7 of Hume's *History of England* which contains an account of 1641 was studied by the Hist in 1796. His account of the 1641 Rebellion caused contention between Hume and two Irish Catholic historians, Charles O'Connor and John Curry, who expressed their disappointment at the hyperbole they accused Hume of producing. According to David Berman (1976), Hume was considered to be 'an unbiased, dispassionate and independent thinker, especially concerning quarrels between rival religions'.<sup>31</sup> Yet, according to O'Connor and Curry he outlined an 'inaccurate and biased' account 'against the Catholics', which was 'likely to encourage religious animosity'.<sup>32</sup> They also stated that 'it could be little expected that such a writer should deviate in any instance from truth, and lay down the arms of philosophy to wield those of spiritual hatred'.<sup>33</sup> Given Hume's reputation as an enlightened philosopher, it seems O'Connor and Curry were surprised that 'such a writer' would present an account of 1641 which further fueled hatred towards Catholics, instead of suppressing or calming it, which they had hoped he would produce. That Hume exaggerated or embellished the events of 1641 is not surprising, the event had been used as a propaganda tool since the insurrection occurred and supplied Protestants with a vivid, traumatic and violent collective memory to use against Irish Catholics. It also vindicated the Protestant cause or position in Ireland and justified the extension and retainment of the penal laws. The anniversary of 1641 was used to remind Protestants of the massacres and was often used for propaganda purposes, which is illustrated in a report in the *Dublin Chronicle* dated 23 October 1787, the 23 October being the date on which the rebellion began, of a sermon dedicated to the 'Irish Rebellion'.<sup>34</sup> Of the Rebellion,

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<sup>31</sup> David Berman, 'David Hume on the 1641 Rebellion in Ireland' in *The Irish Quarterly Review*, lxxv, no. 258 (1976), p. 101.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> *D.C.*, 23 Oct. 1787, p. 608.; see also Jacqueline Hill, 'National festivals, the state and "Protestant Ascendancy" in Ireland, 1790-1829' in *IHS*, xxiv (1984), pp 30-51.

Hume states that ‘the Irish, everywhere intermingled with the English, needed but a hint from their leaders and priest to being hostilities against a people whom they hated on account of their religion, and envied for their riches and prosperity’.<sup>35</sup> He continues his account of the rebellion in 1641 informing the reader of,

an universal massacre commenced of the English, now defenseless, and passively resigned to their inhuman foes. No age, no sex, no condition, was spared. The wife weeping for her butchered husband, and embracing her helpless children, was pierced with them, and perished by the same stroke.<sup>36</sup>

Hume states ‘without provocation, without opposition, the astonished English, living in profound peace, and full security, were massacred by their nearest neighbors, with whom they had long upheld a continued discourse of kindness and good office’.<sup>37</sup> As Berman points out, O’Connor and Curry’s objection to Hume’s account of 1641 was because they had hoped to ‘bring about a relaxation of the penal laws’.<sup>38</sup> Hume’s history then, did not provide any reason to relax the penal laws but rather supported an argument for their enforcement. Yet, just as O’Connor and Curry had an ulterior motive or agenda, Berman contends that Hume’s dramatic and brutal account was because of ‘his hostility to religion’, that by retelling a horrific ordeal, generated by religious intolerance, he could convey ‘how religion can work against...moral tendencies’.<sup>39</sup> Regardless of his agenda or the cultural purpose or goal of the text, Hume’s ‘biased and inaccurate’ accounts of 1641 were studied and used by the Hist (it is unclear which edition they used). That this event remained in collective, national memory is true and as stated served successfully as a propaganda tool. On 22 October 1805, the *Freeman’s Journal* states:

tomorrow will be the anniversary of the rebellion in 1641, the defeat of which will be celebrated by many loyal societies in this metropolis. The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor will give an elegant entertainment on the occasion at the Mansion House.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> David Hume, *The history of England*, v (London, 1778), available at [http://files.libertyfund.org/files/792/0011.05\\_Bk.pdf](http://files.libertyfund.org/files/792/0011.05_Bk.pdf) (7 July 2011), p. 341.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 342.

<sup>38</sup> Berman, ‘David Hume’, p. 101.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp 108-9.

<sup>40</sup> *F.J.*, 22 Oct. 1805, p. 2.

As late as 1828 the Aggregate meeting of Roman Catholics refer to this event when speaking in favour of Catholic emancipation and challenge the use of 1641 as evidence of Catholic hostility or savagery. The article pleads for Catholic, or as the article asks, ‘shall I not, rather call it, of Irish, emancipation’, and appeals ‘to the history of our country for the records of our loyalty’ and states that it ‘may be told that in 1641, we [Catholics] rebelled against our Sovereign’ but as a counter argument states,

but is it England that brings charges against us? She, who, in the same year took up arms against the same Sovereign and brought the wretched Charles to the scaffold, when he atoned for his invasion of British liberty.<sup>41</sup>

In this sense Hume’s descriptions of 1641 only encouraged or stimulated depictions of Irish Catholics as violent brutes, yet in what way were the Hist influenced by Hume’s accounts? Were they indifferent to it? If we consider the use of history as a means to identify with a particular past, connected to people, events etc., in that way then did members of the Hist position themselves with Hume’s history? ‘By difference or resemblance’?

While we may not be able to answer these questions, despite not studying works dedicated to Irish history (apart of Leland’s in 1808), the study of Hume’s *History of England* provided the Hist with a historical context in which to situate themselves and Robert Orr’s speech of 1792 deals with some of these issues of identity history. After describing the ‘advantages of history in general’ Orr states that ‘to the subjects of a free government, the history of *this country* ought to be their peculiar study’,<sup>42</sup> (my italics). Whether ‘*this country*’ refers to Ireland is ambiguous but as the speech continues he states that for ‘the history of our country’ (Ireland?) I ‘turn to that of England’ which ‘affords examples’ of the ‘noblest virtue’.<sup>43</sup> Orr states that the history of England

shows us the birthright we have in our privileges, and inspires us with a noble pride... We see our government to be of very ancient foundation, and that even in its rudest state it was animated with a spirit of freedom.<sup>44</sup>

This speech, presented in 1792, places the Hist’s collective identity within a complicated historical context and formulation of identity. Comerford also refers to this complicated relationship when he states that ‘most of the [Irish] patriots did not see

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 19 Dec. 1828, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> 27 June 1792, ‘The Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 6) [CRADLE 120]

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

their assertion of Irish nationality as a repudiation of their English origins'.<sup>45</sup> Reference to 'ancient foundation[s]', similar to that of Gaelic Ireland which Keating and MacGeoghegan sought to achieve, provides a dynamic historical narrative and in effect 'unites the past with the present'. Orr also refers to a progression 'from barbarism to civilisation'. He states that they are 'attached to the Constitution not from prejudice, but from a conviction of its utility' and are 'anxious to preserve it from the corruption of the court and the factions of the people' and when necessary would reform it but never subvert it.<sup>46</sup> Other aspects of Orr's speech, already considered, further complicate matters as he concludes his speech by calling upon members to exert themselves 'in the name of your country...after having emerged from bondage of centuries' ('your country', a reference to Ireland). A Robert Orr is described by historian Allan I. Macinnes as 'an avowed associate of the United Irishmen, the embodiment of the Irish Jacobins'.<sup>47</sup> While no other contextual information is given, we do know that Orr's time at the Hist coincided with Tone's in 1789 which provides evidence that a link between Orr and the United Irishmen may have existed. After the 1798 Rebellion Macinnes' Orr published, *An address to the people of Ireland, against a Union* (1799), and while it may be difficult to tell if, Macinnes' Orr and the Hist's Orr are one and the same, the 1799 publication reflects opinions expressed in a Hist debate in 1793, for which Orr sided with the motion that 'Ireland could subsist independent of any other nation'.<sup>48</sup> The 1799 publication also refers to Hume and states that,

the dependencies of free states are always more illiberally governed, than those of an arbitrary Monarch; and Mr. Hume, forty years ago, when Ireland was controlled by the British Legislature, and had no free trade, illustrated the position, by comparing the then state of Ireland, with the conquered provinces of the French Monarchy.<sup>49</sup>

This statement expresses and justifies the need for Ireland to retain an independent legislature and demonstrates the influence of Hume's works despite his account of Irish Catholics and the 1641 Rebellion. That Macinnes' Orr quotes and cites Hume in his

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<sup>45</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 65.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Allan I. Macinnes, *Union and empire: the making of the United Kingdom in 1707* (London, 2007), p. 28.

<sup>48</sup> 23 Jan. 1793, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

<sup>49</sup> Robert Orr, *An address to the people of Ireland, against an Union* (Dublin, 1799), pp 7-8, available at Eighteenth Century Collections Online .

publication may indicate his training at the Hist and suggests evidence of the influential nature of the historiographies the Society studied, whether for ‘identity history’ or as a scholarly pursuit. The experience or *Bildung* provided by the Hist is evident through this integration of Hume’s work and ideas, and while a complicated national identity emerges from the use of history, its influence is at least evident.

As the Society’s predominant text for historical study Hume’s *History of England* was in use until the Hist dissolution in 1815. Whether the Extern Society used it is unknown, as there are no records for 1815-31. Hume’s works certainly contained many of the liberal and enlightenment philosophies which earned him the title of an Enlightenment thinker. That members of the Hist assimilated some of these traits is evident in the list of members and is also demonstrated in the debates and compositions produced by the Society’s members. Hume’s *History of England* was the main text used by the Society but it was supplemented with other historiographies including Robertson’s *History of America* and *History of Charles V* which were studied at various intervals. Thomas Leland’s *History of Ireland* (1773) was also studied for a brief period in 1808. Joseph Liechty’s article ‘Testing the depth of Catholic/Protestant conflict: the case of Thomas Leland’s “History of Ireland”, 1773’ (1987) provides important insight into the innate problems confronted by eighteenth-century historians, including Hume, when constructing an Irish history which recognised both Protestant and Catholic grievances. Liechty describes Leland as a highly regarded scholar with the ‘the temperament and approach necessary to produce a properly philosophical history of so contentious a subject as Irish history’.<sup>50</sup> Encouraged by his close friend Charles O’Conor, who critiqued Hume’s *History of England* in the 1760s, Leland took on the task of creating ‘a Hume or a Roberston in our island’.<sup>51</sup> O’Conor’s vision was to produce a history of Ireland which reconciled the disparate agencies in Ireland. O’Conor, who was a ‘leading Irish antiquarian, a writer on behalf of Catholic rights and a man of great liberality and integrity’ and a Catholic, was Leland’s close friend and regarded him as an exemplary scholar.<sup>52</sup> Because of this close friendship O’Conor held high expectations of Leland’s work and was encouraged by his promise to produce a

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<sup>50</sup> Joseph Liechty, ‘Testing the depth of Catholic/Protestant conflict: the case of Thomas Leland’s “History of Ireland”, 1773’ in *Archivium Hibernicum*, xlii (1987), p. 15.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 15-6.

work ‘with a liberal indifference to all parties English & Irish, civil & religious’.<sup>53</sup> Similar to O’Conor’s expectations of Hume’s history, he anticipated Leland’s account of Irish history would lead to reform and increased Catholic rights.<sup>54</sup> An account of the 1641 Rebellion was again a point of concern for O’Conor, yet as Liechty states, Leland’s sermon in 1771 made sure ‘that Protestants accepted a full share of the guilt for the savagery of 1641’ and demonstrated to O’Conor that an account of 1641 which could ease tension and promote reform of Catholic liberties was likely to materialise in Leland’s narrative. Despite indications that a balanced account of 1641 would be created, Leland produced an overtly Protestant account of Irish history much to the dismay of O’Conor and his friend John Curry who wrote to O’Conor and asked - ‘is Temple, Borlase, or Hume as dangerous an enemy as your friend?’<sup>55</sup> Liechty states that, in their descriptions ‘of the course of the rebellion, both Hume and Leland employed violent and dramatic language, and both saw Catholic doctrine and clergy as fomenting massacre’.<sup>56</sup> Liechty describes the contradictory or even perhaps irreconcilable personal views and beliefs which Leland held, indicating that while Leland expressed a liberal view of Catholics through his close friendships with many, including O’Conor, he could not remove himself from his own ethnocentrism and subjective views of Catholics which were dominant in Protestant discourse.

If we consider the Hist’s study of history as merely a scholarly pursuit then Hume’s *History of England* fits this purpose. However, while a scholarly pursuit, accounts of Ireland in Hume’s *History of England* may have perpetuated the long standing animosity between Protestants and Catholics and the Irish and English. The following excerpt demonstrates why O’Conor and Curry were disappointed with Hume’s account of Irish history:

the great plan of James, in the administration of Ireland, continued by Charles was, by justice, to reconcile that turbulent people to the authority of laws, and, introducing art and industry among them, to cure them of that sloth and barbarism to which they had ever been subject.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>57</sup> David Hume, *The history of England*, ii (Philadelphia, 1836), p. 292.

Yet, was Hume's narrative on Irish history accepted by Hist members? That Leland's *History of Ireland* was considered for only a year may indicate their disillusionment with Leland and their preference for Hume. Alternatively, the Hist's attachment to Hume's history may reflect their policy on modern politics. Hume's history, unlike Leland, focused on the history of England and considered Ireland as adjacent to this, identifying with Hume's *History of England* then support Comerford's assertions that although 'patriots' they 'did not see their assertion of Irish nationality as a repudiation of their English origins'.

Both Hume and Leland sought to produce philosophical histories and while they may have failed to produce accounts of history which satisfied O'Connor and Curry they provide important information on the nature of Irish identity and the difficulty that even philosophical, liberal writers had when trying to reconcile the diverse and often contradictory accounts of Irish history and contemporary Irish identity. The study of history certainly influenced members of the Hist, but to what extent they extracted identity history from their study of Hume and other text is unclear. The motions for debate, however, and the development of important oratory skills, may provide more information on the nature of identity but more importantly the influence of liberal and tolerant discourse which many of its members produced and it is within John Wilson Croker's 1800 speech that we find evidence of the importance of oratory and debating with the Hist:

Oratory is in all conflicts a strong defence and a powerful assailant...On it I may truly say our lives depend. In the Senate it is the shield of our country's rights and at the Bar the sword of justice...<sup>58</sup>

*Oratory and debate - 'a strong defence and a powerful assailant'.*

Croker's speech of 1800 is an acknowledgment of the numerous members who succeeded in public life as outstanding, eloquent and skilled masters in the art of oration. Oratory was developed and practiced at the Hist through weekly debates and the speeches and presentations given by members. As we have seen, the Hist provided a training ground for many of Ireland's leading politicians, statesmen and rhetoricians and its founding member, Burke, is but one example of the talented patrons the Society

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<sup>58</sup> 'The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era', p. 512.

fostered and influenced. Other important orators include Grattan, Tone, Emmet, Shiel, Bushe, Moore, O'Connell and later Butt and Davis. Another famous Irish orator, John Philpot Curran, was rejected by the Hist and became a member of the Devils Debating Society in Temple Bar instead when in the 1771-72 session he was one of five proposed members rejected, for reasons that are not made clear.<sup>59</sup> The formal parameters in which the Hist operate provide members with the techniques and methods to communicate and interact with spectators within the Hist and later in the public gallery. Yet, it is the motions for debate which offer insight into both the concerns of the Society's members and the wider public in Dublin. The Hist provided its members with a forum to debate the hot topics of the day and while modern politics was banned many of their debates were analogies to contemporary concerns and reflect enlightened reasoning and rationale.

Motions for debate vary from topics on ancient Roman history, e.g. 'Was Brutus justifiable in condemning his sons?' (1799),<sup>60</sup> to topics on European imperialism e.g. 'Was the discovery of America more advantageous to then disadvantageous to Europe?' (1812),<sup>61</sup> to comments on contemporary etiquette, e.g. 'Is the practice of dueling beneficial?' (1812).<sup>62</sup> Other topics such as 'Should the slave trade be abolished?' (1790),<sup>63</sup> 'Should females received a learned education?' (1812)<sup>64</sup> and 'Should capital punishment be entirely abolished?',<sup>65</sup> reflect enlightenment reasoning and rationale. There is no set pattern for the development of debates and topics for debate were suggested and voted for by members.

Even though the Society decreed in 1770 that no modern politics be discussed, a statement reiterated over the years and indeed a position Burke took issue with in the 1740s, motions pertaining to Union were debated periodically over the years, e.g. 'Whether a Union with Great Britain would be of advantage to Ireland?' (1788)<sup>66</sup> and 'Whether Ireland could subsist independent of any other nation?' (1793).<sup>67</sup> In 1780 the

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<sup>59</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 25.

<sup>60</sup> 8 June 1799, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 13).

<sup>61</sup> 2 Jan. 1812, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST.20).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Feb. 1812.

<sup>63</sup> 7 Apr. 1790, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

<sup>64</sup> 15 Jan. 1812, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 20).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Dec. 1811.

<sup>66</sup> 10 Dec. 1788, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 6).

<sup>67</sup> 23 Jan. 1793, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

Society also debated ‘Whether the Roman Catholics should be admitted into our armed associations?’<sup>68</sup> although the motion was rejected, this topic was of great concern, given the development of Volunteering in the 1770s and 80s.

Elliott discusses the issue surrounding the admittance of Catholics into the Volunteer movement during the late 1770s and describes the movement as ‘aggressively Protestant’.<sup>69</sup> While some corps allowed Catholics to join Elliott states that the majority of these were in towns ‘with sizable Catholic mercantile communities’.<sup>70</sup> In 1779 the Volunteers were urged by Joseph Pollock, who later became friends with Tone, ‘to abandon their religious exclusiveness and admit Catholics to their ranks’,<sup>71</sup> demonstrating the political and social relevance of the Hist’s 1780 debate, ‘Whether the Roman Catholics should be admitted into our armed associations?’. By 1783 the Dungannon Convention, which was dominated by Belfast Dissenters, ‘passed a resolution calling for a limited extension of the franchise to Catholics’ but the National Volunteer Convention some months later refused to discuss the Catholic issues and a Volunteer reform bill was defeated.<sup>72</sup> Budd and Hinds note that up to 1779 Hist debates were focused mostly on topics of ancient history and general subjects but that over the next four years debates focused on more decidedly political topics.<sup>73</sup> Topics which reflect the spirit of the times include debates about union, France and the Volunteers, all of which we have mentioned. Other motions which the Hist debated include:

- Whether it would tend to the advancement of public liberty, that laws should be enacted by the votes of the people at large? (1780)<sup>74</sup>
- Whether the power lodged in the King of dissolving the Parliament at pleasure, is not derogatory of the privileges of a free people? (1780)<sup>75</sup>
- Would it be of advantage to Great Britain that the liberties of the French nation should be extended? (1788)<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 10 May 1780.

<sup>69</sup> Elliott, *Wolfe Tone, prophet of Irish independence*, p. 113.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 17.

<sup>74</sup> 26 Jan. 1780, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (1776-81) (HIST 3).

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 1 Mar. 1780.

<sup>76</sup> 17 Dec. 1788, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 6).

- Is the national debt of real disadvantage to Great Britain? (1789)<sup>77</sup>
- Would a general diffusion of knowledge tend to promote the interests of the community? (1797)<sup>78</sup>
- Is the soldier or the peasant, the more useful member of society? (1799)<sup>79</sup>
- Whether the [preservation] of the conquests of Henry V would have been beneficial to England? (1806)<sup>80</sup>
- Is attainder justifiable in cases of treason? (1808)<sup>81</sup>
- Is patriotism to be preferred to discipline in the field of battle? (1812)<sup>82</sup>
- Did Cromwell's administration benefit England? (1813)<sup>83</sup>
- Was the institution of the Order of Jesuits of advantage to Europe? (1814)<sup>84</sup>

The above list is but a fraction of the debates which exist. A more extensive list is included in the digital article on debates within CRADLE where motions for debate are visualised in a timeline. It must also be noted that since we do not have the journals for the Society between 1815 and 1831, we do not have the motions which the Extern debated.

As stated, these debates were not motions in isolation of the concerns and interests of wider society and political communities, and although some topics are philosophical, perhaps even metaphysical, they may reflect the talking points and preoccupations of Dublin's citizens. Demonstrating that while the Hist had explicit instructions not to debate motions pertaining to modern politics or events, many of the debates had contemporary implications and were reflective of the society in which the Hist and its members existed. A number of motions for debate will be discussed to demonstrate the liberal and progressive nature of the Hist's members, which in turn may reveal the beliefs and opinions of members of the extended community. This extended community includes citizens of Dublin, a proportion of which Hist members represent. By discussing a number of reoccurring debates on civil rights, justice and civil liberties, namely the role of women in society, the slave trade, capital punishment, as well as

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 13 May 1789.

<sup>78</sup> 10 Jan. 1797, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 12).

<sup>79</sup> 27 Mar. 1799, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 13).

<sup>80</sup> 5 Feb. 1806, 'Journals of the Hist' (1806-08) (HIST 17).

<sup>81</sup> 27 Jan. 1808, 'Journals of the Hist' (1808-10) (HIST 18).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 1 Apr. 1812.

<sup>83</sup> 24 Nov. 1813, 'Journals of the Hist' (1813-15) (HIST 22).

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 6 Apr. 1814.

governmental process, we can highlight the Hist's concerns but also that of Irish society during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. These debates reveal contemporary, late eighteenth and early nineteenth concerns, and the fact that they were debated reveal a great deal in terms of the Hist's importance and their ability to reference and address the concerns and interests of wider Irish and European society.

Between the period 1792 and 1812 the Hist debated three motions pertaining to the role of women in society - 'Should women have a share in the government of a country?' (1792),<sup>85</sup> which was rejected thirty-two votes to seventeen, 'Should females be excluded from the throne?' (1799),<sup>86</sup> also rejected, seventeen votes to six and 'Should females receive a learned education?' (1812),<sup>87</sup> for which the Society voted against the motion, thirty-two to nineteen. As we can see from these results just because the Society debated such issues, did not mean the outcome was necessarily enlightened or liberal. Their views, however, must be considered within the context of contemporary beliefs and opinions. The education of women was certainly a topic of debate in the late eighteenth-century as women became increasingly politicised and present in public life and discourse. Women such as Martha McTier, famous for her correspondence with her brother, William Drennan, a United Irishman, also married to Samuel McTier who was President of the Belfast Society of United Irishmen, Mary Ann McCracken, whose brothers were United Irishmen, and was personally involved with radical politics, and Maria Edgeworth, who wrote politically motivated literature which questioned Irish society, including *Castle Rackrent* (1800) and *The absentee* (1812), all demonstrate women's involvement both in literature and radical politics in Ireland during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. The motion on women's participation in government was debated by the Hist in November 1792, the same year which Mary Wollstonecraft, an English author and mother of Mary Shelley, published *A vindication of the rights of women*, in response to Paine's *Rights of men* which itself was a response to Burke. Although the Society voted against the motion, the mere fact that they debated this issues reveals their social awareness. Indeed, Mary O'Dowd in *A history of Irish women in Ireland* (2005) states that both McTier and McCracken 'read with approval' Wollstonecraft's publication.<sup>88</sup> The results of the 1812 debate were not according to

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<sup>85</sup> 21 Nov. 1792, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

<sup>86</sup> 12 June 1799, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 13).

<sup>87</sup> 15 Jan. 1812, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 20).

<sup>88</sup> Mary O'Dowd, *A history of Irish women in Ireland* (Harlow, 2005), p. 261.

Wollenstonecraft's view of the educational rights of women, but with only nineteen votes in favour and thirty-two against it was certainly not a landslide defeat. The Hist debated the issue of women in society at other occasions outside the time period under discussion and as late as 1924 the Society debated women's education and revealed a consistency in their beliefs and opinions as the motion, 'That the admission of women to Universities has been justified',<sup>89</sup> was rejected. However, the diffusion of knowledge or universal education was a topic consistent with concerns of other societies, as with charity schools already discussed. Indeed, women were active participants and patrons of many of philanthropic associations which supported education among other charitable activities.

Other topics of debate which considered contemporary concerns of civil liberties include motions which dealt with the slave trade and slavery. During the years 1788 and 1799 the Society asked whether slavery and the slave trade were consistent with liberal and enlightened principles. On three separate occasions the Society debated the subject of the slave trade. This topic was a concern for societies outside the Hist and reflects the existence of antislavery societies 'active in Ireland from the 1780s', and 'initially dominated by Quakers and Unitarians'.<sup>90</sup> Daniel O'Connell also campaigned on this issue. In 1788 the Society asked 'Ought the slave trade be countenanced?',<sup>91</sup> and decided that the slave trade should not be supported, voting thirty-six against and only four in favour. They were consistent in this affirmation as their 1790 debate which asked, 'Should the slave trade be abolished?'<sup>92</sup> and a motion in 1799 'Is the slave trade consistent with the principles of a free Constitution?'<sup>93</sup> both resulted in a vote against the practice. Importantly this view is consistent with Burke who spoke against the slave trade in House of Commons. In 1789, Burke describes the trade as,

a savage war, prosecuted with unheard-of cruelty, continued during the mid passage with the most loathsome of imprisonment, and ending in perpetual exile

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<sup>89</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 156.

<sup>90</sup> *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, p. 21.

<sup>91</sup> 3 Dec. 1788, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 6).

<sup>92</sup> 7 Apr., 1790, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

<sup>93</sup> 27 Feb. 1799, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 13).

and unremitting slavery was a trade so horrid in all its circumstances, that it was impossible a single argument could be adduced in its favour.<sup>94</sup>

The Society's view against the slave trade is consistent with that of Burke, yet, as we have seen, the Hist's study of Hume's history also influenced the Society. In *Racism and modern philosophy* (2005), Andrew Valls discusses Hume's views on 'other species of men' in his 1742 essay on *National character*, in which Hume states,

I am apt to suspect the Negroes and in general all the other species of men...to be naturally inferior to whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation'.<sup>95</sup>

Although not specifically about the slave trade, Hume's comments are certainly not sympathetic towards the victims of the slave trade or slavery. Indeed in an essay entitled 'Wednesday evening or The miseries of the Society', (no date given) transcribed into the Hist's journal containing prized poems and compositions (1809-13), in a dialogue between three members of the Society, 'Mr. Croker, Mr. Dolor and Mr. Extract' states, in a list of 38 miseries, that the 23rd misery of the Society was 'introducing a new and pretty quotation about slavery from Hume and pausing with modest expectation to receive the merited thunder of applause, when lo! a pin might be heard to fall'.<sup>96</sup> Why they expected a 'thunder of applause' is unclear, but we can see from this that the Society used Hume to discuss the issue of slavery, whether the Society agreed with Hume's quotations on slavery or not.

During this period it is clear the Society supported the abolition of the slave trade, which was abolished in Empire by 1808 and was followed by the abolition of slavery in 1833. Yet, while we can see from these debates during the eighteenth and nineteenth-century that the Hist supported the abolition of the slave trade, debates in the twentieth-century reflect the racism which Hume was guilty of in the mid eighteenth-century. In 1908 the Society voted 'affirmative' to the statement - 'That the emancipation of the coloured races is a danger to "civilization"'.<sup>97</sup> This statement is

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<sup>94</sup> *The speeches of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, in the House of Commons, and Westminster Hall*, iii (London, 1816), p. 435, available at <http://books.google.ie/books?id=83k9AAAAcAAJ> (9 Sep. 2011).

<sup>95</sup> Andrew Valls, *Racism and modern philosophy* (U.S.A, 2005), p. 133.

<sup>96</sup> 'Wednesday evening or The miseries of the Society, a dialogue between Mr. Croker, Mr. Dolor and Mr. Extract' (1809-13).

<sup>97</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 152.

perhaps representative of the time and an example of social Darwinism which grew in the late nineteenth-century, an idea which measured race through scientific method and created a hierarchical model of people.<sup>98</sup> Social Darwinism grew from Charles Darwin's theory of evolution discussed first in *Origins of species* (1859) and *The descent of man* (1871). Darwin's theory was repurposed and reinterpreted to justify eugenics and social engineering, with horrific consequences in the twentieth-century. Yet, before Darwin the idea of primitivism and the noble savage existed and perpetuated in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century and well into the eighteenth-century, especially after Captain James Cook's journeys of discovery in the 1770s.<sup>99</sup> Ireland itself had often been referred to as a barbarous nation consisting of savage inhabitants. Indeed Voltaire, an enlightened philosophe, perpetuated this myth, often describing the Catholic Irish 'as an inferior race'.<sup>100</sup> During the late eighteenth-century the Hist debated on a number of occasions the subject of barbarous nations.<sup>101</sup> In 1790 the Society debated whether, 'the conquest of Barbarous states, on the principle of civilisation is justifiable?'<sup>102</sup> which they voted against, fifty-eight to three while the motion, 'Is Tyranny allowable in the Prince, who aims at the Reformation of a Barbarous Nation?' (1799),<sup>103</sup> was passed thirteen votes to six. In his journal Cook also refers to this idea of civilising nations, when he states,

the superiority of a state of civilisation over that of barbarism could not be more clearly stated, than by the alterations and improvements we had made in this place (Astronomer's Point, New Zealand).<sup>104</sup>

The Hist's views of the slave trade in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century represent a consensus within society that the practice should be abolished, and while we cannot extract a clear opinion or view from the motions on barbarous nations, the idea of the foreign or exotic Other certainly occupied the minds of Europeans at the time. Indeed, in October 1787, the *Dublin Chronicle* published an article titled 'Curious remarks concerning the savages of North America' which advocated the concept of the

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<sup>98</sup> Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler, evolutionary ethics, eugenics and racism in Germany* (Hampshire, 2004).

<sup>99</sup> Nicholas Thomas, *Discoveries, the voyages of Captain Cook* (London, 2004).

<sup>100</sup> Graham Gargett, 'Voltaire's view of the Irish' in Graham Gargett and Geraldine Sheridan (eds), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment, 1700-1800* (London, 1999), p. 167.

<sup>101</sup> See Claire O'Halloran, *Golden Ages And Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate And Cultural Politics In Ireland, c.1750-1800* (Cork, 2004).

<sup>102</sup> 26 May 1790, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

<sup>103</sup> 15 May 1799, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 13).

<sup>104</sup> Thomas, *Discoveries, the voyages of Captain Cook*, p. 174.

noble savage<sup>105</sup> and in 1792 there appeared in Dublin two clubs, the Cherokees and the Chikasaws.<sup>106</sup> Both of these clubs dressed up like American Indians, along with bows and arrows, and acted, as one article described them, like savages.<sup>107</sup> Indeed a debate in 1800 may pertain to the race theories which developed in the late nineteenth-century, ‘Does the difference of national character proceed rather from moral than physical causes?’, and although ‘moral causes’ were ‘agreed to unanimously’,<sup>108</sup> the language used in this question is similar to theories on race which developed in the nineteenth-century, especially in relation to social Darwinism. It is also important to note that Hegel also demonstrated a curiosity of the foreign or exotic Other. Robert Bernasconi notes that ‘in his *Lecture on the philosophy of world history*’ Hegel described Africans ‘as barbaric, cannibalistic, preoccupied with fetishes, without history, and without any consciousness of freedom’.<sup>109</sup> He also stated that ‘they lack “any ingredient of culture (*Bildung*)”’.<sup>110</sup> Hegel’s views are representative of the nineteenth-century, a view which provided justification for the colonisation of Africa later in century. Through this imagery Hegel positions himself and indeed Western culture ‘by difference’ with Africa rather than ‘resemblance’ and refuses to acknowledge the history or culture of Africa within its own context. The debates on the slave trade and motions which considered barbarous nations indicate the concerns and preoccupations of Irish society but also the growing curiosity about the foreign Other, a curiosity which developed into bigotry and inequality during the nineteenth-century.

Capital punishment was another civil rights issue which the Hist debated on a number of occasions. Motions include ‘Whether the multiplicity of capital punishments tends to the prevention of crimes?’ (1790)<sup>111</sup> and ‘Should capital punishment be entirely abolished?’ (1811), which was carried with an overwhelming majority.<sup>112</sup> The Hist also debated the important practice of criminal transportation which replaced the death penalty in certain circumstances. Indeed an article in the *Dublin Chronicle* in 1789

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<sup>105</sup> *D.C.*, 11 Oct. 1787, p. 572.

<sup>106</sup> *F.J.*, 10 Apr. 1792, p. 4.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Mar. 1792, p. 4.

<sup>108</sup> 14 May 1800, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 13).

<sup>109</sup> Robert Bernasconi, ‘Hegel at the Court of the Ashanti’ in Stuart Barnett (ed.), *Hegel after Derrida* (London, 1998), p. 41.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> 24 Feb. 1790, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 41).

<sup>112</sup> 11 Dec. 1811, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 20).

refers to the ‘settlement in the southern parts of almost the extreme of the southern hemisphere...where the convicts are going to be sent,...the natives are the most stupid race of mortals on earth and go naked’.<sup>113</sup> While a reference to the transportation of criminals, this article also reflects the prejudices and bigotry held towards indigenous, uncivilised, inhabitants already discussed. It was not until the 1820s that ‘long terms of imprisonment became the norm for most offenses’,<sup>114</sup> rather than transportation. The morals which Hist members expressed in debates on capital punishment is consistent with reforms in the 1830s which did not abolish capital punishment completely as the Hist had wanted, but reserved the death penalty for murder and treason.<sup>115</sup>

Michel Foucault discusses the ‘spectacle of the scaffold’ in his 1975 publication *Discipline and punish, the birth of the prison*, which describes the use of capital punishment, including the scaffold, as a public performance. Foucault states that ‘the public execution is to be understood not only as a judicial, but also as a political ritual’ which creates, enforces and manifests power.<sup>116</sup> Public executions not only reinstate and enforce government power but can also create political or national martyrs. Indeed, while Tone died from self inflicted wounds in prison after his capture in 1798, Robert Emmet was publicly executed in 1803 after his failed insurrection earlier that year. Emmet’s execution was a public display of power and authority, carried out to demonstrate the repercussions of sedition and treason. Emmet’s execution, carried out in Thomas Street, Dublin, the site of many public hangings and executions, is depicted in a drawing produced in 1870s and available online through the Library of Congress. This picture, of which two versions are available, 1878 and 1883, demonstrates the interplay of power and authority exerted through, as Foucault describes it, ‘the body of the condemned’.<sup>117</sup> Titled the ‘Execution of Robert Emmet’, the caption on the 1878 version reiterates Emmet’s famous statement, debated by the Hist during their bicentenary celebrations, ‘when my country takes her place, among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written’,<sup>118</sup> while the caption on the 1883

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<sup>113</sup> *D.C.*, 5 May 1787, p. 24.

<sup>114</sup> *The Oxford Companion to Irish History*, p. 73.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish, the birth of the prison* (London, 1991), p. 47.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>118</sup> ‘Execution of Robert Emmet in Thomas Street, [Dublin], 20th September 1803’ (c.1878) available at Library of Congress prints and photographs division, Washington, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003652802/> (4 Apr. 2011).

reproduction reads as follows - 'must Irishmen look idly on, while England assassinates at will'.<sup>119</sup> This print was certainly used for propaganda purposes in the late nineteenth-century, produced many years after Emmet's death and is an example of the cult of the martyr. The print demonstrates the power inscribed into public executions and produces an image which distinguishes the Irish, the onlookers, from the English, the administrators of justice. The Hist's debate in 1790, 'Whether the multiplicity of capital punishments tends to the prevention of crimes?', reflects the essence of Foucault's argument that torture and capital punishment is a political tool to control the masses. Foucault describes public execution as carrying out a 'juridico-political function', a ceremony 'by which a momentarily injured sovereignty is reconstituted'.<sup>120</sup> The image depicting Emmet's execution certainly demonstrates this. It is also noteworthy that the Library of Congress' collection includes a print called 'O'Connell's call and Pat's reply' (1850) which is a 'condemnation of Daniel O'Connell's agitation of Irish immigrants in the United States against slavery',<sup>121</sup> also available online. Debates concerning capital punishment and indeed the slave trade were consistent with the concerns of Irish society and were, even though the College Board restricted it, debates which dealt with contemporary politics and concerns and is evidence that the Hist was an outward looking society, conscious of public, social and political concerns.

Other topics which the Hist considered included American independence and as such was very much of a political nature and directly referenced important political and social interests of the day. Motions on America include, 'Were the Americans justifiable in throwing off his dependence on Great Britain?' (1791),<sup>122</sup> and 'Were the Americans justifiable in taking up arms against England?' (1800),<sup>123</sup> and are reflective of Burke's influence and political philosophy. Another debate in the 1831-32 session, 'Did the Declaration of Independence by the United States benefit England?', was answered in the negative.<sup>124</sup> Analogies between America and Ireland were rife during the 1770s, as patriots recognised the similarities between the American cause and its position as a

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<sup>119</sup> 'Execution of Robert Emmet in Thomas Street, [Dublin], 20th September 1803' (c.1883) available at Library of Congress prints and photographs division, Washington, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003667020/> (4 Apr. 2011).

<sup>120</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and punish*, p. 48.

<sup>121</sup> 'O'Connell's call and Pat's reply', (1853) available at Library of Congress prints and photographs division, Washington, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661402/> (4 Apr. 2011).

<sup>122</sup> 9 Nov. 1791, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 41).

<sup>123</sup> 13 May 1800, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 13).

<sup>124</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 144.

colony, with that of Ireland. Yet it was not necessarily independence which Irish patriots sought but fairness for imperial participation.<sup>125</sup> The Society was therefore debating an issue which had connotations in the Irish context but which also concerned its founding member, Burke. In 1789 the Society debated another motion which was central to Burke's concerns or ideas of the American colonies, that of taxation. The motion, 'Whether Great Britain had a right to tax the American colonies?',<sup>126</sup> (1789) which the Society voted against, forty-two to nine, was in line with Burke's views on the taxation of the American colonies. In his 1774 speech, *On American taxation*, Burke considers the complex nature of imperial power and legislation and describes the issue of taxation as essentially an issue of power and the ability of the colonial or local legislatures, controlled by the 'imperial rights of Great Britain,' to legislate for their own taxes.<sup>127</sup>

Other motions include questions on the principles of governing and liberty of the press. Of government, politics and the monarchy, debates include:

- Whether the power lodged in the King of dissolving the Parliament at pleasure, is not derogatory of the Privileges of a Free people? (1780) which the Society voting against nineteen votes to seven,
- Does the influence of the Crown appear to be increasing and ought it to be diminished? (1780),<sup>128</sup> passed with fifteen votes,
- Is a Democracy more favourable than Monarchy to the advancement of Literature? (1798),<sup>129</sup> which the Society voted against, twenty-one votes to nine,
- Is a systematic [opposition] to minority necessary to the welfare of a free government? (1812) the result was thirty-two to thirty-two, so the 'President gave his casting vote to the negative'.<sup>130</sup>
- Is an hereditary preferable to an elected Monarchy? (1814), the motion carried.<sup>131</sup>

Issues related to the Monarchy, especially the power which it held, reflect concerns of absolutism which prevailed before and after the French Revolution. Other motions

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<sup>125</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 241.

<sup>126</sup> 11 Feb. 1789, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 6).

<sup>127</sup> *Speech of Edmund Burke, Esq. on American taxation, April 19, 1774* (London, 1775), p. 92, available at <http://www.google.com/books?id=gGRAAAAAYAAJ> (29 Aug. 2011).

<sup>128</sup> 6 Nov. 1799, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 3).

<sup>129</sup> 25 Apr. 1798, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 12).

<sup>130</sup> 19 Feb. 1812, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 20).

