

HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITÄT ZU BERLIN
CENTRE FOR BRITISH STUDIES
SUPERVISOR: DR. HEATHER ELLIS /DR. GEORGIA CHRISTINIDIS

MASTER THESIS

FROM EIRE TO ALBA: IRISH IMMIGRATION INTO
SCOTLAND
POLITICS, RELIGION AND IDENTITY BETWEEN
1850 AND 1922

CRISTINA ROMAN

Statutory Declaration

I hereby declare that I have written this thesis on my own, without anyone else's help. I have also, to the best of my knowledge, acknowledged the sources of all passages and ideas used, and have placed in quotation marks all quotes used verbatim. I have used no other sources or aids than those indicated.

This thesis contains 19,985 words.

Cristina Roman, Berlin, 17th April 2010

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Introduction

In trying to locate the Irish diaspora, Mary J. Hickman has stressed an important feature in the development of diasporic communities: “[...] diaspora provides a ‘third space’, an alternative public sphere, which includes both identification from the outside, and permanent living inside the national time-space.” (Hickman 2002:9)

This was also the case for the Irish community in Scotland. The present paper is an attempt at analysing the interrelation of the key aspects of Irish identity, politics and religion within a Scottish context. The analysis is based mainly on historical facts, but also includes the sociological concept of Otherness in order to demonstrate how in two particular instances the notion of Irishness was constructed by Scottish institutions.

The choice for the period set between 1850 and 1922 is rooted in the generally-accepted assertion that it was only with the second half of the 19th century that Irish immigration to Scotland had occurred. This, as shall be shown in the first chapter, is a fallacy. The year 1922 relates to Ireland and the creation of the Irish Free State, but also to the ensuing Irish Civil War. Richard Finlay has argued that in terms of identity this was also the year that clearly marked the transition from the Irish community to a Scoto-Irish minority due to the detachment from the concomitant unfortunate events in Ireland (cf. Finlay 2004 :124). Whether this was a coercive effect from other external factors will be analysed in Chapter 3.

In terms of locating the Irish community in Scotland the focus is narrowed down to the western part of the country, with the Clydeside in particular and, implicitly, the city of Glasgow. There are several reasons for this: it was there that the majority of the Irish immigrants chose to settle even prior to the 1850s and the Irish Famine (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 23); it was also in the west of Scotland that the Chartist and Home Rule movements would strike the most resonant chords both with the Irish supporters and their stark opponents (cf. McCaffrey 1998: 75); most of the Roman Catholic parishes and schools were built in the west of Scotland (cf. Bruce 2004:10); and last but not least, it was in the west of Scotland that most allegations for Sinn Fein support were made (cf. NAS HH55/62). The analysis will therefore take into account the relationships fostered by the Irish community with

both the host country and Ireland (in its role as the ancestral homeland), as well as the ones maintained by the west of Scotland with the province Ulster.

Chapter 1 examines the circumstances in which Irish immigration occurred in the west of Scotland and also the side-effects of the process of industrialisation which affected not only the new incomers, but also the Scottish skilled population. This, in turn, as T.M. Devine has observed, led to the outset of a unique phenomenon within the European 19th-century context, i.e. “the Scottish paradox.” (ed. Devine 1992:1).

With no representation of their own the Irish community in the west of Scotland relied on British parties to make their voices heard. The second part of the 19th century was thus mainly a period for Liberal support for the Home Rule movement, after which the community’s endorsement of the Labour party in the early 20th century is almost taken for granted. Chapter 2 will demonstrate that the Home Rule movement in Britain and Ireland had a precedent prior to the 1850s (cf. 2006: 273) and will also focus on the intricacies surrounding the voting patterns of the Irish immigrants from the two opposite religious spectrums.

The anti-Catholic rhetoric was not solely confined to the political landscape. As will be shown in Chapter 3, a lot of uproar was caused within the Church of Scotland by the passing of the Education (Scotland) Act in 1918 which facilitated the Roman Catholic education system by its funding from the state (cf. Finlay 2004:96). That this could be greatly exaggerated in the rhetoric of some Presbyterian Church representatives will be analysed by means of a primary source, viz. *Reports of the Church and Nation Committee 1923-1929*, CH1/2/359. The pros and cons of the hotly debated issue of sectarianism in the west of Scotland will also be examined in detail.

There is no doubt that the events between the Easter Rising in 1916 and the outbreak of the Irish Civil War in 1922 must have had an impact on the Irish community in Scotland. Nevertheless, the extent to which this impact left a mark on the community is difficult to assess due to the dearth of facts in secondary literature, and also to the lack of specificity in the little information provided. The examination of a case study based on another primary source, *The Irish Disturbances Files*, was therefore necessary in Chapter 4 in order to delineate the

factual and imagined elements that led to the creation of the potentially dangerous Irish Other.

1. Coming to Scotland in the Aftermath of the Irish Famine

Mid-nineteenth century Britain is perhaps better known for the major changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution. In the case of Scotland and Ireland these changes had led to the two countries becoming poles apart in terms of their economic, urban and social development. While Scotland was experiencing the economic boom and rapidly expanding its industrial sectors, Ireland remained stagnant and its dependency on the potato crop as the main source of subsistence made it especially vulnerable to economic disaster after the Great Famine had struck the country in 1845.

Although America was a very tempting destination for many, Britain, due to its geographic proximity would be the first choice of a considerable number of Irish immigrants, both Catholic and Protestant (cf. Hickman 2002: 13). The case of Scotland, moreover, is a particularly interesting one, as it experienced the two phenomena of immigration and emigration concurrently until the inter-war period, which T.M. Devine described as “the Scottish paradox.” (ed. Devine 1992:1).