<sup>131</sup> 9 Feb. 1814, 'Journals of the Hist' (HIST 22).

including, ‘When a Parliament becomes corrupt would the people be justifiable in turning them out before the general election?’ (1790),<sup>132</sup> which was voted forty-one votes to four in favour, reflect Burke’s assertions that the people had a right to overthrow a corrupt government. The Hist also debated the issue of ‘universal toleration’ in 1780, 1806, and 1809. In 1780 the Society was undecided on the issue, as it returned 9 votes to 9,<sup>133</sup> in 1806 the Society voted no to universal toleration with only one vote in the difference, 31 to 30,<sup>134</sup> while in 1809 the Society voted for the motion, with 36 for and 24 against. Universal toleration stems from the enlightenment thinking, reasoning and rationale that all men should be provided with civil liberties despite religious beliefs or differences. The issue of universal toleration was of great importance to Irish Catholics, who were excluded from the Irish Parliament because it required administering an oath before taking their seat if elected.<sup>135</sup> In 1812 the Society also proposed to debate a motion on unlimited franchise. This issue was raised in the 1780s by Peter Burrowes, who as McDowell points out, was ‘in favour of the Catholics being enfranchised, on the grounds that they now shared the liberal convictions of their Protestant countrymen’.<sup>136</sup> Indeed this was an issue which the Catholic Committee campaigned for and even though relief acts, enacted between 1774 and 1793 reformed much penal legislation, including Catholic education, Catholics entering law and land ownership, Catholics were still barred from sitting in Parliament and holding high profile positions, such as lord lieutenant.

The liberty of the press was also a theme which reoccurred over the years including debates on the subject in 1780, 1789 and 1797. Motions on this include, ‘Whether in a free constitution there should be any restrictions on the liberty of the press?’ (1780),<sup>137</sup> which the Society concluded there should not, and ‘Whether any restraint on the liberty of the press is necessary in a free state?’ (1789),<sup>138</sup> which was rejected twenty-seven votes to eighteen. These motions and others like it demonstrate the Hist’s commitment to the freedom of the press, an important element in the spread

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<sup>132</sup> 31 Mar. 1790, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 41).

<sup>133</sup> 20 Dec. 1780, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 3).

<sup>134</sup> 19 Mar. 1806, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 17).

<sup>135</sup> S.J. Connolly, ‘Mass politics and sectarian conflict, 1823-30’ in W.E. Vaughan (ed.) *A new history of Ireland, V, Ireland under the Union, 1801-70* (Oxford, 2010), p. 103.

<sup>136</sup> R.B. McDowell, ‘Parliamentary independence, 1782-9’ in *A new history of Ireland*, p. 268.

<sup>137</sup> 29 Mar. 1780, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 3).

<sup>138</sup> 30 Dec. 1789, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 41).

and formation of nationalism, as Benedict Anderson discusses in *Imagined communities*. Yet contemporary publications and societies also realised the potential of the press and many clubs and societies used it to interact with readers and make manifest their communities of readers and supporters. A pamphlet published in 1798 by W.P. Clarke, once the proprietor of the *National Evening Star* and an ex-member of the United Irishmen, highlights the importance of print media by quoting: ‘to the Liberty of the Press alone we are indebted for all the freedom we at present enjoy, and on it we must found all our hopes of future freedom’, which was taken from Erkiné’s *Defence of Paine*.<sup>139</sup> Clarke also supplements this by quoting Cardinal Wolsey in the sixteenth-century who declared ‘we must destroy the freedom of the press, or the freedom of the press will destroy us’.<sup>140</sup> Print capitalism, i.e. newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, etc., was the means by which associational culture grew and prospered, it provided societies with a social network of potential and actual members and provided a forum for debate and publicity. The United Irishmen and many other political clubs, including the Whig Club, used the power of the printing press and produced many pamphlets and leaflets for their cause. This diffusion of literature is also evident in the Hist’s accumulation and acquisition of an in house library which provided members access to a litany of works. The availability of cheap prints recruited new members to the national cause as individuals associate with particular communities identified in literature. An essay on the subject of printing is included in the Society’s book of compositions and is presented as digital object in CRADLE. Written by John Dumoulin, during the period 1809-13 (the essay is not dated), the piece ‘An essay on the invention of the art of printing’ states,

History and experience must convince every one of the great benefits resulting to man from the invention of the art of printing; whether we regard it in a moral or political point of view, to it, we are indebted for the universal diffusion of knowledge which now happily pervades mankind, which previous to the fifteenth-century of the Christian era was so limited and difficult to attain.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> William P. Clarke, ‘An appeal to the people of Ireland’ (Dublin, 1794) (Russell Library, NUI Maynooth, PA 231).

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> John Dumoulin, ‘An essay on the invention of the art of printing’ (HIST.62) available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

On a number of occasions the Hist also debated the important issue of the universal diffusion of knowledge among the general populace, which Dumoulin refers to. Motions on this include, ‘Is the diffusion of knowledge amongst the lower classes of the people of advantage to them?’ (1791),<sup>142</sup> which passed thirty-four to ten in favour of the motion, ‘Would a general diffusion of knowledge tend to promote the interests of the community?’ (1797),<sup>143</sup> which the Society again voted in favour of, twenty-five to eleven. The question ‘Is the universal diffusion of education among the poor advantageous to society?’ was also proposed for debate in 1813.<sup>144</sup>

As we have already mentioned, it was not until 1793 that Catholics were officially allowed to enter Trinity College yet even though admitted restrictions still remained for scholarships and fellowships. However, as we have noted in previous chapters the topic of diffusing knowledge ‘amongst the lower classes’ was a topic which received much attention from many associational clubs in the city, not least from charitable societies which ran Sunday schools. Seen as a civilizing process, proposals by Thomas Orde in the 1780s to set up a national education system reflect the motions which the Hist debated on education. In line with their conclusion in 1797, that a general diffusion of knowledge to all would be an advantage to society as a whole, Orde states that to the diffusion of ‘knowledge to all ranks of people’ would ‘introduce a degree of civilization scarcely known in any country’.<sup>145</sup> This topic of debate demonstrates that while not explicitly pertaining to contemporary events or people, the topic implicitly reflected Irish society and its concerns.

While we do not have records for the Hist during the period 1815-31, debates for the 1831-33 periods, in which Isaac Butt, an Irish barrister and founder of the Home Rule Party, participated demonstrate a preoccupation with issues of a similar kind to those debated in previous sessions. Topics include the practice of dueling, the Declaration of Independence in America, education and the Constitution of Great Britain.<sup>146</sup> Another motion, ‘Whether emigration so far as it can be put into operation is a remedy for Irish distress?’ (1831-32), was rejected with Butt as pleader for no and his

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<sup>142</sup> 20 Apr. 1791, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 41).

<sup>143</sup> 10 Jan. 1797, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 12).

<sup>144</sup> 24 Nov. 1813, ‘Journals of the Hist’ (HIST 22).

<sup>145</sup> *D.C.*, 1 May 1787, p. 5.

<sup>146</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 144.

speech against the motion was judged the best of the night.<sup>147</sup> Emigration was already a feature of Irish life and during the seventeenth-century Catholics went to the continent to attend college and university, many attending the numerous Irish colleges established across Europe including the Irish College in Paris and Salamanca in Spain. Indeed the ‘Irish in Europe project’ details the extent of Irish migration to the continent in the early modern period, which included Irish soldiers and their families.<sup>148</sup> Emigration would become a permanent feature of Irish life during and after the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s and created a burgeoning Diaspora which contributed economically and politically in their adopted communities but also importantly back home.

The motions for debate vary considerably and although the Hist was not allowed to discuss contemporary politics or events, topics such as slavery, capital punishment, the place of women in society were debates which held significance to and within contemporary society. These debates were also concerned with political and governmental reform and policy. The Hist debated on the rights of women in the same year in which Wollstonecraft published her work which outlined the rights of women. The currency of their debates exemplifies the Hist as the premier forum for debate and discussion of important contemporary issues and demonstrates their interaction with social as well as political discourse. The outcome of debates on the slave trade tended to agree with abolition and reflect the consensus within wider society that the practice should be halted, a view supported by Daniel O’Connell among others, including Burke. Debates which discussed savage nations were also indicative of the times and although we cannot extract a clear view of the Hist’s opinions in this regard, the nature of the question reflect European preoccupations. Hegel, as well as other contemporary writers, conceived of the foreign Other as a curio, describing ‘them’ as uncivilised, without history and therefore without validation and lacking culture. Debates on capital punishment also expressed the Hist’s views on the reform on the practice, yet while some members just debated this issue others were subject to the horrific implications of capital punishment. Debates which dealt with the freedom of the press, the monarch and politics also confronted contemporary issues but in a roundabout fashion and perhaps this is why the College authorities intervened, especially in the 1800s and early 1810s with increased aggression. The result of the boards increased intervention and

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>148</sup> ‘The Irish in Europe project’, Department of History, NUI Maynooth, available at <http://www.irishineurope.com/> (8 July 2011).

interference with the running of the Hist was their exile from the College for over twenty years. Other topics, such as the franchise and universal toleration, also express the concerns of the liberal and enlightened citizens of Dublin who sought to reform the status quo, while the diffusion of knowledge and education was a topic which concerned reform groups and many associational clubs and charity schools which operated in Dublin at the time, as we have seen in previous chapters. The Hist expressed the liberal and tolerant beliefs of their members through the results of these debates but they also demonstrated the complexities of Irish society. Motions on universal toleration met with mixed results and reflect the hesitance of Protestants to relinquish their ‘minority privilege’ as David Fitzpatrick describes it. While the motions for debate are of themselves important, the act of speech making and the performance involved in delivering a coherent, structured argument provided one of the most important training experiences to members. The Hist provided a platform for public speaking and provided members with a unique opportunity to practice the art of oratory, a skill necessary to rally and excite the masses and it was through this that Daniel O’Connell, who was highly skilled in oratory, was able to mobilise the Catholic proletariat through monster meetings and rallies. Public speaking and the ability to communicate ideas and excite the crowd is a trait which had an obvious affect on many of the successful patrons or members already discussed. The last activity which the Hist promoted, writing, also had obvious implications as many Hist members went on to publish numerous pamphlets on various topics, including political tracts which dealt with political and religious reform. Yet, given the ban on modern politics in debating, the compositions which the Society wrote were not political in nature and promoted artistic expressions in the form of poetry as well as essays.

#### *Compositions - poetry, essays and songs*

Like much of the Hist’s activities, writing compositions also provides insight into the concerns of the Society and its members and just like debating provided members with experience and training for future use. Members such as Thomas Moore and Charles Wolfe, who entered Trinity College in 1809, both received medals from the Society in the field which they both became famous for in later life - poetry and writing. As stated only two volumes of poetry and prose exist for the period under discussion, of

these some compositions were of a trivial nature, e.g. a poem ‘The Seasons’, a ‘Stanza to friendship’, an essay on beauty and taste, as well as numerous odes or epitaphs to former, deceased members, one of which, ‘On the death of Mr Roberts’ (1809) by Richard Lalor Shiel, was partially reprinted by the *Irish Quarterly Review*.<sup>149</sup> Other compositions dealt with philosophical inquiry, e.g. ‘An essay towards a Philological enquiry into the beauties and defects of the English language’ (1780), by Stephen Dickson, for which he received a medal. The following is an extract from this prize essay:

During the dark ages of illiterature and barbarism, every study the final end of which is intellectual improvement meets with disregard and contempt: But according as the dawn of humanity begins to brighten, and the pleasure of the understanding to be enjoyed, men by degrees conceive a relish for the more exalted studies, and as their opportunity permit them, abandon corporate occupation.<sup>150</sup>

Dickson also has a poem entered into the journals, ‘Private interest, a satire. Dedicatory sonnet to the Historical Society of Trinity College’ (dated between May 1780 and March 1782), which makes reference to the Society’s motto carved into their medals – ‘The banish’d Muses shall no longer mourn’.<sup>151</sup> Only essays and compositions which received this medal were transcribed into the Society’s journal dedicated to the member’s compositions. In this discussion we consider Richard Graves poem on the 1782 Constitution, two poems which were destroyed by the Society, for reasons we will endeavor to discover, an incident involving Thomas Moore, as well as look at Charles Wolfe’s contribution to the Society, an essay on printing and the transcription of a song on the Battle of Clontarf.

One of the medals, described by Dickson, was awarded to Richard Graves, afterwards a senior fellow at Trinity College, Dean of Ardagh and member of the Royal Irish Academy<sup>152</sup> for a poem called ‘An irregular Ode on the late happy restoration of Irish freedom’ (28 May 1783).<sup>153</sup> This poem is a reference to the 1782 Constitution

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<sup>149</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 513.

<sup>150</sup> Stephen Dickson, ‘An essay towards a philological enquiry into the beauties and defects of the English language’, pp 297-309 (HIST 48).

<sup>151</sup> Stephen Dickson, ‘Private interest, a satire. Dedicatory sonnet to the Historical Society of Trinity College’, p. 368. (HIST 48).

<sup>152</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 23.

<sup>153</sup> Richard Graves, ‘An irregular ode on the late happy restoration of Irish freedom’, p. 351 (HIST 48).

which amended Poyning's Law, repealed the Declaratory Act and restored the Irish Parliament, providing it with more legislative power. Indeed additional parliamentary pressure provided by the Volunteers influenced the 1782 Constitution as well as the introduction of free trade in 1780. The 1782 Constitution prompted Henry Grattan to declare, 'I am now to address a free people... Ireland is now a nation'.<sup>154</sup> Graves' poem declares that 'Ierne's long lost rights restored, her foes low crouching from the uplifted sword',<sup>155</sup> describes the patriotic feeling which the 1782 Constitution created. This period is described by Foster as the 'golden moment for "patriotism"',<sup>156</sup> a feeling reflected in Graves' poem, and while some of this poem is illegible, the following excerpt demonstrates the elation which Grattan expressed in his 1782 statement:

All nature's [wrapt] in dumb suspense, and hark! Upon my ravish's sense,  
ardent bursts this awful strain – know Britannia, mine the Deed,  
inflames thy haughty soul, by my aid Hibernia's freed,<sup>157</sup>

The reality, however, not expressed in Graves' poem was that Ireland's Parliament was still answerable to Whitehall and while Grattan's Parliament, as it became known, exercised this newly found legislative freedom, the limitations of this freedom were soon apparent and as Foster states, 'the reality of 1782 was largely cosmetic',<sup>158</sup> contributing to the dissatisfaction and calls for radical reform during the 1790s.

In the same year that Graves produced his ode to the 1782 Constitution a number of other poems received medals, including Plunket's 'A defence of the age', which, according to Plunket's grandson, 'the Society determined to print but the copy of it has been unfortunately lost'.<sup>159</sup> During the same session, 19 November 1783, another composition, "'The Incognitos, a Northern Tale', signed 'Borealis'", came under severe scrutiny and the Society passed the following resolution;

That a poem signed 'Borealis', containing very unjust and scandalous abuse of the Volunteers of Ireland and also the most unjust calumny of several respectable

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<sup>154</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 34.

<sup>155</sup> Graves, 'An irregular ode', p. 351.

<sup>156</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 249.

<sup>157</sup> Graves, 'An irregular ode', p. 351.

<sup>158</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 251.

<sup>159</sup> Plunket, *The life, letters and speeches of Lord Plunket*, i, p. 35.

private characters, be burned by the hands of the porter, in the presence of the Society...and the porter being called in the said poem was burned.<sup>160</sup>

In March 1790 another composition, 'Comhal', received the same fate, along with an accompanying letter which the Chairman announced was a 'scandalous, anonymous publication, containing characters in the University and this Society.'<sup>161</sup> These events demonstrate that just like the debates member's writings were also censored, even though or perhaps because, as the *Dublin University Magazine* states in 1842, 'the compositions read in the Society were on subjects selected by the authors themselves'.<sup>162</sup>

While we do not know the contents of 'Comhal', it may refer to a character in James Macpherson's *The poems of Ossian*, the authenticity of which was often debated. The poem by 'Borealis' (northern) is described as being abusive to the Volunteers of Ireland, yet we must be careful here not to confuse the Volunteers of Ireland with the Volunteers previously discussed. The Volunteers of Ireland were a British regiment, composed of Roman Catholics, who fought in the American War of Independence. In *Catholics and the American Revolution, I* (1907), Martin I.J. Griffin quotes Bancroft's *History of the United States* stating,

the cause of the United States was the cause of Ireland. Yet, such is the sad complication in human nature that the people who of all others should have been taking part with America sent some of their best troops and their ablest men to take the field against the defenders of their own rights. Irishmen fought in the British ranks at Eutaw.<sup>163</sup>

This correlation between the Irish situation and that of America has already been alluded to and while Edmund Burke wrote against the French Revolution in 1790, he supported the American Revolution believing it to a just cause against colonial power. This Irish regiment, filled with Irish Catholics as well as deserters from the American Army, was under the command of Lord Rawdon whose officers and men are described as 'exclusively Irish'.<sup>164</sup> An example of one of these 'exclusively Irish' officers was

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<sup>160</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, pp 22-3.

<sup>161</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 66.

<sup>162</sup> 'Memoir and remains of Charles Wolfe' in *The Dublin University magazine*, xx, no. 119 (1842), p. 622.

<sup>163</sup> Martin I.J. Griffin, *Catholics and the American Revolution*, i (Pennsylvania, 1907), p. 340 available at <http://www.archive.org/stream/catholicsandame01grifgoog#page/n4/mode/2up> (8 July 2011).

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald who became Rawdon's 'aid-de-camp' in 1781 and by 1796, having returned to Ireland in 1793, Fitzgerald was a leading United Irishman and brought extensive military experience to the Society.<sup>165</sup> Indeed, Rosemary Richey states in that in 1792 Tone 'approached Rawdon in hopes of being appointed his private secretary' and the two appeared 'to have become close friends for a period'.<sup>166</sup>

Griffin's account of the Volunteers of Ireland includes documents and letters from various sources including a letter dated 23 October 1778 which describes Irish emigrants as 'our most serious antagonists', having fled 'from the real or fancied oppression of their Landlords', and who because of their great numbers are able to keep 'national customs' alive which prevents 'them from entirely assimilating with the Americans'.<sup>167</sup> Support for the American War of Independence in Ireland was mixed, it certainly drew initial support from moderate patriots but dwindled when demands became more radical and extreme and it was Irish radicals of the 1790s who drew from American republican ideology. That members of the Hist supported and indeed defended the Volunteers of Ireland in 1783 perhaps reflects this patriotism rather than radicalism which other members became renowned for. Without the actual text it is difficult to know what, in the content of the poem, the Society deemed 'scandalous'.

Although these poems were burned for their apparent scandalous content, this fact has insured a reference to them in the journals, saving them from complete deletion from the Society's records, a fate of so many other works written by many members of the Society. Thomas Moore was also involved in a scandal because of his compositions. Discussing this account in his journals, reprinted by the *Irish Quarterly Review*, Moore states,

I wrote a burlesque sort of poem, called an 'Ode upon Nothing, with notes by Trismegistus Rustifustius, &c &c.' My attempts at humorous writing had not been many, and the fun scattered throughout this poem was, in some parts, not of the most chastened description.<sup>168</sup>

In the usual fashion, Moore's composition was submitted to the Society anonymously to be read out by a member of the Society. After Moore submitted his piece, Moore

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<sup>165</sup> Kevin Whelan, 'Fitzgerald, Lord Edward' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a3138> (1 Oct. 2011).

<sup>166</sup> Rosemary Richey, 'Hastings, Francis Rawdon' in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a3854> (1 Oct. 2011).

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

<sup>168</sup> Moore, *Memoirs, journal and correspondence*, p. 52.

himself was elected to read out his own poem; unbeknown to the Society of course that he had just been asked to read out his own work. His work, and recital, were received with ‘applause and laughter’ and ‘the medal was voted to the author of the composition triumphantly’.<sup>169</sup> The poem was then ‘transcribed into the book of the Society appointed to receive all such prize productions’.<sup>170</sup> However, not long after the poem was made available to view by all members, a general practice which allowed members to view the work of their peers and vote on works produced in the society, a motion was ‘brought forward’ to expunge ‘certain passages’.<sup>171</sup> In his defence at the Society’s next meeting Moore assumed the persona of Dr Trismegistus Rustifustius. Moore recounts this event in his journal;

The description of my interview with this ideal personage, and the ludicrous message which I represented him to have sent me by his critics and censors, excited roars of laughter throughout...and I sat down amidst triumphant cheers.<sup>172</sup>

Moore’s elation was short lived as he describes the impact of the prosecutor’s speeches, three of which were given by separate individuals. Moore replied to his accusers, stating,

I freely acknowledge the serious impression which my accuser’s words had made upon me, as well as the sincere pain I should feel at being thought capable of deliberately offending against those laws prescribed alike by good morals and good taste.<sup>173</sup>

The Society, however, did not decree to remove his composition. Instead, satisfied with the remorse and regret, they heard in his rebuttal, they voluntarily withdrew their motion.<sup>174</sup> Moore, however, took it upon himself to ‘quietly’ remove ‘the composition from the books’.<sup>175</sup>

Another member destined for fame as a poet was Charles Wolfe, a member during the period 1813-15. ‘Memoirs and remains of Charles Wolfe’ a reference to John

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<sup>169</sup> ‘The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era’, p. 510.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 511.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., p. 512.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

Abraham Russell's publication, *Remains of the late Rev. Charles Wolfe*<sup>176</sup> (1836) refers to the poems Wolfe composed while a student at Trinity College and a member of the Hist. These include 'Jugurtha', which according to Russell was 'written on a subject proposed by the heads of the university',<sup>177</sup> and 'Patriotism', both of which are transcribed and reprinted in Russell's publication along with a fragment of Wolfe's speech in the Society, 1813-14, which includes the following lines,

She (the Historical Society) sends her ambassador, to recall the wavering and disaffected to their allegiance, by displaying the beauties of her constitution; that you may not desert the station for which nature and education have designed you; that you should not dare to frustrate a nation's hope, which looks to you for the guardians of her laws and the champions of her political prosperity...<sup>178</sup>

Is Wolfe referring to ambassadors i.e. students, sent to talk with the college authorities during this period? Wolfe's time at the Hist was well spent, having addressed the Society in 1814 he also received a medal for his 'poetical composition' called 'Lines on the burial of Sir John Moore'<sup>179</sup>, again transcribed in Russell's publication but which attracted praise and acclaim beyond the Hist and for which Wolfe is most famous. 'Lines on the burial of Sir John Moore' is an account of Moore's death wish to be buried where he lay in the battle field. Wolfe wrote:

II.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,  
The sods with our bayonets turning;  
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,  
And the lantern dimly burning.

III.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,  
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;  
But he lay like a warrior taking rest,  
With his martial cloak around him...<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> John Abraham Russell, *Remains of the late Rev. Charles Wolfe* (London, 1836) available at <http://books.google.com/books?id=bkIHAAAAQAAJ> (5 Apr. 2011)

<sup>177</sup> 'Memoir and remains of Charles Wolfe', p. 622.

<sup>178</sup> Russell, *Remains of the late Rev. Charles Wolfe*, p. 55.

<sup>179</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 49.

<sup>180</sup> Russell, *Remains of the late Rev. Charles Wolfe*, p. 23.

## VIII.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,  
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;  
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone -  
But we left him alone with his glory!<sup>181</sup>

During his time at the Hist Wolfe also wrote 'The College course' which is also transcribed into the Society's journal and for which he received a medal, a copy of which is also available in CRADLE.<sup>182</sup> In the same session, John Martin Anster, 'the translator of Goethe's *Faust*' also received a prize for his composition, 'An ode to fancy'.<sup>183</sup>

Another prize composition, which is in the second volume of poems and prose, is a 'Translation of an Irish war song – Sung before the Battle of Clontarf,' (1813). The second verse of this poem reads as follows:

Shades of hero's dead and gone!  
Fallen like the stars which lately shone.  
No more with light to cheer our eyes.  
Bend from your dwelling in the skies.  
And breath the voice of wisdom sweet.  
Where warriors round the Gobhlan meet.<sup>184</sup>

Whether this is an actual translation of an Irish war song or an original piece of prose is unclear, it is more likely that it is not an actual translation given the language used but either way the reference to ancient Ireland is of significance. The Battle of Clontarf, fought in 1014 between Brian Boru, King of Cashel and the victorious side, and the King of Leinster, is an event which as Comerford states, has 'assumed symbolic status in subsequent Irish history as affecting the expulsion of the invader from the soil of Ireland'.<sup>185</sup> This event is part of the 'origin myth' of Ireland and indeed has been used to emphasise the claim of Gaelic Ireland. Leerssen refers to the publication of such texts as marking a 'cultural transfer' from Anglo centric history to a Gaelic centric one and states the

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid., p. 24,

<sup>182</sup> Also available on CRADLE.

<sup>183</sup> The Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin – second era', p. 517.

<sup>184</sup> 'Translation of an Irish war song' (1813) (HIST 62) available at [cradle.forasfeasa.ie](http://cradle.forasfeasa.ie)

<sup>185</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 21.

the period 1760-1845 witnesses a crucial transformation in Irish culture in that the native Gaelic tradition...is interiorized by a modernizing, urban-centered, English-speaking and essentially Victorian Ireland.<sup>186</sup>

To what extent this happened at the Hist is unclear but the transcription or translation of such a powerful symbol of the Gaelic Irish ‘origin myth’ is of significance, given the fact that the Hist were so careful when choosing historiographies or particular history to study. The song itself refers to the chieftains of Gaelic Ireland and ‘spirit of ancient days’<sup>187</sup> and invokes the origin myth which Geoffry Keating expressed in his *Foras feasa ar Éireann*. Indeed Daniel O’Connell also evoked the mythical status of this event when in 1843 he proposed to hold one of his monster rallies at Clontarf. O’Connell’s invocation of the myth of Clontarf demonstrates Leerssen’s assertions of a ‘Gaelic reorientation of Ireland’s public space and public sphere’.<sup>188</sup>

The Gaelic Society founded in 1806, to preserve and publish ‘ancient, historical and literary documents’,<sup>189</sup> helped in the task of revitalising a Gaelic identity within the public sphere and describe their mission statement as of ‘national importance’.<sup>190</sup> Importantly, Theophilus O’Flanagan, a Gaelic scribe and secretary of the Gaelic Society, was a member of the Historical Society in the 1780s although he was Catholic.<sup>191</sup> The transactions of the Gaelic Society, published in English and Irish in 1808, begins with an invitation to new members - ‘the friends of literature, and of Ireland, are invited to join an institution, whose purpose is to preserve and cultivate a language the most ancient, copious, and elegant of Europe’.<sup>192</sup> The transactions refer to the ancient history of Ireland and identifies it with a lineage steeped in tradition, custom and law, which are consistent with ideas of the reorientation of Gaelic Ireland which Leerseen refers to. The Gaelic Society states their intention to publish, ‘*The history of Ireland*, by Dr. [Keating],<sup>193</sup> in the original Gaelic, with a new translation,’ among many

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<sup>186</sup> Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland*, p. 24.

<sup>187</sup> ‘Translation of an Irish war song’ (1813) (HIST 62).

<sup>188</sup> Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland*, p. 13.

<sup>189</sup> Dagg, *College Historical Society*, p. 60.

<sup>190</sup> *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin, established for the investigation and revival of ancient Irish literature* (Dublin, 1808), p. 12, available at [http://www.google.com/books?id=z7HHYauc5\\_AC](http://www.google.com/books?id=z7HHYauc5_AC) (29 Aug. 2011).

<sup>191</sup> Lesa Ní Mhuinghaile, ‘Ó’Flanagan, Theophilus’ in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, available at <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a6757> (5 Apr. 2011).

<sup>192</sup> *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, p. v.

<sup>193</sup> ‘Dr. Keting’ is printed in the original.

other volumes including ‘several volumes of Annals’.<sup>194</sup> This process of gathering and reprinting ancient and historical texts is certainly an aspect of Benedict Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’ which envisages and enforces national connections through print capitalism and public discourse. The Gaelic Society’s transactions include an ‘Address to the Gaelic Society by the Rev. Paul O’Brien, Gaelic Professor in the Royal College of Saint Patrick at Maynooth’.<sup>195</sup> This address is written in old Irish script, use of which alludes to the vernacular of a specific community of readers, with a specific identity rooted in the Irish language. The message which this publication transmits is an expression of a specific Gaelic culture and tradition and provides an image of a language rooted in history. It is also part of the Gaelic Society’s task to revive the Irish language and the bilingualism inherent in the transactions demonstrates this duality as a feature of Irish identity.<sup>196</sup> The importance of the Gaelic tradition in Irish nationalism is reiterated by Leerseen, who states that,

to trace the sense of identity and historical consciousness evinced by nationalist like Davis back in time, we find its earlier manifestations...among the balladeers and historians of Gaelic Ireland...[including] exiled cleric-historians from Keating to abbé Magheogan.<sup>197</sup>

Leerseen speaks of the internalisation of the Gaelic Irish tradition and history and as an image which presented Davis, as well as other nationalist in the 1840s and later, a legitimate and illustrious origin myth or ‘identity history’. Leerseen also discusses the Gaelic Society and, what he refers to as, ‘its more respectable successor, the Ibero-Celtic Society’ as ‘scholarly societies’ which were precursors to the development of the Gaelic League,<sup>198</sup> founded in 1893 by Douglas Hyde, also a member of the Hist during the 1880s. Whether the reproduction of the Irish war song in the volumes of the Historical Society of Trinity College is part of this movement is unclear but it seems likely that this is an example of the revitalisation of Gaelic Ireland which occurred in the 1810s and 1820s and which, as a member of the Gaelic Society, former Hist member O’Flanagan was concerned with.

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<sup>194</sup> *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, p. viii.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>197</sup> Leerseen, *Hidden Ireland*, p. 15.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 24-5.

The poems, prose and essays which were read out and discussed at the Historical Society of Trinity College were mostly subjects selected by each individual author. While we do not have entries for the period after 1814, we can see from the compositions we do have that, just like the debates, members were concerned with trivial, as well as political and cultural topics and issues. Compositions such as Graves' ode to the restoration of Irish freedom demonstrate the concern for contemporary issues but also expressed an Irish patriot identity which supported Grattan's Parliament. Nearly thirty years later then, the Society expressed another affirmation of identity through its compositions yet this time it was not rooted in the 'Patriot citizenry of Dublin', as Leerssen describes it, but within an emerging public sphere dedicated to Gaelic Ireland, its history, language and tradition.

The study of History, motions for debate and compositions submitted by members are all part of a formalised peer review process. The Hist exhibited the work of its members who sought peer approval and recognition of their scholarly pursuits and provided members with the 'mutual scrutiny by one's peers', which Burke advocated as essential to the development of civic minded individuals. Burke's club was founded on the study of history, oratory and composition to encourage speaking, reading and writing and to promote decency, good manners and virtue and despite turbulent politics and censorship by the College authorities the Hist remained resolute to the beliefs upon which Burke founded the Society. Just like the coffee houses in Dublin the Hist debated issues which concerned its clientele and provided a forum for members to discuss the issues which the Society set for debate. Yet, while many issues and debates were censored we have shown that questions for debate and compositions invariably referred to contemporary society and politics. Discussions on the slave trade, women in society, American independence, education, emigration and even Union highlight the fact that regardless of censorship and restrictions, the Hist were able to discuss contemporary issues as they unfolded. The motion, in 1780, which dealt with Catholics in armed associations also demonstrates that the Hist considered the important issues of the day and were politically and socially aware, despite their prohibitions. A debate on this issue in 1780 was certainly well timed and reflects the influence of the Volunteer movement during the period. The motions for debate which Tone helped devise also indicate that Hist members were clued into foreign politics of the day as well as domestic and highlights the Hist's ability to nurture the individual's political and social interests,

which in turn shaped the direction of Hist debates and the politics it discussed. This sensitivity to contemporary social and political concerns confirms the Hist's role as an associational group which provided its members with access to the most burning issues of the day, in a formal setting which encouraged and supported the educational and personal development of its members.

The study of history also provides insight into contemporary eighteenth and nineteenth-century concerns but also demonstrates trends in historical study, or as Clark refers to, 'fads and fashions'. Yet the Hist predominate text of study, Hume's *History of England*, also offers insight into the political use of historiography. Whether the Hist derived the elements of 'identity history' from Hume's historiography is unclear. Hume's accounts of the 1641 Rebellion certainly provided a subjective view of Irish Catholics and indeed Robert Orr demonstrates the complicated relationship with 'identity history' which Irish patriots faced, that of referencing Ireland within the context of English history. Orr's call to action to members was specifically within an Irish framework, calling upon members to 'exert' yourself 'in the name of your country'. No less than six years later Orr is associated with the United Irishmen, a relationship perhaps forged during his time at the Hist with Tone, and 1799 he published a pamphlet against Union, a view which he held and debated as a Hist member. Debates sanctioned by the Society are recorded in the journals but we must also ask what other political discussions and debates occurred that were not part of these formalised discussions and as a result not recorded. As discussed, Clark refers to this as 'part of that general conversation which was the quintessence of club life' and there is no doubt that Hist members discussed issues which were not part of their formal debates or study of history. It is this combination of formal and informal dialogue between members that enables the Hist, as an associational body, to provide its members with guidance and instruction in universal society. In this sense the Hist supplies additional education to its members that is more akin to Hegel's description of *Bildung* which includes cultural, societal and political indoctrination and socialisation and supplements students academic experiences in Trinity College. The Hist provides the experience and development which members require to perceive of themselves as belonging to a collective group, not only in terms of belonging to the Hist, but also to a wider social sphere, both locally and nationally. The Hist encouraged the development of 'outward looking' members of society, who through their interaction with a powerful

associational body could interact with the 'external world' or Hegel's universal society. Through interaction with the Hist individual members perceive themselves as belonging to a large social group rather than just being a single, insular, entity and in effect moves members away from 'narrow local particularism'<sup>199</sup> or insular family units, as debates and the study of history create or support identities which identify with universal concerns and universal society.

The open forum of debate which the Hist promoted, although stifled by the college authorities at times, allowed members to interact with individuals from various backgrounds and nurtured links and networks that had political and national implications. The social network which individual members established at the Hist include the development of links between Tone and T.A. Emmet in the eighteenth-century and Davis and Dillion in the nineteenth. Given our discussion of Daniel O'Connell, which indicates a connection to the Society in 1796, we must ask if he established any close relations from this experience.

The Hist, as an associational entity, is more than a forum for debate and the study of history. The Hist is its members. Many important figures in Irish history were members of the Hist, not least members of radical politics during our period under discussion. Indeed the Hist provided a social network for radical groups to infiltrate. As a training ground for the *alumni* it nurtured the skills of oratory and writing required for those destined to become statesmen, politicians, poets, radicals and revolutionaries. As a college society it thrived when in favour with the College authorities but declined when out of it. Even in exile the Hist or Extern followed the established principles and laws of the Society and made repeated attempts to regroup inside the College walls. But just like extracting a sense of identity or an idea of Irish nationalism from their study of history and topics of debate is complicated, extracting this from their members also proves to be difficult. Of its most famous members, Grattan was an Irish patriot, Tone and Emmet, were United Irishmen who advocated republican ideologies, O'Connell, who at least has a tangential link, came to personify Catholic Emancipation and the Repeal movement, Isaac Butt began the Home Rule movement and Thomas Davis along with John Dillion and others began Young Ireland. These Irish patriots, the majority of whom were Protestant, represent the various identities and ideologies which members of the Hist profess and reflect the turbulent and dynamic nature of Ireland during the

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<sup>199</sup> Clark, *British clubs and societies*, p. 6.

late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. Other members such as Whitely Stokes, Peter Burrowes, Robert Orr, William Plunket and Charles Kendal Bushe contributed greatly to the United Irishmen cause and all, bar Stokes, published objections to the Act of Union. This short list of members reflect how the Hist was a facility for the promulgation of external ideas and through education or *Bildung* provided members with knowledge, experience and the practical skills to utilise as members of parliament, as members of radical groups, as members of reform groups, as members of the Irish bar, members of Westminster, among many other essential public roles. Ireland itself was an ‘outward looking’ society which looked to foreign influence and rhetoric. This helped the nation identify with itself, as well as with Europe and America. The Hist was part of the associational world which encouraged and disseminated these ideologies and rhetoric and provided students and members alike a forum to cultivate the skills necessary to move Ireland forward and take ‘her place, among the nations of the earth’.

## CHAPTER 7

### ASSOCIATIONAL CULTURE AND NATIONALISM - CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH ASSOCIATION.

Our survey on associational culture in Dublin and our case study on the Hist considered clubs and societies which express and promote various forms of Irish nationalism and contribute to the development of particular Irish identities. Throughout the last number of chapters we have paid close attention to the features of associational life which contribute to the development of national identity. These features include the capacity of associations to express group identity, linked to political, social, as well as national ideologies and their ability to influence and support social and political movements. This chapter brings together the two main themes in this historical thesis, associational culture and nationalism. In this respect we will first consider Burke and Hegel and their contribution to the idea of nationalism and consider patriotism alongside it. We will examine Burke's discourse on nationalism regarding his position as a late eighteenth-century political and philosophical writer before considering Hegel's work and contribution to the idea and concept. Both Burke and Hegel's writings reflect the development of nationalism as an idea and demonstrates it as a concept in flux; both works are considered with associational culture in mind.

Daniel Druckman's 1994 article - 'Nationalism, patriotism and group loyalty' is also considered and provides important insight into the social psychological idea of nationalism and attachment to one's country through group loyalty. Our discussion then leads us to the complexities of Irish nationalism as we explore the penal laws as an agent of imperial rule whose implementation and subsequent repeal provides a reference point both for Catholic identity and protest throughout our period under examination. A recent publication, *New perspectives on the penal laws* (2011), provides important insight into the impact and consequence of these oppressive laws and Tadhg O'Sullivan's contribution is used to support our examination of the penal laws. Throughout this discussion we will consider the perceived difference between patriotism and nationalism and try to identify key differences between these terms while keeping in mind historical context and interpretations. We will also consider the marked division of Irish society after the Union and examine the development of sectarianism,

illustrated in the associational activity of the Orange Order and the Brunswick Clubs. We will then move on to look at associational culture in Dublin and how it contributed to the development of Irish nationalism. We will first consider Burke and Hegel before moving onto to looking at Irish nationalism and the penal laws.

*Burke and Hegel on nationalism and identity*

Edmund Burke's *Reflections* describes the local, political and class ties which individuals make as a connection to a subsection of a country or state. He describes an attachment 'to the subdivision' or the ability 'to love the little we belong to in society' as the 'first principle of public affections' and the 'first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love of our country and to mankind'.<sup>1</sup> Whether this describes the idea of patriotism or nationalism is open to debate. During the 1770s, 80s and 90s Irish patriotism expressed itself in a number of ways and was often associated with economic and legislative freedoms within the imperial context, orchestrated and led by Irish Protestants such as Flood and Grattan. The Volunteer movement of the 1770s was also an expression of patriotism and of a desire to protect one's country against foreign invasion, namely by France. Yet as Conor Cruise O'Brien states in *The great melody* (1992), while 'the Irish Volunteers did think and speak of themselves as the embodiment of the Irish nation' the Volunteers represented the 'Protestant nation which was not, for [Burke] the Irish Nation'.<sup>2</sup> The United Irishmen during the 1790s professed a new kind of patriotism, one which was not just necessarily economic or politically based but which reflected the sentimental idea of belonging to a nation, or more specifically an Irish nation which, included Catholics and therefore consisted of Irishmen and Irish citizens concurrently.<sup>3</sup>

Burke's ambiguous reference to nationalism or patriotism reflects the ambiguity between the terms. He describes the individual's attachment to regional or local society as a stimulus to the generation of an attachment to one's country or nation. He also describes political systems or 'institutions of policy' whose existence rely upon a

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<sup>1</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> O'Brien, *The great melody*, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Society of the United Irishmen of Dublin, the Hon. Simon Butler in the chair. Resolved unanimously, that the following circular letter, reported by our Committee of Correspondence, be adopted and printed* (Dublin, 1792), pp 1-2.

perpetual cycle of ‘decay, fall, renovation and progression,’ as preserving and building upon a state’s past, retaining and improving ‘the conduct of the state’ respectively.<sup>4</sup> It is in this regard that Burke makes an important analogy between the emotional attachments which individuals make to politically and socially constructed entities, such as the nation, and the idea of belonging to these entities through blood relations and the sharing of a common past or history. Burke talks of referencing the past and the idea of a national inheritance which adheres to ‘those principles of our forefathers’.<sup>5</sup> The importance Burke attaches to national inheritance is highlighted in the weight attached to the study of history in the Historical Society of Trinity College. He sees a relationship between the past and the present and describes the idea of national inheritance as ‘the image of a relation in blood’ which unites ‘the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections’.<sup>6</sup> This analogy with blood and blood relations is a powerful symbolic feature of modern nationalism and conjures up notions of belonging to an extended family or a people who are perceived to be the same, inheriting similar features or characteristics from a shared past. Blood association links a state with the people, its laws and constitution, and expresses the historical and continuing interactions between a nation and its kin. Burke also asserts that the interaction or cooperation between the various public and private spheres in society as an essential feature of a state – ‘keeping inseparable and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchers and our altars’.<sup>7</sup> Through this he describes the combination of the public spheres, the state, the church and the private spheres, the home and even death, as inseparable features of life and an individual’s position within a political system. This reference to ‘our sepulchers’, which is a tomb or burial place, may also be a metaphor for Burke’s idea of national inheritance and a relationship with the past or national history. Burke figuratively and literally describes the past as dead and buried but recognises that the past assumes a physical, philosophical and spiritual role in the present. In keeping with his description of the state as a perpetual cycle between ‘decay, fall, renovation, and progression’ the interaction of these public and private spheres may indicate the life cycle events of the

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<sup>4</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

state, as well as its individual members. Burke's reference to 'our altars' also indicates his stance on religion and reiterates earlier connections between established religion and its promotion of moral and civil order, regardless of denomination. Burke's interactions between the various public and private spheres in many ways promote the idea of non-sectarian nationalism which we have considered in previous sections.

A decade before the publication of his *Reflections*, Burke also refers to the sentimental idea of a nation. In his 1780 speech at the Guildhall in Bristol, which deals with 'certain points relative to his parliamentary conduct', Burke states that after an act 'completed in a most wonderful manner the re-union to the state, of all the Catholics of that country [Ireland]...it made us, what we ought always to have been, one family, one body, one heart and soul, against the family-combination, and all other combinations of our enemies'.<sup>8</sup> Whether the acts referred to are the Catholics Relief Acts of the 1770s is unclear but O'Brien points out that in August 1778 Burke wrote to 'Edmund Sexton Pery, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons...to congratulate him on the progress of the Catholic Relief Bill in the Irish Parliament'.<sup>9</sup> Referring to an Irish nation which included Catholics or 'one family' Burke declares 'you are now beginning to have a Country and I trust you will complete the design'.<sup>10</sup> Evidence suggests that the acts which Burke refers to may in fact be the relief acts of the 1770s. Burke describes the important idea of the construction of individual identity outside of the family unit and an attachment to the nation, imagining it as a family with a heart and soul. He depicts the idea of loyalty to the nation against common enemies but also curiously against the family. As stated Burke envisages the relationship between 'domestic ties' or the family as essential to the 'constitution of our country', as it is these ties that instill a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the family as well as the state. Through these ties the 'fundamental laws' of society are placed at the heart of 'family affections' and are representative of the universal laws and abstract rights at the heart of Hegel's theory of civil society. Burke's inference in 1780 that loyalty to the nation or state should take preference over the family may indicate that it is these universal laws or indeed the 'fundamental laws' of the nation which should take preference over the family. This is in line with Hegel assertions that it is only through the protection of these universal

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<sup>8</sup> Edmund Burke, *The works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, ii (Boston, 1807), p. 250, available at <http://www.google.ie/books?id=s8wcAAAAMAAJ> (29 Aug. 2011).

<sup>9</sup> O'Brien, *The great melody*, p. 194.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

laws that the individual, and as a natural extension the family, can secure their protection and rights within civil society and indeed the nation state. Burke's pronouncement of 'one family, one heart and soul' refer to an abstract notion of a family composed of members of a national community, which share common, inherited features and are some way related through a metaphor of blood and a spiritual relation.

In letters published after *Reflections*, Burke also describes the ties between members of the nation as the sentimental attachments to laws but also as an attachment to 'customs, manners and habits of life'.<sup>11</sup> This is akin to the idea of cultural nationalism which flourished in the late nineteenth-century with the invention of tradition and customs. In *Three letters addressed to a member of the present parliament, on the proposals for peace with the regicide directory of France* (1796), Burke explains the relationship between nations as composed of and dependent on the 'formalities of treaties and compacts' but asserts that 'men are not tied to one another by papers and seals' rather 'are led to associate by resemblances, by conformities [and] by sympathies'.<sup>12</sup> He describes the abstract, metaphysical or even emotional links that link people in contrast to the impersonal ties made through treaties, papers and politics. He suggests that these emotional ties are relevant to the individual as well as the nation and explains that

nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nation and nation as correspondence in laws, customs, manners and habits of life. They have more than the force of treaties in themselves. They are obligations written in the heart. They approximate men to men, without their knowledge, and sometimes against their intentions.<sup>13</sup>

These ties are explained in terms of relationships between different nations, the sentimental attachments he describes are relevant to the connections within a nation, as well as between them. Universal laws and rights, defined by a constitution and made relevant only through the participation of citizen members, supply the legislative foundation of a nation while 'customs, manners and habits of life' supply a more thorough, natural and emotional connection between members or individuals. These abstract connections supply the means for individuals to relate or associate with one

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<sup>11</sup> Edmund Burke, *The works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, viii (London, 1803), p. 181, available at <http://www.google.com/books?id=d0sJAAAAQAAJ> (29 Aug. 2011).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 180-1.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

another and perceive of themselves as resembling each other through similar habits and customs as well as their abidance of the same laws and rules. In many ways Burke echoes Herder (1744-1803), a German philosopher in the eighteenth-century, and asserts that nationalism is cultural rather than political and nationalism is not about the politics of the state but ‘the culture of a people’,<sup>14</sup> or a particular *volk*. The connections which Burke describes are emotionally charged and represent ties of the ‘heart and soul’. In many respects Burke illustrates the evolution of a nation from a political entity to a social one containing related members who perceive themselves as one, imagined, community. In line with this idea of imagined community Boyd summarises Burke’s connection between the family and the nation as ‘concentric circles of affection – ties to family, locality, religion, property and class’.<sup>15</sup> It is these links which provide physical affirmation of the links between the various public and private spheres and provide tangible evidence of the abstract, imagined community or as Boyd calls it, the ‘abstract political order’.<sup>16</sup> These links and affections enable the individual to contextualise their belonging to an ‘abstract political order’ which they ‘are otherwise incapable of experiencing directly’.<sup>17</sup> Abstract attachments to a community realised through affiliation and interaction with associations also contribute to the development of social and national awareness. Clubs and societies are part of the ‘concentric circles of affection’ and provide a tangible way to experience the abstract notion of belonging to a state or nation as it supplies another sphere or tie between individuals and the conceptual idea of a nation or community of people.

Although Burke never explicitly refers to nationalism by name he describes many of the cultural and transcendent elements of it which contribute to its development and which are features of nineteenth and twentieth-century nationalism. He alludes to nationalism both as a healthy expression of nationalist identity and interaction between fellow citizens and as a fanatical and extreme form of identity which singles out distinctiveness and differences along similar lines i.e. customs, traditions, etc., but which is also fueled by connotations of blood relations.

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<sup>14</sup> Frederick Beiser, ‘Herder, Johann Gottfried’ in E. Craig (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London, 1998) available at <http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/DB038SECT6> (1 Aug. 2011).

<sup>15</sup> Boyd, ‘Edmund Burke’s defense of civil society’, p. 470.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Interactions with the various spheres of influence contribute to the construction of identity which is linked to an abstract community in which all these spheres converge, i.e. the nation or the state. This transformation from the local or private spheres of influence and affiliation, to the conceptual notion of belonging to a public sphere with a national influence and extension, supported by the individual's interaction with intermediary bodies and associations, is also reflected in Hegel's *Philosophy of right*. The evolution or transition from local attachments to national ones is reflected in Hegel's discussion of the individual's abstract rights or freedoms within society, which are achieved and protected through the provision of these rights to all individuals within a given, universal, society. Hegel's transition, as well as Burke's, reflects the development of social consciousness and identity and it is through these local attachments that individuals perceive themselves as belonging to a public space within the regional and national context. As stated, it is this relationship between the individual, the family, civil society and the nation which represents the various private and public spheres which an individual interacts with on various social, political, economic and religious levels. Hegel speaks of this transition from the family and asserts that

a nation does not begin by being a state. The transition from a family, a horde, a clan, a multitude, &c., to political conditions is the realization of the Idea in the form of that nation.<sup>18</sup>

While the construction of a nation is often more complex than a political entity, often based on social, religious and cultural attributes, Hegel describes the conditions by which a nation comes into being as an entity possessing an 'ethical substance' expressed in universally valid laws. This interaction between various groups, of increasing magnitude, develops social awareness and directly contributes to the development of civic virtue and increased social capital. The transition from the family to the state and the literal and metaphorical expansion of the family into a nation, or as Burke refers to it 'one family,' has already been mentioned in previous discussions on Hegel but it is worth reemphasising to demonstrate his ideas as an extension of the family into the nation.

Hegel describes the 'transition of the family into civil society' as the disintegration of the nuclear family into a 'plurality of families, each of which conducts

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<sup>18</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §349.

itself as in principle a self-subsistent concrete person and therefore as externally related to its neighbours'.<sup>19</sup> It is from this grounding in the family, described as the particular, from which an abstract notion belonging to the universality is conceived. In this way each particular instance of the family assumes the principles of the universality, the nation or civil society, as 'its basic principles'.<sup>20</sup> Hegel describes how the family expands or transitions with these new principles into 'the external world', often in a

peaceful expansion [,] until it becomes a people i.e. a nation, which thus has a common natural origin, or...under the influence of an overlord's power or as a result of a voluntary association produced by the tie of needs and the reciprocity of their satisfaction.<sup>21</sup>

This reference to 'voluntary associations' describes the individual's interactions with various associational bodies in order to fulfill certain needs, which includes sustenance of the body as well as the mind and soul. In 'Hegel's social philosophy' (2008) Frederick Neuhouser describes the transition of family members to citizens and states that 'family members and citizens strive to realize the collective good of their families and states',<sup>22</sup> and it is in this way that these 'basic principles' are achieved through collective adherence to these but also through collective action. It is the ability of associations to represent the needs of the individual through collective representation and fulfill these needs through collective action which makes associational culture an important element in the development of society and capable of supporting nationalist causes, which reiterates Burke's statement that when men act in bodies it is power.

Neuhouser also discusses Hegel's idea of social freedom or abstract rights which are achieved by individuals 'belonging to and participating in the three principal institutions of modernity (the family, civil society, and the state)<sup>23</sup> and in many respects reiterates the ties and affections which Burke describes in society. Neuhouser gives an account of Hegel's description of ancient Greece in his *Philosophy of right* and states that it was the polis which supplied a 'source of a distinctive and deep satisfaction for its members' as it provided

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., §181

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Frederick Neuhouser, 'Hegel's social philosophy' in Frederick C. Beiser (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Hegel and nineteenth-century philosophy* (New York, 2008), p. 215.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

a social framework that gave meaning to their lives and served as the primary arena within which, by fulfilling their roles as citizens, they achieved their “sense of self” through the recognition of their fellow citizens.<sup>24</sup>

This social framework is provided by many of the clubs and societies in urban, as well as rural, areas in Ireland and supplies an arena or public sphere for individuals and groups to perceive of themselves as belonging to an extended community of ‘fellow citizens’. This recognition from fellow citizens reiterates earlier discussions on Burke and the idea that it is these connections in society which provide the ‘advantage of mutual scrutiny by one’s peers’.<sup>25</sup> This is in contrast to the corruption and moral ambiguity which Burke associates with individualism. Burke and Hegel advocate the individual’s activity in the various public and private spheres and see this interaction as essential to the development of virtue and morality both within the individual and the national context. Neuhausser reiterates this and points to the utility and advantage of associations in the development of morality and social consciousness. He also discusses the importance which Hegel attributes to associational sociability as capable of indoctrinating the individual within society and providing a social framework to develop, through socialisation, particular social freedoms or abstract rights. Neuhausser states ‘the idea behind Hegel’s doctrine of social freedom is that the remedy for both defects of moral subjectivity lies in an account of good (or rational) social institutions’.<sup>26</sup> Yet while the interaction between the individual and ‘good social institutions’ may in fact point to the idea of civil society, its development in the context of the modern institutions as outlined by Neuhausser, ‘the family, civil society and the state’, highlights the important role of associations in the development of social, as well as national, consciousness through interaction with the various ‘institutions of modernity’ and the associational function of sociability and socialisation or indoctrination into civil society.

Associations support this process of indoctrination as they provide expressive outlets for identity, as well as the structures or social frameworks from which to build, fortify and consolidate identity rooted in particular nationalist ideologies. Hegel sees this interaction between the family, which he describes as ‘the natural mind’, and civil

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>25</sup> Boyd, ‘Edmund Burke’s defense of civil society’, p. 484.

<sup>26</sup> Neuhausser, ‘Hegel’s social philosophy’, p. 211.

society as creating an abstract notion of ‘national minds’ which are actualised and realised through the ‘inter-relation[s]’ of the various public and private spheres.<sup>27</sup> He describes the transition from the ‘the natural mind’ of the family, to civil society which creates ‘national minds’ operating within the state or nation but which also perceives of itself as belonging to a wider ‘world-history’.<sup>28</sup>

This idea of belonging to a ‘world-history’ is important for a nation constructing an identity of itself which is connected to the past but which is also conceived of within the context of its place in history in terms of or relative to the wider world or broader political spheres. Hegel describes epochs of world history in which a particular nation is dominant and while this may lean towards a precarious and often dangerous topographical representation of states, nations and civilizations, it does iterate the importance of the study of history in the development of national consciousness and its role in legitimising the existence of politically and socially constructed national entities e.g. an historical claim to land. Indeed Hegel claims that before a ‘history actually begins’ a state or nation must ‘struggle for formal recognition’,<sup>29</sup> a recognition, however, which is often achieved not from within a nation but from outside it, from other nations and a relationship between them – perhaps through the treaties and papers which Burke speaks of.

Just as Burke talks about history as a national inheritance, Hegel describes the creation of history, in *Philosophy of history*, first published in 1837 and based on his 1830/1 lectures, as developed or written for different political and national purposes.<sup>30</sup> In it Hegel describes ‘universal history’ as a history which endeavors to ‘gain a view of the entire history of a people or a country’ but which is approached by the author in terms of ‘his own spirit; a spirit distinct from that of the element he is to manipulate’<sup>31</sup> and as such may contain tones of the author, national subjectivity and anachronisms. Hegel also describes ‘pragmatical’ history which is part of ‘reflective history’ and which brings to the fore connections between the past and the present. While Hegel refers to the ‘moral teaching expected from history’ he also states that history teaches us

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<sup>27</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §33.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., §349.

<sup>30</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *The philosophy of history*, trans., J. Sibree (Ontario, 2001), available at <http://socserv.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3ll3/hegel/history.pdf> (2 Aug. 2011).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

that peoples and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it. Each period is involved in such peculiar circumstances, exhibits a condition of things so strictly idiosyncratic, that its conduct must be regulated by considerations connected with itself, and itself alone.<sup>32</sup>

This is in contrast to Burke's assertions that history provides lessons or principles from 'our forefathers'. While Hegel may be referring to the practical or pragmatic use of history within a nation, he also refers to the French, who, through the writing of national histories, 'display great genius in reanimating bygone times, and in bringing the past to bear upon the present condition of things'.<sup>33</sup> Indeed through his discussion of national histories Hegel exposes his own national sentiment when he refers to 'we Germans' in contrast to 'the French'.<sup>34</sup>

Yet, rather than just being important for politics of identity, Hegel's description of the rise and fall of nations and civilisations, in *Philosophy of right*, highlights the precarious nature of nations and how they are often constructed upon politically and socially unstable structures and claims. Similar to Burke's metaphorical description of the life-cycle of a nation, Hegel describes the 'the history of a single world-historical nation' as containing;

(a) the development of its principles from its latent embryonic stage until it blossoms into the self-conscious freedom of ethical life and presses upon world history; and

(b) the period of its decline and fall, since it is its decline and fall that signalizes the emergence in it of a higher principle as the pure negative of its own.<sup>35</sup>

Of the decline of a nation Hegel states that when this happens another nation is marked out for historical significance and the declining or fallen nation may 'lose its autonomy, or it may still exist, or drag out its existence, as a particular state or a group'.<sup>36</sup> While Hegel sees the decline and fall of a nation in very pessimistic terms, as he sees the ultimate demise of a nation, Burke describes these stages of decay and renewal as an important feature of society and one which unifies the past and the present. Our

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §347.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

discussion of the Hist and in turn its study of specific historiographies reflect the importance of national histories in the construction of national identity and, as Hegel describes, the ability of both pragmatic history and reflective history, to be arranged and manipulated by individual writers, as ‘each will insist upon his own spirits as that of the age in question’<sup>37</sup> - a feature prevalent in historiographies on Ireland as we have noted.

Within the context of the state Hegel makes explicit references to patriotism and we are again confronted by the difference between patriotism and nationalism. While the differences are subtle, nationalism is considered to be more militant or extreme in its pronouncements of love for one’s country. This militant and extreme form of nationalism is associated with late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century expressions of nationalism, which developed into fascism or extreme right-wing politics. David Dwan’s 2008 publication *The great community* discusses the difficulty in separating patriotism from nationalism. Dwan states that Young Ireland in the 1840s explicitly called themselves nationalists but were also affiliated to a ‘classical tradition of civic republicanism,’ highlighting the ‘fraught nature of recent attempts to distinguish the language of republicanism – or patriotism – from discourses of nineteenth-century nationalism’.<sup>38</sup> Dwan cites Maurizio Viroli’s 1995 work, *For love of country, an essay on patriotism and nationalism*, which distinguishes patriotism as the ‘endorsement of free institutions from the nationalist pursuit of the homogeneous community grounded often on illiberal and atavistic ideas’.<sup>39</sup> Indeed Viroli’s title evokes Burke’s quotation – ‘a love of our country’. Yet, as Dwan suggests, ‘nationalism is a more complex phenomenon than Viroli’s polarized account of matters suggest’ and states that Young Ireland were nationalist who ‘also invoked the language and ideals of a republican or patriot tradition’.<sup>40</sup>

What this indicates is that patriotism and nationalism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century were intrinsically linked in ideological terms, ideologies which were expressed through and by various associational movements. It also indicates the development of national consciousness, perhaps a move from civic patriotism of the eighteenth-century to a form of national patriotism which the United Irishmen

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<sup>37</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of history*, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> David Dwan, *The great community, culture and nationalism in Ireland* (Dublin, 2008), p. 14.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Maurizio Virolo, *For love of country, an essay on patriotism and nationalism* (Oxford, 1995).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 14-5.

expressed. Yet as we have seen, the republican ideals and the revolutionary actions of United Irishmen were born and influenced by the American War of Independence and the French Revolution. Were the American Revolution and the French Revolution the actions of patriots or nationalists? Charles Taylor discusses this in his contribution to *The state of the nation, Ernest Gellner and the theory of nationalism*, and points out that nationalism is not ‘a single phenomenon’.<sup>41</sup> Taylor asserts that the American and French revolutions were initially patriotic and not linked to nationalism. In both cases ‘the nation was taken as given out of previous history and the patriot was one who sought its freedom’.<sup>42</sup> Taylor indicates that nationalism is conceived of ‘when other people began to feel that they could not attain real freedom by simply revolutionising the existing (often imperial) political structures, or find their place within a liberal empire (of Napoleon)’.<sup>43</sup> Yet even before the Napoleonic Wars, which generated much nationalist fervor across Europe, the United Irishmen demonstrated this expression of nationalism as they sought to remove the existing imperial political and legislative structures. The United Irishmen’s views then were more than patriotic and more similar to nationalist feeling which developed in Europe during the nineteenth-century.

Hegel’s reference to patriotism in *Philosophy of rights* in 1821 is indicative of the complexities in differentiating patriotism from nationalism. Hegel describes patriotism as ‘a readiness for exceptional sacrifices and actions’ and as a sentimental ‘relationship between our daily life’ with a community which we recognise as ‘one’s substantive groundwork and end’ and it is ‘out of this consciousness...that there subsequently also arises the readiness for extraordinary exertions’.<sup>44</sup> He also describes the generation or creation of patriotic sentiment as determined and acquired through the interaction of members of the state with the ‘various powers of the state’ which carry out various ‘functions and spheres of action’ and through ‘this process the universal maintains its identity’.<sup>45</sup> Again Hegel refers to the interaction between the individual and the public sphere on many levels which generate a sentimental attachment to a perceived community of members which in turn leads to the construction of a universal

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<sup>41</sup> Charles Taylor, ‘Nationalism and modernity’ in John A. Hall (ed.), *The state of the nation, Ernest Gellner and the theory of nationalism* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 191.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of right*, §268.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, §269.

identity. Although Hegel explicitly refers to these ‘exceptional sacrifices and actions’ as a form of patriotism, this ‘readiness for extraordinary exertions’ and ‘exceptional scarifies,’ which he describes, is also a feature of nationalism in the early nineteenth-century.

This development from civic patriotism or virtue to the extreme nationalism of the nineteenth and twentieth-century utilises or defines a new phase or basis for the expression of patriotism. So rather than nationalism replacing patriotism the two exist as varying degrees of the same identity within an accepted or contested universal community or nation. Dwan states that ‘so much does nationalism become the rule as a basis for patriotism that the original pre-nationalist societies themselves begin to understand their own patriotism in something like nationalist terms’.<sup>46</sup> Both patriotism and nationalism are expressions of an attachment to a politically constructed idea of a state or nation and indicate abstract notions or emotions of belonging to these socially constructed entities, which as Hegel points out often struggle for recognition.

Another article which we have not yet considered, ‘Nationalism, patriotism and group loyalty’ by Daniel Druckman (1994),<sup>47</sup> also provides important insight into the social psychological idea of nationalism and attachment to one’s country through group loyalty. Druckman describes ‘how individual group loyalties influence and shape collective behavior’ and how these group loyalties relate to and promote ideas of nationalism, both through the definition of and identification with an in-group and the construction of an out-group.<sup>48</sup> Druckman describes a number of processes which create these loyalties, many of which we have already considered including the fulfilment of certain needs and wants described previously by Hegel.

Druckman states that the first ‘bases for group and national loyalty are widely assumed to be lodged in human needs’.<sup>49</sup> Yet, despite not referencing Hegel, Druckman effectively describes the type of interactions which we have considered in Hegel’s system of needs and wants, as the individual engages in a reciprocal relationship between production and consumption, resulting in the generation and development of ideas or notions of universal goals, which of themselves are satisfied through interaction

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<sup>46</sup> Dwan, *The great community*, p. 14.

<sup>47</sup> Daniel Druckman, ‘Nationalism, patriotism and group loyalty, a social psychological perspective’ in *Mershon International Studies Review*, xxxviii, no. 1 (1994), pp 43-68.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

and engagement with various groups and institutions. It is through these interactions that individuals perceive themselves as belonging to a wider community. As individuals develop more complicated needs it is the wider community and the nation which satisfied these needs and wants and not just the local or family based communities. As a result the wider community and the nation becomes an intrinsic arena which is perceived as, and capable of, supporting an individual in the satisfaction of physical, social, political, religious, as well intellectual needs and objectives. It is on this basis which associational clubs and societies develop, not only as a response to certain economic and social conditions but also in support of intellectual pursuits as we have seen through our discussion of the Historical Society of Trinity College but also the utility and use of coffee houses and reading rooms which act as a communications hub as they disseminate information and news. Through interaction with various associational bodies an individual is indoctrinated into society. Druckman reiterates earlier points on the idea of *Bildung* and states that through ‘normative involvement’ with various groups ‘individuals internalize the norms and role expectations of the nation’.<sup>50</sup> It is through these interactions that ‘the nation achieves personal relevance for individuals’ as ‘they become sentimentally attached to the homeland (affectively involved),’ which supports their endeavors and are ‘motivated to help their country (goal orientated) and gain a sense of identity and self-esteem through their national identification’.<sup>51</sup> He expresses Hegel’s idea of the universal class or society and through the interaction with an ever increasing public sphere, which encourages the gradual enlargement of an imagined community, an aspect which associational bodies support, we come to express loyalty to the universal class and the nation.

Figure 1 is a visual representation of this transition and demonstrates the various spheres that an individual becomes involved in as part of modern society. Civil society here includes participation in and interaction with various associational bodies. Druckman states that ‘the feelings expressed toward small groups or communities form the basis for those expressed towards the nation’.<sup>52</sup>

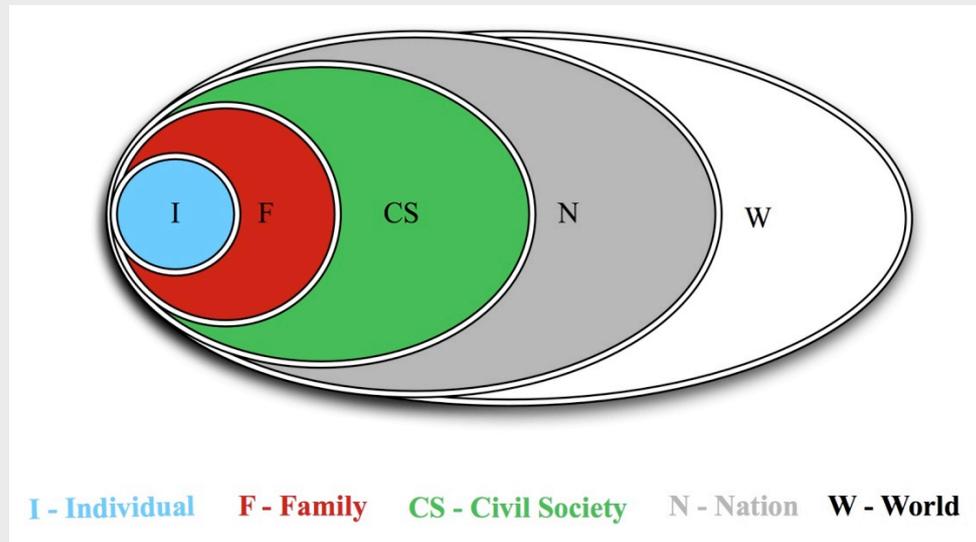
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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

Figure 1 - Visualisation of the various stages and domains which an individual interacts in. These spheres of interaction develop social and national/universal consciousness. Interactions between nations construct 'world-history and legitimise the political construct of the nation through recognition by other nations.



Druckman's discussion of nationalism and patriotism also reveals the complex relationship between the two terms and the difficulty in providing a definitive distinction between them. Studies which Druckman discusses are centered on American nationalism and patriotism in the 1980s and must be considered within the context of world history and the development of new forms of militant, right-wing nationalism of the mid-twentieth century. One interpretation which Druckman entertains is that nationalism involves 'feelings of national superiority and a need for national power and dominance' while patriotism 'focused on feelings about one's own country'.<sup>53</sup> Another interpretation is 'nationalism is merely a more complex form of patriotism,' as patriotism is described as a commitment or 'a readiness to sacrifice for the nation... while nationalism is commitment plus exclusion of others, a readiness to sacrifice bolstered by hostility towards others'.<sup>54</sup> Patriotism is also considered to be a less complicated relationship as it pertains to the individual and the nation, while nationalism considers the individual and the nation in terms of other nations and the difference between them. As noted previously, Hegel describes patriotism in similar terms, as 'a readiness for exceptional sacrifices and actions' and discusses the 'world-history' as the difference between and relationship with other nations, indeed he sees

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

this relationship as providing legitimate recognition for some nations. Burke also describes the relationship between nations, linked through amity in 'laws, customs, manners and habits of life'.

Druckman's study emphasises how an individual transfers group loyalty from the family to an ever increasing public domain and public space. As stated the feelings individuals express toward 'small groups or communities form the basis for those expressed towards the nation'. Clubs and societies represent, and are, these small groups or communities and provide a means to express group loyalty but are much more than just a means to express this. Associational culture provides the means by which individuals perceive themselves as belonging to a wider community, can interact and become instrumental in the social and political movements which clubs and societies support. They also provide sociable functions which indoctrinate the individual into society and provide him/her with a set of norms and conventions on which to model his/her behavior.

#### *The development of Irish nationalism, the penal laws and associational culture*

Burke, Hegel and Druckman demonstrate the means by which nations are imagined through constant interaction between individuals, family, civil society and the various associational institutes which mediate between the state and the nation. Group loyalty and attachment is generated through physical affiliation which associations support rather than an abstract notion of belonging to a political or social order. Yet, while nationalism is often a romanticised notion of belonging to a community of like-minded individuals and expresses or supports an identity which is rooted in sameness rather than difference, this sameness is often achieved or manifested through the identification of the Other in society. Nationalism and Othering are concepts which deal with ideas of identity and belonging, and can both be attributed with positive, as well as negative, consequences in the pursuit of identity rooted in group association. Theories on nationalism, and its growth, discuss the political, social and technological climate which makes manifest our modern conception of nationalism. Similarly, discourse on Othering explores religious, scientific and geographical revelations which construct different theories on the Other at different periods in modern European history, which are dependent on political and social climates. It can be said that, history informs us that

nature creates land and man creates nations. In its simplest guise, nations are geographical entities which become politicised through human interaction and association but also importantly disassociation. This notion of disassociation forms part of Othering theory and as previously discussed is a feature of associational culture as well as nationalism, as associational groups construct identity based on certain criteria of admission. Just as nations define a particular in-group, associations, which are representations of national interests, also define themselves through the construction of in-groups and out-groups, differentiating between us and them. This is often an implicit feature of associations, as membership is often limited in some way in order to protect the exclusivity, range or functionality of the group and in many ways protects the group dynamic. A sense of inclusion creates an awareness of belonging, both in terms of associations and within nation states, yet this inclusion is often coupled by exclusion.

Inclusion of some and exclusion of others in associational terms nurtures a sense that individual members are special and part of a group which they can relate to and resemble. This is also a feature of nationalism and as Burke states it is through resemblance that individuals within a nation relate to each other. The construct of the Other in society can manifest in a number of ways including through charity groups who construct classes of people who are deserving and undeserving of help. Divisions in Irish society along sectarian lines demonstrate this idea of Othering as a latent yet significant feature of Irish society in the eighteenth-century. Demarcation along religious lines not only categorised the majority of the Irish population as different in terms of religion but the political order used this marker of identity to emphasise and heighten this difference by creating economic and social obstructions in the form of the penal laws. We will use the penal laws to demonstrate how this pronounced act of Othering or exclusion from the civil norms of Irish society helped create and motivate associational movements which generated a new form national identity. The development of Irish nationalism is demonstrated through the United Irishmen of the 1790s, led by liberal Protestants and the Catholic Association in the 1820s, led by Catholics, with Daniel O'Connell as figure head. These political and reform groups campaigned against the penal laws which restricted social freedoms. They endeavoured to extend universal laws, and in turn public sphere, to include Catholics and Dissenters as part of an extended community of 'fellow citizens'. Through these associational movements Irish nationalism conceptualises the idea of a new Irish nation and as such

demonstrates Ernest Gellner's theory that 'nationalism invents nations, rather than the other way round'.<sup>55</sup> Both associations exemplify the utility of associational culture as a means to develop social networks which are exploited to advance political and social movements of national importance.

As noted, nations do not produce nationalism. Countries are innate objects, which of themselves do not emanate nationalist fervor. As demonstrated through Burke, Hegel and Druckman, land is only ascribed emotional ties and links through human settlement and it is this which generates nationalist identity rooted in territory. These ties, links and interactions are conducive to and important in the transition from small family groups to the perception of belonging to a universal society, at the heart of which universal laws and rights are achieved and protected. However, nationalism or the concept of nation are not always land-locked as borders and territorial lines can change through political and social upheaval. The idea of the nation consists of ambiguous claims to land through social and political constructs. Land itself is the literal home ground of populations who through territorial space, language, culture, politics and history construct identity to legitimise citizenship of states or nations. Yet even this notion is not without its obvious flaws or anomalies - colonial nationalism being an obvious one. Colonialism demonstrates how arbitrary national claims to land can be. Far from being a natural affinity to land, which in itself may be a spurious or manufactured claim, colonialism uses notions of superiority to subjugate and rule. It transfers the political and social ideals of the mother land to the subjugated one, creating and manifesting contradictory forms of nationalism, not only rooted in land but dangerously, race, status and religion. This is one of the anomalies which create contested forms of Irish identity and nationalism and creates a patriotism generated from the imperial context.

As noted in 'Oratory, composition and history, the Hist's *raison d'être*', historically Ireland developed and nurtured a number of identity groups including Gaelic, Irish Catholic, Old English, New English, Irish Protestant, the Protestant ascendancy and the Anglo-Irish. Yet, while this list may highlight the various identity groups it does not indicate the complexities inherent in such a categorisation, especially since many of these identity groups overlapped, referenced each other or existed just as

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<sup>55</sup> Brendan O'Leary, 'On the nature of nationalism, an appraisal of Ernest Gellner's writings on nationalism' in *British Journal of Political Science*, xxvii (1997), p. 206.

a political entity or identity. As we have seen from our overview of associational culture in Dublin, many clubs and societies tried to avoid reference to a specific nationalist identity or more precisely the religious politics of the day. Clubs such as the Freemasons, the Hist, the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick, the Beef Stake Club among others regulated discussions or reference to religion or politics. However, as we know these rules were often ignored or broken. Even where there existed cooperation between various identity groups, exemplified by dinners consisting of members of the Catholic Committee, the Aldermen of Skinners Alley, the Whig Club and the United Irishmen, the precarious nature of this cooperation and cross referencing inevitably faltered as events of the 1790s and the Act of Union affected associations in a number of different ways – the Catholic Committee and the United Irishmen disbanded, the Whig Club degenerated into a drinking club while the Aldermen of Skinners Alley became an ultra-Protestant drinking club. This example demonstrates not only the fraught ideologies and identities which these societies professed but also the precarious and unpredictable nature of associations – perhaps even life-cycles linked to decay and progress.

Burke also demonstrates the difficulty with constructing a specifically Irish identity, both as a political or social entity within the imperial context. Of Burke's writing on the American colonies, O'Brien states that Burke is often misinterpreted as turning his back on his native country, to fawn on its oppressors. But it is a complete misreading. The 'Ireland' on which Burke...turns his back on is not his 'native country' but the Ireland of its oppressors: the exclusively Protestant Nation...[and] the England whose interests he prefers to those of the Protestant Irish Nation, is the enlightened England, whose best representatives were the Rockingham Whigs.<sup>56</sup>

Burke attaches himself to the Whig tradition in England as representative of his own enlightened, liberal views and while his loyalties are defined within the English or imperial context, these loyalties are referenced in terms of an attachment and loyalty to Ireland, for which he wrote numerous tracts in support of the reform of the penal laws. Burke demonstrates that Ireland not only constructed an identity of itself from within but also in terms of and through the imperial context. The various politically, socially and indeed religiously constructed ideas of national identity in Ireland leads us to Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's question, and publication of the same name,

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<sup>56</sup> O'Brien, *The great melody*, p. 195.

*Who sings the nation-state?* (2007),<sup>57</sup> which literally asks who is a nation composed of and who does a nation represent. An answer in the Irish context may not be easily supplied given the multitude of identities derived and maintained through the political and religious system in place and of course given the history of English conquest. While Butler and Spivak's publication deals with nationalism and the nation state in its modern conception, it provides important theory on the conditions within which citizens perceive themselves as belonging to or excluded from a nation state. This will be considered shortly.

In its physical or literal formation nationalism is linked to land or territory but this is far from the only element which makes manifest nationalist feeling. As we have seen politics, legislation, religion and the idea of a national culture or indeed national inheritance all contribute to the development of nationalist identity. Yet, in Ireland these features, ideals and ideologies develop within the imperial context and it is this often precarious relationship between Ireland and its place within the imperial world which provides the motivation and inspiration for many clubs and associations as they deal with the political as well as social fall out of this uneven relationship.

The manifestation of imperial rule in the seventeenth-century was the implementation of a series of legislations which culminated in the penal laws and which subjugated the majority of the Irish population. As mentioned previously a nation or state is politically defined and Butler and Spivak reiterate this when they observe that 'the state signifies the legal and institutional structures that delimit a certain territory'.<sup>58</sup> It is within these legal and institutional structures which citizens find legal protection. This observation is central to Hegel's theory of civil society and the complex networks which secure for individuals protection through universal laws and abstract rights and freedoms. While the individual has an obligation to abide by these laws it is true that the state must also comply to and preserve these abstract rights within these legal boundaries but also through the social contract established and constructed through the constant interaction between the family, civil society and the state. Butler and Spivak ask what happens when these laws and rights, constructed and maintained to protect individual citizens, becomes part of the judicial boundary which excludes a particular

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<sup>57</sup> Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Who sings the nation-state?* (London, 2007).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

set or group of citizens, in our case the penal laws which legally ostracized the Catholic population. Butler and Spivak point out that,

the state is supposed to service the matrix for the obligations and prerogatives of citizenship. It is that which forms the conditions under which we are juridically bound...but since the state can be precisely what expels and suspends modes of legal protection and obligation...it can signify the source of non-belonging, even produce that non-belonging as a quasi-permanent state.<sup>59</sup>

As we have already seen, the use of legal sanctions in this way effectively creates the antithesis of Hegel's universal rights and laws - "un-universal" laws. It is this 'quasi-permanent state' of non-belonging which associations such as the Catholic Committee and the United Irishmen sought to reform and remove, while the Orange Order and other ultra-Protestants groups sought to preserve the universal laws or abstract rights which secured and protected the Protestant interests of these ultra-Protestant societies. Indeed associational groups provided a sphere by which Catholics and Protestants could regroup under circumstances which removed this state of non-belonging, providing, as we have already indicated, an inclusive public sphere.

This state of non-belonging, created by legal subjection, was in fact rectifiable. To reinstate an individual of Catholic persuasion to the state's boundary of legal protection and obligation, Irish Catholics could convert to the Established Church. Yet, this option seems to have held little appeal for Irish Catholics and as Comerford observes, 'conversion efforts were but fitful, and it would appear that the Catholic proportion of the population was never much lower than seventy-five per cent'.<sup>60</sup> Yet, while a number of Irish Catholics converted, many only did so in order to retain their lands and included in this list of converts was Edmund Burke's father, Richard Burke, who was able to become a lawyer because he converted.<sup>61</sup>

While these efforts to create a nation of sameness through religion enforced through law may have ultimately failed, perhaps because it overlooked religion as a feature of social indoctrination and an aspect of tradition, the penal laws effectively created a tiered legal system in Ireland. Through law Irish Catholics were defined and labeled as a group possessing negative traits and as a class separate to Protestants, who

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp 3-4.

<sup>60</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 100.