1.1 Industrialisation in the West of Scotland

The age of industrialisation had without a doubt a very significant impact on the Scottish economic and social landscape. The process took place at amazing speed and transformed a mainly agriculture-dependent society into a modern engine of the Victorian era. Scotland as a whole underwent this transformation firstly at the beginning of the 19th century relying predominantly on the textile, or more specifically the cotton, industry before its major shift to the heavy industry (cf. Knox 1999: 34). The west of Scotland, Glasgow in particular, specialised in weaving in the 1840s (cf. Lynch 1992: 412) and became the second most important harbour in Britain a decade later. One explanation for this would be that the western county of Lanarkshire was a major source of coal whose exploitation, together with the boom in the iron industry and the collapse of cotton production, generated the

Scottish industrial miracle and shifted the country's interest towards engineering, steamship building and export (cf. Knox 1999: 49). As Michael Lynch has pointed out: "All sectors of heavy industry were critically dependent on coal and railways". (Lynch 1992: 410). Nevertheless, this development benefited only a few specific parts of Scotland to the extent that by "1850 the Clyde was responsible for 66 per cent of the tonnage of iron vessels in Britain" (Knox 1999: 36) and "the region employed around 74 per cent of the workforce in 1870" (Knox 1999: 85). Thus, the west of Scotland, and implicitly Glasgow, had turned into the main employer after the 1850s and would rely heavily on cheap Irish labour to safeguard the further development of this industrial process.

It cannot be ignored that there were other Scottish cities such as Edinburgh and especially Dundee, with its jute industry, which had also prospered during this period, but neither attracted the huge influx of Irish immigrants that Glasgow did in an extremely short space of time (cf. Devine 2006: 487). From a demographic viewpoint it can be noted that the mid-nineteenth-century Irish diaspora had the tendency to form both smaller and larger enclaves throughout Scotland, but interestingly not in the traditionally Catholic regions of the north-east such as Aberdeenshire, Banffshire and parts of Inverness-shire (ed. Devine and Finlay 1996: 271). With geographic proximity and transportation playing an important part, it was mainly the Clydeside that would experience the waves of Irish newcomers during and in the immediate aftermath of the Irish Famine (1845-51). Martin Mitchell has given an example, viz. that between January and 30 November 1847 only, "an estimated 49,993 'destitute' Irish had landed at the Broomielaw, a figure which did not include those other unfortunates who disembarked at the other Clyde ports or elsewhere along the west coast". (ed. Mitchell 2008: 23) However, as will be shown in the next section, they were not the first Irish settlers in the west of Scotland.

1.2 The Irish Famine and Emigration to Scotland

Even though the boom of mid-nineteenth century Scotland had attracted a lot of new workers from across the Irish Sea, this pattern of social mobility had been set much earlier in the form of temporary or seasonal migration (cf. Devine 1991: 11).

In the case of Ireland the process had begun as early as the second part of the eighteenth century (cf. Knox 1999: 37), and given the country's agricultural background, this system suited Scottish landowners well. Smyth, however, has pointed out that in the first half of the nineteenth century in Glasgow alone an estimate of 44,000 or 16 per cent of the total population was Irish-born (cf. Smyth 2000: 126). It can be therefore suggested that with this type of temporary migration came also a significant number of permanent settlers. With the devastating effects of the Irish Famine becoming increasingly noticeable after 1845 this type of labour was no longer be a feasible solution for the thousands that were enduring starvation.

As Michael Cronin specified in his analysis of that period, the Famine's unexpected scale and immediacy was what had shocked the most and reduced the Irish population dramatically in less than seven years (cf. Cronin 2001: 135): "In 1845, the population of Ireland stood at approximately 8.5 million. By 1851, and the nominal end of the famine, the population had been reduced by over 2 million." (Cronin 2001: 135). The worst hit counties were Roscommon, Sligo and Mayo in Connacht, and the southern counties of Cavan, Fermanagh and Monaghan in Ulster (cf. Cronin 2001: 139). Cronin, however, underlined the fact that it was not primarily from these counties that the new waves of immigrants had come in the 1850s but, paradoxically, "[...] emigration rates were highest from counties such as Limerick, Donegal, Kildare, Kilkenny and Louth, where the effects of the famine were not as extreme." (ibid: 140). A more recent study by Martin Mitchell has also revealed that:

The famine migrations [...] seem to have been mainly Catholic with south Ulster, parts of Donegal, Cavan, Monaghan and Sligo well-represented. This pattern was a clear break with the past when substantial numbers of Ulster Protestants had come to Scotland in the first four decades of the nineteenth century. (ed. Mitchell 2008: 23)

What needs to be mentioned at this stage is that at the time of the Famine the main points of departure for Irish immigrants from all over the country were based in the province of Ulster. Thus, "embarkation ports for the Clyde were Belfast, Londonderry and Larne" (ed. Mitchell 2008: 23) and according to Mitchell's findings, in terms of numbers, a lot less had opted for Scotland than England during the same period (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 20).

In their research on the Irish diaspora in Scotland whilst focusing on locality and religious adherence, Brenda Collins and Tom Gallagher have observed an interesting pattern in terms of Irish immigration. If in the early 1850s the majority of the Irish newcomers had mainly originated from Catholic provinces, by the 1880s they estimate that over eighty per cent hailed from Ulster (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 15). This, in turn, was succeeded by another wave of Catholic immigration before the Great War and during the interwar period, as the counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan had remained amongst the poorest (cf. *ibid*: 15). By contrast, Knox has even suggested that “half of all Irish immigrants to Scotland in the period 1851 to 1881 were Protestant.”(Knox 1999: 93), while Mitchell, as mentioned above, argues the contrary (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 23). It can be noticed, therefore, that an overall clear-cut number of the Irish immigrants coming to Scotland from 1850 onwards—whether it was on a short-term or a permanent basis, and whether they were mainly Catholic or Protestant—raises some difficulties.