<sup>61</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 30.

held the ‘minority privilege’ as described by David Fitzpatrick.<sup>62</sup> In his journals Theobald Wolfe Tone describes these laws as a

code, framed with the heart and the malice of demons, to plunder, and degrade, and brutalize the Catholics. Suffice it to say, that there was no injustice, no disgrace, no disqualification, moral, political or religious, civil or military, that was not heaped upon them.<sup>63</sup>

This description reflects Wolfe Tone’s position as a revolutionary figure who sought to address the discriminate nature of the penal laws. His references to ‘no injustice, no disgrace, no disqualification’ highlight the various injunctions placed on Catholics and Dissenters, which prohibited them from, officially, participating in the Irish public sphere as equal citizens to Protestants. Landownership figures of the early eighteenth-century demonstrate the effectiveness of these laws and highlight Fitzpatrick’s description of the minority privilege, as Comerford reports, by 1703 ‘only fourteen per cent of Irish land is estimated to have remained in Catholic ownership’.<sup>64</sup> Tone also demonstrates this point when he states that, ‘the Protestants, though not a above a tenth of the population, were in possession of the whole of the government, and of five-sixths of the landed property of the nation’.<sup>65</sup> These laws, which were in operation during the seventeenth and eighteenth-century, however, provided the stimulus for the creation of many organization and societies such as the Catholic Committee, the United Irishmen, the Catholic Board and the Catholic Association who sought to reform this two tiered society which these laws created. As we have seen the laws were advantageous to the Protestants in their conception but they also helped Irish Catholics form and solidify an identity.

Thomas McLoughlin’s publication *Contesting Ireland, Irish voices against England in the eighteenth-century* (1999), which we have cited on a number of occasions, provides important insight into the development of a specifically Irish Catholic identity as a byproduct of the penal laws. Of these laws McLoughlin states that they ‘helped fashion an identity for Catholics’.<sup>66</sup> The penal laws helped consolidate an identity between the various factions of Catholic Irish society including, as McLoughlin

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<sup>62</sup> Fitzpatrick, ‘Religion and the Orange Order’.

<sup>63</sup> Tone, *The life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 55.

<sup>64</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 101.

<sup>65</sup> Tone, *The life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 53.

<sup>66</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 29.

lists, ‘the Catholic nobility, the dispossessed landowners, graziers, tradesmen, beggars, tenant farmers, agents for absentee landlords, Gaelic speakers [and] English speakers’ who through these laws ‘now constituted a complex amalgam of people’.<sup>67</sup> This list represents the wide range of identities and interests which many clubs and societies sought to represent.

This construction or portrayal of Irish Catholics in a negative light and the laws which defined them as existing outside of normal civil society arena, or as part of this non-belonging legal state, provided Catholics with a platform from which to begin a resistance against the laws which held them in political and social disadvantage. McLoughlin asserts that ironically these laws ‘helped generate that sense of a recognizable undifferentiated entity among Catholics which became a starting point for...resistance’ against imperial rule.<sup>68</sup> The penal laws provided a common point of concern for the diverse range of Catholics within Ireland, including the traditionally Catholic Old English population in Dublin. In effect the penal laws juxtaposed Protestants against Catholics as distinct parts of the same nation and even though these laws defined the Catholics as the subordinate Other in Irish society they also provided a reason for Catholics to coalesce and form an identity rooted in this Otherness, defined by historical roots and national inheritance.

Evidence suggests some of these laws were often overlooked and ignored, yet they still had the psychological as well as social effect of isolating and categorising the Other in Irish society, even though this Other was the majority of the population and we can refer again here to the idea of a ‘minority privilege’. Catholic reaction to the penal laws demonstrates how negative legislation creates positive identity and group formation through litigation. Associative groups such as the Catholic Committee develop and articulate the Catholic voice through protest against these laws and helps formalise identity through this formal protest, which was carried out through diplomatic means Catholic protest is presented in parliament as petitions presented by legal counsels.

While the penal laws initially helped fashion an identity and enabled individuals to visualise themselves as part of an imagined community of people, linked through religion and legal sanctions, Catholic protest of the eighteenth-century did not and could

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

not represent all Irish Catholics or create one discerning voice, despite endeavors to do so. McLoughlin refers to this ‘enforced sense of community’,<sup>69</sup> which the penal laws created, but which oversimplified the myriad of interests and concerns within the Catholic community. Irish Catholics came from very different economic and social backgrounds and while the penal laws created a group, Irish Catholics, who were distinct from Irish Protestants, other markers of identity, including wealth, region, occupation, etc., inevitably diversified the needs and wants of this enforced community: a factor which contributed to the failure of the 1798 Rebellion since the United Irishmen’s rhetoric and propaganda relied upon this ideal of an Irish nation composed of one people.

In a recent publication *New perspectives on the penal laws* (2011), Tadhg O’Sullivan’s contribution, ‘Between toleration and preservation: the popery laws and Irish Anglicanism, 1782-1808’, considers a number of eighteenth-century pamphlets published which discuss justifications for and against the penal laws and their repeal. O’Sullivan contrasts one publication in 1783 which ‘welcomed the increasing attachment of Catholics to the state’, stating that the exclusion of Catholics only resulted in increased danger to civil order as,

the danger of the Papist is perhaps more produced in from the penal laws against them, than by their religion. These detach them from the rest of community, give them a separate interest and make them enemies.<sup>70</sup>

While this statement is for the repeal of the penal laws and seeks to include Catholics in the universal community or the national one, other articles which O’Sullivan considers demonstrate the anxieties which other parts of Irish community held in relation to the penal laws. Although writing in support of repeal, one anonymous pamphlet from 1782, which discusses *The dangers of Popery*, declares that ‘toleration can never go too far, as long as its object creates no danger to the state’.<sup>71</sup> O’Sullivan also discusses the important post-Union period and the failure of its passing to bring about full Catholic emancipation as had been promised if the act was passed. The question of Catholic emancipation then became, as O’Sullivan describes it, finally a British one.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>70</sup> Tadhg O’Sullivan, ‘Between toleration and preservation: the popery laws and Irish Anglicanism, 1782-1808’ in John Bergin, Eoin Magennis, Lesa Ni Mhunchaile and Patrick Walsh (eds) *New perspectives on the penal laws* (Dublin, 2011), p. 250.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 268.

Importantly for our studies on the Hist, O’Sullivan discusses the 1808 publication *A sketch of the present state of Ireland, past and present* (1808) by John Wilson Croker, whose Hist 1801 speech we discussed in the previous chapter. O’Sullivan describes Croker’s publication as a ‘rare instance of high Tory support of Catholic Emancipation’.<sup>73</sup>

The penal laws are an essential feature in the creation of Irish nationalism, as they helped generate associational protest, and many reform groups and societies used these repressive measures as a focus for associational activity. The reform of the penal laws provided a motive for groups like the Catholic Committee, the United Irishmen and the Whig Club to come together and associate on terms of equal interest, cooperating for Catholic emancipation and legislative freedom. In relation to the political reform during mid-eighteenth century McLoughlin maintains cooperation between Catholics and Protestants was based, not on feelings of equality for Catholics per se but a sense that Irish Protestants could not be seen to hold overtly contradictory positions on ideas of liberty – calling for Ireland’s liberty within the English parliamentary or legislative framework, while the majority of the population were held in legal subordination; the contradictory notion of ‘liberty and slavery within the same country’.<sup>74</sup>

While this may be true of the mid-eighteenth century or indeed pre-French Revolutionary Ireland, liberal Protestants such as Tone and Emmet, who were involved with a number of different associational bodies, were motivated to reform the penal laws and parliamentary legislation through reference with French Revolutionary ideals and not because of a perceived hypocrisy of their ideology on liberty. French ideals promoted *liberté, égalité* and were disseminated through associational connections and were a genuine concern and disagreement with the penal laws and their implications on equality or *égalité*. Tone states the most important consequence of the French Revolution was the advancement of ‘the luminary of truth and freedom’ from France which spread ‘rapidly to its meridian splendor, the public mind in Ireland,’ which was ‘proportionably illuminated’.<sup>75</sup> Tone continues and reiterates the importance and repercussions which the French Revolution had on Ireland and its citizens.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>74</sup> McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 155.

<sup>75</sup> Tone, *The life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 55.

The French Revolution had awakened all parties in the nation from the stupor in which they lay plunged...the citizens of Belfast were the first to raise their heads from the abyss, and to look the situation of their country steadily in the face. They saw at a glance their true object, and the only means to obtain it; consciousness that the force of the existing government was such as to require the united efforts of the whole Irish people to subvert it, and long convinced in their own minds that to be free it was necessary to be just, they cast their eyes once more on the long neglected Catholics...they determined to bring a new system, and to raise the structure of the liberty and independence of their country, on the broad bases of equal rights to all the people.<sup>76</sup>

This passage indicates the depth of feeling Tone had, not only for the positive effect which the French Revolution brought, but for the ideal of a united Irish nation, fighting or subverting the existing government and its oppressive laws. It is perhaps this type of rhetoric which earned Tone the title of Ireland's first nationalists.

Tone's description of the French Revolution awakening 'all parties in the nation' is certainly reflected in associational terms. As noted in our overview of associational Dublin, the French Revolution provided radical politics as well as important symbolic imagery, highlighted by the celebration of Bastille Day. An article in the *Freeman's Journal*, 8 Nov. 1792 indicates this influence, as it reports the formation of a new club in Dublin, established 'upon the principle of all that is bad in the French nation. The charter toast is, "May mankind trample upon Royalty". Every member must be a Marat, none else are judged worthy of admission'.<sup>77</sup> Another report in April 1793 describes French influence as 'the French disease' and confirms that 'we have still our Jacobin Club in Dublin, as well as they have in Paris. We still have our Robespierre, our Marats, and our [Petitions], in [embryo]; men equally prone to anarchy and rebellion'.<sup>78</sup> A 'report from the Committee of Secrecy', a parliamentary body formed to investigate unlawful clubs and societies, published in the *Freeman's Journal*, 23 May 1797, also indicates the depth of French influence on radical politics in Ireland, as well as the creation of a new Irish identity which sought total and utter reform and which was presented and promoted through associational bodies.<sup>79</sup> The report which endeavored to

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>77</sup> *F.J.*, 8 Nov. 1792, p. 4.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Apr. 1793., p. 3.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 May 1791, p. 2.

enquiry ‘back to the period of the commencement of the Societies styling themselves United Irishmen’ states -

It appears that soon after the French Revolution, certain individuals, encouraged by the example of the French, aimed at the overthrow, of the existing Laws and Constitution of this kingdom, and the establishment of a Republic unconnected with Great Britain; that they have been encouraged to proceed to this attempt by an expectation of aid from France and the cooperation of certain disaffected and seditious societies in Great Britain entertaining similar views.<sup>80</sup>

The views outlined in this report, ‘the establishment of a Republic unconnected with Great Britain’ and those expressed by Tone in his journals, also indicate the distinction which Taylor endorses between patriotism and nationalism and as such supports the idea that Tone was one of Ireland’s first nationalists. As these views indicate the nation which these societies sought to reform was not a given, it was not centered on a previous history which was connected to Great Britain, a feature Taylor describes in patriotism, but the Irish nation was reconceived of as a completely new political structure, a Republic. This new nation, or ‘a Republic unconnected with Great Britain’, which Tone and the United Irishmen described, is ideologically as well as conceptually different to the nation which Grattan, an Irish patriot, referenced in his 1782 speech. Grattan’s nation was conceptualised within the terms of an Irish Parliament existing within the legal and institutional confines of Great Britain, while Tone and the United Irishmen conceived of an Irish nation on completely different terms. Richard English in *Irish freedom, the history of nationalism in Ireland* (2006) provides important insight into the nation which Grattan addressed. English states, ‘Grattan had not sought to weaken the Anglo-Irish connection, but rather to establish constitutional equality with Britain for the Irish Protestant kingdom – under the Crown’.<sup>81</sup> Grattan spoke to a new Protestant nation in Ireland, his nation did not include Catholics who, after the 1782 Constitution, were still unrepresented in Parliament. Eighteenth-century patriotism is described by English as ‘Protestant proto-nationalism’ which involved ‘a definite national identity, together with a sense of Irishness defined in terms of place, clear boundaries, history and indeed an argument based on supposedly inherited historical

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Richard English, *Irish freedom, the history of nationalism in Ireland* (London, 2006), p. 83.

rights'.<sup>82</sup> Yet as English points out this 'proto-nationalism' only accounted for less than a tenth of the Irish population and directly linked and referenced Irish Protestant identity and interests.

Irish nationalism, as nationalism in general, must be seen as a concept which, like the construction of the Other within society, fluctuates and changes in accordance with certain social, political, legal and even economic conditions. Nationalism is subjective and as such must be considered in the environment in which it is socially and politically constructed. It is important to consider it within the context of the politics of the day and emerging forms of nationalism which grew in the nineteenth-century. Contrasting the idea of Grattan's patriotism or indeed English's 'Protestant Proto-nationalism' the nation which the United Irishmen conceived of and which Tone described as an independent nation, centered on 'the broad bases of equal rights to all the people' is ideologically different to Grattan's nation and reflects Hegelian thoughts on the transmission of universal rights and freedoms to participants in a particular state or society. English also describes the United Irishmen's politics as promoting 'a self-conscious national community' which was 'clearly bound to territory and the people and although we see the United Irishman promoting politics of inclusion they did so with 'fierce exclusivism...in anglophobic relation to England'.<sup>83</sup> This exclusivism and anglophobia is certainly a feature of later Irish nationalism. However, the divisive nature of religion, even in a symbolic sense, prompted the United Irishmen to avoid any allusions or reference to it. As Comerford asserts, the United Irishmen envisaged and 'represented the reinvention of Irish nationality on the basis of the abandonment of confessional divisions'.<sup>84</sup>

The repeal of the penal laws was the first step to achieve 'equal rights to all the people' and while the 1798 Rebellion failed to achieve this or the realisation of a Republic it did intensify popular politics and bring to the fore new national politics and a reinvigoration of nationalist ideology within Daniel O'Connell's Catholic Association and later Young Ireland. The United Irishmen movement and the 1798 Rebellion provided a reference point for nationalists groups in the future. While the United Irishmen themselves made no 'reference to particular origins',<sup>85</sup> they provided future

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>83</sup> English, *Irish freedom*, p. 110.

<sup>84</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 106.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

nationalist a historical point of reference, indeed a sort of national inheritance which Burke describes. English states that in 1843 the *Nation*, the newspaper of Young Ireland, published a poem by John Kells Ingram. At the time of publication Ingram was an active member of the Historical Society of Trinity College but later became ‘Professor of Oratory to the University’.<sup>86</sup> Whether this poem was composed initially for the Society is unclear but Budd and Hinds refer to an illustration in their publication, indicating that ‘the dormer window at the end of the Rotten Row at the extreme left of the picture is the window of the bedroom in which John Kells Ingram composed one night, “The memory of the dead”,<sup>87</sup>: this at least confirms he was a student at Trinity when he wrote the poem. The publication of this poem illustrates Young Ireland’s cultivation of national heroes and a nationalist historical reference to the past. It also highlights the important role which the Hist played in cultivating skills in writing and composition in terms of the creation of nationalist heritage and cultural nationalism. The last two stanza’s of this poem reads as follows;

They rose in dark and evil days, to right their native land;  
They kindled here a living blaze, that nothing shall withstand.  
Alas, that might can vanquish Right – They fell, and passed away;  
But true men, like you, men, are plenty here to-day.

Then here’s their memory – may it be, for us a guiding light,  
To cheer our strife for liberty, and teach us to unite!  
Through good and ill, be Ireland’s still, Though sad as theirs your fate;  
And true men, be you, men, Like those of Ninety-Eight.<sup>88</sup>

Ingram’s poem illustrates the important historical consequences of the United Irishmen in terms of providing a national inheritance and a conceptual notion of adhering to the ‘principles of our forefathers’,<sup>89</sup> as described and advocated by Burke. Ingram alludes to the idea of sacrifice for one’s country and by using the memory and imagery of 1798 he ties the present with the past. This historicism, expressed and used by Young Ireland in the 1840s, is also discussed by Dwan. He begins his consideration of Irish nationalism

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<sup>86</sup> Budd & Hinds, *The Hist*, p. 73.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>88</sup> W.B. Yeats, *A book of Irish verse, selected by modern writers* (London, 1901), p. 150, available from [www.forgottenbooks.org](http://www.forgottenbooks.org) (6 Aug. 2011).

<sup>89</sup> Burke, *Reflections*, p. 49.

with Young Ireland in the 1840s and explains that he does so because they are the ‘point of origin for a specific form of “cultural nationalism” in Ireland’.<sup>90</sup> Yet while he argues that the United Irishmen of the 1790s also expressed a form of ‘cultural nationalism’, he states the major ideological difference between the two was a ‘self-conscious “historicism”’, or sense of history, which Young Ireland professed but which the United Irishmen denied.<sup>91</sup> Earlier discussions on the Hist and their use of history highlight this point.

While Young Ireland of the 1840s used the United Irishmen as a tool to generate national sentiment and attachment, the immediate consequence of the Rebellion was the Act of Union, and while Union may have always been inevitable, the Rebellion and United Irishmen activity demonstrated to the English Parliament that a new approach on Irish politics was necessary. Just as the penal laws provided a reference point from which to begin agitation and to construct a new idea of Irish national identity, rooted in inclusion as the United Irishmen promoted, the Union, as Foster remarks, ‘was to set the rhetorical terms of nationalist politics over the next century’<sup>92</sup> and provided a new reference point for agitation for many associational bodies in the nineteenth-century.

Pre-Union reform politics was predominately led by liberal Protestants in powerful associational bodies such as the United Irishmen but Catholic associational bodies such as the Catholic Committee cannot be discounted for their role in the repeal acts and in the development of popular agitation, which was radicalised and revolutionised by the United Irishmen. In his journals Tone describes his admiration for the Catholic Committee and describes the ‘rapidly advancing...political spirit’ of the Catholics ‘as the revolution in France went prosperously forward’ which ‘added to their courage and their force’.<sup>93</sup> The Catholic Committee were instrumental in providing a specifically Catholic voice and point of agitation yet they also demonstrate the utility and benefit of associational culture as a means to generate and support the expansion of social networks which individuals can manipulate and exploit. Tone became Secretary of the Catholic Committee in 1792 and as we have demonstrated a cooperation and social networking among other groups such as the Whig Club generated support and momentum for the United Irishmen’s cause and the cause of Irish nationalism. Indeed

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<sup>90</sup> Dwan, *The great community*, p. 14.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 289.

<sup>93</sup> Tone, *The life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, p. 60.

Francis Higgins described the Catholic Committee as ‘active in pursuing republican principles’ through their correspondence with the United Irishmen.<sup>94</sup>

The Historical Society of Trinity also demonstrates the social network or system which associational culture supported and how this affected political and social movements and the development of Irish nationalism in the late eighteenth-century. As we have discussed, Tone met many future supporters, leaders and members of the United Irishmen during his time at the Hist and long after his closing speech in 1789 the Hist provided a network from which to draw support for the United Irishmen cause. Indeed the structures and organisation of Freemason lodges provided the United Irishmen with an alternative means to meet and recruit after their suppression in 1793. Yet, even though some Freemason lodges were infiltrated, a letter from Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 19 Nov. 1796 states that ‘several Freemason lodges in different counties have recently come forward and publicly avowed their loyalty and their marked disapprobation of the United Irishmen’, which highlights variations in Freemason’s support of the United Irishmen.<sup>95</sup> The United Irishmen also used pseudonyms and new societies to operate within, which included associations such as the Strugglers Club and the Committee.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore the United Irishmen were linked to the Pill Lane Society or the Friendly Club of Pill Lane who, as Higgins recounts in his letter cited above, resolved along with their ‘republican associators (all United Irishmen of Dublin)’ to bring forward on the next meeting of the Grand Lodge ‘a resolution to forbid every Masonic lodge throughout the kingdom from publishing declarations of, or concerning any kind of party politics under penalty of having their warrant superseded’.<sup>97</sup> Higgins states that if these resolutions are passed ‘it will prevent a great and numerous body of men from showing their loyalty and their detestation of incendiaries’.<sup>98</sup> This letter demonstrates that the Friendly Club of Pill Lane and the United Irishmen were at some level involved with the Freemason, yet highlights an inconsistency in levels of support for the United Irishmen. It also demonstrates that despite clear regulations on the discussion of religion and politics at lodge meetings, there was an obvious element of politicisation and expressions of group loyalty.

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<sup>94</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 109.

<sup>95</sup> Barlett, *Revolutionary Dublin, 1795-1801*, p. 116.

<sup>96</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, p. 109.

<sup>97</sup> Barlett, *Revolutionary Dublin, 1795-1801*, pp 116-7.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

The 1798 Rebellion was also supported by other associative groups, such as the Defenders, who provided a military wing for the United Irishmen and this demonstrates the advantages of associational culture and its power to build and support social networks. Conversely, government forces were also supplemented and supported by associational groups, namely the Yeomanry Corp and the Orange Order. The major fall out of the 1798 Rebellion was intensified division in Ireland along sectarian lines and between North and South. Post-Union Ireland inherited these divisions, which still have serious ramifications today. English asserts the national inheritance of post-Union Ireland as ‘popular republicanism, separatism, loyalism, Orangeism’<sup>99</sup> and a new wave of nationalism. All these identities played out in the form of associational bodies and while the Orange Order was founded in 1795, the early nineteenth-century saw the growth of Orangeism and Orange related clubs and societies, which will be discussed shortly in conjunction with the growth of liberal clubs in the late 1820s which supported O’Connell.

While the Orange Order thrived in the early nineteenth-century, the United Irishmen were no more despite Robert Emmet’s efforts to regroup in 1803. As English points out ‘the failure of Emmet’s rebellion showed the end of any serious danger from United Irish-style insurrectionism to British rule in Ireland’.<sup>100</sup> English also refers to Emmet’s close friendship with Thomas Moore. As we know this friendship was established during their time at Hist and while Moore wrote about Emmet in later life, Moore’s also contributed to the development of cultural nationalism through songs and poems which he wrote. Songs like, ‘Dear harp of my country’, became part of Irish ‘nationalist consciousness and tradition’.<sup>101</sup> This growth of cultural nationalism is an important aspect in the development of Irish nationalism during the nineteenth-century but the early nineteenth-century also demonstrates the growth in associations which support, as Leerseen describes it, a cultural shift in Irish society which included reference to Gaelic Ireland and Gaelic history. As noted in the previous chapter the Gaelic Society or the Ibero Celtic Society, formed in 1806, published transactions in 1808 which state the society was established for the purpose of ‘the investigation and revival of ancient Irish literature’, a practice which the Royal Irish Academy began in

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>100</sup> English, *Irish freedom*, p. 123.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

the 1780s.<sup>102</sup> A newspaper article in 1819 in the *Freeman's Journal* reports on the Gaelic Society's general meeting and states – 'the objects of the Society must be highly interesting, not only to the natives of this country, but to the lovers of literature in every other. They embrace everything connected with the history, poetry, music, laws, manners and customs of ancient Ireland'.<sup>103</sup>

Cultural nationalism developed in the early nineteenth-century but post-Union politics was dominated by the repeal of the last remaining penal laws, or Catholic Emancipation, and by repeal of the Act of Union. The Act of Union became the focus point of Irish nationalism and agitation and provided Irish nationalist a political agenda to build upon, shaping modern Irish politics and history. Just as the penal laws provided a reference point for associational agitation, the Union provided the political agenda for the nineteenth-century. Popular politics and agitation during this period is dominated by Daniel O'Connell and the associational bodies which he led, namely the Catholic Board, Catholic Association and the Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland and represented a new found confidence and political spirit within Irish Catholics supported by liberal Protestants. Rather than supporting or creating a 'forced sense of community' which the penal laws produced, O'Connell provided a figure head which Irish Catholics could relate and connect to. Centered on O'Connell's campaign of repeal he created an imagined community through associational ties and the use of print capitalism. English describes O'Connell's campaign as a nationalist movement which 'reflected deep communal (especially Catholic) bonds, and which was systematically organized in struggles of power, for greater autonomy, and for refashioning of the state'.<sup>104</sup> Protestants were still very much part of the agitation in the period after Union. Indeed Thomas Davis, part of the Young Ireland movement in the 1840s and a member of the Hist during the 1830s, which explicitly called themselves nationalist, was Protestant, as were many other Young Ireland leaders and members.

Just as the United Irishmen utilised associational structures to support and buttress their campaign and to promote their republican ideology, Daniel O'Connell, as previously noted, used a similar strategy to promote Catholic Emancipation and campaign for repeal of the Act of Union. O'Connell's Catholic Association, formed in

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<sup>102</sup> *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, p. 12.

<sup>103</sup> *F.J.*, 8 Jan. 1819, p. 4.

<sup>104</sup> English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 140.

1823, was the beginning of a mass mobilization movement which was centered on social and political reform but did not advocate violence. Comerford states that the scale of O’Connell’s movement ‘scarcely had any European equivalent’,<sup>105</sup> and indicates that while O’Connell promoted Catholic nationalism, his ‘liberal view of political society’ meant there was ‘a place for a minority’.<sup>106</sup> O’Connell’s Catholic Association and the following he accumulated was only possible because of the use of associational ties and through harvesting the power of men acting in bodies. The Catholic Association relied upon membership subscription. This was initially one guinea a year but in 1824 O’Connell introduced a new subscription fee of one penny a month, O’Connell created ‘a new category – that of associate member’.<sup>107</sup> This penny a month subscription, called the Catholic Rent, increased the Associations membership and created the first mass movement in Irish history. The penny a month subscription opened the Association to the lower class and created an associational movement which, through associational ties imagined through this subscription, galvanized members from disparate classes and regions. This sense of belonging to a mass associational movement intensified calls for Catholic emancipation and as English states, ‘the effective mass movement of communal nationalist struggle had arrived’.<sup>108</sup>

1827 and 1828 also saw the establishment of liberal clubs and independent clubs across Ireland. The establishment of a Dublin Independent Club was proposed in May 1827 and was supported by O’Connell. The purpose of this club was ‘to secure the independence of election in the county and city of Dublin – to afford free scope to freedom of election, and to give every elector the opportunity of expressing his individual opinions in the most unbiased manner’.<sup>109</sup> Similar associations were formed across Ireland including the Louth Independent Club, the Clare Independent Club and the Connaught Club. Liberal Clubs were also established across the country so ‘that the liberal and independent candidates may be returned’.<sup>110</sup> These Clubs, as the *Freeman’s Journal* points out, ‘would concentrate the feelings, give a direction to the energies and

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<sup>105</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 37.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>107</sup> English, *Irish Freedom*, p. 128.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>109</sup> *F.J.*, 26 May 1827, p. 3.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 Nov. 1827, p. 2.

embody the interests of the people in a tangible form'.<sup>111</sup> The article also states that forming these clubs 'will insure...Emancipation'.<sup>112</sup> A later article, in 1828, describes the expansion of these liberal clubs, which emerged in Louth, Waterford, Tipperary, Wexford, Galway, among many others and states, 'the institution of Liberal Clubs... now proceeds throughout Ireland with a spirit and a system'.<sup>113</sup>

At the same time that these liberal clubs, which supported O'Connell's movement, were growing, Brunswick Clubs were also established clubs across Ireland. Brunswick Clubs were anti-Catholic, ultra-Protestant loyalist clubs, who were against Catholic emancipation.<sup>114</sup> These developments in the late 1820s reflect increased sectarianism in Irish society since the Union and indicate the development of wholly incompatible national ideals and ideologies. Of this period Jacqueline Hill states, in 'Irish identities before and after the Act of Union' (2001), that the Union produced 'heightened religious tensions' instead of 'removing religion from politics, as the legislative Union was supposed to do'.<sup>115</sup> In this sense nationalism became increasingly sectarian in the nineteenth-century and associational groups such as the Orange Order, the Aldermen of Skinners Alley and the Brunswick Clubs who represented Protestant, Unionist interests in Ireland exist in contrast to the Irish Catholic interests which O'Connell's movement represented. Blackstock discusses the growth of Orangeism in the early nineteenth-century and it is reckoned that in 1809 the Orange Order enjoyed membership of over 150,000.<sup>116</sup> By 1828 it was claimed by 'Thomas Ellis, a defeated parliamentary candidate for Dublin' that their existed 'four-hundred thousand Orangemen; armed, organised, intelligent and brave...ready to start into the field at a moment's notice'.<sup>117</sup> The Apprentice Boys of Derry, who were loyalist in nature, also emerged in 1813 and while 'membership was limited to city freemen or those whose family claimed connection by residence' meetings held in Dublin indicate as Blackstock states that, 'the members were neither apprentices nor boys' and the association enjoyed proliferation outside of Derry.<sup>118</sup> These increases in loyalist, unionist activity, embodied

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 20 Aug. 1828, p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829*, p. 225.

<sup>115</sup> Jacqueline Hill, 'Irish identities before and after the Act of Union' in *Radharc*, ii (2000), p. 63.

<sup>116</sup> Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829*, p. 134.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 229.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., pp 154-5.

in the Orange Order and reflected in the rapid development of Brunswick clubs in 1828 are linked to Irish loyalist Protestant nationalism and what Blackstock describes as ‘cultural loyalism’ which is seen as the Irish nationalist counterpart.<sup>119</sup>

The innate difficulty with nationalism is the assumption that one group’s political or social claim over a nation state is more legitimate than that of another. In this sense how do we reconcile the political or social ideologies of groups which claim conflicting nationalist identities derived from the same nation state? Any notion or concept of Irish nationalism or identity derived from O’Connell’s Catholic movements are in stark contrast to those identities extracted from clubs and societies such as the Orange Order and the Brunswick Clubs which also enjoyed proliferation across Ireland. O’Connell’s campaign for Catholic Emancipation and then for the repeal of the Union sought to increase the previously marginalised position of Catholics in Irish society, yet as Hill indicates the Union secured for Irish Protestants their place in a United Kingdom where they were ‘part of an overwhelmingly Protestant population’.<sup>120</sup> Unionist associational activity represented Irish Protestant interests which the Union protected and repeal of which threatened.

The advantages of associational structures were utilised by Brunswick Clubs who used the idea of subscriptions to incorporate members and create a sense of belonging a specific community of like-minded individuals. As Blackstock reports 108 clubs were created in only 12 weeks, clubs were established in Clare, Ballymena, Cork, Dublin as well as Limerick and within Trinity College as previously discussed.<sup>121</sup> A letter published in the *Freeman’s Journal*, 8 September 1828, which is signed by Daniel O’Connell discusses the establishment of Brunswick Clubs across Ireland and states,

The formation of the “Brunswick Clubs” demands our particular attention. This new shape in which the fell and persecuting spirit of Orange narrow-minded bigotry exhibits itself must be looked to in order to prevent its doing the only serious mischief it can do – namely, exciting the people by irritation, oppression, and insult, to any reciprocal acts of crime or outrage...There is nothing which the “Brunswick Clubs” so much desire as to see the country in a flame – “Blood, much blood,” is their motto...But it is only Irish blood they would shed...The

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>120</sup> Hill, ‘Irish identities before and after the Act of Union’, p. 51.

<sup>121</sup> Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829*, p. 225.

people have already changed the name of Brunswick Clubs to...“Bloodhound Clubs” and wherever a “Bloodhound Club” shall be established we shall have to watch over the people with double vigilance.<sup>122</sup>

Signed by Daniel O’Connell the letter expresses not only disdain for Orangism and the Brunswick Clubs which represented Orange loyalism and the Orange Order but O’Connell’s worries of the violence which could counteract his work for Catholic Emancipation. O’Connell expresses this in the last paragraph of the letter when he states, ‘we must counteract its efforts and keep the people quiet, though united – tranquil, though combined – obedient to the laws, but energetic in their legal and constitutional efforts to obtain justice and liberty for Ireland’.<sup>123</sup> In this sense we can see the development of an exclusively Irish Catholic nation which O’Connell referenced as ‘the people’.

The establishment of Liberal Clubs alongside the establishment of Brunswick Clubs demonstrates the effective division of Irish society along sectarian and political lines. During the early nineteenth-century there was also intensified agrarian violence and agitation, which was represented by the Ribbonmen. Just as the Whiteboys provided a general name for agrarian violence in the eighteenth-century, Whiteboyism, Ribbonism became the general term used to denote agrarian movement in the nineteenth-century. The Defenders, who developed close ties with the United Irishmen in the 1790s and provided military strength during the Rebellion, are described by English as ‘a Catholic Irish secret society’ and ‘a politico-social movement,’ helped develop militant Irish nationalist politics, a feature of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Irish nationalism.<sup>124</sup> Indeed Blackstock reports that riots and fighting ‘occurred between Protestant Orangemen and Catholic Ribbonmen’ and represented the increasingly factional nature of Irish society in the nineteenth-century.<sup>125</sup>

Irish political and indeed social society prior to the Act of Union supported and encouraged collaboration between advanced Catholics and advanced Protestants. In many ways this collaboration was fashionable and reflected enlightened and liberal influence emanating from France. Subsequently, however, post-Union Ireland was marked by ever increasing sectarianism and the development of contested forms or

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<sup>122</sup> *F.J.*, 8 Sep. 1828, p. 3.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> English, *Irish Freedom*, pp 88-9.

<sup>125</sup> Blackstock, *Loyalism in Ireland, 1789-1829*, p. 155.

ideas of Irish nationalism and identity. This period marks an ideological shift from the Catholic Other to the Protestant Other, as Catholic interests and identity become synonymous with Irish nationalism. The 1798 Rebellion served to highlight these conflicting interests and created radically different forms of Irish identity resulting in politicised, religious based nationalism. The Act of Union was passed in return for Catholic Emancipation, and as such many Catholics supported the Union. However, this was not realised until 1829 as a result of O'Connell's agitation and not because of any pre-Union guarantees. The withdrawal of this campaign pledge after the Act of Union was passed, intensified religious divisions as the Union ignored Irish Catholic interests and buttressed Protestant ones. After the Union the Irish nation became identified with Irish Catholics while Protestants and other reformed religions are seen as embodying the outsider, the invader, the intruder, the newcomer. The newly emerging Brunswick Clubs in the 1828, who embodied ultra-Orangeism, were described as being concerned with 'their Protestant Constitution'.<sup>126</sup> This description indicates a cultural shift and change in the Other in Irish society.

The role of the Catholic Church in terms of associational activity is a useful avenue for further study. The radical politics of the 1790s created, as Comerford explains, 'politicised Irish Catholics' who went out 'out of their way to disavow any allegiance to the pope in civil matters'.<sup>127</sup> Catholic involvement with freemasonry in the eighteenth-century is an example of this. As stated in chapter 4, despite papal bulls in the mid-eighteenth century which condemned membership of freemason lodges, Catholics were actively involved in the various lodges throughout Dublin.<sup>128</sup> This may also reflect the liberal attitude of the Irish church to freemasonry, as Archbishop John Troy, appointed in 1786, 'sought a revocation [of]...excommunication of catholic freemasonry'.<sup>129</sup> Daniel O'Connell's membership of the freemason's provides important information on the nature of Catholic membership of the fraternity but also the Catholic Church's role.

In 1799 O'Connell joined 'Dublin lodge no. 189' in spite of these papal bulls but as Fagan points out 'for much of the time he was involved in freemasonry, O'Connell

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<sup>126</sup> *F.J.*, 9 Oct. 1828, p. 2.

<sup>127</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 106.

<sup>128</sup> Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant country*, pp 129-30.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

was passing through a phase when he was a catholic only in name'.<sup>130</sup> By 1837, however, O'Connell renounced his membership of the freemasons, claiming that he was a member before he was aware of the 'ecclesiastical censure...prohibiting the taking of masonic oaths'.<sup>131</sup> By this stage O'Connell was a staunch Catholic, exemplifying the shift in Irish society during early nineteenth-century which created a nation divided along sectarian lines and a growing confidence in Irish Catholicism. O'Connell's formal renunciation letter refers to Troy's role in the public denunciation of freemasonry and Fagan highlights the fact that in 1797, Troy released a pastoral letter which 'condemned the taking of all unnecessary oaths', aimed mainly at the United Irishmen and the Defenders, as well as freemasonry.<sup>132</sup>

The extent to which the Catholic Church discouraged or encouraged membership of other associations requires further research, but as stated above it condemned any association which required the taking of oaths. Yet, as Comerford states, the 'mobilisation of the Catholic populace' in the 1820-40s occurred in Ireland 'there was sufficient freedom of association and freedom of the press'.<sup>133</sup> This is in contrast to the European experience of restricted associational activity in the age of Metternich. Indeed, support for the largest of these Irish organisations, the Catholic Association, was, as Comerford explains, 'part of the response of the Catholic Church' to increased religious animosity and tension in Irish society.<sup>134</sup> The role of religion cannot be under estimated in terms of the development of Irish nationalism. As we have seen, confessional lines proved divisive in Irish society and resulted in the creation and development of Irish nationalism which distinguished between Catholics pertaining to Irishness and Protestant pertaining to Englishness. In terms of the period under review, it was not until the 1820s and 30s that the Catholic Church experienced a resurgence in influence and indeed confidence. This is exemplified through O'Connell's revised position on his faith. This thesis did not consider confraternities linked to local parishes, to do so would expand the thesis beyond the core associational categories discussed. However, Colm Lennon and Robin Kavanagh's digital humanities research project, *Irish Confraternities 1775-1965*, attests to the enormity this facet of associational

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>133</sup> Comerford, *Ireland*, p. 107.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

culture studies and provides important primary material on associations directly linked and influenced by the Catholic Church.<sup>135</sup>

Our discussion of the penal laws demonstrates how legislation can define and sculpt nationalism and while citizenship is based on strict rules and regulations, which often legislates exclusion rather than inclusion, legislation and laws do not, on their own, create or manifest nationalist identity. As we have discussed much of the agitation and evolution of Irish nationalism was centered on the work of associational bodies and their unique ability to represent and work on behalf of their real and imagined members. However, this agitation by associational movements represents both Catholic and Protestant interests and supported loyalists and unionist developments as well as Catholic ones. Associational structures were instrumental in agitation for the repeal of the penal laws as well as their preservation and supported conflicting ideologies and representation of Irish nationalism and identity.

If ‘nationalism invents nations’ then the work of associational bodies in the late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century demonstrate the associational movements which encouraged the development of new forms of Irish nationalism which centered on the creation of a new Irish nation. The United Irishmen’s movement, centered on the ideal of an inclusive Ireland which was born from the exclusionary terms of the penal laws and despite these claims of inclusion, were also seen to express exclusivism and Anglophobia. The United Irishmen used existing social networks which associational culture developed to promote and support their cause and while the United Irishmen failed to create a Republic their feats provided a new generation of Irish nationalists with a historical narrative which they could use as nationalist propaganda and demonstrated the existence of ‘forefathers’. Post-Union politics and associational culture was dominated by a new cultural, political and religious shift which foregrounds the Irish Catholic and sought to reverse this idea of a ‘minority privilege’ politically but also in terms of associational culture and the imagined community which new associations represented. O’Connell’s mass movement demonstrates the power of men acting in bodies and the formidable power of creating imagined communities on a national scale through associational structures. O’Connell’s movement rallied support in numbers never before seen and capitalised the use of regional and local bodies of

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<sup>135</sup> ‘Irish Confraternities and Parishes Website & Database, religion and social identity in Ireland: the role of parish confraternities and associations, 1775-1965’ available at [www.irishconfraternities.ie/](http://www.irishconfraternities.ie/) (28 April 2012).

support to create this national movement. Conversely, the Orange Order and Brunswick Clubs also utilised associational structures and exploited the power of men acting in bodies and represent the range of nationalist identities and interests which coexist in Irish society.

Previous discussions on associational culture describe these intermediary bodies, clubs and societies which operate between the family and the state, as micro communities of identity, based on certain preconditions to admission. An individual's interactions with these formal associations, which are outside the nuclear family, generate this sense of belonging to groups of like minded individuals within the public sphere. However, this attachment to the 'subdivision' or the love for 'the little we belong to in society,' as Burke describes, develops the idea of belonging to a real or imagined community, is supported by the functional aspect of associational culture, that clubs and societies are both expressive and instrumental. Associations support the abstract notion of belonging to an extended group of individuals, outside the family unit and while there are many reasons for their existence, as outlined in previous chapters, clubs and societies often form to achieve a common purpose or goal within a local, regional or national context. Yet, whether they are expressive or instrumental is unimportant as associations which provide either functionality contribute directly to the development of national consciousness. Clubs and societies which are expressive provide practical assistance in the construction of identity, while associations which are instrumental support social and political movements which directly impact on the social welfare of individuals and the collective. Yet, whether groups are subversive or loyal to a particular collective, within the universal class, is another thing. Associations which support social movements, whether for politics or civil rights, evoke the reciprocal nature of Hegel's system of wants through the attainment of social and civic needs as well as physical sustenance. As Hegel states it is only through the provision of political and civil rights to all members of society that these rights are secured for all. Associations articulate the identity of a particular group and represent the needs and want of its physical members but also imagined ones whom they represent in *absentia*.

Earlier discussions on Hegel's theory of civil society reveal that through interaction with various institutions and associations, an individual takes on various social roles and as a result develops social awareness, social consciousness and perceives himself as part of the universal group which elicits the individual's loyalty.

The various social roles which an individual assumes are linked to the various associational bodies which we have discussed. Clubs and societies support many different social and political endeavors and are linked to the interests and concerns of the members it represents. Many of these interests and concerns complement the state and promote and support civic virtue and civic activism. As such many clubs and societies are concerned with and support political and social concerns which are reflective of national ones. In this sense members become actively involved in national social and political reform and are part of collective action which supports both local and national communities and which share general resources among the universal or national community.

Dublin's associational culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century supported the means by which its citizens could formulate identity through interaction with intermediary bodies and helped express various forms of national identity. Political clubs and associations provided the means by which individuals could express and articulate political and social grievances, while charity or philanthropic clubs and societies provided the means by which individuals could make manifest their civic virtue and sense of social responsibility, born from the conceptual development of belonging to a universal society. Social and convivial clubs also provided citizens with a public space and forum in which to interact and socialize with fellow citizen and while many may have outwardly expressed only sociable functionality many inevitably utilised their associational structures to carry out philanthropic pursuits and mixed their conviviality with civic virtue through banquets and balls. Conversely many political clubs degenerated into mere drinking clubs, highlighted by the Whig Club as well as Tone's original political club, nicknamed the 'Oyster Club'. Yet, what our overview of Dublin's clubs and associations and indeed our case study on the Hist demonstrates is that associations are capable of supporting many social, political and civic activities which combined contribute to the development of civic minded, socially aware and political active citizens who perceive themselves as belonging to a nation which supports these activities.

The associational activities described above not only develop an attachment to the national institution or state which supports them but generates and develops loyalty to the imagined national community. It is in the sense that associational culture is instrumental in the development of national consciousness which focuses on the

interaction with these intermediary bodies. The last four chapters considered an overview of associational culture in Dublin, focused on the Historical Society of Trinity College as a case study and considered Irish nationalism not only as a byproduct of associational activity but as a direct result of it. Associational movements which support social change not only promote civic virtue and collective identity but reinforce ideas of civil society and collective action and contribute directly to the development of Irish nationalism and to the evolution of the Irish nation and Irish society.

## CHAPTER 8

### PRESENTING ASSOCIATIONAL DUBLIN - THE REPRESENTATION OF INFORMATION, CRADLE AND THE BUNDLE OBJECT.

Chapter 3 described the digital humanities approach taken to support the development and creation of the historical narrative presented in chapters 2, 4-7. As such the printed thesis presents research findings in a traditional format as printed, linear text. However, a thesis born from digital methodologies should consider alternative means to present historical findings given orientation within digital humanities or digital history. Traditional scholarship produce printed theses and articles at the end of a PhD cycle and while some universities now stipulate the inclusion of a digital version, this version often replicates the printed text and adds no value to the knowledge presented therein. This thesis uses a digital humanities approach to research and as such creates digital objects that not only inform research but can be reused to present it. As such aspects of the traditional narrative are supported and enhanced by the inclusion of an online version that explores the use of digital narrative as a medium to engage readers and users.

This chapter looks at how scholarship immersed in digital technology reinvigorate discussions on epistemology, as technology changes how we form, construct and present knowledge. The work of Vannevar Bush and Theodor Nelson, who both advocate openness in scholarship through technology, will be reviewed before moving on to consider the affects of hypertext on learning and knowledge acquisition, as outlined by Diana DeStafano and Jo-Anne LeFevre's 2007 article 'Cognitive load in hypertext reading: a review'. We will then look at the use of CRADLE and the Bundle object as a method to present research inputs (sources), as well as its results (scholarship). The recommendations outlined by DeStafano and LeFevre are used in conjunction with hypertext methods proposed by Nelson and Bush to implement the digital representation of new knowledge and scholarship within the Bundle object and rendered through CRADLE. We will first look at the idea of knowledge as linked to technological change and how these developments affect scholarly methodology, study and practices.

Digital communication and computer technology make manifest methodologies immersed in computer assisted research generation and presentation and legitimately occupy the philosophy on knowledge construction and formulation. The methodology discussed for this research is ‘more akin to scientific empirical research and Cartesian modes of scholarship than traditional ones’<sup>1</sup>, as Geoffrey Rockwell suggests in discussions on ‘text technology’.<sup>2</sup>

Knowledge, regardless of technological advances, remains an interpretative process which, as the factlet structure and factoids demonstrate, can be exposed and utilised as part of the scholarly process and presentation of research. In 1945 Vannevar Bush suggested that a mechanical device could help leave a trail of links and associations between various textual artifacts to demonstrate how an interpretation had been reached or formulated.<sup>3</sup> The Memex, as Bush called it,

was a hypothetical, mechanical instrument, devised to make the task of wading through the ever increasing amount of publications and scholarship in the 1940s easier and more manageable. Bush isolated the “inadequate means of storing, arranging and tagging information” as the major difficulties facing scholars. Some sixty years later, in the presence of modern computer technology, we are still faced with these difficulties and an ever increasing problem of information overload and data retrieval. Our means to store, arrange and tag information are adequate, and are constantly being revised and updated, but the presentation of scholarship, which often lacks transparency of interpretation, can benefit from leaving the trails of links and associations, as described by Bush.<sup>4</sup>

Another early proponent and supporter of the use of information technology in the creation and construction of knowledge, and highly influenced by Bush, is Theodor Nelson. Nelson coined the phrase ‘hypertext’ and ‘hypermedia’ in 1965, defining hypertext as ‘non-sequential writing – text that branches and allows choice to the reader,

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<sup>1</sup> Sharon Webb, “‘Reconfiguring narrative’ using digital tools’, Research Foundations for Understanding Books and Reading in the Digital Age Conference, 15 Dec. 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Rockwell, *Introduction: thinking through text technology* (2009), available at <http://hermeneuti.ca/rhetoric/correcting-method> (7 Dec. 2010)

<sup>3</sup> Webb, “Reconfiguring narrative”

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

best read as an interactive screen'.<sup>5</sup> He also spoke of the 'intertwining' of knowledge, that is the deep connections and entanglements in all human knowledge.<sup>6</sup> The hypertext structures of the Internet reflect this assertion and as Nelson contends, realises the non-sequential fashion of a text and of knowledge, which the structures of print have often denied.<sup>7</sup> Nelson speaks of the 'tissue of thought' and of the western tradition of 'continuing dialogue among people you have thought different things' and concludes that we need hypertext to represent 'knowledge' as a vast 'cross-tangle of ideas and evidential materials, not a pyramid of truth. So that preserving its structure, and improving its accessibility, is important to us all'.<sup>8</sup> Nelson's publication *Computer lib/Dream machine* (1974) is a liberal, philosophical, manifesto on the use of personal computers and information technology to promote knowledge creation and dissemination. He proposes the use of hypertext and what he terms 'thinkertoys', which he defines as 'a computer display system that helps you envision complex alternatives' to visualise the complexity of the interconnections in knowledge but most importantly supplies a 'system to help people think'.<sup>9</sup> 'Thinkertoys' and hypertext improve accessibility to knowledge but also expose how knowledge was constructed or created.

Scholarship is the production and dissemination of knowledge usually through the Cartesian tradition of research based on evidence and experiment. Nelson suggests that knowledge should be an open dialogue between the evidence and the new knowledge that is being presented, specifically through hypertext systems, where the user or reader is engaged with 'evidential materials' and the information or knowledge derived or created from this. Nelson categorises hypertext in a number of ways, the first type, 'discrete, or chunk style'<sup>10</sup> (figure 1) acknowledges that text or works are not isolated instances of knowledge but instead a complex web of information, concepts and dialogue between and derived from different sources and evidence. In essence figure 1 demonstrates the 'intertwining' of text. The second type, 'collateral hypertext' presents linked text or media beside calling text and allows synchronous viewing of a

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<sup>5</sup> Landow, *Hypertext 3.0*, pp 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Montfort, *The new media reader* (U.S.A., 2003), p. 329.

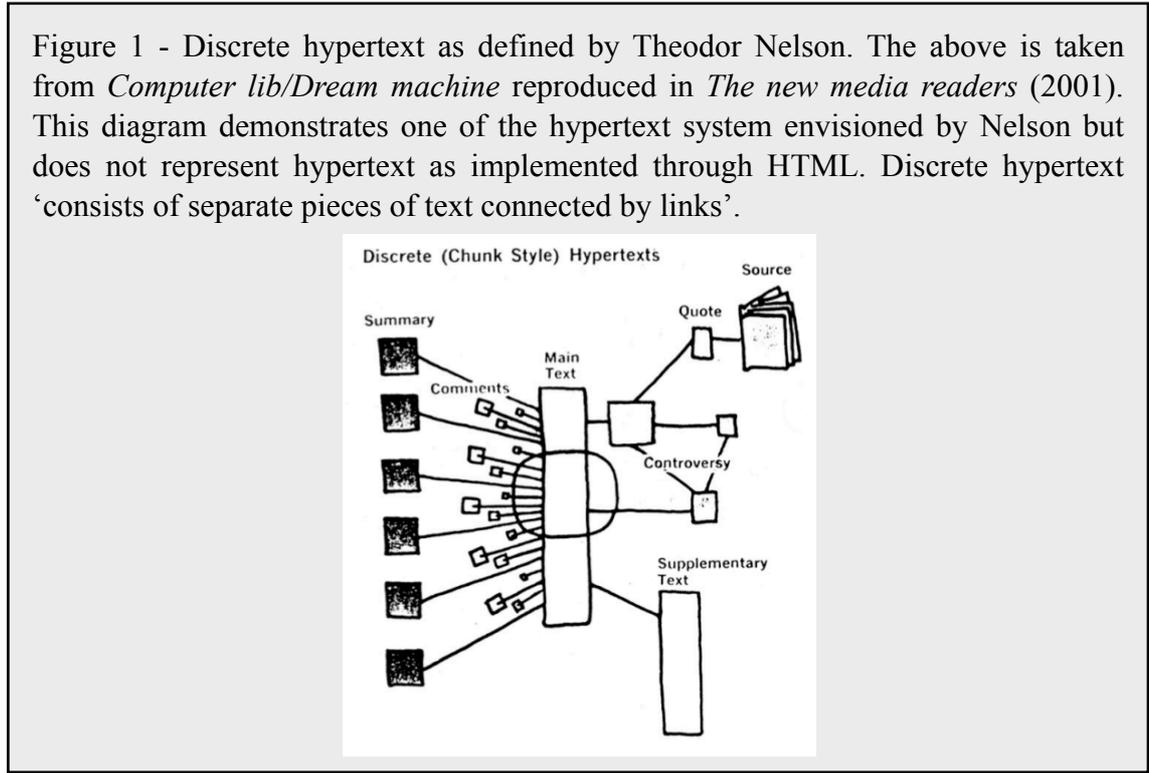
<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ted Nelson, 'Computer lib/Dream machines (1974)', in Randall Packer and Ken Jordan (eds), *Multimedia – from Wagner to virtual reality* (U.S.A., 2001), p. 157.

<sup>9</sup> Wardrip-Fruin & Montfort, *The new media reader*, p. 330.

<sup>10</sup> Wardrip-Fruin & Montfort, *The new media reader*, p. 314.

text and supporting documents.<sup>11</sup> ‘Stretchtext’ changes the structure of the text depending on where the user/reader clicks and adds information to content and as Nelson states ‘the stretchtext is stored as a text stream with extras, coded to pop in and pop out at the desired altitudes’.<sup>12</sup> Other categories include interaction with images, while the most ambitious, the ‘grand hypertext’ links everything available about a subject.<sup>13</sup>



Nelson’s ‘grand hypertext’ is realised through project Xanadu or Xanadu® Space™, the latest version of which was released in 2007.<sup>14</sup> Xanadu is Nelson’s original vision of ‘hypertext’, that is a system which allows ‘deep linkage’, rather than the one-way systems ‘that can’t overlap’, and supports ‘parallelism’ and ‘marginal notes’ to demonstrate the infinite links in text and show the ‘origins of content’.<sup>15</sup> This deeply connected space is Nelson’s realisation of Bush’s original idea of a system that leaves a trail between texts and artifacts. Perhaps in this sense, hypertext, as envisioned by Bush and implemented by Nelson in Xanadu, and hypertext, utilised by the web and

<sup>11</sup> Nelson, ‘Computer lib/Dream machines’, p. 160.  
<sup>12</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>13</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>14</sup> Xanadu Homepage, <http://xanarama.net/> (7 Feb. 2011)  
<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

implemented in HTML by Tim Berners Lee, are two different software paradigms – HTML is a utility, while Nelson’s hypertext, or that described by Bush, is a philosophical representation of knowledge which exposes its evaluations and interpretations.

Nelson describes history as ‘many parallel streams of events’<sup>16</sup> and recommends the use of parallelism, that of viewing interconnected documents simultaneously and exposing the primary and secondary sources used. It is this openness in scholarship, which Bush suggests, that the factlet and factoid structures seeks to provide.

Factlets address some of the issues surrounding transparency of interpretation and subjectivity. They enable the visual representation of the relationship between sources through factoids and in many respects factoids can present the ‘parallel streams of events’ which Nelson describes. Digital objects ranging from factlets, to primary source images and metadata, represent the first stage of research and are used in the creation of new knowledge, centered on a particular research question. These digital objects help break down the scholarly process and provide a pathway to generate content but can also strip back interpretational layers inherent in scholarship and present the trails of scholarship as suggested by Bush. Presenting these objects in parallel with historical narrative or linear text, engage user/readers in the ‘origins of content’ as advocated by Nelson and it is this attention to primary sources which the CRADLE environment supports; reflecting Elton’s assertions that control should lie with source evidence.

The ‘grand hypertext’ system which Nelson proposes and creates in Xanadu, visualises content as a vast network of infinitely linked content - text, images, videos and sound,<sup>17</sup> and while it exposes the user/reader to the mechanics of scholarship, evidence suggests that too much interactivity with text or online content can negate the perceived advantages of representing text in this hypertextual manner. DeStefano and LeFevre’s (2007) article is a review of different studies on hypertext reading and its affect on cognitive load. While their conclusions propose further study and research into

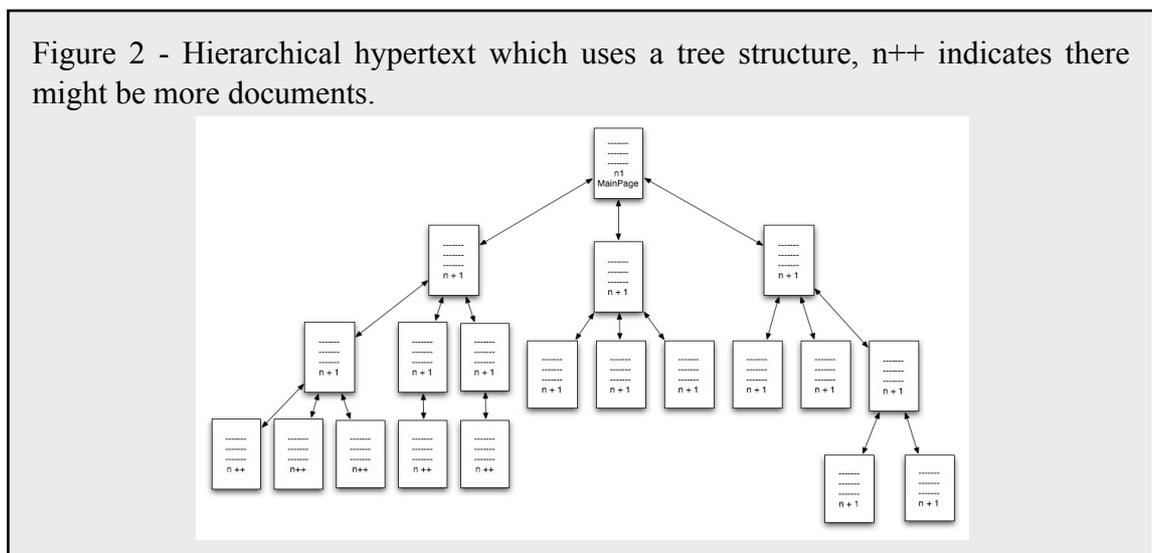
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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> While the World Wide Web as we know it hypothetically provides infinite connections and possibilities, Nelson distances himself from the hypertext system which powers the World Wide Web and deems it a one-way system with broken, volatile links.

hypertext reading and its affect on user learning experiences, they make a number of observations that should be considered when presenting scholarship or content online.<sup>18</sup>

The level of interactivity supplied by a document depends on the number of embedded links within a web page or web environment. Linear hypertext provides the user/reader with limited sequential choices. The second variant of online text is a hierarchical hypertext, where the user/reader chooses the sequence of reading or navigation through the text, enabled by a tree like structure or relationship between texts or document nodes, as demonstrated in figure 2.<sup>19</sup> The third variant is non-linear, networked or semantic hypertext. In this system ‘a linked phrase could be connected to nodes anywhere in the hypertext’ system,<sup>20</sup> there is no structural logic, like traversing a tree in hierarchical hypertext, but only the path as specified by the user/reader in that instance, and in many respects this definition should include dynamically generated content, a fact not specified by DeStafano and LeFevre. The semantics which dictate the links and relationships between different texts and webpages reflect the associative thinking outlined by Bush and Nelson’s ‘intertwingularity’ of knowledge. Figure 3 demonstrates a network or semantic hypertext, created using the Flex springGraph class. It demonstrates the links between the various nodes and how they are deeply intertwined or ‘intertwined’ and resembles the model which Nelson features in Computer Lib/Dream Machines as a hand drawn diagram.<sup>21</sup>



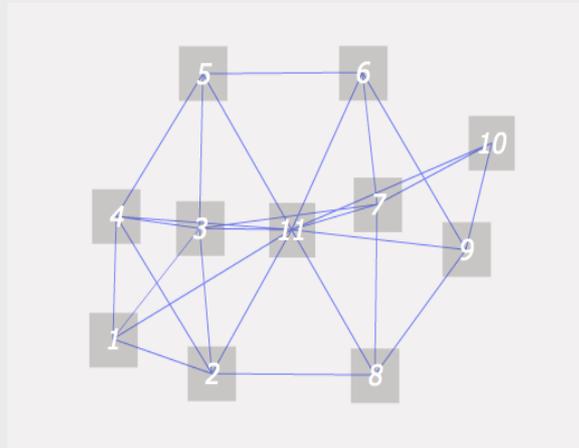
<sup>18</sup> Diana DeStafano and Jo-Anne LeFevre, ‘Cognitive load in hypertext reading: a review’ in *Computers in human behavior*, xxiii (2007).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 1617.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Rosenberg, ‘Hummingbird features’ in *Cabinet*, xiii (2004) available at <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/13/rosenberg.php> (9 Feb. 2011)

Figure 3 - Network or semantic hypertext, nodes are linked depending on their semantic relationship. This image was captured from the springGraph class in Flex 3. In this network all nodes are connected to '11'. This is the same structure which visualises the relationship between factlets as factoids.



DeStafano and LeFevre assert that regardless of the hypertext system used to generate a digital text, ‘reading and navigating in hypertext’ places ‘demands on working memory’.<sup>22</sup> Working memory, defined as the ‘mental resources’ needed to process data we encounter, is required to ‘encode, activate, store and manipulate information’.<sup>23</sup> The various studies on the association between hypertext reading and increases in cognitive load suggest that in certain circumstances hypertext can impair or reduce reading and cognitive performance. This is because hypertext reading ‘introduces a new set of cognitive requirements to the reading task, thereby increasing working memory demands, and increasing mental load’.<sup>24</sup> These extra demands on cognitive load and working memory are introduced by increased decision making requirements inherent in the hypertext model. Within the various hypertext systems a user/reader determines the route or path to travel within or outside a text, guided by the various visual cues to internal and external, embedded, links to content. The inclusion of footnotes, references and quotations in traditional, printed text confront the reader with implicit links to other works, in this sense Nelson refers to “hypertext” as any text which embeds ‘pointers’<sup>25</sup> to other text, rather than just digital manifestations with explicit links. Implicit ‘pointers’ within printed text lead readers to works outside (but

<sup>22</sup> DeStafano & LeFevre, ‘Cognitive load in hypertext reading: a review’, p. 1618.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 1618-9.

<sup>25</sup> Rosenberg, ‘Hummingbird futures’

sometimes within e.g. appendix, etc.) the original document but the logistical limits of print and access to these outside works, limit instant access to other works, which online text can provide. Willard McCarthy refers to this on the Humanities Discussion Group (2010), when he wrote,

my readers can rejoice (I have told myself) in the treasure-trove of references, speeding from my argument into the network of scholarship I have uncovered. On the other hand they leave my argument quickly behind. Indeed, I am implicitly urging them to do so.<sup>26</sup>

The advantages of hypertext, as advocated by Nelson and others, are the same features which McCarthy perceives as unfavorable to the reader-writer experience or the reader-writer relationship. Exposing readers to the multitude of text, articles, documents, images, sounds or film related to a text reveals the ‘network of scholarship’ described by McCarthy, yet as he states, it is this instant access which encourages reader migration, with no guarantees that the reader or user will return. The benefits of exposing these networks or ‘trails’ are evident, they promote openness in scholarship and reveal the cognitive moves which scholars and writers take to reach various positions and arguments. Openness in interpretation is one of the fundamental motivations behind the generation and use of factlets and factoids. It is not the facility of these features which increase cognitive load and working memory but the process of deciding whether to pursue a link and as these links become numerous it becomes more difficult for a user/reader to simply read through a text, which, as DeStafano and LeFevre state, can affect comprehension and understanding of a text and its content. As DeStanfano and LeFevre discusses ‘every time a reader chooses to follow an embedded link, the text he or she encounters in node (n + 1) potentially functions as an interruption of the ongoing comprehension process’.<sup>27</sup>

DeStafano and LeFevre conclude that ‘designers need to consider cognitive load’ when building hypertexts, as ‘many features of hypertext resulted in increased cognitive load and thus may have required working memory capacity that exceeded readers’ capabilities.’<sup>28</sup> Prior knowledge increased comprehension whereas embedding numerous unrelated links increased demands on working memory, caused distraction

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<sup>26</sup> Willard McCarthy, Humanist Discussion Group, xxiv, no. 550. Centre for Computing in the Humanities, King's College London, available at [www.digitalhumanities.org/humanist](http://www.digitalhumanities.org/humanist) (7 Dec. 2010)

<sup>27</sup> DeStafano & LeFevre, ‘Cognitive load in hypertext reading: a review’, p. 1619.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 1636.

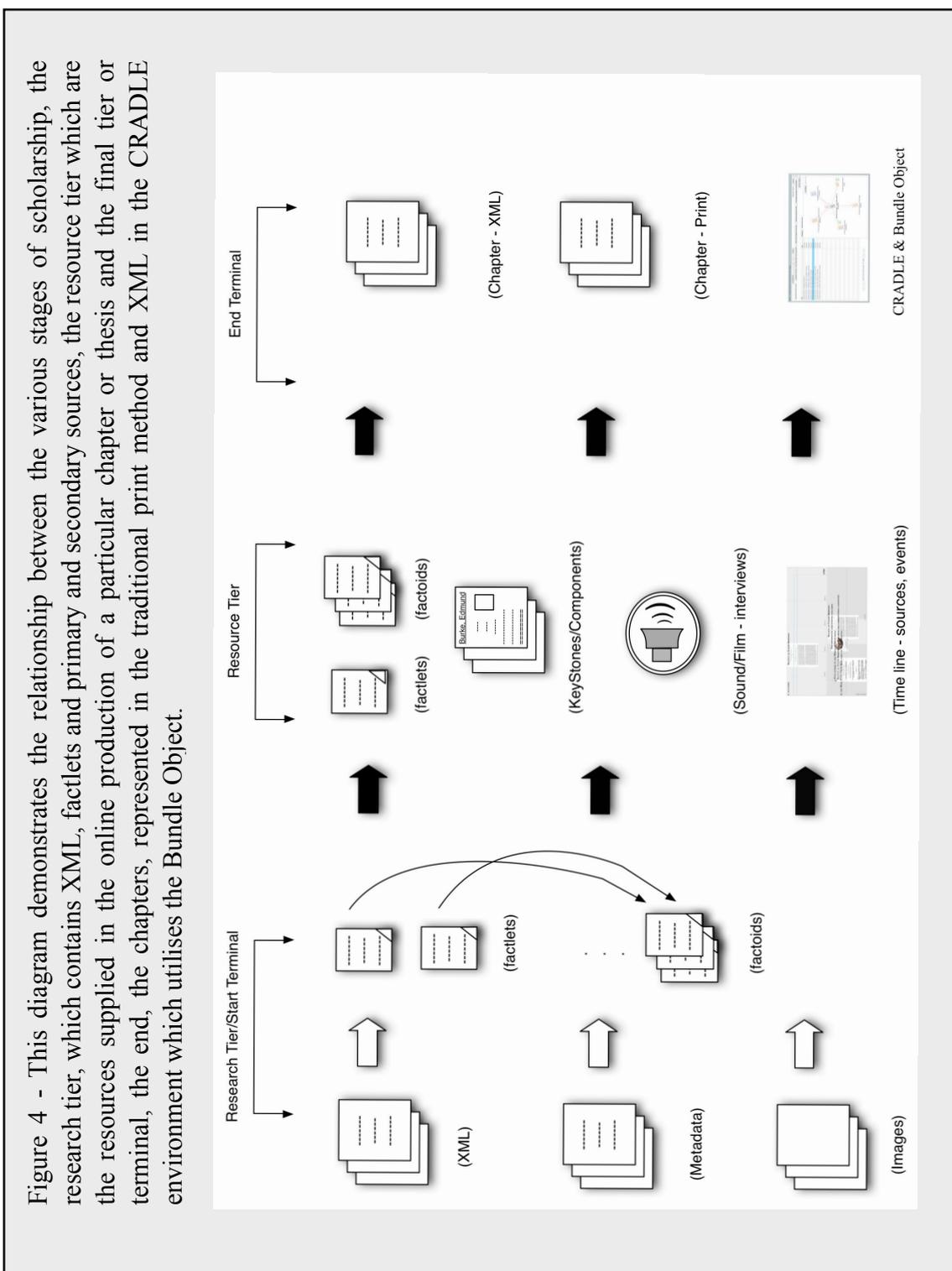
and disorientation within a text and resulted in a decrease in comprehension and ‘factual recall’.<sup>29</sup> It is important to consider the effects of hypertext systems on learning when designing hypertext for the presentation of scholarship online. We must consider both the learning advantages and disadvantages and recognise the effects on learning when different users/readers engage in online or digital content. The inclusion of referential or tangential links must be carefully considered not only because they impede on comprehension but also because anchors, <a>, with “hrefs” are visual cues for the user/reader to exit the text, and as McCarthy states are explicit instructions to leave ‘this’ text. DeStafano and LeFevre’s review suggests that Nelson’s ‘grand hypertext’, which links everything on a subject, may not necessarily be the best method to present content or knowledge within an online system because of the impact on cognitive load and reader comprehension. To counter this they suggest the use of popup windows, which provide contextual information about the links, which may help reduce demands on working memory and cognitive load as user/readers reduce the amount of links they follow or traverse and consequently decrease ‘potential distractions’.<sup>30</sup> This method is similar to hover text used by Sonia Howell, John G. Keating and Margaret Kelleher in their DH2010 conference paper, ‘A new digital method for a new literary problem...’,<sup>31</sup> which alerts the user to the category of encoding used e.g. implicit or explicit cultural context. While Nelson’s ‘grand hypertext’ may affect cognitive load, his ideas on parallelism, which support the inclusion of ‘evidential material’, reduces the need to jump between links. Presenting ‘evidential material’ as various digital objects, including primary sources, factlets, factoids and discussion forums within CRADLE alongside scholarship presented in the Bundle object, as a PDF or digital article, can help user/reader comprehension by reducing the need to leave the environment in which ‘evidential material’ and presents the user with the ‘origins of content’. As such we will now discuss the idea and use of boundary objects before moving on to consider CRADLE and the Bundle object.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp 1629-30.

<sup>31</sup> Sonia Howell, John G. Keating and Margaret Kelleher, ‘A new digital method for a new literary problem: a proposed methodology for bridging the “generalist” – “specialist” divide in the study of world literature’, DH2010, 10 July 2010 available at <http://dh2010.cch.kcl.ac.uk/academic-programme/abstracts/papers/html/ab-846.html> (14 Feb. 2010)



The digital objects used to support parallelism can be referred to as boundary objects, which are objects with context dependent meaning and functionality, an example of which are factlets.<sup>32</sup> The creation and use of factlets by an initial researcher

<sup>32</sup> Robyn Thomas, Leisa D. Sargent and Cynthia Hardy, *Power and participation in the production of boundary objects* (2008) available at [http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/carbs/research/working\\_papers/human\\_resource/H2008\\_1.pdf](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/carbs/research/working_papers/human_resource/H2008_1.pdf) (21 Jan. 2011).

creates and supports argument development and construction and represents the research tier as displayed in figure 4. In another context the same factlet is used to expose or make available the interpretational process to the online user and in this context the factlet becomes part of the ‘evidential material’ presented to a user/reader and represents the resource tier. Factlets are also used in the final tier or end terminal and demonstrate interaction between argument development and scholarly production. In this sense the same object, the factlet, obtains different meanings and uses in different contexts. Other boundary objects include primary and secondary sources which function differently depending on the user: an author may use these objects to produce or support an argument, while a student reading an article may use them to understand the argument presented.

Boundary objects are used to create and enhance the production of scholarship and support learning in an environment where the ‘origins of content’ and ‘evidential material’ is exposed and made available. Linking historical narratives to the various boundary or digital objects ‘engage readers and users in the environment which the historiography and historical narrative was produced’.<sup>33</sup> This digital manifestation of scholarly output requires the rethinking of how we present scholarly narratives given new reader, or more specifically user, activity. The online environment inherently promotes hypertext reading and it is this reading in a nonlinear fashion, jumping from one text to another, which places extra demands on working memory and cognitive load. Landow refers to these texts as “metatext” or “metametatext”<sup>34</sup>, depending on the distance between the original text or webpage and the current one’.<sup>35</sup> Sources which are usually peripheral to the main body of text become an essential a feature of the main text or narrative but destabilise the narrative as the user controls the path or trail to follow but can also destabilise learning and comprehension as highlighted above. Riffaterre, who considers the difference between intertextuality and hypertextuality, defines the use of hypertext

to transcend the linearity of the written text by building an endless series of imagined connections, from verbal associations to possible world, extending the glosses or marginalia from footnotes of yesteryear to metatexts.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Webb, “Reconfiguring narrative” using digital tools’.

<sup>34</sup> Landow, *Hypertext 3.0*, p. 69.

<sup>35</sup> Webb, “Reconfiguring narrative” using digital tools’.

<sup>36</sup> Riffaterre, ‘Intertextuality vs. hypertextuality’, p. 780.

The ‘endless series of imagined connections’ as Nelson perceives it in his ‘grand hypertext’, hypothetically, allow users to infinitely traverse between related materials on the web and engages users in non-sequential consumption of texts. The inclusion of boundary objects within online, linear or hierarchical representations of scholarship must consider the cognitive effects as illustrated by DeStafano and LeFevre. Their studies reveal that text presented online, with a multitude of links and anchors can impede comprehension and learning, although the extent to which this happens depends on user experience and user ability. Online or hypertext systems that present scholarship or content should consider these learning trends but also the individualistic manner in which users/readers process information. In this sense, we must consider the various users and the different learning dichotomies which this presents.

*Reconfiguring narrative - the Bundle Object within CRADLE.*

Scholarship presented online should provide users with different ways to access information or knowledge. The normative way in which we digest scholarship is through linear text and while these contain embedded references with implicit instructions to seek information outside the central text, it is only when these text become digitised that these instructions become explicit and can impair learning and comprehension. Yet, this method remains the predominate mode of knowledge transmission. The 2010 conference paper, “Reconfiguring narrative” using digital tools’,<sup>37</sup> discusses the use of hypertext and the representation of traditional historical narratives and considers how “reconfiguring narrative,” as proposed by George Landow, can engage users/readers in new functionality made possible by on-line technology.<sup>38</sup> It also considers the use of different user/reader aids, namely William G. Thomas and Edward L. Ayers 2001 article ‘The difference slavery made: a close analysis of two American communities’,<sup>39</sup> which provides various access points to knowledge, catering to different user/reader learning and cognitive requirements. Thomas and Ayers’ article, printed in the traditional manner in the *American Historical Review*, was also presented

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<sup>37</sup> On-line publication date to be confirmed.

<sup>38</sup> Landow, *Hypertext 3.0*, p. 215.

<sup>39</sup> William G. Thomas and Edward L. Ayers, ‘The difference slavery made: a close analysis of two American communities’ in *American historical review*, cviii, no. 5 (2003) available at <http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/AHR/> (18 Sep. 2010)

as an online digital article, providing users with ‘stand alone “components”’, categorised by various subjects and historical argument, and linked to evidence, analysis and historiography.<sup>40</sup>

Figure 4 is a visual representation of the various stages involved in the production of scholarship. These tiers or terminals, as outlined by John G. Keating, demonstrate the use of various boundary objects within an online representation of scholarship at different stages of research. The start terminal conceptualises the use of XML (encoded sources), factlets, etc., in the research tier of scholarship, that of fact-finding, inquiry and study. The second phase, the resource tier, are the boundary objects which are included as part of the online environment but which also inform the final stage or the end terminal, which is the point at which a thesis or dissertation is developed and presented. To “reconfiguring narrative” the resource tier supplies various learning aids or points of access for different user/reader requirements, so it not only helps “this” research but as these resources are made available online, they can provide points of reference and access for other research.

Thomas and Ayers’ 2001 article demonstrates this reconfiguration of narrative. It describes the construction of a traditional, linear article and the representation of this in an online environment which abandons the linearity of traditional articles. The creation of ‘components,’ which are essentially text bytes linked to the various topics and subjects which emerge in the article, ‘supports current user activity which can involve jumping from one text to another, rather than fixed, linear reading,’ yet this activity is controlled and confined to ‘sources, maps, historiography and analysis’ within their online environment.<sup>41</sup> The ‘components’ created by Thomas and Ayers influenced the creation of key stones as a learning aid in digital articles for this research.

Key stones represent key ideas, people, events and clubs and societies which emerge from research and provide contextual information to the reader within the environment that scholarship is presented, negating the need to exit the core text. Key stones represent a metaphor for unlocking or opening scholarship and like components described by Thomas and Ayers are distinct from the article that they inform or produce, e.g. the end terminal. Yet while Thomas and Ayers maintain that a component ‘cannot be reverse engineered from the printed’ or linear article, ‘it is difficult to divorce the

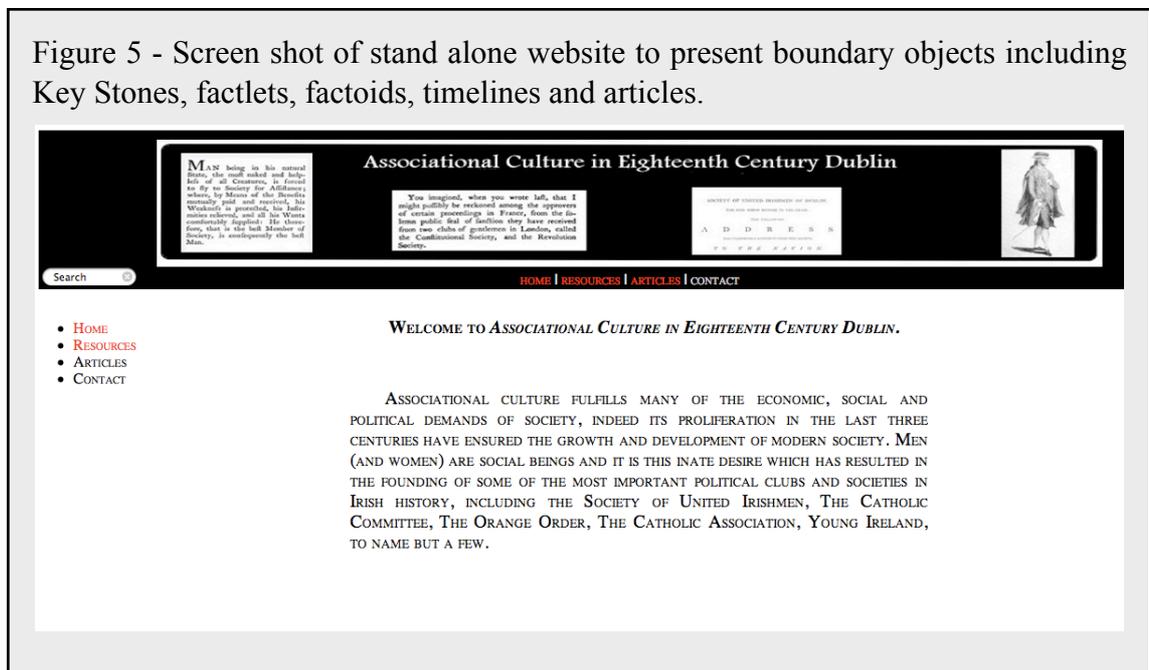
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<sup>40</sup> Webb, “‘Reconfiguring narrative’ using digital tools’.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

digital article from the printed [linear] one completely<sup>42</sup> and as such key stones may contain elements of the argument developed in the final tier. In this way a ‘reflexive process between final scholarship, sources and other resources is required to reconfigure the text and narrative to create’ the ‘text chunks’ as described Nelson or components as described by Thomas and Ayers.