Irrespective of the actual numbers, however, Ulster and its historical links with Scotland make this region a particularly interesting case study to analyse within the broader process of Irish immigration. In the 17th century, as a consequence of the phenomenon which became known as the Ulster plantation, the province experienced its first influx of Scottish migrants who had originated in the south-west counties (cf. Devine 2006: 500). Once settled, the new Protestant community was determined to retain strong links with the land it had left. Devine has two striking examples which date to the end of the 18th century: “[...] the movement of the Irish Protestant bleachers and weavers to provide instruction in the Scottish linen industry in the 1780s and 1790s and the attendance of Presbyterian Irish students at Glasgow and, to a lesser extent, Edinburgh universities.” (Devine 2006: 500). It is therefore no surprise that this had turned into regular seasonal migration to the industrialised west of Scotland by the beginning of the 19th century and was continued after the 1850s (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 55). The reasons why the Irish Protestants had chosen to immigrate during the latter period might be somewhat unclear—at first glance. Ulster, unlike the rest of the agriculturally-based provinces, did experience a phenomenon of industrialisation comparable to Britain (cf. Cronin 2001: 144). Nevertheless, one previously important branch of the industry, hand-loom weaving, had suffered a

notable economic downturn during the Famine years, which had ultimately led to its collapse (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 55).

Movement from Ulster was further enhanced by the concentration of the heavy industry in the west of Scotland with which, as specified above, the province had had long-standing links, but also by the emergence of the skilled and semi-skilled Ulster workers who were much sought after when Scotland started facing a major exodus (cf. ed. Devine 1992: 5). This in turn produced other important effects which will be briefly discussed in the next section.

1.3 Influx and Exodus—Scotland's Paradox

As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the age of industrialisation had different effects on Scotland and Ireland: while the first was reaping the rewards, the latter, by contrast, with the exception of its northern province, was deprived of any benefits. Thus it would be relatively easy to explain the outward movement from Ireland while ignoring the comparable wave of emigration from Scotland. On the face of it, the rationale appears to be missing: why would people have chosen emigration when their own country was at the zenith of its economic development? Furthermore, this process also seemed to favour the newly emerging skilled workers in Scotland's urban areas. Nevertheless, it was the awareness of this class, as well as of the workers in the rural areas such as the Highlands, that determined the occurrence of this phenomenon (cf. Devine 2006: 482).

A major factor, as Devine pointed out, was that even though Scotland had been one of the main engines driving the process of industrialisation, it was facing “a low-wage economy.[...] in 1860 Scottish wages were often up to 20 per cent lower than for equivalent English trades.” (ed. Devine 1992: 10). Another reason that may have increased the number of emigrants was the setback the Scottish economy was faced with in spite of its boost:

Scotland's manufacturing structure was founded on a small number of giant industries dependent on international markets. It was an economic system very vulnerable to the rise and fall of the trade cycle. After c.1840 the UK became more subject to fluctuations of this type which were particularly violent in Scotland because of the tight interrelationships between shipbuilding, iron, steel, engineering and coal and the fickle nature of overseas markets which they served. Therefore,

[...], there was chronic economic insecurity with employment falling steeply in such periods as the later 1840s, the mid-1880s and 1906-10. (Devine 2006: 484-5).

Thus, as the Clydeside experienced the first waves of Irish immigrants escaping the Famine, a significant percentage of Scottish workers were considering better prospects in the colonies, most notably Canada (cf. ed. Devine 1992: 5). This concomitant occurrence of influx and exodus remained unique in Europe throughout 19th century and it may be for this particular reason that Devine has coined the phrase, “the Scottish paradox” (ed. Devine 1992: 2) in relation to it.

In order to analyse the paradox’s impact on the urbanisation of the industrial west of Scotland, one important aspect needs to be taken into account viz. that as a result of emigration, Scotland (compared to the rest of the UK) had also lost the highest proportion of skilled and semi-skilled artisans (cf. ed. Devine 1992: 3). A notable gap needed to be filled quickly and the arrival of thousands of Irish who were more interested in survival than higher wages appeared to be the ideal replacement. However, there was only one niche amongst the new immigrants that could have had access to this type of employment.

1.4 The Effects on Urbanisation

What the majority of the Irish immigrants had found on their arrival in their new host country, whether the stay was to be temporary or permanent, was the downside of Scotland’s economic success: overcrowded and expanding slums with poor housing and unsanitary conditions. It was under these circumstances that population growth and urbanisation in the west of Scotland ensued. Checkland observed in his study of nineteenth-century Glasgow that: “[...] in 1871 the population of Glasgow was just over half a million, at 547,000; by 1891 it was over three-quarters of a million at 782,000; just before 1914, at the climax, the magical figure of one million was reached.” (Checkland 1977:8). It was also during this period that a sharp dichotomy arose between the artisan or semi-skilled worker and the unskilled labourer.