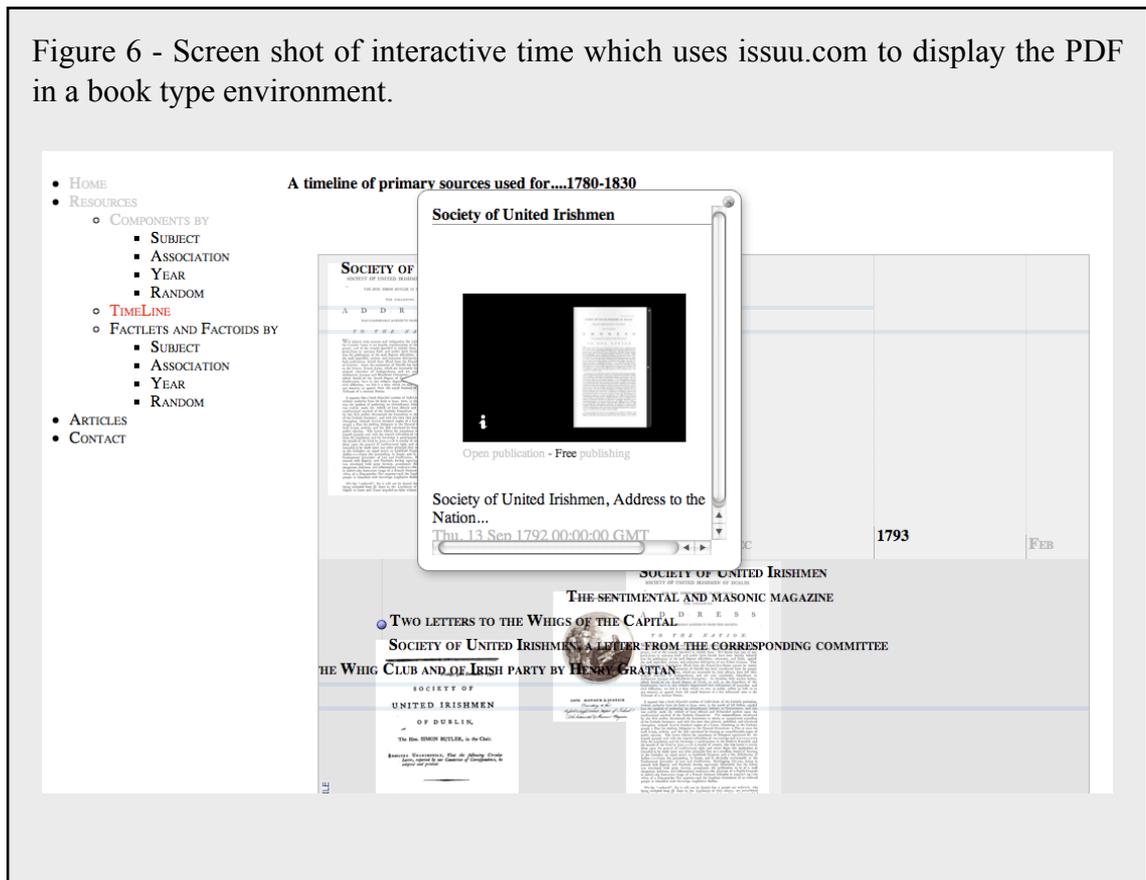
It was envisaged that key stones, factlets, factoids and articles related to this research would be presented in a stand alone website (see figure 5) which would present key stones as short newspaper articles as prompted by user interaction with the text. Primary source material, such as the pamphlets and articles digitised from the Russell Library and those obtained through the DRIS at Trinity, would also be displayed in this environment, again immersing the user/reader in the ‘evidential material’. Other features, including an interactive timeline with access to primary sources displayed using the social publishing software issuu.com, ‘which emulates a printed text’ by displaying a PDF in a print style environment, were also proposed and indeed developed as figure 6 demonstrates.<sup>43</sup>



<sup>42</sup> Webb, ‘”Reconfiguring narrative” using digital tools’.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

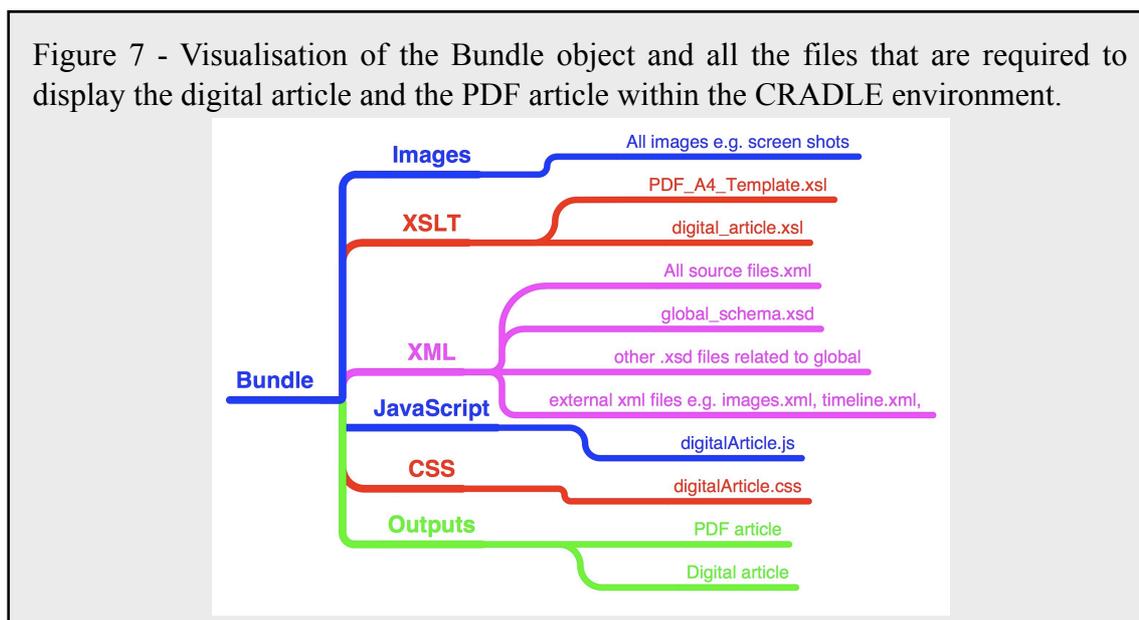
Figure 6 - Screen shot of interactive time which uses issuu.com to display the PDF in a book type environment.



However, given the development of CRADLE at An Foras Feasa it was decided to utilise this environment and develop these features using the Bundle Object to create the digital article. CRADLE supports the management of various digital objects and handles all complex database, system administration, image rendering and server requirements, as implemented by Gallagher and Fallon. The ‘Associational Dublin Archive’ linked to this research and includes the XML encoded sections of this PhD thesis, transformed using the XSL-FO and XSLT templates. These become digital objects in the collection, effectively becoming boundary objects.

CRADLE is also extensible and it enabled Webb to upload the Bundle object which becomes part of a particular collection which hosts the digital article. The Bundle object simply refers to all the code that is required to produce the A4 PDF article and the digital article which can then be used by the CRADLE environment host any documents or web pages produced using the templates built using XSL-FO, XSLT, XML, HTML, CSS and JavaScript. Figure 7 is a visualisation of the files and folders contained as part of the Bundle object which supports the multiple representations of and within PhD theses as discussed in Webb, Teehan, and Keating’s DH2011 paper,

‘The born digital graduate: multiple representations of and within digital humanities PhD theses’.



The DH2011 paper considers how we use digital humanities methodology to create or formulate knowledge and suggests ways in which we can adequately represent digital humanities thesis which sufficiently embodies the digital humanities principles and research which helped create it.

Traditionally, research outputs codified as chapters or sections can be seen as the final manifestation of a PhD thesis and reflect the use of print or static technology...Chapter functionality represents and reflects the original research statement and provides the means to convey and articulate traditional scholarship within the medium of print. Yet, why then would the product of a digital humanities thesis be restricted to a real-world document that described a process of digitally influenced scholarship? The use of XML, XSLT, XSL-FO, CSS, HTML along with the provision of software libraries in JavaScript, creates a framework to add dynamic functionality to an otherwise static text.<sup>44</sup>

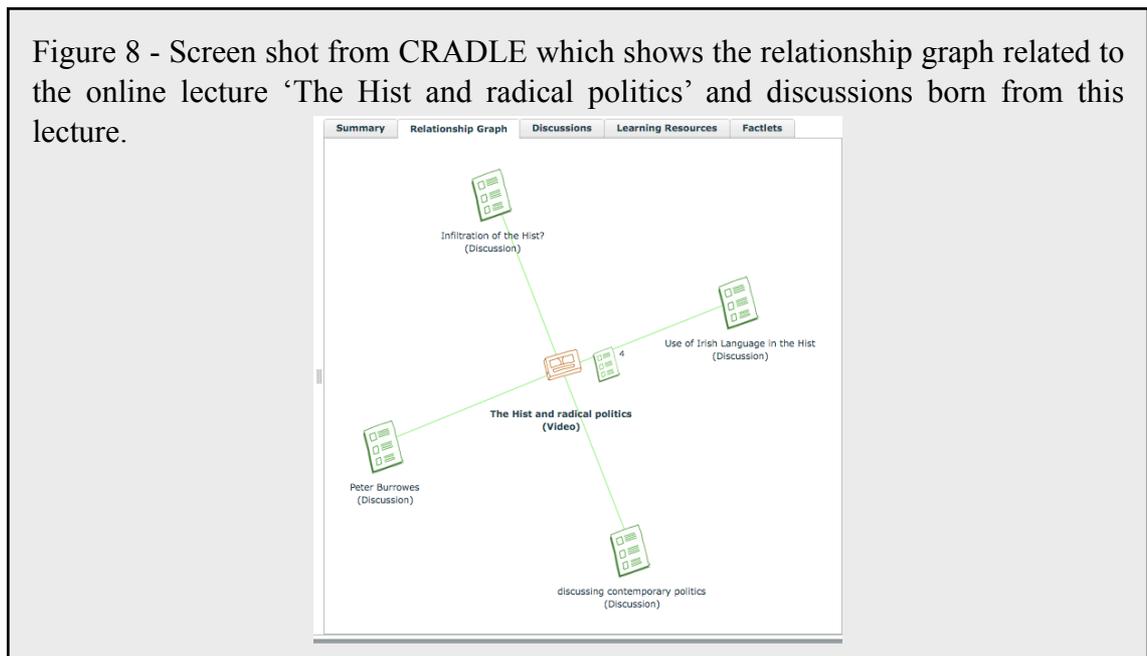
It is these technologies which inform the Bundle object, hosted in CRADLE and realises the original use case: creating a website.

This approach reflects the innate capability of the digital medium to layer extra functionality over the restricted functionality of printed works, so rather than

<sup>44</sup> Sharon Webb, Aja Teehan and John G. Keating, ‘The born digital graduate: multiple representations of and within digital humanities PhD theses’ at DH2011, Stanford University, California (20 June 2011).

creating just a single representation of scholarly output, the use of XSLT and software libraries generates and encourages a reflexive process between text, argument, narrative and source material.<sup>45</sup>

These methods change reader and user activity - one user may be a reader while another may have access to interactive environment. This environment can transform a passive user to an active participant, as he/she can create factlets and factoids, engage in forum discussions about objects and review articles and lectures related to these objects.<sup>46</sup> Users can actively add to scholarship presented online and engage in debates and discussions centered on primary documents as well as the scholarship derived from them. Figure 8 displays the relationship graph linked to the online lecture and highlights the existence of a number of threads or discussions on a number of issues concerned with the topic of the Hist and radical politics. Figure 9 and 10 indicate a discussion thread on Peter Burrowes and shows the relationship graph related to this discussion.



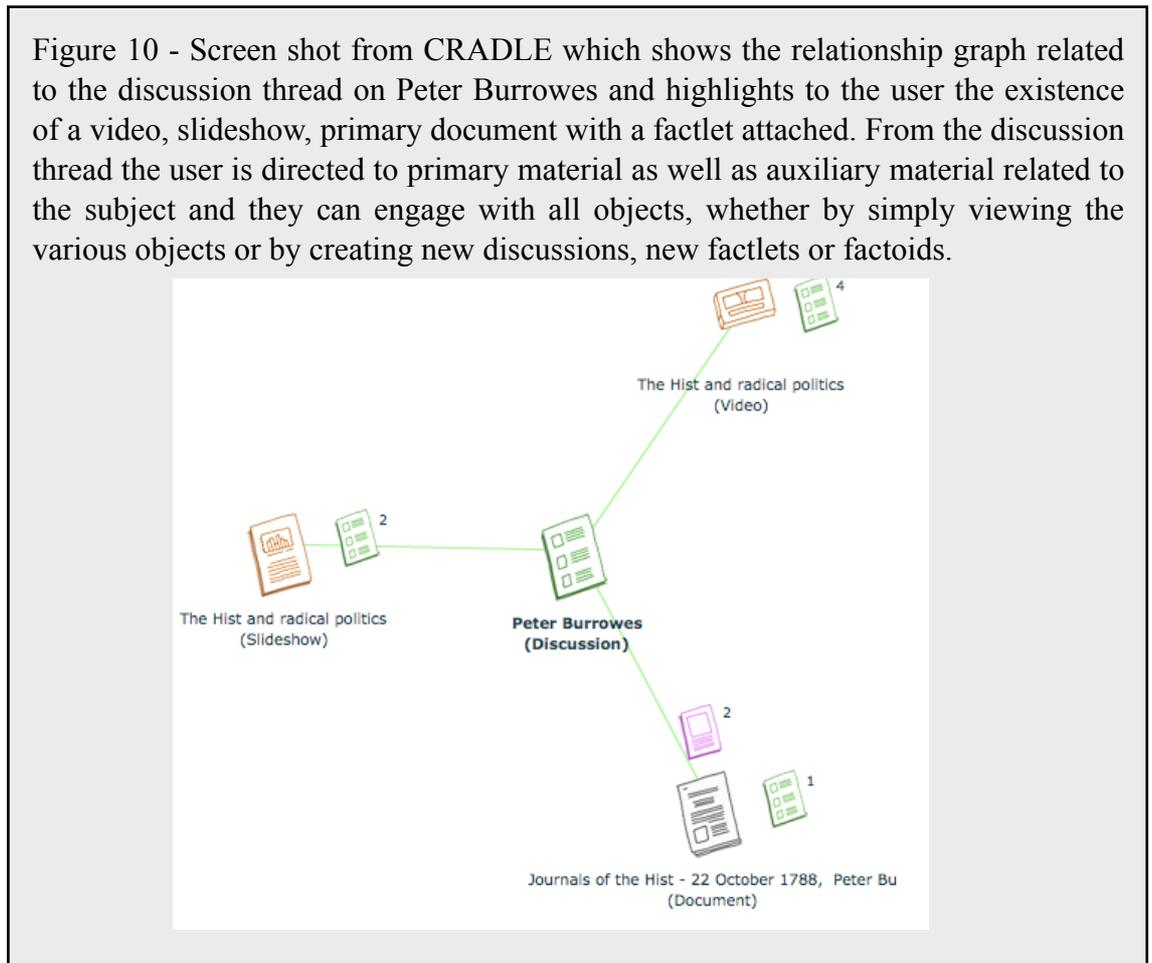
<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> See Sharon Webb, 'The Hist and radical politics'. This lecture is attached as a learning object to Wolfe Tone's 1789 speech, 'Journals of the Hist - 1 July 1789, Wolfe Tone in the Chair' in 'Journals of the Hist' collection, which itself is part of 'Associational Dublin Archive'.

Figure 9 - Screen shot from CRADLE the discussion thread on Peter Burrowes as illustrated in figure 8.



Figure 10 - Screen shot from CRADLE which shows the relationship graph related to the discussion thread on Peter Burrowes and highlights to the user the existence of a video, slideshow, primary document with a factlet attached. From the discussion thread the user is directed to primary material as well as auxiliary material related to the subject and they can engage with all objects, whether by simply viewing the various objects or by creating new discussions, new factlets or factoids.



Complex features implemented in CRADLE were engineered by Gallagher and Fallon, while Webb worked on the factlet/factoid branch to create the factlet and factoid user interface,<sup>47</sup> implement web services, create functions and methods, and implement user logic and functionality. Factlets and factoids were engineered using some functions already available in CRADLE, namely the springGraph to visualise factoids. Flex 3.5 was used to create the user interface while Git, a version control system, was used merge and control the development of different branches simultaneously. This also enabled Webb to work collaboratively with Gallagher and Fallon, as the factlet, factoid branch, updated and maintained in the Git repository, allowed senior software engineers to advice on programming logic and ensured continuity between Webb's branch and other branches such as the discussion thread, for which Webb was able to reuse and modify existing functions and methods. We will now briefly discuss factlets and factoids as implemented in CRADLE.

Figure 11 - The user interface for a factlet in CRADLE which use narrative, deduction and consequence to capture the historical process.

The screenshot shows a web-based form for creating a factlet. At the top, there are three buttons: 'View Factlets', 'New Factlet', and 'Factlets?'. Below these is a section titled 'Factlet'. The form has four main input areas:

- Title**: A text box containing 'The Hist - 'a theatre of war and tumult!''
- Narrative**: A text box containing a paragraph: 'Tone's account, appraisal or perhaps even condemnation of the Hist asks whether they shall be mentioned as no more than a 'theatre of war and tumult', stating that their 'broils' are a disgrace not only to the institute itself but to the country and to the university and it was not on these principles of anarchy and disobedience that the society was founded, stating 'that not for such heroes was this Society instituted',
- Deduction**: A text box containing a paragraph: 'In what sense is the Hist 'a theatre of war and tumult', is Tone referring to arguments between the Society and the college authorities? He asks whether the 'civil magistrates' should never rest from their 'broils', are students getting into more serious trouble? This may be a metaphor for the quarrels and internal disputes in the society but as T.S.C Dagg states in 'College Historical Society' it may also refer to the
- Consequence**: A text box containing a paragraph: 'Tone's speech is an unyielding scolding of the Society, are his impressions harsh because he is a senior figure, not a university student anymore?'

At the bottom of the form, there is a 'Subject Terms' section with a dropdown menu labeled 'Selected Subject Terms' and the word 'members' visible below it.

As stated factlets are structured annotations which prompt users to follow the functional and genre specific steps taken to produce historical writing. Linked to specific digital objects public factlets can be used as a research and teaching tool which can demonstrate to users and scholars how a specific interpretation or conclusion was drawn. Private factlets then can help inform scholarly writing, while the use of factoids visually represent the relationship between objects and demonstrates the intricate links

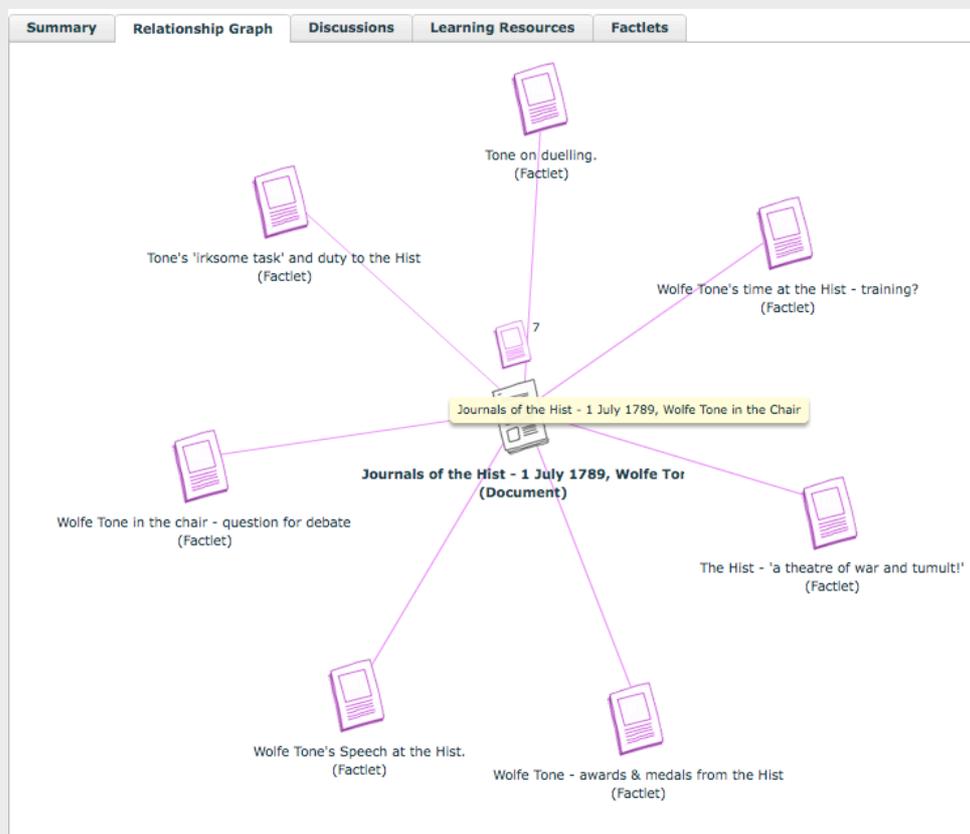
<sup>47</sup> See figure 11, 12, 14 for some interface examples.

and interconnections between sources and historical research and argument derived from this. Figure 11 and 12 are screen shots from CRADLE which show factlets related to Tone.

Figure 12 - The user interface in CRADLE which lists all the factlets that exist for a particular object. View mode controls whether the user views public, private or all factlets depending on their individual log in permissions.

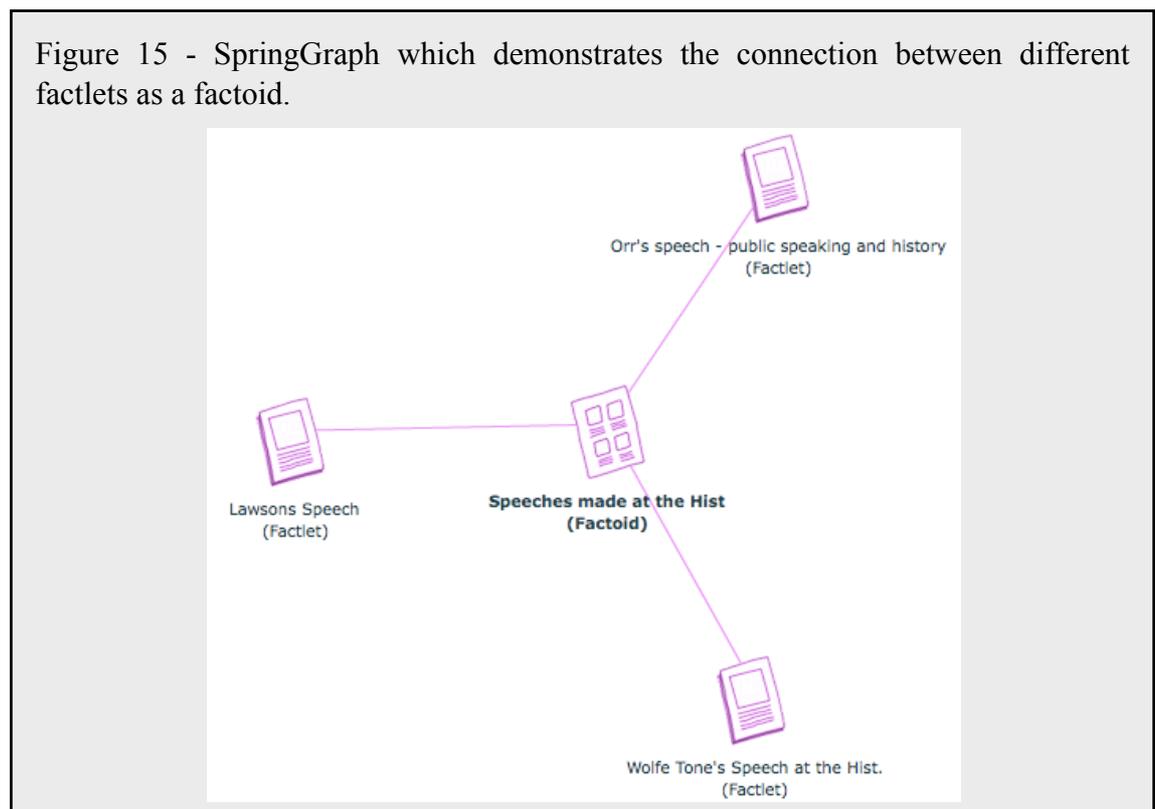
ID	Title	Author	Date
130	Tone's 'irksome task' and duty to the Hist	swebb	15/06/2011 at 11:00
128	Tone on duelling.	swebb	15/06/2011 at 10:28
127	Wolfe Tone's time at the Hist - training?	swebb	15/06/2011 at 09:56
125	The Hist - 'a theatre of war and tumult!'	swebb	15/06/2011 at 09:47
124	Wolfe Tone - awards & medals from the Hist	swebb	15/06/2011 at 09:23
123	Wolfe Tone in the chair - question for debate	swebb	14/06/2011 at 22:13
86	Wolfe Tone's Speech at the Hist.	swebb	13/06/2011 at 11:54

Figure 13 - displays the spring graph related to the factlet list in figure 12.





on Union and through this ability to connect different types of structured information it was highlighted to the user that debates of the Union between Ireland and Britain in the 1780s and 1790s directly influence a number of publication made by a number of different ex-Hist members, including Burrowes as previously discussed. This visualisation of these connections were interpreted and are now presented in chapter 6 which looks at the Hists debates with a special focus on debates pertaining to Union before the Act of Union was enacted in 1801. Figure 14 and 15 demonstrate the use of factoids within CRADLE.



The factlet, factoid structure creates transparency between interpretations and the primary sources they are linked to. Within CRADLE they support open scholarship and encourage interaction with content as other user can can add factlets and factoids. This creates new interpretations which are centered on the integrity of the original primary source.

However, a thesis born from these digital methods should reflect the digital framework in which it was created. As such the inclusion of digital articles within the CRADLE environment (e.g. 'The Hist and radical politics'), realises use cases which enable the user to engage with the digital text but also demonstrate the importance of

data reusability, creating the multiple representations of research content as discussed in the DH2011 paper.

To support the creation of multiple representation of research the Bundle Object was developed. A ‘User guide and documentation for the Bundle Object’ is provided in the appendix and documents the steps required for new users to reuse the XSL-FO and XSLT templates. As it indicates the transformation of a born-digital text (a thesis) into both the print and digital media relies upon the existence of a single, defining text-model and as such uses the global schema as discussed in chapter 3. This approach makes the text reusable and ensures a single document ‘can function very differently’ in different environments.<sup>49</sup>

The creation of a PDF template and a digital article template within the Bundle object reflects the implementation of two specific use cases as discussed in the DH2011 presentation for which are viewable in CRADLE. The first representation (or use case), for a PhD theses is the printed document in a PDF. The generation of this print based document satisfies academic requirements but also caters to different user activity and learning requirements, including the novice reader or indeed the traditionalist and enables users to print directly from CRADLE. Using the XML encoded source, or the master document, an XSLT transform was created that incorporates the use of XSL-FO, extensible style sheet language, formatting objects, and uses Apache FOP to automatically generate PDF file which included table of contents, footnotes and a bibliography, all part of the traditional structure of a printed theses but which are dynamically generated from the XML source which uses the global schema as discussed in chapter 3. It also handles the placement and use of images or figures and embedded internal and external links (depending on the context) helps the user navigate from the table of contents to the various sections in the document and creates a hyperlink to any external sites cited. The XSLT, XSL-FO style sheet creates a template from which all chapters of a PhD theses, or other encoded articles, can use to create standardised print documents.

The articles now presented in CRADLE pertain to sample articles extracted from the research on the Historical Society of Trinity College. Selected primary sources consulted for chapter 5 and 6 on the Historical Society of Trinity College, including their journals, laws, speeches and compositions were ordered from DRIS (Digital

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<sup>49</sup> Landow, *Hypertext 3.0*, p. 107.

Resource and Image Services) at Trinity College and now presented as digital objects in CRADLE. The number of pages digitised from the Hist's journals was limited due to financial constraints, as they were ordered specially for this research from the manuscript department at Trinity College through DRIS. As such a range of pages were selected to demonstrate the variety of content in the journals (e.g. debates, speeches, minutes, essays and poems). Alongside the acquisition of these cultural artifacts from Trinity College, a number of pamphlets selected from the pamphlet collection at the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth, were digitised in the image lab at An Foras Feasa using specialised imaging equipment and imaging software. Of the pamphlets digitised from the Russell Library two pertain to the Historical Society of Trinity College, as well as pamphlets which discuss the Catholic Book Society, the Catholic Association and a letter from a member of the Revolution Society to Edmund Burke, all of which are now available for use and consultation in CRADLE and form part of the academic discourse in chapter 4. These pamphlets were chosen, not only because of their relevance to the topic, but because no other online digital copy yet exists. All digital images of primary documents now available within CRADLE are loaded with meta-data attached. A TEI header is used to store bibliographic detail and provides a meta-data template which allows the user to add details as needed, including the ability to include copyright information as required for digital objects obtained from DRIS.

The second use case, the creation of a digital article, based upon the same encoded source document, also contains footnotes, table of contents, etc., but its online environment allows for the inclusion of boundary objects, such as static timelines, key stones or tool tips, which are encoded in a separate XML file and provides extra contextual information to the reader in a hover text. Boundary objects in the digital article also include references to sources within the interactive environment and dynamically generated springGraphs which demonstrate the relationships between factlets and their sources and alerts the user/reader to the existence of these objects. This second representation of the source document also uses an XSLT which includes HTML, CSS and JavaScript. Both the printed article and the digital article consider different user requirements and allow us to scaffold the user. The inclusion of boundary objects described within the digital article takes into account increased cognitive load and effects on working memory which can effect different users when interacting with hyper texts.

Figure 16 - Relationship graph of the Bundle Object, Historical Society of Trinity College, in CRADLE which shows the existence of a PDF document and a digital article, as indicated by the orange icons.

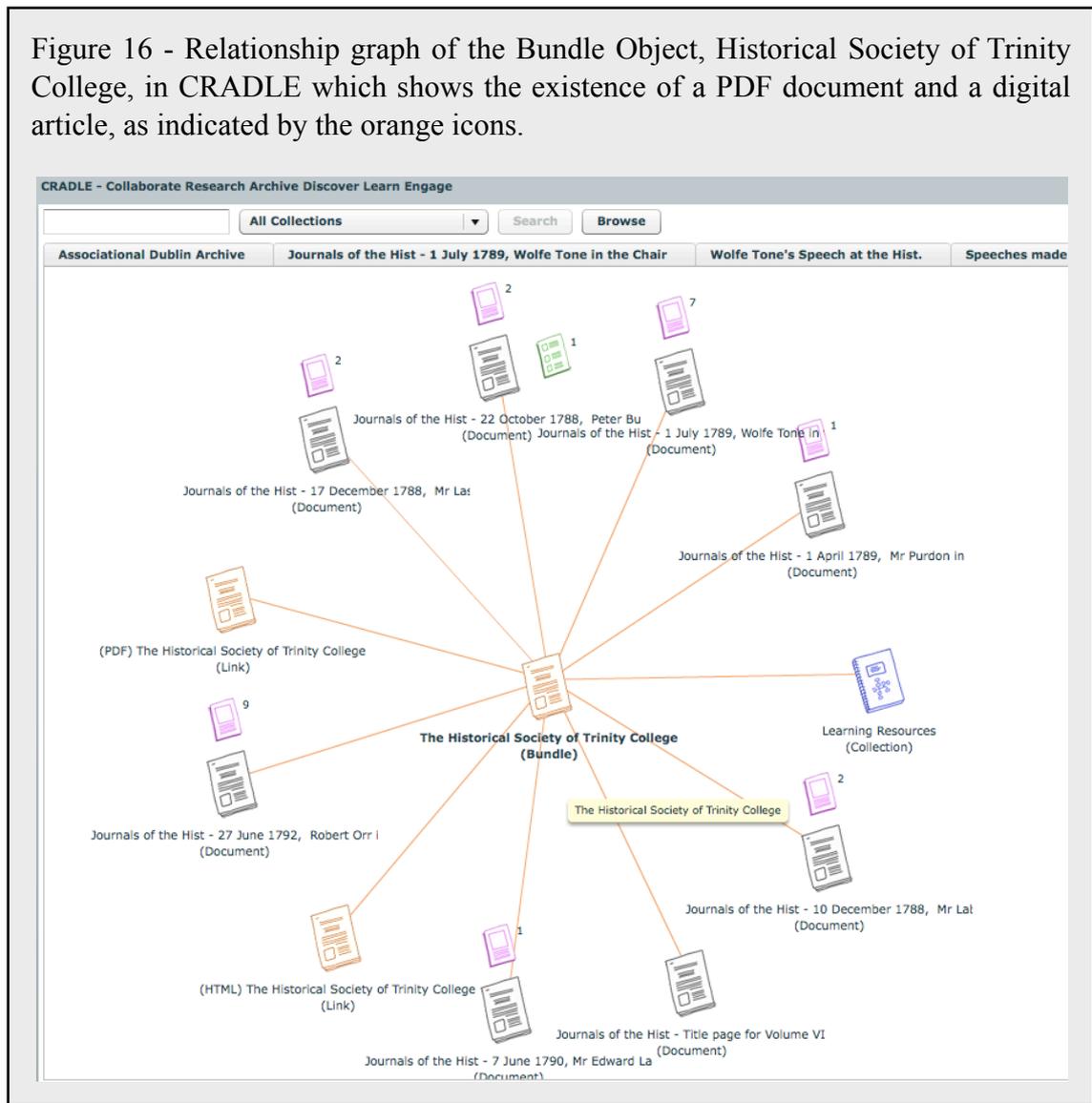


Figure 16 displays the relationship graph associated with the Bundle object - 'The Historical Society of Trinity College' and presents the user with the various digital objects associated with the Bundle, including primary documents, factlets, discussions and of course the PDF document and the HTML, digital article, as per the orange icons in the diagram. The right pane in CRADLE also allows the user to view the XML related to the Bundle object. The diagram in figure 16 demonstrates the innate capabilities of CRADLE to present to the user/reader the network of scholarship which is an implicit feature of all research but which is explicitly highlighted here. The relationship graph highlights the importance of all aspects of the research and resource tier while the Bundle object, which is the central node, represents the end terminal or research outputs of a particular resource project, in this case associational culture and Irish nationalism. It is in this sense that Elton's advice, that sources should be given

control, is realised as the user is confronted with the source evidence as consulted by the scholar or author of the Bundle object which contains scholarly articles in PDF and digital format. However, while part of the end terminal, the cyclical relationship which between source, argument development and research means that like other digital objects presented in CRADLE the digital article becomes a boundary object and can be used by different users for different purposes. Used here by Webb to present certain aspects of the PhD thesis on associational culture, the same objects can become learning tools as demonstrated by the previous figures on Peter Burrowes and the discussion threads born from the online lecture and the digital article on the Hist.

This cyclical relationship was highlighted in a visualisation in the introduction to this thesis and is worth inclusion here to re-emphasise the relationship between the various stages of scholarship and the activities which CRADLE supports, including the use of factlets and factoids as boundary within the various cycles of research, argument development and presentation. Figure 17 now includes the visualisation as used in the introduction.

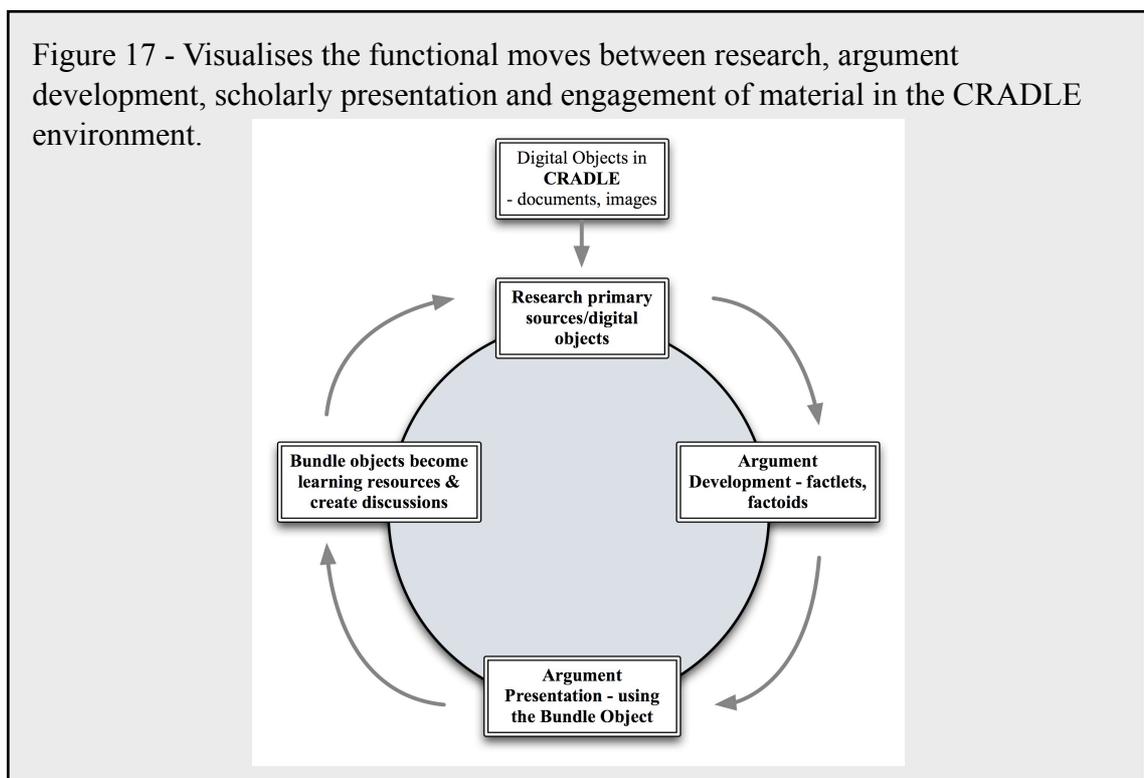


Figure 18 - Clicking on the PDF icon will open a new browser window with the XML article parsed according to the XSL-FO, XSLT template. The HTML link uses the same source XML file along with the 'digital\_article.xml' template to create the digital article, an extract of which is now presented here;

The screenshot shows a digital article page with the following content:

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE**

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE AND RADICAL POLITICS LEADING TO THE 1798 REBELLION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- [INTRODUCTION](#)
- [THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE](#)
- [THE HIST AND THE UNITED IRISHMEN](#)
- [LORD CLARE'S INVESTIGATION](#)
- [OUTBREAK OF THE 1798 REBELLION](#)
- [CONCLUSION](#)

**“DARK AND GLOOMY AS ARE OUR PROSPECTS, I DO NOT YET DESPAIR OF THE REPUBLIC. LET US SET OURSELVES SERIOUSLY TO THE WORK OF REFORMATION...BE ASSIDUOUS IN HISTORY; BE BOLD, YET TEMPERATE, IN DEBATE; BE CANDID AND CAUTIOUS ON THE MERITS OF COMPOSITIONS. THINK OF YOUR PAST GLORIES, THE INFAMY OF DESERTION, THE GREATNESS OF REWARD, THE EASINESS OF ACQUISITION. THIS DO, AND YE SHALL LIVE! OMIT IT, AND YE ARE NOTHING!”**

*THEOBALD WOLFE TONE, ADDRESS TO THE HIST (1789)*

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE AN FORAS FEASA DISCUSSION PRESENTED WITHIN THE ON-LINE REPOSITORY WITH ACCESS TO PRIMARY SOURCES, THIS TRANSCRIPT, SLIDES AND A RECORDING OF THIS TALK. THE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION, THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, OR THE HIST AND RADICAL POLITICS IS TAKEN FROM A LONGER ARTICLE WHICH INVESTIGATES THE HIST IN TERMS OF ASSOCIATIONAL CULTURE IN DUBLIN AND USES THIS STUDENT DEBATING SOCIETY AS A CASE STUDY. THEOBALD WOLFE TONE, ADDRESS TO THE HIST (1789)

**INTRODUCTION**

THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WAS A POLITICAL AND SOCIALLY INTENSE PERIOD. THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1783) AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (1789) STIRRED LIBERAL AND RADICAL POLITICS IN IRELAND AS ELSE WHERE AND INFLUENCED A NEW ERA OF IRISH REPUBLICANISM BASED ON THE FRENCH MODEL OF *LIBERTE, EGALITE*. LARGE SCALE GROUP ASSEMBLIES IN THE FORM OF THE VOLUNTEERS, NECESSITATED BY THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE REGULAR ARMY TO THE AMERICAN COLONIES, PRODUCED IN IRELAND A NEW ORGANISATIONAL BASE FROM WHICH TO EXPRESS LIBERAL SENTIMENT AS WELL AS DEMONSTRATE AGAINST ECONOMIC DISSATISFACTION (WITH TRADE RESTRICTIONS). INFLUENCED BY THE FRENCH REVOLUTION MANY VOLUNTEER GROUPS, INCLUDING THE DUBLIN VOLUNTEERS, CELEBRATED BASTILLE DAY THROUGH PUBLIC PARADES AND MARCHES.<sup>1</sup>

As per figure 16 when a user clicks on the orange icon related to the digital article as part of the Bundle object a new browser window is opened which renders the XSLT template and displays the HTML. This dynamically generates content such as key stones and the springGraph which are related directly to the objects, factlets and factoids in CRADLE as specified by the user in the XML source document. Figure 18 is a screen shot from the first section of the digital article and demonstrates the dynamic generation of a table of contents, a title quote which is for presentational purposes and the beginning of the article itself, in this case on the Hist. The table of contents, footnotes and any images or figures embedded in the text are internally linked to each other and as such allows the user to navigate to and from the different sections in the text, the footnotes and various figures and images.