That the two categories were represented among the population of Irish immigrants by those belonging to the two opposite religious spectrums only added to the problem. Consequently, an urban division within Glasgow became inevitable

with the more privileged Protestant Irish artisans settling in areas with better tenement housing such as Govan and Partick (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 59) and the unskilled Catholic workers living in the more deprived parts of the city. The most infamous case discovered by John Burrowes was that of “District 14” (Burrowes 2008: 88), an area in Glasgow’s inner city which, although very small in size, was lodging over 7,000 people (cf. *ibid*: 89). The poignant irony of this situation was that a thriving middle-class suburb, Blythswood, was located in its immediate proximity (cf. *ibid*: 89). Unfortunately, this was not restricted to the urban areas only, as similar cases could be encountered in Glasgow’s surrounding villages of Greenock, Kilmarnock and Paisley (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 50).

As only one clearly-defined part of the new Irish community was benefitting from Scotland’s industrialised west the following questions arise: did the Catholic Irish seek to improve their lot through political affiliation given that the Chartist movement was gaining ground at this time? Did they form their own parties or did they support a British party instead, and if so, what were the reasons for it? To what extent did the idea of Home Rule influence their choices? An analysis of these issues shall be presented in the next chapter.

2. Chartism, Political Affiliation and the Irish Home Rule

As was shown in the previous chapter, the Irish immigration to the west of Scotland was a phenomenon which had preceded the Great Famine (cf. Knox 1999: 37), and with it came also new political support. In order to understand why the Irish immigrants chose to endorse certain political movements and parties over others, a few events in the first half of the nineteenth century need to be taken into account.

In 1832, Britain as a whole experienced one in a series of major transformations on its political scene—the passing of the First Reform Act, and thus, the beginning, although at this stage quite flawed, process of enfranchisement. The changes that this action had brought about were significant, even more so in Scotland, by raising the number of voters from 4,500 to 65,000 (cf. Houston and Knox eds. 2001: 326). As Devine has also observed, “the number of burgh constituencies increased from 15 to 23, with Glasgow now allocated two Members of Parliament, Edinburgh an additional representative and larger towns, such as,

Dundee, Perth and Aberdeen, one apiece.” (Devine 2006: 273). The franchise was further extended in 1867-1868 and 1884-1885, by means of the Second and Third Reform Act respectively, to the benefit of the urban middle and working classes (cf. *ibid.* 2006:284). Nevertheless, two questions do arise: did enfranchisement comprise the Irish settlers as well, and if so, was it to a larger or rather lesser extent?

2.1 Chartism, Repeal and the “Irish Brethern”

In spite of it being a political breakthrough the Reform Act of 1832 had its disadvantages which became noticeable not long after the passing of the Act. As Devine has shown, the Whig government’s primary concern at the time was to ensure that the enfranchisement would not exceed the parameters of the urban middle class (cf. Devine 2006: 274). The awareness and concern of the working classes led to the creation of another British nationwide phenomenon, the People’s Charter, drawn six years later. In it six points were stipulated: “universal suffrage, abolition of property qualifications, the secret ballot, equal electoral districts, payments of MPs and annual parliaments.” (Devine 2006: 276) The movement’s success in Scotland was imminent after no less than 130 Chartist associations were set up between 1838 and 1839 (cf. Devine 2006: 276). Furthermore, during the same period the leadership was quickly shifted from Edinburgh to Glasgow where Scottish Chartism started gaining more ground (cf. Wilson 1970: 68). One could therefore argue that the Chartists in Scotland were not only well organised, but seemed to be very eager to make their voices heard.

But what about the Irish labour force who had settled in or around Glasgow during that period? As workers in the weaving industry and especially in the collieries of Lanarkshire, quite a few earned a reputation as violent strike-breakers, and as Wilson pointed out, a high proportion of them were even brought over by their employers for this particular purpose (cf. Wilson 1970: 17). This, however, does not rule out the possibility that the Irish workers themselves, whether Catholic or Protestant, might also have taken part in the strikes of the 1830s and 1840s (cf. Mitchell 1998: 24). A distinction of paramount importance should therefore be noted between the Irish temporary migrants and the permanent (or even second-

generation) settlers. As Mitchell has noticed in his analysis of the Irish involvement in the Scottish Chartist movement, the temporary migrants were less likely to participate, as their main interest was to return to Ireland (cf. Mitchell 1998: 37). Their contribution would have been superfluous, irrespective of whether that meant the participation in strikes or the endorsement of Chartism (cf. *ibid* 1998: 37). On the other hand, whether the case of the permanent Irish settlers was that of a fully non-participatory nature remains debatable.

What needs to be questioned first is the generally accepted assertion that in the period before the 1850s the Irish community had been overwhelmingly Protestant. Unlike Wright or Wilson, Mitchell has a different viewpoint and has underlined the fact that the strike-breakers were usually associated with the Irish Catholics (cf. Mitchell 1998: 47). Therefore, the Scottish Chartists' perception of the Catholic Irish and their attitude towards them makes the case all the more interesting when set against the following background: by contrast with the movement in the rest of Britain, Scottish Chartism also based its foundations on religion. As Devine explained: "[...] for many the struggle for political rights was a continuation of the historic struggle for civil and religious liberty carried on by their forefathers since the time of the Covenanters in the seventeenth century." (Devine 2006: 278-9) Taking into account the longstanding anti-Catholic tradition instilled by the Covenanting period, the idea of fraternity or the mere use of "Irish brethren" (Wilson 1970: 141) in the Scottish Chartist political rhetoric might come as a surprise. Moreover, when a few rank-and-file Catholics in Ireland had cried out for the repeal of the Act of Union signed in 1800, most Scottish Chartist associations did nothing to oppose it and a faction, such as the "Scottish Complete Suffragists in Glasgow", even sympathised with the cause (cf. Mitchell 1998: 223). This can be exemplified by an extract from a speech held by this association in 1841:

Irishmen and Scotsmen had hitherto been taught by the ruling few, and by their clerical teachers, that it was good to hate, oppose and injure each other, and that they had no interests in common. The march of intelligence, however, had dispelled these nostrums, and the people now felt and acted upon the principle that union was strength, and a bad government the enemy of both. (Mitchell 1998: 223)

It could therefore be argued that disappointment with the government and the labelling of the aristocracy as the enemy of all working classes was enough to safeguard a common denominator. Nevertheless, the relationship between the Irish community in the west of Scotland and their fellow Scottish Chartists was anything but uncomplicated. As Wright noted in his analysis of the movement in Scotland, the Irish Catholic community was mainly driven by the opinion of one man who had campaigned for the Catholic Emancipation in 1829 and was now focusing on the repeal of the Act of Union—Daniel O’Connell (cf. Wright 1953: 18-19).