Other features of the digital article include key stones which are displayed as hover texts when the mouse is placed over a highlighted piece of text and provides the user with contextual information about people, events or associations. However, it is important to note that the key stones are stored in a separate XML file to the source code and as such are extensible and reusable. The digital article also includes a static

time lines which uses a separate XML file to hold the textual information and XSLT to render the content. As such the timelines are also extensible and reusable. Figure 19 demonstrates the use of key stones, while figure 20 is a screen shot of a static timeline.

Figure 19 - A key stone related to Edmund Burke is signified by blue text.

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE**

BASED ON A TRADITION OF ORATORY, HISTORY AND COMPOSITION, THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE OR THE HIST, GREW FROM A CLUB FOUNDED IN 1747 BY A YOUNG STUDENT BY THE NAME OF **EDMUND BURKE**. BURKE HAD ENVISIONED AN ARENA OF OPEN DEBATE BUT SOON AFTER DEBATING THE SUBJECT OF 'IRISH MANUFACTURES' AND 'THE INJURY INFLICTED BY E

**EDMUND BURKE**

BORN IN DUBLIN IN 1730, EDMUND BURKE IS ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IRISH PHILOSOPHER, POLITICAL THEORIST, PAMPHLETEER AND POLITICIAN. EDUCATED AT TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN (1747) HE ENTERED MIDDLE TEMPLE AT LONDON TO RECEIVE TRAINING IN LAW, WHICH HE ABANDONED IN ORDER TO WRITE PHILOSOPHICAL TRACTS BEFORE ENTERING BRITISH POLITICS IN 1759. HOWEVER, IT WAS HIS TIME AT TRINITY COLLEGE WHICH HAD A LASTING AFFECT ON HIS FUTURE CAREER AS A WRITER AND ACCOMPLISHED STATESMAN - AS IT WAS AT TRINITY THAT BURKE FOSTERED HIS PASSION AND LOVE FOR DEBATE, WRITING AND ORATORY. IN 1747, BURKE, ALONG WITH SOME OTHER STUDENTS, FOUNDED THE 'CLUB', LATER KNOWN AS THE COLLEGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR THE HIST, UPON THE PRINCIPLES AS A STUDENT IN TRINITY COLLEGE BURKE CO-FOUNDED THE CLUB, KNOWN LATER AS THE COLLEGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR THE HIST. BURKE'S CLUB IS ONE OF THE OLDEST, LONG-STANDING SOCIETIES IN IRELAND. ESTABLISHED UPON THE PRINCIPLES OF 'DECENCY AND GOOD MANNERS, VIRTUE AND RELIGION', THE CLUB REPLICATES OR AND STILL PRACTICES MANY OF THE OBJECTIVES OUTLINED BY BURKE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, THAT OF ORATORY, COMPOSITION AND THE STUDY OF HISTORY. BURKE'S SUCCESS AND PASSION AS A WRITER AND PUBLIC SPEAKER MAY WELL HAVE BEEN FOUNDED IN TCD AT THE SAME TIME HE ESTABLISHED THE HIST. THE TOPICS AND SUBJECT OF BURKE'S WRITINGS AND PUBLICATIONS VARY AND REFLECT HIS PERSONAL INTERESTS AS A WRITER AND PAMPHLETEER BUT ALSO INDICATE HIS ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT AND CAREER WITHIN BRITISH POLITICS. HIS EARLIEST WRITINGS ARE OF A PHILOSOPHICAL INCLINATION AND INCLUDE A VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY (1756) AND A PHILOSOPHICAL ENQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN OR OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME AND BEAUTIFUL (1757)....

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE**

BASED ON A TRADITION OF ORATORY, HISTORY AND COMPOSITION, THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRINITY COLLEGE OR THE HIST, GREW FROM A CLUB FOUNDED IN 1747 BY A YOUNG STUDENT BY THE NAME OF EDMUND BURKE. BURKE HAD ENVISIONED AN ARENA OF OPEN DEBATE BUT SOON AFTER DEBATING THE SUBJECT OF 'IRISH MANUFACTURES' AND 'THE INJURY INFLICTED BY E

1832 - EXTERN SOCIETY OPERATING

1815 - EXPULSION FROM THE COLLEGE

1807 - MERGED WITH THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1798 - LORD CLARE'S INVESTIGATION INTO THE UNITED IRISHMEN INCLUDING ROBERT EMERSON'S REBELLION

1795 - RECONSTITUTED 'INTERN' WITHIN THE COLLEGE AND 'EXTERN' SOCIETY, OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE, OPERATE INDEPENDENTLY OF EACH OTHER

Figure 20 - static timeline in the digital article related to Edmund Burke and rendered using an external XML file, HTML, CSS and JavaScript.

**EDMUND BURKE - SOME IMPORTANT DATES**

BURKE WRITES REFLECTIONS... (1790), IN WHICH HE CONDEMNS THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. THIS PUBLICATION PROMPTS THOMAS PAINE TO RESPOND WITH THE RIGHTS OF MAN

BURKE SUPPORTS THE AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE. (1778)

ACTIVE IN BRITISH POLITICS, MOST NOTABLY AS PRIVATE SECRETARY TO MARQUIS ROCKINGHAM (1759 - 1774)

A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN OF OUR IDEAS OF THE SUBLIME & BEAUTIFUL (1757)

ABANDONING A LEGAL CAREER, BURKE WROTE VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY (1756), A PHILOSOPHICAL SATIRE.

CO-FOUNDED THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AT TRINITY (21 APRIL 1747)

ENTERS TRINITY COLLEGE (1744)

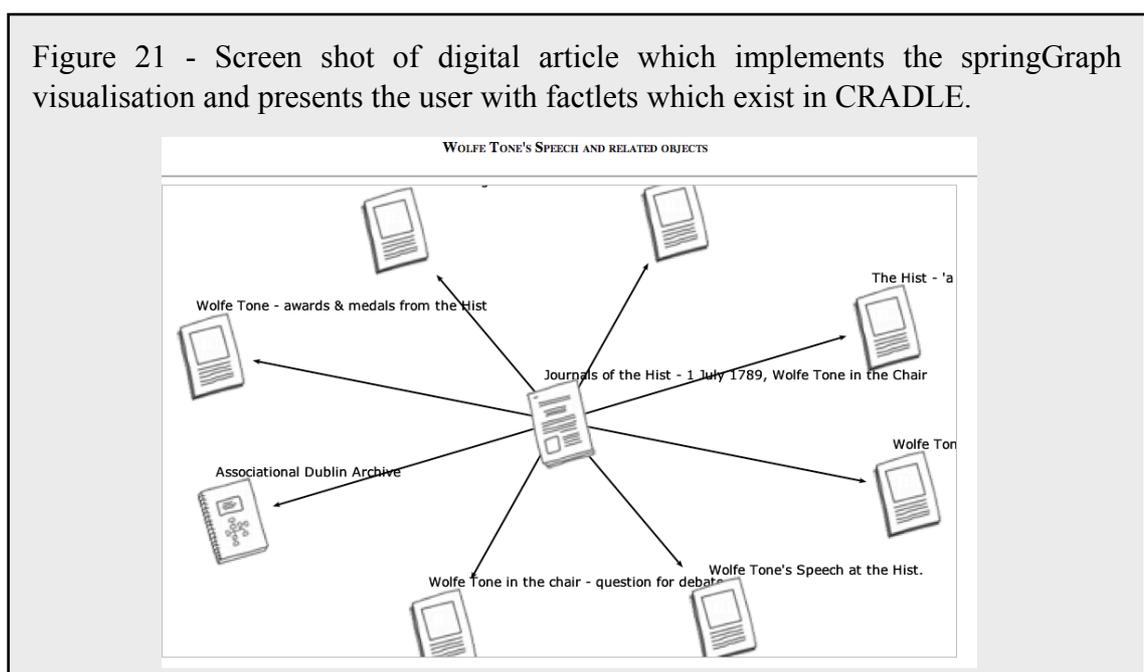
EDMUND BURKE (1730 - 1797)

1730s | 1740s | 1750s | 1760s | 1770s | 1780s | 1790s

The static timeline fulfills a particular use case but other timelines can be implemented which provide increased interactivity to the user as per the interactive timeline displayed in figure 6, which has been modified to display a timeline of sample debates extracted from the Hist journals, presented in the digital article on Hist debates which demonstrate how we can extend the functionality of the digital article through new XSLT, HTML, CSS and JavaScript templates.

Through the XML source encoding the digital article also contains reference to factlets which exist within CRADLE. Using a similar springGraph visualisation from the relationship graph in CRADLE a reference to a specific digital object or factlet dynamically generates a springGraph which returns the objects, factlets, factoids, etc., related to that particular object. The Hist Bundle object references AssocDublin:5, which is Wolfe Tone's speech from the chair in 1789. As such a springGraph is displayed in the digital article which alerts the reader/user to the existence of various objects in CRADLE, again exposing the 'network of scholarship' as McCarthy discusses and the 'intertwining' of knowledge, or the connections and entanglements in all human knowledge, as highlighted by Nelson. This in turn brings us back to the 'origins of content' as users have access to scholarly text as well as the source material which informed it. Figure 21 displays the springGraph, the JavaScript for which John G. Keating implemented, related to Wolfe Tone's speech which is dynamically generated from CRADLE ensuring that any updates or additions to the object in CRADLE are reflected in the digital article.

Figure 21 - Screen shot of digital article which implements the springGraph visualisation and presents the user with factlets which exist in CRADLE.



The creation of the PDF and the digital article, based on the use of the global schema means that different text form different sources can be modified and transformed and within the CRADLE environment can focus on the source or evidential material. Digitally enabling a PhD thesis, while retaining core functionality, like creating a print thesis, produces digital humanities scholarship which maximises the use of known technologies and creates a methodological symmetry between research inputs and scholarly outputs. However, the two use cases developed as part of the Bundle object, the PDF and digital articles, can both be modified but more importantly their functionality can be extend and added to.

As outlined the research tier and the resource tier inform and support the creation of scholarship in the end terminal or output tier. Thesis or research chapters reflect the final stage of knowledge production. Presenting research chapters in the same environment as the research and resource tier allows access to evidence and exposes the ‘deductive reasoning’ embraced by Descartes. By implementing the same methods used to present the resource tier, such as parallelism and hover text, we can control and help reduce demands on working memory. Presenting articles or chapters in a controlled online environment, and as an article to download or print in the traditional sense, allows the user to access knowledge interactively or as a static print article, supporting individual user needs and cognitive or learning requirements.

History shows us that methods we use to construct knowledge have changed in line with technological advances. So that whether it is the printed word or the digital word, the presentation of this knowledge undergoes change, as it moves from the written word in scrolls and manuscripts, to printed word in books and the digital word in hypertexts. In line with epistemology and technological change, Nelson speaks of hypertext as the ‘intertwingularity’ of knowledge, as a method to demonstrate the explicit links and relationships between concepts, ideas and the various bodies of works on particular subjects. Preserving the structure and access to evidence enhances reasoning and Cartesian methods of deductive analysis both for the reader and the author and is a feature which CRADLE and the Bundle object supports. By considering the methods that Nelson promotes and the cognitive obstacles which DeStafano and LeFevre review we can produce online scholarship which reconfigures traditional narrative as we use boundary objects such key stones, timelines, factlets, factoids not only to present the resource tier in scholarship but which enhances this linear model

through parallelism of the various boundary objects. These ‘thinkertoys’, as Nelson describes them, introduce different points of entry to discourse and support different cognitive requirements presented by individual user needs and expertise.

The multiple representation of a PhD theses challenges the idea of a ‘published’ theses and reflects concerns of academic prestige as discussed in chapter 1. How do you ‘publish’ an interactive article in the same way you would publish a monograph? How is the work involved in creating these representation credited? This thesis is presented in the traditional, print ready format but the inclusion of a number of articles based directly from chapter 5 and 6 allow the reader to engage with the historical narrative within the context of the CRADLE environment. The reader is invited to engage in this interactive environment and to explore the primary sources, factlets, factoids, discussions, online lecture, slides and the Bundle objects that are directly linked to this research.

The products (PDF, digital article) of the methodologies discussed not only affect the presentation of scholarship but how that scholarship is perceived and used. The Bundle Object is hosted in CRADLE but the digital article and the print ready article can exist independently of CRADLE. However, their inclusion in a research environment which can host the primary sources and interpretations related to the topic, as well as map relationships between sources and support online discussions, offers major advantages over presenting them separately. Presenting aspects of this PhD as digital articles, with access to source content, within CRADLE creates dynamic scholarship. It exposes the interpretations held in factlets and in many respects moves the user/reader away from the final product, the thesis chapter which may be perceived as static scholarship, and allows users to interact with the ‘scholarship’ - the sources, the interpretations, etc., and not just the final product of that scholarship - the static article. While the digital article and indeed the interactive environment provide access to boundary objects, the static article (PDF) and digital article become boundary objects themselves within CRADLE, as interaction with these objects become context and of course user dependent. They are the final products of this research but may be an entry point for another.

The various representations, the PDF, the digital article with boundary objects and the online lecture and slideshow are concerned with direct content of the PhD. These representation are hosted by the interactive environment which provides access to primary sources and their interpretations. In this way it brings the user back to the

original history, as it stands with and without interpretation - the difference between facts of the past and facts of history. The primary material used for historical research is brought to centre stage and the reader is confronted by the 'evidential materials' that informed research. Coupled with the ability to create factlets and to start or enter discussions, the user gains access to historical debate but also contributes to it. This source interaction, and indeed interaction with other historians or users, creates dynamic history. It allows users to "do" history and encourages debate and questioning of the interpretations presented in the final products of scholarship and in many ways creates dynamic knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

‘Associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism’ examines a number of key features in Irish society during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The clubs and societies that developed and operated within the city of Dublin are reflective of the concerns and difficulties which patrons of these associations were either directly effected by or took issue with on behalf of their fellow citizens. Irish associational culture is a microcosm which reveals the central issues of the wider community and is the epitome of Irish identity and the inherent complexities of Irish nationalism. The associational lens used to discuss Irish nationalism reveals the political, social and religious concerns of the various sectors of Irish society and enables us to gain insight into the intricate nature of identity politics and the forces which drive and motivate nationalist movements. Using Anderson’s metaphor for the nation as an imagined community we exposed the layers inherent in this metaphor and revealed through civil society theory that associational communities, built through the individual’s constant interaction with ever increasing private and public spheres, consisting of both real and imagined members, were a critical factor in the development of Irish nationalism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

Our consideration of an associational world in chapter 2 provided the theoretical framework for discussions on associational culture, both as a phenomena in its own right and as an important feature of civil society theory. Driven by common interests and goals, individual members of particular associations draw from and influence the collective will expressed through these groups. Anthropological definitions of associations revealed the functional attributes of associations and their ability to support important cultural and political movements through the inherent expressive and instrumental nature of associations. R.T. Anderson maintains that associations support social movements but do not create them. However, associations reflect the social and political concerns and interests of the day and cultivate and galvanise members of the group as well as those in the wider local, regional and national community. In this way associations are instrumental in the creation of effective, widespread and powerful social and political movements which help transform society.

Discussions on Edmund Burke and G.W.F. Hegel examined civil society theory and supported theory on associational culture and reinforced the importance of

associational culture as a mechanism driving the development of modern societies. Burke's publications, *Thoughts on the cause of the present discontent* (1770) and *Reflections on the revolution in France* (1791) reveal his thoughts on civil society theory, which sit between contemporary ideas and early modern definitions of it. Burke describes the conceptual dependencies between early definitions of civil society, which were linked to political society, and current definitions, which describe civil society as separate from political society. He identifies intermediary bodies as a means to bridge the gap between political society, the state, religion and the individual. Intermediary bodies promote both social order and social upheaval, and while Burke disagrees with the French Revolution he supports participation in civil associations which promote moral and political development and reform through constitutional means. Burke also connects associational ties with the development of sentimental and emotional ties to the nation. In *Reflections* Burke reveals his connections to associational groups such as the Constitutional Society and his dialogue with members of the Revolution Society, as highlighted in the 1791 pamphlet, digitised and available in CRADLE. An important aspect of associational culture considered by Burke is the idea of peer review or peer scrutiny which promotes morality and virtue among members in various associational groups. This idea was further explored with the Historical Society of Trinity College, which Burke cofounded in 1747 implementing his view that when 'men act in bodies' it is 'power'. This idea of collective action and responsibility is also an aspect of Hegel's theories on civil society which promote individual interaction and participation in an external world that guarantees the abstract rights of the individual and the collective or universal class.

Hegel's 'system of needs' identifies the reciprocal nature of society and the interdependencies inherent in modern society. He describes the social connections individuals make as conducive to the development of complex social networks which indoctrinate individuals, as they become part of an ever increasing public sphere, including local, regional and national communities. Through the attainment and fulfillment of various, increasingly complex, needs and wants individuals become part of a system which is responsible for collective, as well as individual, satisfaction of particular abstract rights and promotes collective, universal will and action. It is in this sense that we use Benedict Anderson's phrase, 'imagined communities', to describe these individual and collective interactions in society that generate a sense of belonging

to these universal systems which are dependent on each other. Associational culture and associational ties are central to these developments and provide the constructional means for individuals to participate in society and promote and fulfill their individual and collective ends. Yet, as society becomes more complex, members needs and wants become more abstract and are not focused on sustenance of the body but sustenance of the mind and soul. As such associational cultural can provide for the satisfaction of intellectual, metaphysical and transcendental needs as well as political, social and religious ones. Coupled with this are philanthropic endeavors which are reflective of community needs rather than individual needs and amount to, as Hegel states, individuals or members 'acting in a universal way'.

This universality of needs and wants and the satisfaction of these for all members is at the forefront of associational groups which drive social movements for change in the universal laws, part of Hegel's 'administration of justice' which defines, but also upholds, universal rights and laws. It is in this sense that we discussed the Irish penal laws as un-universal laws which acted not in the universal interests of the community but for a minority. In contrast to the universal freedoms and rights which Hegel describes, the penal laws restricted these abstract freedoms and rights. In this sense associational movements which called for reform of the penal laws were acting in a universal way and reflect the social responsibilities of the universal class. Associations such as the Catholics Committee, the United Irishmen, the Catholic Board, and the Catholic Association were often supported by Irish Protestants, whom these laws did not effect, but who were acting to realise Hegel's universal freedoms and rights for all citizen members. Hegel's theories on civil society promote the individual's attachment to the external world which guarantees an individual's rights and freedoms and makes important connections between civil society and developments in nationalism, as associational activity, inherent in civil society, acts as intermediary between the family and the state. This universal society is manifest in the state or nation and becomes the focal point for all abstract and actual rights and freedoms. Associational activity also cultivates and encourages the development of culture and customs and engages members in dialogue between the abstract notion of a universal society, realised as a national community. Discussions on civil society provide important insight into the nature of associational culture and as such throughout this thesis we referred back to

civil society and reinforced its significance throughout our overview of associational Dublin.

Our overview of associational culture in Dublin considered the context of Irish associational activity, in Dublin City and within the context of Irish politics, Irish patriotism and Irish nationalism and identity. Movements such as the Volunteers demonstrate the social and political power of associational culture as they were instrumental in the introduction of the 1782 Constitution, instated under Grattan's Parliament, who himself was an officer in the Volunteers. This social and political power was also discussed for the various forms of Irish nationalism which associational culture in Dublin promoted and included consumer nationalism as well as cultural nationalism.

Consumer nationalism invoked a strong commitment and support of national manufacture and industry and expressed a type of nationalism that was not linked to ideology or related to religion or identity history per se. The support of Irish manufacture provided the means to express affiliation to a national interest and while different clubs and societies expressed different national identities through material objects, they demonstrate the utility of material culture in the expression of identity. Material objects such as goblets and the use or promotion of Irish cloth provided powerful symbolism for the expression of identities within clubs and societies, including the Volunteers, the United Irishmen, the Orange Order and other clubs including the Gleeg Club, the Kildare Street Club and the Club of Druids. Sarah Foster states that the 'colouring and decoration of clothing, glass and furniture reflect the economic and political turmoil of the 1780s and 1790s, and yield insights into the formation of nationalist and unionist identity', while nineteenth century consumerism reflected national identity which 'was tied up with authentic Celtic objects'.<sup>1</sup> This reflects earlier discussions on a cultural shift in identity during the early nineteenth century which creates a new public sphere that explicitly referenced Ireland's Gaelic past. Trade groups or commercial groups, such as the Ouzel Galley Society, also support this idea of consumer nationalism and provided a public space in which Catholics, Dissenters and Protestants could mix and interact. This public space was also provided by groups such as the Freemasons, the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick, the Beef-Stake Club, the Historical Society of Trinity College and the Shamrock Club, as they barred

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<sup>1</sup> Foster, 'Consumer nationalism in 18th-century Dublin', p. 44.

the inevitably devise discussion of religion and politics. While we know these regulations were often flouted, these associations made important efforts to promote non-sectarian nationalism. Commercial clubs, composed of merchants, traders and manufacturers aimed to improve Dublin and Ireland's commerce and develop the national economy. Consumerism in the late eighteenth century, which focused on promoting Irish goods, was a powerful symbolic, as well as economic, expression of civic patriotism or nationalism, yet this form of nationalism was in many ways restricted by its economic and class connotations. Charitable organisations were also considered for their efforts to support the poor of Dublin and in effect reflect Hegel's idea of individuals acting in a universal way, expressing social responsibility through the provision of important state like functionality. Although a form of patriotism, charitable work also brought with it connotations of class and exposed ideas of Othering in Irish society. Philanthropic endeavors are a feature of most associations, even when not a primary objective of a club or group, associational activity, through sociability, provided important fund raising for charitable organisations. The provision of Sunday schools by charitable organisations also made important contributions to society and provided important education in the interim to the implementation of national education, as promoted by Thomas Orde's plan in 1787. Through discussions on education we considered Hegel's important consideration of *Bildung*, which indoctrinates the individual into society through education in culture as well as intellectual developments. Education and the diffusion of knowledge is an important aspect of nationalism and provides the means to engage in literature associated with the national body. Linked to this is the idea of print capitalism which Benedict Anderson asserts promotes a sense of belonging to an imagined community of readers and forgoes any spatial or temporal difference, as readers perceived of themselves as belonging to a particular group reflected or represented within a given text. Associations such as the Dublin Library Society, the Dublin Bible Society and the Catholic Book Society reflect the importance of print capitalism as they promote and encourage various forms of identity linked to particular publications.

Print capitalism is an important feature in the development of modern forms of nationalism and accordingly political clubs and societies relied heavily on the production and dissemination of tracts and pamphlets to promote their policies and political propaganda. Political clubs and societies are one of the most important and

influential features of associational culture in the development of Irish nationalism. Our overview of associational culture in Dublin considered many clubs which operated in Dublin during the late eighteenth century including the Society of Free Citizens, the Constitutional Society, the Whig Club, the Whigs of the Capital and the United Irishmen. Many of these clubs reflect the influence of French revolutionary politics and ideals but demonstrate the contrasts and conflicts within Irish society in terms of religion. Clubs which represented intolerance included Protestant Association, the Orange Order, the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley (in the nineteenth century at least) and the Brunswick Club in the late 1820s. The development of ultra-Catholic societies such as the Shamrock Club in 1808 and the ultra-Protestant societies such as the Aldermen of Skinner's Alley represent the intensified sectarian divisions in Irish society after the Act of Union in 1801. The Aldermen of Skinner's Alley is an extreme example of these intensified divisions, especially given the fact that before the Union in 1801 they dined and drank with members of the Catholic Committee, the Whig Club and the United Irishmen. The Orange Order and the Brunswick Club represented and epitomised Orangism in Irish Society and while Daniel O'Connell's mass political movement, the Catholic Association, was based on the universal interests of the community focusing on reform of the penal laws and Catholic emancipation; it also demonstrates intensified sectarianism in Irish society. O'Connell's politics of inclusion created a mass political movement which focused on the interests of Irish Catholics and in this sense referenced an exclusively Irish Catholic nation. During the nineteenth century Irish nationalism became synonymous with Catholicism and marked the creation of the new Other in Irish society.

Other societies in our overview of Dublin's associational world included debating societies and while information on the Devil's Debating Society and the Debating Society of High Street is scarce, reflecting an inherent difficulty in associational studies, our case study on the Historical Society of Trinity College drew from a wealth of primary material and at length considered one of the most important associational societies in Dublin, which existed throughout the period under discussion. Many influential figures discussed as active and prominent members of political clubs and societies were also, or had been, members of the Hist. As a student debating society with roots in Edmund Burke's Club formed in 1747, it is one of the oldest societies of its kind and boasts an impressive list of *alumni*. Our historical overview of the Society

described the Hist's involvement with the radical politics that infiltrated Dublin's political scene. The result of this involvement was the expulsion of a number of Hist members from Trinity College for their associational activity with the United Irishmen which revealed the depths of this infiltration. One of the most prominent and well known members of the United Irishmen, Theobald Wolfe Tone, established himself as an impressive orator and through his dealings with this Whiggish Society, as Marianne Elliot describes them. The Hist's topics for debate also influenced Tone as he developed many of the liberal ideologies and philosophies which later informed his political tracts and policies which were the political drive force of the United Irishmen. Even before the establishment of the United Irishmen Tone utilised the social networks he created at the Hist and established a political club along with Peter Burrowes and Whitely Stokes in 1790. Burrowes also had connections with Thomas Addis Emmet and Robert Emmet, both prominent members of the United Irishmen and the Hist. Robert Emmet's close friendship with Thomas Moore also demonstrated the utility of the Society in promoting and encouraging important skills of writing and composition and while Moore was not directly involved in the United Irishmen, evidence suggests he had links with the Catholic Committee. Moore's contributions to Irish nationalism are evident in later years as his poems and songs are used to promote Irish nationalism and identity. Nationalist groups such as Young Ireland, who referenced the United Irishmen as nationalist heroes, used Moore to express nationalist rhetoric. Indeed, Moore's poems were also cited in *The Ghost of the Catholic Association* (1825) and highlight the importance of print capitalism. Daniel O'Connell was also connected to the Historical Society of Trinity College, even if there were questions over whether his connections were with the Extern Society which operated simultaneously for a number of years outside the college after a split in 1794. Regardless of this question mark over O'Connell's link to the Hist, O'Connell epitomises the importance of associational culture in developments of Irish nationalism as he was involved with many associational bodies in Dublin - O'Connell utilised the library at the Dublin Library Society, attended Hist debates, was a possible member of the United Irishmen, was a member of the Freemasons and used this associational experience to establish the Catholic Board, the Catholics Association and Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland. In exile from the College from 1815 to 1843, the Hist demonstrated their importance as a national institution as they gained respect and admiration from the

reading public, a sentiment expressed in contemporary newspapers, particularly during the 1820s when the Society was still outside the walls of the college.

Apart from the Hist's importance as a society which cultivated and supported the development of important political and nationalism social networks, their 'cultivation of the *belles lettres*' provided its members with important experience in debating, writing and historical studies. Discussions of Hist debates and their study of history reveal important aspects of nationalist identity and highlight their importance as a forum for debate. Although banned from discussing events and politics of the day, the Hist examined important social and political issues of late eighteenth century Ireland, including the admission of Catholics into the Volunteer movement. Other motions for debate demonstrated how they referenced politics and social issues outside Ireland, reflecting the cosmopolitan nature of the Society, as motions included the role of women in society, capital punishment and the slave trade. Through their study of history we looked at the important idea of identity history and how through reference to the past individuals construct identity rooted in constructed, national history. The study of Hume's *History of England* highlighted the contested nature of Irish history and historiography which evokes the myth of origins, as it perpetuated the idea that Irish Catholics, or papists, were savage and capable of extreme cruelty and violence given the 1641 Rebellion. These accounts justified reasons to keep the remaining penal laws which protected the interests of the minority of the Irish population while they suppressed the majority. Through its encouragement of writing, the Hist was also instrumental in the early careers of famous Irish writers such as Charles Wolfe.

The Hist's activities provided the mutual scrutiny of ones peers which Burke advocated and created, as Clark describes it, outward looking individuals who were engaged in the universal interests of its members but also of the wider community. The practical knowledge and skill which members of the Hist gained provided individuals with cultural as well as educational experience akin to the idea or concept of *Bildung* as advocated by Hegel. Through this process and experience members become indoctrinated and socialised into civil society. A number of Hist members were also instrumental in the development of nationalist movements, not only because they developed important social networks to draw support from but also through the political experience gained from participation in the formal procedures of the Society. Prominent members of the United Irishmen and Young Ireland were members of the Hist and

highlight the importance of it in the development of Irish nationalism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As discussed Charles Kendal Bushe stated the Society was described as ‘a political society prophaned by a comparison with the Whigs of the Capital, United Irishmen, and such other Jacobin associations’ and highlights the Hist’s role in Dublin’s political, associational world.

Our case study on associational culture focused our attention on the Historical Society of Trinity College and enabled us to investigate closely their associational activities and interests. Apart from their utility as a student debating society they provided important insight into the political and social concerns of Dublin’s citizens during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and personified the diversity of its members and the diversity of the wider community.

Burke and Hegel were again examined for their contributions to theories of nationalism and patriotism. Burke saw the ‘love of the little we belong to in society’ as the ‘first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love of our country’. It is in this sense that associational culture promotes ideas of nationalism through the ‘concentric circles of affection[s]’ which it encourages. Just as Benedict Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’ bring together a conceptual public sphere which embraces national members and individual citizens, associations provide tangible evidence of this national, imagined community. The associations which we have considered support many activities which contribute to the development of civic minded and virtuous citizens. Associational groups such as the United Irishmen and the Catholics Association are evidence of Burke’s assertions that when men act in bodies it is power. O’Connell harnessed the power of men in bodies and created a mass political movement which centered on the improvement of universal freedoms and rights and actively engaged individuals in these ‘concentric circles’. This is also reflected in our discussion on group loyalty and the sentimental attachments individuals make to an ever increasing public domain or public sphere, promoted through constant interaction and participation in various associational groups.

Association and disassociation highlighted the notion of defining ourselves in comparison to others. In this sense we considered the penal laws and how they were used to construct the identity of the in group and the out group in Irish society. Yet while we described the penal laws as the antithesis of Hegel’s universal rights and freedoms, these laws provided the political and social motivation for societies such as the Catholic

Committee, the United Irishmen and the Catholic Association to group and protest against these un-universal laws. They also provided ultra-Protestant groups such as the Brunswick Clubs with a purpose and focus as they were anti-Catholic and against emancipation.

Irish associational culture during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century highlight the complexities inherent in Irish nationalism. Many clubs and societies formed to address the political and social issues which were born from the penal laws and the administration of these un-universal laws. The Union also provided political and social motivation for the formation of associations which supported both Catholic and Protestant interest. Associational culture during the period under discussion supported the nationalist and political claims across the spectrum of Irish identity, including Irish Catholics, Protestant and loyalist and unionist groups, embodied in the Orange Order and Brunswick Clubs. Over a period of fifty years many clubs and societies emerged to address the political, social and intellectual needs of Irish society, which includes competing and conflicting claims and assertions of nationalist identity, while agrarian associations developed nationwide to address land issues which would dominate the associational landscape in Ireland over the course of the nineteenth century. The period under review however does not signify the end of the development of Irish nationalism linked to associational culture and as already indicated movements such as Young Ireland in the 1840s used associational structures to promote Irish identity and Irish nationalism while the Orange Order and association like the Apprentice Boys of Derry represented loyalism and unionism which increased division along religious lines but also increased divisions along regional lines, namely between the north and south. Throughout the nineteenth century and beyond associational groups sought to reform Irish grievances and these groups represented all strands of political and nationalist identity.

Irish nationalism is a complex subject and emphasises the inherent difficulties in extracting identity from the socially and politically constructed entity known as the nation state. As such associational culture provides a unique opportunity to investigate this complex phenomena as it enables us to break down these complex issues and provides insight into the group dynamics which ultimately creates the 'love of one's country'.

The complex nature of associational culture and the social networks it fosters are represented and structured within the digital methodology discussed. This digital humanities approach underpins the historical investigation into Irish associational culture and supports the various activities related to research, including source gathering and management, source querying, argument development and presentation. The objective to build a software information environment was realised through the development and use of different software solutions for historical research and allowed for the creation of research models specific to historical inquiry, namely the factlet and factoid structure. Software development within CRADLE realised the factlet and factoid structure in an environment which exposes the ‘origins of content’ and engages the user in Elton’s ‘facts of the past’ - the primary source. This engagement with source material enables new readers and users to explore the historical process and the inclusion of the Bundle Object, which contains scholarly write-up, allows exploration of a digital history environments that presents ‘facts of history’ (the thesis), as well as ‘facts of the past’ (the sources).

The digital methodology employed to explore Dublin’s associational world structured the complex data linked to this social and political phenomena. These complexities are reflected in the XML that encapsulates information on individual members and particular associational bodies. This structure allowed close reading of the data which revealed connections between different associations and members and explicitly highlighted the links and relationships, revealing associational culture as a complex system of social networks. In many respects historical research is the analysis and connections between different data types or objects, e.g. people, dates, events, etc., from various data sources. Identifying relationships between these data types enabled the construction of a historical narrative based on these relationships. The digital methodology helped to extrapolate patterns and meaning which are not always obvious when considering a vast body of work and helped answer questions like, what is the relationship between different clubs and societies? Or, are individuals members of multiple societies? The factlet and factoid structures also helped to map the different relationships between sources as well as between members and associations.

The development of the Bundle Object allowed for the presentation of online content in both linear and non-linear representations. The inclusion of boundary objects (keystones, static and interactive timelines and springGraphs) took into account

cognitive load and comprehension which affects different users confronted by hypertext representations of content. In this respect the different representations of the scholarly article scaffolds the user, giving readers a level of choice and control over their online interaction with text. Importantly the Bundle Object is extendable, modifiable and reusable and is available to researchers, exemplified through its reuse in two Masters theses. Presenting the Bundle Object and its scholarly content in CRADLE also allows users to view the various cultural artifacts linked to the historical narrative and opens the field of historiography, revealing historical interpretation and analysis. The on-line representations of this thesis also reconfigures the notion of traditional scholarship, producing interactive scholarly content which is available to wider audiences.

Our discussions on digital humanities and digital history contextualised the theoretical framework for this thesis while discussions of the factlet, factoid structure, the global XML schema, the use XML in the creation of historical narrative, the realisation of factlets and factoids within CRADLE, the digitisation of a number of primary documents, the Bundle Object and the creation of digital articles with boundary objects, all demonstrate the practical digital approach to the various stages of research implemented throughout this research. Yet, in what way can we measure the success or failure of these approaches? How do we measure how they helped or hindered the historical research? There is no other body of work to compare or contrast this thesis with. If I had implemented a different methodology would the historical result be any different? Perhaps these are unanswerable questions but are nevertheless important to consider if we are to advance the field of digital history or digital humanities. Digital history must be more than just digital curation and the preservation of historical material. Historians have a track record of engaging with new technologies and of experimenting with new methodologies and digital projects and those discussed are just a tiny representation of the digital humanities that exists but nevertheless provide evidence that historians are engaging in new approaches to history through digital means.

In many respects this thesis is an exercise in Le Roy Ladurie's subversive statement that - 'the historian of tomorrow will be a programmer or he will be nothing'. Le Roy Ladurie's assertion is provocative and while it may not reflect the contemporary use of digital technology within historical research, it may have relevance for future historians who are confronted with data abundance rather than scarcity and who may

find themselves engaging in digital archaeology to retrieve digital primary sources and artifacts. Modern computing is focused on accessibility and the developments of applications that non-expert users can utilise and engage with. In this sense researchers can add value to work without having to become as Le Roy Ladurie states, programmers. Yet the reality is that digital humanities, digital history and humanities computing are supporting the development of historians who are programmers. In this sense we must ask how their digital endeavors are supported in traditional academic departments and how these digital approaches to research are ascribed scholarly merit? How are logical algorithms and software engineering techniques recognised as part of historical research? Willard McCarthy describes humanities computing as a 'cultural change' but this cultural or paradigm shift must also occur in the humanities rather than adjacent to it as a separate discipline.

Other issues we dealt with considered the Web as offering a cornucopia of knowledge and while we have access to ever increasing amounts of information, traditional forms of scholarship presentation remain predominant. The production of static print documents or printed theses are an important aspect of research presentation and in many ways are part of the research process. However, we must engage in new forms of knowledge presentation in order to engage with the evolving field of digital history and digital technology. Everyday we are accumulating massive amounts of new, raw data, yet as we discussed our methods to consume this remain relatively the same. Researchers must engage in new research techniques such as data and text mining but to achieve this data must be open and in structured formats that allow semantic mining of knowledge and content. On the whole current practices for the production of electronic journal articles do not support data or text mining. This issue is raised by the Open Access movement who support the generation of open, peer reviewed articles which, through semantic encoding, can support activities such as data and cross collection mining.

Digital humanities and digital history is a constantly evolving field and methods and technology will inevitably change. However, the factlet and factoid structures are rooted in historical inquiry and in the functional movements historians make in argument development. The visualisation of factlets as factoids presents the user with the links and relationships between sources and help to visualise the complexities of interconnections between historical interpretation and historical sources. Factlets

encapsulate the researchers interpretations and present them in the context of the primary material, while factoids demonstrate the sequence of relationships between different sources, events, theories and people. In this sense these structures provide stability as they model particular behaviour rooted in historical inquiry which forgoes changes in technology.

We must take into account new technological advances and developments like HTML 5 which might change how the digital article is constructed in the Bundle object. As discussed both the PDF template and the digital template are only two representations of this research. The digital article can be expanded while the text remains. This, enabled by the XML encoding, provides stability to the historical content and while historians and writers may want to edit their content from time to time, this is easily facilitated in the Bundle Object - simply load a new XML source file. CRADLE uses these XML source files to present encoded articles related to this research and are presented within the environment of the historical sources.

The methods used and described in this thesis are but one approach to history in a digital humanities framework and while other techniques such as visualisation, GIS mapping and data mining may provide important digital dimensions, choices must be made, especially given the timeframe of PhD research. It is important however that we engage in exploration of new digital possibilities, to push the boundaries of historical research and the methods we use to support historical endeavour. Our anthropological discussions on 'voluntary associations' concluded that we should concentrate on 'association' and forget about the prefix 'voluntary'. However, for digital humanities, the 'humanities' can ill afford to disregard the prefix 'digital'.

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# Appendix

# User guide and documentation for the "Bundle" Object

Author: Sharon Webb

Abstract: This document is a user guide to explain the use of XSLT templates created to support multiple representations of scholarship, as detailed in DH2011 paper (Webb, Teehan, Keating) and further discussed in Webb's PhD thesis. Using a combination of XML, XSLT, XSL-FO, HTML, CSS and JavaScript we are able to build templates to create a PDF document and a digital article. It is this combination of documents which create the "Bundle" object, which can be loaded into the CRADLE environment and provide users access to the PDF and the digital article and any other template which we create within an environment that supports scholarly research and learning. This user guide has been created using the XML schema and XSLT templates which will now be discussed.