To have a better understanding of the Catholic Emancipation Act’s importance a brief explanation is needed. The Act of Union in 1800 further strengthened Westminster’s parliamentary control over Ireland, even more so as it refused to allow membership to Catholic politicians (cf. Cronin 2001: 119). By opposing this and bringing together both the Irish middle class and the peasantry, as well as having the support of the Catholic clergy, Daniel O’Connell’s action led to a successful radical change (cf. Cronin 2001: 128). Once a Member of Parliament, O’Connell’s next action was the further campaigning of more rights for the Irish Catholics and thus founded the Repeal Association in 1840 with a mass membership in Ireland (cf. Cronin 2001: 134). As a consequence, when the Chartists’ interest in the Irish cause started to waver and a faction led by Feargus O’Connor was considering a more violent path to achieve their goals, O’Connell curtailed his support and advised his followers to do the same (cf. Mitchell 1998: 185).

This might be the underlying reason for the ensuing trend of Irish Catholic non-participation in Chartism as a whole, which was due: “[...] not because they were apathetic towards the Charter: they did not participate because the dominant figure in the Chartist agitation was their hero Daniel O’Connell’s arch-enemy Feargus O’Connor.” (Mitchell 1998: 258) However feasible an explanation this might be, it is still quite difficult to believe that the majority of Irish Catholic immigrants in the west of Scotland were all blind followers of one leader only. It is therefore important to mention that the Catholic clerics’ support of O’Connell’s views and their denunciations of Chartism were also paramount in molding the community’s allegiances (cf. Mitchell 1998: 202). That the community in the west

of Scotland, particularly in Glasgow, was sharing O'Connell's ideas about the Repeal can be noticed in the associations set up after 1840 and modelled on the Loyal National Repeal Association which campaigned for an Irish parliament (cf. Mitchell 1998: 211). Even if O'Connell eventually endorsed the universal suffrage, this action came too late, as the weakness of the Scottish Chartism and the general apathy of its initial supporters became conspicuous (cf. Mitchell 1998: 223).

The Chartist movement was soon replaced by the two other Reform Acts which increased the number of potential voters. In Scotland the Second Reform Act, passed a year later than the one in England in 1867, gave working class men the opportunity to vote for the first time. As McCaffrey also pointed out, the number rose from 54,000 in 1865 to 154,000 in 1868 (cf. McCaffrey 1998: 68). Furthermore, the newly voted property qualifications "resulted in the vote now going to householders in the burghs who had been resident for a year and paid the poor rates, and to £5 proprietors and £14 tenants in the counties." (McCaffrey 1998: 68) The Third Reform Act of 1884 and 1885 led to further enfranchisement and "equalised the vote in the counties and the burghs, leading to a large rise in the total electorate, from 293,000 to 561,000, the greater part composed Lowland industrial workers."(McCaffrey1998:73). Nevertheless, neither Act stipulated the enfranchisement of Catholic working class members (cf. Devine 2006:300).

2.2 Irish Support for the Liberals and Scottish Reactions to the Irish Home Rule

Throughout the rest of the century, the newly-enfranchised labour force would have to decide between William Gladstone's Liberals and Benjamin Disraeli's Conservatives. The fact that the former party enjoyed four successful elections under Gladstone in Scotland was perhaps mainly due to "the loyalty and support it received from members of the skilled working classes who had done most to advance the Chartist cause in the 1840s and 1850s." (Devine 2006: 280). Another factor that may have contributed to this outcome was that in Scotland the general perception of the Conservatives by the working class was strongly associated with the aristocracy, much to the detriment of the Tory party (cf. ed. Devine and Finlay 1996: 259). In Ireland, as D.G. Boyce noted, the endorsement for the Liberals had come from the Roman Catholic voters (cf. Boyce 1996: 24). This, together with the

whole problematic surrounding the Irish question, would prove to be of paramount importance to Gladstone's party politics.

It was in the late 1870s that Gladstone, at the time the leader of the Opposition at Westminster, came to the realisation that there might be a solution to the Irish question which he viewed as follows: "the creation of a class of small propriety in Ireland" with "[...] the same man shall be cultivator and proprietor too." (Boyce 1996: 30) Whether this was his genuine belief of *noblesse oblige* as a politician or a mere tactics to secure more Catholic votes for the future election is not certain, but nonetheless his message had struck a very sensitive chord, perhaps even more so in the west of Scotland. What Gladstone started promoting ardently; especially after 1885 was the idea of Home Rule: Ireland should have its own executive and be given legislative powers, an action which would have led to the removal of the Irish MPs from Westminster (cf. Boyce 1996: 30). In other words, his view of the problem did not differ much from what Daniel O'Connell had previously envisaged as the Repeal of the Act of Union, but if the overall Scottish attitude towards this issue had been largely one of non-involvement during the Chartist period, by this time the situation had been utterly transformed.

The Home Rule support in Scotland was mainly concentrated in the surrounding areas of Glasgow, a support which, according to Devine, also had its financial benefits: "in the 1890s [it] boasted the largest branch in Britain, and was able in one year to devote more funds to the Home Rule treasury than almost any of the great cities." (ed. Devine 1991: 25). Nevertheless, its stark opponents, some of whom had withdrawn from amongst Gladstone's Liberals in 1885 and had subsequently formed their own Liberal Unionist party in early 1886 (cf. McCaffrey 1998: 75), were also fairly well prepared to backfire.

Moreover, as McCaffrey has shown, the impact this secession had on the party as a whole was all the more devastating in Scotland with the highest proportion of the party's MPs dissenting from the Liberal branch there. They were fully rewarded for their new political stance as during the election in late 1885, the Liberal Unionists had already won 17 seats, viz. almost a third of the Liberal total in Scotland alone (cf. Devine 2006: 302). It is therefore no surprise that the former radical faction within the Scottish Liberal branch came with a rapid response and was particularly well-organised. One of the first steps the dissenters took was to

form the “West of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association”, which, as the name suggests, campaigned for the opposition to the Home Rule philosophy (cf. McCaffrey 1971:48). Moreover, according to McCaffrey’s findings:

Of the nine in this group who were lawyers or businessmen six were members of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. As a group they represented a fair cross section of the mercantile classes typical of Glasgow at this period. They were all well placed through their widespread commercial, social and political contacts both to act in concert and to spread their opposition in Glasgow and the west of Scotland. (McCaffrey 1971:59)

As a consequence, a number of Liberal Unionist committees were set up which targeted the Glasgow constituencies of Bridgeton, Central, Blackfriars, Hutchesontown or Partick, but also the surrounding towns of Greenock and Paisley (cf. McCaffrey 1971:63). In support of their action, the previously neutral Glasgow Chamber of Commerce (cf. McCaffrey 1971:67) decided to voice its concerns about the Irish Home Rule, which if it were to be implemented, they argued, would deeply harm Ulster:

What, it was asked, would happen to 'the merchants, the manufacturers, the bankers, the traders of Ulster who have made the North of Ireland what it is trusting to the protection of the United Kingdom of which they are proud to be subjects'? Such a course could only lead to 'never ceasing disputes in matters of trade and commerce' and 'the destruction of a great field for the employment of British capital. (McCaffrey 1971:67)

As the Liberal Unionists were gaining increased support from Protestant voters, the ancestral links with the province of Ulster were once again emphasised to the extent that representatives of the Ulster clergy and work force were brought over to the west of Scotland to make their contribution to the Unionist political rhetoric (cf. McCaffrey 1971:63-4). Thus, as Graham Walker also noticed, “the Home Rule crisis gave rise to much more pro-Ulster agitation in Scotland than has often been recognised.” (ed. Devine 1991: 60). Within the Glaswegian Irish community *per se* further disparities became visible: the Catholics, who deemed the Liberal party as their only hope for Home Rule, supported Gladstone firstly through the Irish National League established in 1882 and later in 1900 through the United Irish League (cf. Devine 2006: 304). Both Leagues maintained their political sympathies

directed at the Liberals until the Great War and urged both Catholic settlers as well as newcomers to support them in turn (cf. *ibid* 2006: 304). There is no doubt that the emergence of another prominent Irish political figure, Charles Stewart Parnell, who became an ally of the Liberals, had also a decisive part to play in the process of mobilisation (cf. Smyth 2000:130). The Protestant Irish, on the other hand, endorsed the Liberal Unionists and the Conservatives (which merged in 1912) through the Orange Order, an Ulster import which became firmly cemented in the west of Scotland (cf. ed. Devine and Finlay 1996: 259). A closer look at how this came about and to what degree it differed in Scotland from Ulster needs to be taken at this stage. The Orange Order, a fraternity, was founded in the aftermath of the battle of Boyne in 1795 and celebrated the victory of William of Orange over the Catholic rebels (cf. Cronin 2001:260). Regarding the overall membership of the Order in Scotland, Eric Kaufmann has noticed a pattern, mainly in the western part of the country: the most notable increases took place between 1863- 1877, 1902 - 1909, and 1919-1926, whilst the sharp declines occurred from 1878-1900 and 1913-1918 (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 160). At first glance, one could argue that the Home Rule crises may have been one of the main factors to trigger off an increase of the Orange Order membership in Scotland. Kaufmann, however, has pointed out the following: “Scottish Orangeism has been limited in strength, but has proven remarkably durable.” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 160). Furthermore, Kaufmann also suggests that in terms of membership density in Glasgow where the Orange Order was mainly concentrated this had seldom exceeded 10 per cent (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 164). The view that the Orange Order in Scotland was more powerful an emblem than a decisive factor on the nineteenth-century political events has also been sustained by Devine and Finlay:

[...] the Unionists in Scotland, in contrast to the Unionists in Northern Ireland, had no substantial ‘pork barrel’ with which to reward working-class supporters, and ultimately were part of a political party whose wider (British) agenda offered little scope for religious sectarianism. The Unionist hold on the Protestant working class was nowhere near as tight as in Northern Ireland. (ed. Devine and Finlay 1996: 261)

As was previously mentioned, Gladstone’s Home Rule motions exceeded the boundaries of the Irish community and, as a result, Scotland demanded its own

share in the new Home Rule politics with a Scottish Home Rule Association already set up in 1886 (cf. McCaffrey 1998: 81). Devine explained this reaction as follows:

The issue of Scottish Home Rule became a central feature of national politics in the years immediately before the First World War. [...] it had emerged in the 1880s, partly because of the fears that the Irish were receiving preferential constitutional treatment ahead of the Scots and also because of concerns of administrative reforms that would make the union with England function more effectively. (Devine 2006: 307)

Another important aspect was that Scotland, by contrast with Ireland, had already achieved a particular degree of legislative autonomy when the Scottish Office was set up in 1885 (cf. Walker 1995: 48). This explains why the attempt at securing more power was not altogether unsuccessful either, with one of the seven motions presented before the House of Commons from 1886 to 1900 passing the second reading in 1914 (cf. Devine 2006: 308). What could have happened with the bill if it had not been for the unfortunate events that followed later that year remains subject to interpretation.