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## Introduction

This paper describes the methodology used to create multiple representation of and within PhD thesis, based on the DH2011 paper, 'The Born Digital Graduate: Multiple representations of and within Digital Humanities PhD theses'<sup>1</sup> and documents the methods used to create an XSL-FO template to create PDFs or print ready documents, and an XSLT template which creates a digital article.

The templates described here can be reused and modified under the Creative Commons licence, 'Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike CC BY-NC-SA', which allows users to 'remix, tweak, and build upon' work for non-commercial projects, as long as users credit this work 'and license their new creations under the identical terms'.<sup>2</sup> As such any user can reuse, add, modify or change any XML, XSD, XSLT, XSL-FO, CSS, HTML or JavaScript file. It is envisaged that any major updates or changes should be shared among the community of users and any new templates derived or developed from these should be shared and documented in the same manner as current templates. This ability to add, change and modify templates not only creates a dynamic learning environment but also makes templates such as these extensible and reusable and supports collaborative research.

In order to create the XML source documents to use with the XSLT we must specify a schema, we will take a brief look at this before moving on to dealing with the XSLT/XSL-FO template which controls the output of a PDF document and the XSLT template to create a digital article. The 'Bundle' object itself will then be considered.

## XML Schema and XML Source document

The XML schema used to create the source or input document for the XSLT, XSL-FO templates reuses the XML schema created to carry out research into the historical PhD theses, 'Associational culture and the development of Irish nationalism'. This schema is a generic schema (referred to as the global schema) and allows the user/researcher to document, store, query and reuse primary and secondary source material. Through the development and implementation of factlets and factoids, structured annotation and the visualisation of these, described in Webb and Keating's DH2009

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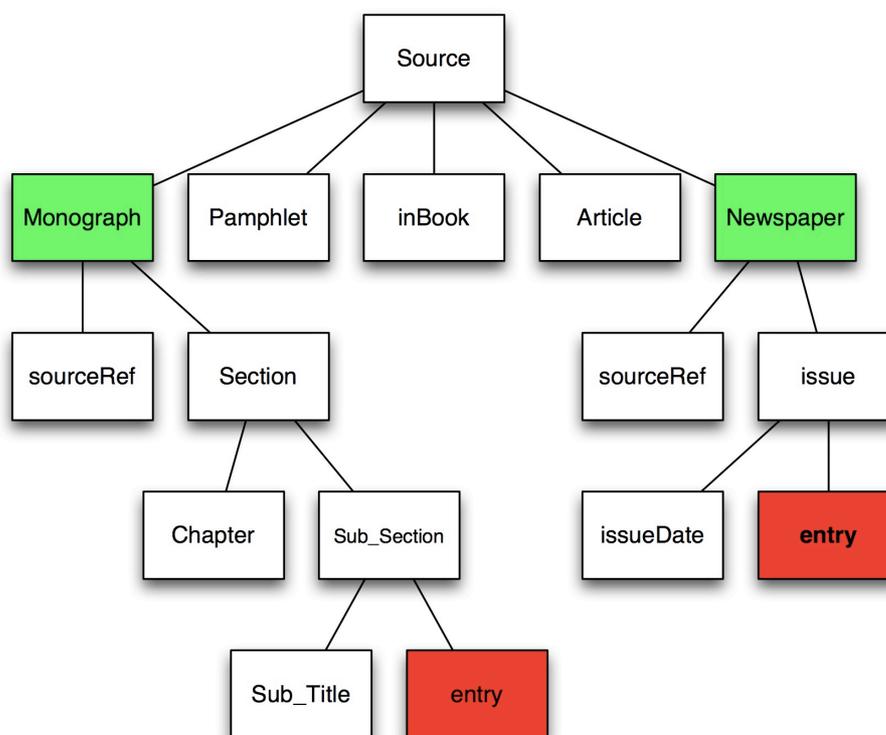
<sup>1</sup> Sharon Webb, Aja Teehan and John G. Keating , 'The Born Digital Graduate: Multiple representations of and within Digital Humanities PhD theses' at DH2011 (Stanford, 20 June 2011)

<sup>2</sup> 'Creative Commons, about the license' available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/> (22 July 2011)

paper<sup>3</sup> and implemented and developed in CRADLE, users can utilise the same XML structures for all stages of research, e.g. source gathering, argument development and content presentation.<sup>4</sup> Indeed the CRADLE environment supports all three of these activities and features such as discussion forums and the ability of new users to add factlets, and in so doing new interpretations, extends the scholarly process and creates a dynamic relationship between primary content, interpretations and define various communities of users e.g. teacher-student, or peer-review.

The figure below is a skeleton representation of the full schema but illustrates some of the basic elements and tags used. 'Entry' represents a common tag used across all source types and the 'Monograph' element is used to create the XML source document for the XSL-FO, XSLT templates.

Figure 1 - Simplified XML tree map of the global schema



This tree map defines the basic structure of the global schema. 'Entry' is common to all child elements of 'Source' and 'Monograph' is used to text encode the source for the 'Bundle' object.

Although works encoded are not monographs the global\_schema.xsd, which was used in preliminary research into the historical thesis uses 'monograph' when considering secondary works and as a thesis also follows the same structure e.g chapters,

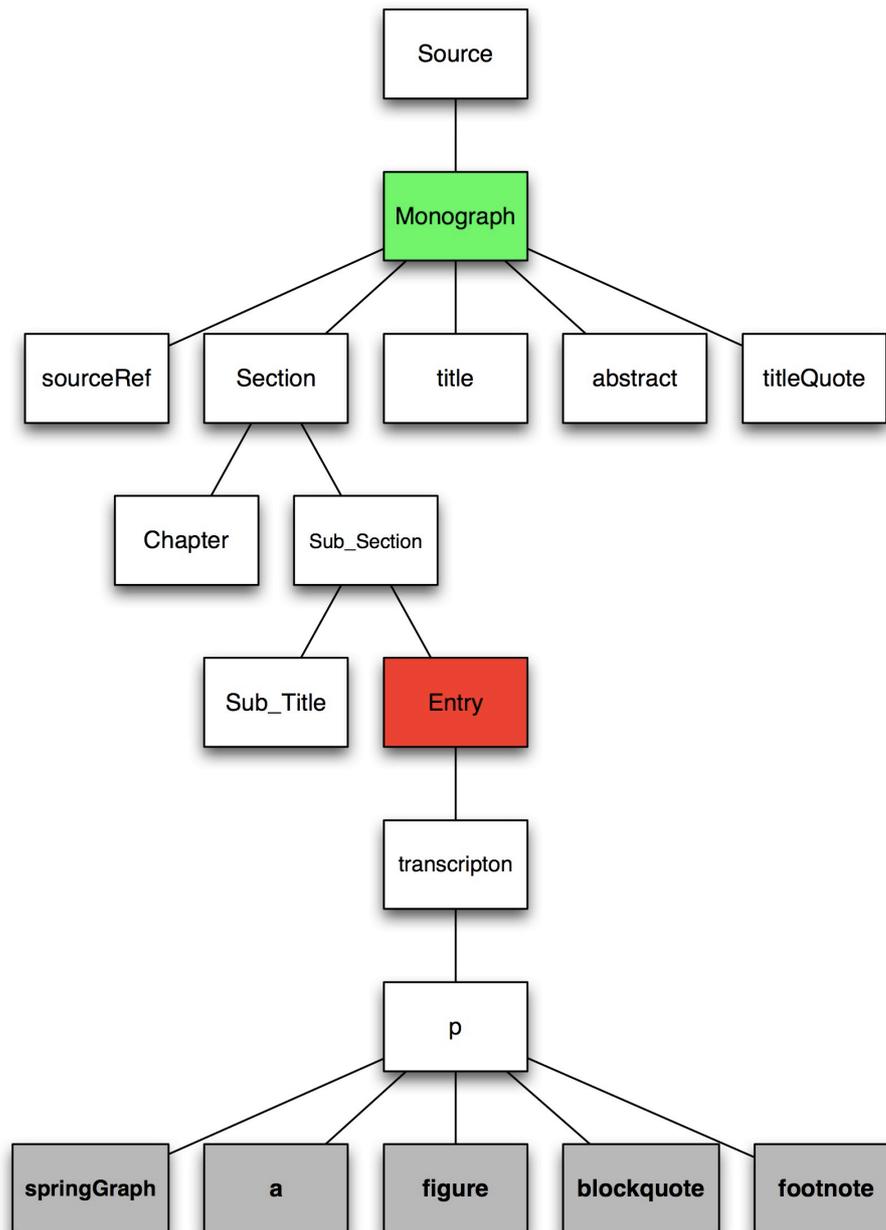
<sup>3</sup> Sharon Webb and John G. Keating , 'MIHS - Text mining historical sources using factoids at DH2009 (University of Maryland, 25 June 2009)

<sup>4</sup> Webb, Teehan & Keating, 'The born digital graduate'

sections, etc. the encoded articles use the same schema, not only because they follow the same structure but because it reuses a schema that already exists within this research.

The XML source document follows the same structure and the following figure represent the structure which is required in order to use the templates supplied.

Figure 2 - Simplified XML tree map of the input document



This tree map outlines the basic structure of the schema to encode the XML Source document.

As shown above, the 'a' element controls the use of boundary objects such as keystones and timelines while 'springgraph' creates a graph linked to CRADLE in the digital article and illustrates the relationship between specific digital objects and factlets within a collection. These features are only available in the digital article,

while blockquote and 'a' elements of type 'image' are visible both in the digital article and the PDF version. 'Footnote' is also used to create both footnotes references and a bibliography.

The above figure illustrates the tags and elements used to create this article and a number of other articles, which are hosted in the CRADLE environment, including, 'The Hist and radical politics'.

The footnote element is perhaps on of the most important elements. It controls both the generation of footnotes and the bibliography. In this instance the footnotes and the bibliography generates content which adheres to the *IHS* rules for contribution. To produce different stylistics simply add templates to the existing documents. As the footnote manages both the production of footnotes and the bibliography, the XML source code must follow the following rules;

- The first reference to a book, article, etc., must state the full bibliographic details and use the various elements e.g. <author>, <publicationDetails>, etc. See figure below. The details provided below are used to create both the footnote and the bibliographic information. The first reference to a work must contain the attribute *bib*, which tells the XSLT how to process the reference, all other reference to this work does not contain the *bib* attribute and so is ignored by the XSLT template that creates the bibliography i.e. it is not repeated in the bibliography.

Figure 3 - Screen capture 'User\_guide.xml' - 1st Reference to Pawson

```
<blockquote>- <i>Layout-master</i>; 'wraps the page specification'  
<footnote bib='book'><author><firstName>Dave</firstName> <surname>Pawson</surname></author>,  
<book>XSL-FO</book> (<publicationDetails>U.S.A., 2002</publicationDetails>), p. 11.</footnote>  
for each page template as specified below. Each <i>fo:simple-page-master</i>  
defines a page layout for a specific part of the  
document e.g. the main body or the bibliography.</blockquote>
```

- Any subsequent references to a work which require a footnote, depending on the previous footnote can use the abbreviated version and does not require the full bibliographic encoding, see below

Figure 4 - Screen capture 'User\_guide.xml' - a subsequent reference to Pawson

```
<p><blockquote>According to Pawson <i>fo:flow</i> is 'intended to supply content  
for the region-body, and as content is consumed, it  
will not be reused', whereas <i>fo:static-content</i> 'are  
reusable content chunks, capable of customization,  
which is normally derivative of the specific page that  
they are currently addressing to provide content for region-start and region-end', e.g.  
header and footer.<footnote>Ibid., p. 46.</footnote>
```

A full example of a source document which contains more examples of footnotes etc. is viewable in [CRADLE](#), "Learning:4" - The Hist and radical politics and should be viewed to gain a greater understanding of the schema used.

## The creation and use of XSL-FO [File: 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml']

XSL-FO is used to create a PDF of the XML source document described above. It creates a print ready document which uses XSLT to extract information from the XML file and XSL-FO to format the page size, layout, headers, footers, page numbers, images, etc. The XSL-FO stylesheet described here creates an A4 document which dynamically generates the front page, table of contents, content with automatically generated footnotes and embedded images and figures, a dynamically generated bibliography and a glossary of terms.

The XSL-FO stylesheet can be broken into two parts - the *fo:root* which controls the layout and from which all template calls are made and the XSLT template matches.

From *fo:root* we can specify the page sequence, page size, layout, etc., and while we can add static content here, we use an external XML source document in order to create reusable templates. *Fo:root* contains the following:

- *Layout-master*; 'wraps the page specification'<sup>5</sup> for each page template as specified below. Each *fo:simple-page-master* defines a page layout for a specific part of the document e.g. the main body or the bibliography.

Figure 5 - Screen capture 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml' - layout master

```
<!-- layout master, defines the margins, page size etc. of each document section.-->
<fo:layout-master-set>
  <!-- FrontPage -->
  <fo:simple-page-master master-name="frontPage" page-height="29.7cm" page-width="21cm"> [5 lines]
  <!-- Table of Contents -->
  <fo:simple-page-master master-name="toc" page-height="29.7cm" page-width="21cm"> [4 lines]
  <!-- Main Body of Text -->
  <fo:simple-page-master master-name="sections" page-height="29.7cm" page-width="21cm"> [4 lines]
  <!-- Bibliography -->
  <fo:simple-page-master master-name="bibliography" page-width="21cm" page-height="29.7cm"> [4 lines]
  <!-- Glossary of Terms -->
  <fo:simple-page-master master-name="glossary" page-width="21cm" page-height="29.7cm"> [4 lines]
</fo:layout-master-set>
```

So for example *frontPage* is an A4 document with a specific margin layout. Each page in a FO template is broken down into sections consisting of the *region-body* - the main body, *region-after* - the region after the body where footnotes can be placed, *region-before* - the region before the body where headers can be placed. The figure below shows the page set up defined for *frontPage*.

Figure 6 - Screen capture 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml' - frontPage Master

```
<fo:simple-page-master master-name="frontPage" page-height="29.7cm" page-width="21cm">
  <fo:region-body region-name="xsl-region-body" margin-right="1in"
    margin-left="1.5in" margin-bottom="0.78" margin-top="2in"/>
  <fo:region-before extent="0.7in" region-name="xsl-region-before"/>
  <fo:region-after extent="0.7in" region-name="xsl-region-after"/>
</fo:simple-page-master>
```

---

<sup>5</sup> Dave Pawson, *XSL-FO* (U.S.A., 2002), p. 11.

- *Page-sequence*; specifies the order in which the page masters should be processed. From here we can control text formatting and specify the use of page numbers and their positioning on the page. *Fo-flow* controls the page region, so for example *xsl-region-body* below states that we should process the template matches for *ChapterTitle* and places the result in the body of the page.

Figure 7 - Screen capture 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml' - frontPage, page sequence

```
<!-- Front page -->
<fo:page-sequence master-reference="frontPage">
  <fo:flow flow-name="xsl-region-body" font-family="Times">
    <xsl:call-template name="ChapterTitle"/>
    <xsl:call-template name="Abstract"/>
    <xsl:call-template name="Subject"/>
  </fo:flow>
</fo:page-sequence>
```

According to Pawson *fo:flow* is 'intended to supply content for the region-body, and as content is consumed, it will not be reused', whereas *fo:static-content* 'are reusable content chunks, capable of customization, which is normally derivative of the specific page that they are currently addressing to provide content for region-start and region-end', e.g. header and footer.<sup>6</sup> Page numbers, etc., are derived content and only exist because of the content displayed in *fo:flow*. The table of contents page sequence uses the *fo:static-content* to generate the page numbers and extracts derived information from *fo:flow* which uses the XSLT template *toc* to generate the dynamic table of contents.

Figure 8 - Screen capture 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml' - Table of Contents, page sequence

```
<!-- Table of contents -->
<fo:page-sequence master-reference="toc" initial-page-number="1" format="I"
  font-family="Times"
  font-size="12"
  text-align="justify"
  line-height="2">
  <!-- we use content flows to indicate the stream of content, static content and flow -->
  <fo:static-content flow-name="xsl-region-after">
    <fo:block text-align="center">
      <fo:page-number/>
    </fo:block>
  </fo:static-content>
  <fo:flow flow-name="xsl-region-body">
    <fo:block>
      <xsl:apply-templates select="/" mode="toc"/>
    </fo:block>
  </fo:flow>
</fo:page-sequence>
```

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

The *page-sequence* defines the order in which the content should be processed and formatted and it is the template match, called from each page-sequence, which controls the output of content. While some content is easily generated, e.g. a paragraph, mixed content, i.e. a paragraph with footnotes, anchors, images, etc., need to be controlled and handled with more complicated XSLT templates. The dynamic creation of footnotes and a bibliography requires an XSLT template which handles the generation of page numbers, footnote numbers, etc. The PDF template can also handle to use of images, specified in the XML source code as <figure> of type image. The digital article handles <figure>'s of type timeline but as these are generated using html they are not included in the PDF version. The template automatically generates figure numbers. Another feature of the digital article, the use of tool tips or keystones, are used within the PDF version to create a glossary of terms and as such reuses content that is available. The use of external content such as the images and keystones are controlled by using separate, external XML files. In this way content can be re-used within various articles and resources.

Template matches control the content and are used in conjunction with *fo:block* and *fo:inline*, which define blocks of output. *fo:block* is usually used to define chunks of text like a page or paragraph, within which *fo:inline* can be used to define a block of text within the parent. The template match below, which controls the content output of the footnote, uses other fo structures to define chunks of text, e.g. *fo:footnote* and *fo:footnote-body* and are specifically designed to handle the dynamic generation of footnotes.

Figure 9 - Screen capture 'PDF\_A4\_template.xsl' - footnote template match

```
<xsl:template match="footnote">
  <fo:footnote>
    <fo:inline font-size="0.5em" baseline-shift="super"> [2 lines]
    <fo:footnote-body>
      <fo:list-block provisional-distance-between-starts="20pt" provisional-label-separation="5pt"
        text-indent="0.1" margin-bottom="2">
        <fo:list-item> [11 lines]
      </fo:list-block>
    </fo:footnote-body>
  </fo:footnote>
</xsl:template>
```

A combination of *fo:block* and *fo:inline* are used to create bibliographic references which contain different stylistics for different elements e.g. an article in italics and conditional statements in XSLT are used to control the output of content.

Figure 10 - Screen capture 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml' - part of the bibliography template match

```

<xsl:if test="@bib='journal'">
  <fo:block space-after="1em">
    <xsl:choose>
      <xsl:when test="author">
        <xsl:value-of select="author/surname"/>,&#160;<xsl:value-of select="author/firstName"/>
      <!-- a work with multiple authors, test the existence of multiple authors and then define the specific presentation requirements -->
      <fo:inline>
        <xsl:choose>
          <xsl:when test="author2">
            <xsl:choose>
              <xsl:when test="author3">,<xsl:value-of select="author2/surname"/>,
              <xsl:value-of select="author2/firstName"/> and <xsl:value-of select="author3/surname"/>,
              <xsl:value-of select="author3/firstName"/>,
            </xsl:when>
            <xsl:otherwise>
              and <xsl:value-of select="author2/surname"/>,<xsl:value-of select="author2/firstName"/>,
            </xsl:otherwise>
          </xsl:choose>
        </xsl:when>
        <xsl:otherwise,&#160;</xsl:otherwise>
      </xsl:choose>
    </fo:inline>
  </xsl:when>
  <xsl:choose>
    <fo:inline><xsl:value-of select="article"/>' in <fo:inline font-style="italic"><xsl:value-of select="journal"/>
    </fo:inline><xsl:if test="vol"><fo:inline,&#160;<xsl:value-of select="vol"/></fo:inline><xsl:if test="num"><fo:inline,&#160;<xsl:value-of select="num"/></fo:inline><xsl:if test="pp"><fo:inline,&#160;<xsl:value-of select="pp"/></fo:inline><xsl:if test="pageNum"><fo:inline,&#160;<xsl:value-of select="pageNum"/></fo:inline>
  </fo:inline>
</fo:block>
</xsl:if>

```

Other templates handle the presentation of *blockquotes* which are encoded in the XML source document, while template matches for *Chapter*, *Sub\_title*, *Sub\_Section*, etc., provide formatting instructions to control the flow of sections in the document and also handle to start of a new chapter. Other features include internal document linking from the table of contents page to the various sections in the document and an external document linking is implemented in the footnotes with access to external websites.

In order to use the 'PDF\_A4\_template' the user is first required to encode the source XML file using the 'global\_schema.xml' and specifying the 'monograph' element. This document has been encoded using this schema and can be used as an example, while 'hist\_paper.xml' can also be used and provides a more thorough example of the various footnotes.

It is important to note however that this template may need to be altered or features added as required by the user. Templates and formatting are specific to guidelines set out by the History Department at NUI Maynooth and users may need to change page layout, margins, font, etc.

### XSLT template to create a digital article [File: digital\_article.xml]

The digital article is created using the same XML source document and includes additional boundary objects such as timelines, springGraphs and key-stones or tool tips. The 'digital\_article.xml' uses external CSS and JavaScript files which controls presentation and adds functionality. The digital article also automatically generates a table of contents and footnotes which are both hyperlinked to the section and footnote reference, respectively.

Similar to the PDF template where the *fo:root* is the main body from which all XSLT templates are called, the digital article uses the html tag, <body> to generate the main sections of the web page. The various 'divs' control the table of contents, footnotes, etc., while <div id = 'mainContent'> with an <xsl:apply-templates/> controls the output of the main body of text, images, figures, timeline, etc. If a user requires any additional html features a new XSLT template will be required which specifies the HTML tags and uses XSLT to specify the content extracted from the XML source document. As with the 'PDF\_A4\_template.xml' the 'digital\_article.xml' contains comments for the reader and should be used in order to gain a better understanding of the techniques and methods described here.

As already discussed, a glossary of terms is created in the PDF document however this glossary of terms was extracted from a feature originally only designed for the digital article and was in fact an additional feature derived from the key-stone boundary object. The keystone is presented as hover text in the digital article and provides extra contextual information for the reader. These keystones or tool tips are created in a new XML document, external to the source XML. 'keystones.xml' contains the data which populates the floating or hover div when the XML source file refers to an id specific to a particular subject in keystones.xml. New subjects can be added to this list by new users and it is implemented using JavaScript and CSS. The figure below uses the external XML document as a variable and creates the div which is hidden until the user hovers over the tagged piece of text, while the proceeding figure controls when the div is visible to the user. Indeed the pdf version underlines the text which is explained in the glossary.

Figure 11 - Screen capture 'digital\_article.xml' - template which controls the generation of keystones as hover text

```

<xsl:template match="p">
  <p><xsl:apply-templates/></p>
  <!-- controls the generation of the hover divs which give extra contextual information to the reader -->
  <xsl:for-each select="$keystones/collection/keystone">
    <xsl:variable name="id"><xsl:value-of select="@id"/></xsl:variable>
    <xsl:variable name="subject"><xsl:value-of select="subject"/></xsl:variable>
    <xsl:variable name="content"><xsl:value-of select="transcription"/></xsl:variable>
    <div class="hoverText" id="{ $id }">
      <h4><xsl:value-of select="$subject"/></h4>
      <p><xsl:value-of select="$content"/></p>
    </div>
  </xsl:for-each>
</xsl:template>

```

Figure 12 - Screen capture 'digital\_article.xml' - template which controls when a pop up div...pops Up!

```
<!-- to create the popup div -->
<xsl:template match="p//a">
  <xsl:if test="@type = 'keystone'">
    <xsl:variable name="keystones">
      <xsl:value-of select="@id"/>
    </xsl:variable>
    <a class="keystone" onmouseover="ShowContent('{${keystones}'}'); return true;"
      onmouseout="HideContent('{${keystones}'}'); return true;"
      href="javascript:ShowContent('{${keystones}'}')">
      <xsl:value-of select="."/>
    </a>
  </xsl:if>
```

Another feature of the digital article is the creation of static timelines. Again an external XML document, 'timeLine.xml', controls the content of the timeline and users can also add to this. Timelines are tagged as <figures> with an attribute type=timeline, a figure can also be an image, type=image, in fact this is what controls the screen captures and images presented in this user guide.

Since the Bundle object is as an object within CRADLE, the digital article also allows cross referencing between relationship graphs in CRADLE and the digital article. This feature demonstrates to the user the existence of a digital object and any factlets or factoids generated for the digital objects contained in the system. See below for example code.

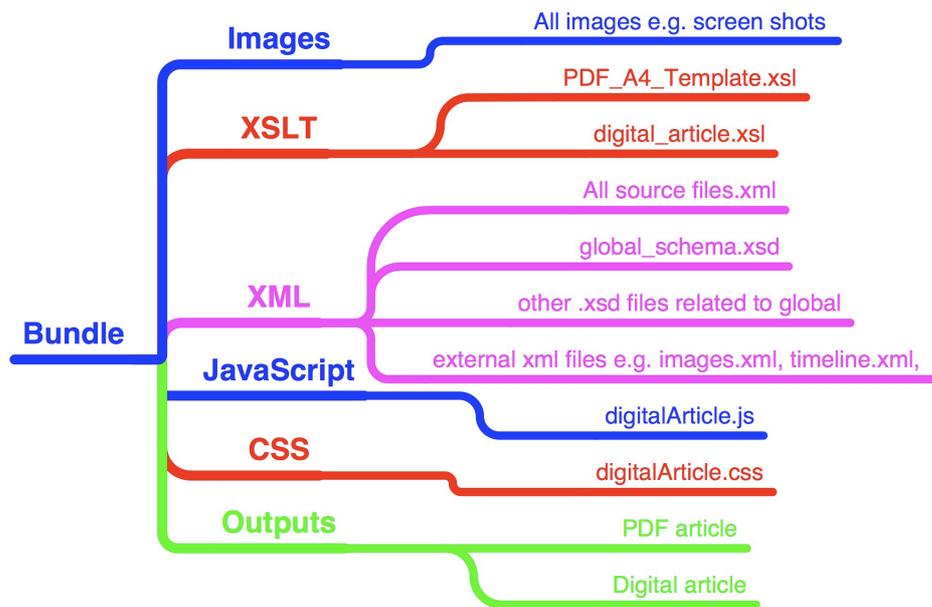
Figure 13 - Screen capture 'digital\_article.xml' - template which controls the generation of the springGraph derived from CRADLE

```
<xsl:template match="p//springGraph">
  <xsl:variable name="ids"><xsl:value-of select="ids"/></xsl:variable>
  <xsl:variable name="source">http://tomcat.dev.forasfeasa.ie/repository/sgraph/public?ids=<xsl:value-of select="ids"/>
    &amp;w=850&amp;h=510</xsl:variable>
  <div>
    <br/>
    <h4 style="text-align:center"><xsl:value-of select="title"/></h4>
    <iframe src="{${source}}" width="100%" height="80%" style="text-align:center"/>
  </div>
</xsl:template>
```

## The Bundle Object

The Bundle Object simply refers to all the code that is required to produce the A4 PDF article and the digital article which can then be used by the CRADLE environment to upload and host any documents or web pages produced using the templates described above. The Bundle Object has the following files;

Figure 14 - Visualisation of the Bundle Object and all its files



These templates were created using Apache FOP, a FO processor and Oxygen, the XML editor which uses the XSLT processor Saxon6.5.5.

## Bibliography

### Secondary Sources

'Creative Commons, about the license' available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/> (22 July 2011).

Pawson, Dave, *XSL-FO* (U.S.A., 2002)

Webb, Sharon, Teehan, Aja and Keating, John G., 'The Born Digital Graduate: Multiple representations of and within Digital Humanities PhD theses' at DH2011 (Stanford, 20 June 2011)

Webb, Sharon and Keating, John G., 'MIHS - Text mining historical sources using factoids' at DH2009 (University of Maryland, 25 June 2009)

## Glossary of terms

- **Creative Commons** ; From the Creative Commons website, 'The Creative Commons copyright licenses and tools forge a balance inside the traditional "all rights reserved" setting that copyright law creates. Our tools give everyone from individual creators to large companies and institutions a simple, standardized way to grant copyright permissions to their creative work. The combination of our tools and our users is a vast and growing digital commons, a pool of content that can be copied, distributed, edited, remixed, and built upon, all within the boundaries of copyright law.' Visit [www.http://creativecommons.org/](http://creativecommons.org/)

- **CRADLE - Collaborate Research Archive Discover Learn Engage** ; A digital repository and research and learning environment developed at An Foras Feasa.

- **Factlets** ; Factlets are structured annotations which prompt users to follow the functional and genre specific steps taken to produce historical writing. The factlet structure considers the genre of narrative, deduction and consequence and reflect the researchers interpretation of cultural objects or artifacts and provides a means to preserve transparency between "facts of the past" and "facts of history". Linked to specific digital objects public factlets can be used as a research and teaching tool which can demonstrate to users and scholars how a specific interpretation or conclusion was drawn. Private factlets then can help inform scholarly writing, while the use of Factoids visually represent the relationship between objects and demonstrates the intricate links and interconnections between sources and historical research and argument derived from this. Factlet structure explained: Narrative: 'logical' rather than 'ideological', what Caroline Coffin terms historical recount, the logical information contained in the text that contribute to a narrative of the past. Deduction: draws 'out the significance of the' 'evidence', part of challenge genre, 'ideological rather than logical', this can draw on 'narrative' or the original text, and contains historical interpretations or deductions based on the document in question. Consequence: part of explanation genre, (thinking in the abstract), cause and effect (consequence)

- **Factoids** ; Factoids utilise factlets to bring together different types of related information. Just as a factlet preserves part of the historical process, factoids demonstrate the explicit links and relations historians make between various sources, people, events etc. which are not always explicit in the sources themselves. Defining links and relationships between different types of sources allows the user to shape historical arguments based on a particular premise or theses. Yet, rather than historical "fact", the factoids structure presents both the 'fact' as it exists independently and the 'fact' as it exists through interpretation. Factoids, posited by John Bradley and Harold Short for the representation and management of information extracted from text for prosopography purposes,

is a simple method which connect "different kinds of structured information". The term factoid may be perceived as a misnomer, as one definition ironically defines it as a fact, that the fact, is not a fact. The contradictions associated with the use of this term are well known and somewhat celebrated as a curious reminder of the faith historians, endow in "factual" information. Factoids reflect the "historian's worry when a tiny extract is taken out of the context of a larger text and the historical period in which it was written and presented as a 'fact'". (Bradley & Short, Texts into database: the evolving field of new-style Prosopography, 2005)

- **Test to demonstrate the use of keystones.** ;

- **XSL-FO** ; XSL-FO is a mark-up language used to format XML documents and can output high quality print ready documents in PDF or TeX format and as such is often described as a type-setting language or specification. XSL-FO is part of the XSL suite of mark-up languages and is used in conjunction with XSLT to create print ready documents. You can create a XSL-FO document by simply using the FO specification or by using an XML source document along with an XSLT stylesheet, which then uses an XSLT engine to create the XSL-FO document. Once you have the XSL-FO document you must use an XSL-FO formatter or processor to create the final output document. It is preferable to use XML as the source code, rather than embedding content and presentation in a hard-coded XSL-FO document, in order to keep presentation and content separate and make the content reusable.

## Extracts from XML files which use the global schema.

### - Newspaper

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<Source xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
  xsi:schemaLocation="http://www.mihs/sources_global_schema.xsd"
  xmlns="http://www.mihs/sources">
<newspaper>
  <sourceRef>FJ</sourceRef>

  <issue>
    <issueDate norm="24-10-1789">24-10/27-10-1789</issueDate>
    <entry id="FJ.9">
      <page>3</page>
      <clubSociety ref="C.10">Historical Society of Trinity College</clubSociety>
      <Editorial_Type>general news</Editorial_Type>
      <transcription>
        <p>Last Wednesday the Historical Society of Trinity College met for the first time since the commencement of the long
          vacation, after the usual business,the Society proceeded to ballot for a Secretary, in the place of the late
            <person individualRef="I.13">Mr William Bruce</person>, when <person individualRef="I.14">Mr Logan</person>
              Assistant [Accompt---], was declared duly elected</p>
      </transcription>
      <subject>
        <key>club/society</key><key>meetings</key><key>members</key>
      </subject>
    </entry>
  </issue>
```

<issue>

<issueDate norm="31-07-1790">31-07/03-08-1790</issueDate>

<entry id="FJ.90">

<page>4</page>

<clubSociety ref="C.4">Volunteers</clubSociety>

<Editorial\_Type>general news</Editorial\_Type>

<transcription>

<p>The reports given out for a few days past, that the Volunteers in all the country parts, were again arming, has no foundation in truth such arms only exist in the thorny porcupine heads of a factious party in Dublin. The original Volunteers, the country gentlemen and the respectable individuals of the interior parts of this kingdom, who once armed in defence of their country, have too much respect for their own peaceful security, to aid the purposes of those who would aim at destroying the happiness of that country; - they are too much the men who have property at stake, to mind the ribald voice and indiscriminate suggestions of those who have no property to hazard, no character to maintain, no principle to avow, as the guide of their actions.</p>

</transcription>

<factlet factletRef="FJ.90.f1">

<narrative>

<p>The Volunteers are reported to be arming again, yet, it is stated that the original Volunteers were &quot;gentlemen and respectable individuals&quot;</p>

</narrative>

<deduction>

<p>If there is any truth in this re-arming, the report states that it would only be from the &quot;factious&quot; parties in Dublin. There was a tradition of regional Volunteers e.g. Ulster Volunteers, etc., but this report seeks to disassociate them - see quote below</p>

<p><t value="quote">And in what school of politics, gentlemen, have you learned that it will serve the cause of Irish liberty to continue the distinction of Protestant and Catholic Volunteers, and thus perpetuate a division industriously fomented by the [apo.. ] of bigotry and the hirelings of a distracted government?</t><t value="link\_file">FJ.7</t></p>

</deduction>

<consequence>

<p/>

```
</consequence>
<fSubject>
  <key>political</key><key>volunteers</key><key>armies</key><key>contested_identity</key>
</fSubject>
<date_stamp>09-12-2009</date_stamp>
</factlet>
<subject>
  <key>volunteers</key><key>armies</key><key>militarism</key>
</subject>
</entry>
<entry id="FJ.91">
  <page>4</page>
  <Editorial_Type>general news</Editorial_Type>
  <transcription>
    <p>Ashamed of the [saucepan] manufacture of cockades, many of these men in
      uniform, who appeared last Sunday at the <t value="place">Phoenix Park</t>,
      thought proper to wear a cockade of green silk, with the Irish Harp, stamped
      at each corner. Thus, most of them have already got ashamed of their
      political tinkering.</p>
  </transcription>
  <factlet factletRef="FJ.91.f1">
    <narrative><p/> </narrative>
    <deduction>
      <p>Not sure if this report is associated with the previous report <t
        value="link_file">FJ.90</t>, and Volunteers or with other military
        activity at the time or with corporation perambulations.</p>
    </deduction>
    <consequence><p/> </consequence>

    <fSubject>
      <key>political</key>
      <key>corporations</key>
```

```

        <newKey>material_culture</newKey>
    </fSubject>
    <date_stamp>09-12-2009</date_stamp>
</factlet>
<subject>
    <key>corporations</key>
    <key>political</key>
    <key>material_culture</key>
    <key>meetings</key>
</subject>
</entry>

</issue>
</newspaper>

```

## - Hist Journals

```

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<Source xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
    xsi:schemaLocation="http://www.mihs/sources_global_schema.xsd"
    xmlns="http://www.mihs/sources">
    <!-- HIST.3 -->
    <manuscript>
        <sourceRef>HIST.3</sourceRef>
        <entry id="HIST.3.1">
            <page>438</page>
            <clubSociety ref="C.10">Historical Society</clubSociety>
            <date norm_date="19-01-1780">19-01-1780</date>
            <transcription>
                <p>[Saurin] in the Chair</p>
                <p>...</p>
            </transcription>
        </entry>
    </manuscript>
</Source>

```

<p>History being concluded, the Question of Debate was read from the chairs as follows;</p>

<p><question>Whether Ireland could possible subsist independent of any other Nation?</question></p>

<p><answer>And the question being put was passed in the negative. On a division, the Ayes were 9, the Noes were

14<answer>

</p>

</transcription>

<factlet factletRef="HIST.3.1.f2">

<narrative><p/> </narrative>

<deduction>

<p>The question of debate indicates that Ireland cannot exist without not just any nation per se but without England. Members conclude that it cannot but with only 5 votes in the difference it is certainly not an overwhelming majority that believe this to be the case.</p>

</deduction>

<consequence><p/></consequence>

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<entry id="HIST.3.2">

<page>440</page>

<date norm\_date="26-01-1780">26-01-1780</date>

<transcription>

<p><Mr Ball in the Chair</p>

<p>...</p>

<p>...</p>

<p><question>Whether it would tend to the Advancement of Public liberty, that laws should be enacted by the votes of the People at large?</question></p>

<p><answer>And the question being put, it passed in the Negative without a Division.</answer></p>

</transcription>

<subject>  
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<entry id="HIST.3.3">

<page>446</page>

<date norm\_date="02-02-1780">02-02-1780</date>

<transcription>

<p>Mr. Burrowes in the Chair</p>

<p>...</p>

<p>...</p>

<p><resolution>3rd Resolved, That it is the opinion of the Committee that in the study of Modern History, the society ought to confine themselves to the History of Great Britain.</resolution></p>

</transcription>

<factlet factletRef="HIST.3.3.f1">

<narrative>

<p>The resolutions of the society outline the type of history that they should and should not pursue. It lists the texts that they should consider, including <t value="publication">&quot;Humes History of England from the beginning of the Reign of Henry the 7th - to the Revolution in 1688...&quot;</t>.</p>

</narrative>

<deduction>

<p>The society endeavors to study only the history of Great Britain and no where mentions Ireland. Is the history of Ireland being ignored as subservient to that of Britain or is this a deliberate attempt to locate their identity within English history or simply a case of looking at an &apos;interesting&apos; history?</p>

<p>[Schoolbooks in the 1840s commissioned by the board did not teach Irish history although they were non-denominational.]</p>

</deduction>

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    <p>A general observation of the proceedings and resolutions of the society show
      a high degree of decorum presented. Many resolutions deal with punishing
      members through monetary fines for not asking permission to leave the
      society, for not taking the Chair or for not providing a question to debate.
    </p>
  </narrative>
  <deduction>
    <p>The resolutions reflect the formality of this society.</p>
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  <page>454</page>
  <date norm_date="23-02-1780">23-02-1780</date>
  <transcription>
    <p>Mr Marshall in the Chair</p>
    <p><question>Whether the practice of Duelling be of Advantage to Society?</question></p>
```

<p><answer>And the question being put was passed in the Negative. On a division. The Ayes were 9, The Noes were 13.</answer></p>

</transcription>

<factlet factletRef="HIST.3.4.f1">

<narrative> <p/></narrative>

<deduction>

<p>Does this reflect a sentiment of improving society?</p>

<p>Dueling is discussed in <linkFile sourceRef="P.11">Ireland Sixty years ago</linkFile> and Trinity College students are mentioned as active participants.</p>

</deduction>

<consequence><p/></consequence>

<fSubject>

<key>proceedings</key><key>club/society</key><key>improving\_societies</key>

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<date\_stamp>28-10-2009</date\_stamp>

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<entry id="HIST.3.5">

<page>457</page>

<date norm\_date="01-03-1780">01-03-1780</date>

<transcription>

<p>Mr Cuthbertson in the Chair.</p>

<p>...</p>

<p><question>Whether the power lodged in the King of dissolving the Parliament at pleasure, is not derogatory of the Privileges of a Free people?</question></p>

<p><answer>And the question being put, it passed in the Negative. On a division, the Ayes were 7, the Noes were 19.</answer></p>

</transcription>

<factlet factletRef="HIST.3.5.f1">

<narrative>

<p>What free people are they referring to here?</p>

</narrative>

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