There is no doubt that the political venture of Gladstone's Liberals did the party more harm than good in Scotland with a sharp decline of almost 20 per cent in the voting support from 1847 to 1900 (cf. Devine 2006: 302). It may have won them more Catholic votes in Ireland, but the enfranchisement in Britain had barely affected the Irish Catholic community throughout that period (cf. Smyth 2000: 144). The fact that in 1912, Asquith was still adamant to promote the Home Rule philosophy whilst the party's support was in decline, could only lead to the alienation of both of the urban middle classes and of the Irish community itself (cf. Boyce 1996: 52). The realisation of the Irish Home Rule as Gladstone had initially envisaged it had by now lost its credibility.

2.3 The Quick Shift to Labour?

The beginning of the twentieth century marked the steady rise of another political party, whose role after the Great War would become decisive in the implementation of policies favourable to the Irish Catholic community. Its momentum came at the 1922 elections when the newly-emerged Labour party had succeeded in surpassing

the Liberals; one of the arguments for its overall success being the Catholic vote-transfer (cf. Smyth 2000: 146). This, however, is in many ways an oversimplification of the relationship between the Irish Catholic community and the Labour representatives.

As was shown in the previous section, the Liberals' Home Rule philosophy had found many adherents amongst the Catholic Irish, both in the west of Scotland and on Irish soil itself. Moreover, it had led to the general belief that the Liberals were the only party capable of achieving success in this undertaking (cf. Devine 2006: 312). It would have taken a powerful political rival to convince the community of the opposite, and it was this power which Labour lacked between 1906 and 1914 due to poor organisation and financial problems (cf. McCaffrey 1998: 123). In Scotland, even upon its emergence as a relatively determined party after winning two parliamentary seats in 1906, the Liberal sympathies, and hence, the absence of a more clear-cut political line were still conspicuous (cf. Devine 2006: 305). This lack of homogeneity, however, proved to be an advantage after the Great War, as Labour's niche of supporters was both extended and diversified.

One element that needs to be taken into consideration is the socialist uproar, the only one of its kind in Britain, which the Clydeside experienced during and after the First World War as a consequence of high unemployment (cf. Devine 2006: 314). Devine's view about the era is that, in spite of what this phenomenon appeared to be at the time, the "Red Clydeside" was not about the promotion of Bolshevism (cf. *ibid* 2006: 314). Iain McLean has also pointed out that: "In the Glasgow of 1918, Socialism was not the creed of the unskilled workers. Wartime militancy divided, not united, the working class; craftsmen joined the socialist parties, but labourers did not." (McLean 1999:176). What this meant for the Irish community in the west of Scotland was that the dichotomy between the Protestant skilled artisans and the Catholic unskilled workers was as poignantly visible at this stage as it had been half a century before. In Glasgow, this was further suggested by the dynamics and the distribution of its inhabitants: on the one hand, the skilled artisans (both Irish and Scottish) were to be found in areas such as Kingston or Govan, whereas the unskilled workers' presence was felt in Gorbals, Hutchensontown, Calton and Broomielaw (cf. Mclean 1999: 177). The rift in terms of political loyalties had run much deeper prior to 1918 as the Irish Catholic

community was urged by its clerical representatives to attack socialism (cf. Walker 1972: 663). The fact that Labour was known for its socialist sympathies, led to further discouragement; even to public accusation when the Irish-born Catholic, John Wheatley, set up the first Catholic Socialist Society in 1906 and campaigned for Labour support (cf. Devine 2006: 304-5).

The question that can therefore be raised next is: what had determined the change in Catholic community's perception of the Labour party? McCaffrey and McLean both agree that the decisive factor was the 1918 Education Act, which aimed at securing state funds for denominational or voluntary schools, which, in the case of Scotland were mainly Catholic schools (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 120 and cf. McLean 1999:190). McCaffrey, however, has also made two more interesting points regarding this issue: firstly, that Irish Catholic support had already been present before the Education Act was passed and thus that it had come at a time when no guarantees for a favourable outcome were given (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 126). Secondly, as the community had watched the successive rejection of the Liberal Home Rule Bills, the possibility that the Education Bill might have followed suit must have determined the change of perception as well (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 128). In other words, with the decline of the Liberals, there was no other party the Irish Catholics could now appeal to and, as McCaffrey has suggested, they were adapting to the new situation:

Far from being a monolithic community blindly supporting a single issue, the Irish—as much as other groups—were reflecting the dynamism and fluidity of the age. Since they lived in that vital middle of that society, it would have been surprising if they had reacted otherwise: hence their developing responses in their own way, just as with other sections of the population, to social movements as represented by Labour. (McCaffrey 1998: 104)

Another, perhaps most notable, point regarding this aspect is that the Education Act 1918 was introduced by a Liberal government and not by the Labour party (cf. Bradley 1995: 140).

As far as the Education Bill *per se* was concerned, Labour's stance was neither for nor against (cf. McLean 1999:191). It could therefore be argued that in 1918 the affiliation with Labour was more of a benefit to the Irish community than the Irish Catholic vote was to the party, although the concomitant extension of the

franchise may have suggested the contrary. As Devine has observed: “At a stroke the electorate tripled, from 779,000 in 1910 to 2,205,000 in 1918, and the vast majority of these new voters were drawn from the working classes. Labour achieved immediate success in the elections of 1918 by gaining a third of Scottish votes, more than 10 times better than any of its performances in the past.”(Devine 2006: 312). Hutchison has also noted that by 1921 the male enfranchisement had exceeded 94 per cent with the majority of new male voters based in Glasgow (cf. Hutchison 1986:285). By contrast with the number of voters the three previous Reform Acts had secured, this had been by far the most lucrative for the elections that followed. Nevertheless, in spite of the general belief that the Irish Catholic vote had played a decisive part in boosting the Labour party’s position, this did not affect the Catholic community on such a large scale (cf. Smyth 2000: 152). There are a few arguments as to why this aspect has been overlooked.

Firstly, the decisive vote for Labour was mainly secured by the native Scottish middle and working classes; both by the niche that had previously supported the Liberals (cf. Finlay 2004:98), as well as the one which endorsed socialism (cf. McLean 1999: 177). Furthermore, Finlay argues that as the Labour party was mainly targeting votes from social classes rather than focus on religious loyalties, the party had not set out with a separate political agenda to attract the Irish Catholic vote in particular (cf. Finlay 2004:98-99). To put it simply, there is a fair chance that both the Irish community and the native Scots were sharing a common goal once again: the endorsement of a political party that would represent their interests.

Secondly, as Smyth has shown in his analysis of the Irish Catholic vote, the overall percentage of the enfranchised Catholic workers was still limited to only to 50 per cent until 1918 (cf. Smyth 2000:126) and given that this was first and foremost a community “the Irish were never simply sufficiently numerous to play such a determining role.”(Smyth 2000: 125). This view is also supported by Devine and Finlay who have added that: “These developments allowed for a greater Catholic participation in Scottish public life, although the process was by no means immediate, but generational.” (ed. Devine and Finlay 1996: 271)

Thirdly, the Irish community could not be trusted with their new votes, as their leaders had a rather volatile stance towards both the Liberal and Labour parties prior and during the Great War period:

[...] there was a deep suspicion of Irish politicians who were perceived as playing an opportunistic game. John Ferguson, for example, had regularly instructed his supporters to vote Conservative, anticipating Parnell's instructions in 1885. After 1886, however, he was well ensconced in the Liberal Party, and although he had originally been enthusiastic about the Scottish Labour Party, when he came to regard it as a threat to the home-rule cause then he withdrew Irish support.

(Hamish 2000: 127)

The 1922 elections had marked the apex of the Labour party in Scotland as it not only turned into the largest party with 29 representatives returned to parliament --of whom 10 had been elected from Glasgow constituencies—but had also won 32 per cent of the overall number of votes cast, an unprecedented feat for Labour (cf. Devine 2006: 313).

Nevertheless, the rise of the Labour party became a reality through the endorsement by voters who in turn supported different causes; and its electoral success had been based on class, not religious adherence (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 27). For the Irish Catholic community in the west of Scotland, after the huge disappointment with the Liberals the Labour party seemed the only feasible replacement-- although that was possible only to a limited extent. It can therefore be argued that the Labour party's interest in, but not particular enthusiasm for some of the Catholic community's issues was the decisive factor in determining the future of this relationship, which was in many ways a political marriage of convenience.

Devine, however, suggests that even under these circumstances, the Irish Catholics' affiliation with Labour had its advantages in the long run, viz. it smoothed the path towards integration into the Scottish society (cf. Devine 2006: 313), and, moreover: "In time identification with Labour helped reconcile them to their place in the British state and the horizons of many would widen the extent that loyalty to their class, union, or occupation would become more important than loyalty to their parish or their ancestral homeland." (ibid 2006: 313) Yet, how did this shift of identity occur at a time when Ireland itself was undergoing major

cultural and political transformations? How were these in turn perceived by the Irish community in the west of Scotland—were they easily embraced as a consequence of being deprived of a status within the Scottish social stratification, or did they take a different stance and reconstruct their own identity, given that, as Smyth has mentioned, a clear majority had already been born in Scotland (cf. Smyth 2000: 152)? And if the latter was the case, which features of Irishness had survived within that new construct? The following chapter will try to answer these questions.

3. “**Rome on the Rates**”: Irish Catholic Identity and Scottish Perception

During the second half of the nineteenth century Ireland was experiencing a cultural revival which raised the awareness of a separate Irish identity and bolstered the campaign for Home Rule even further. In the west of Scotland, as has been shown at the beginning of the present paper, Catholic immigration had continued throughout the rest of the century. Nevertheless, the recurrent problematic of identity must have left a very marked imprint on the immigrants’ psyche, as the main question which needed an answer was: “[...] how to adjust so as to overcome challenges without at the same time losing their identity?” (McCaffrey 1998: 77)

A potential answer in this respect might be, as Gallagher put it, that the Irish Catholic community in Scotland was:

If anything, the offspring of immigrants were more Irish than their forebears since they grew up in communities that carefully fostered links with the old country, bonds reinforced by bodies like the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Gaelic Athletic Association, and the Gaelic League which had not existed in Ireland when the main migrations occurred before 1860. (ed. Devine 1991: 24)

The effect the political Home Rule campaign had on the Irish community in Scotland in terms of voting limitations has already been demonstrated in the previous chapter. The political rhetoric used prior and during that period, could be both sympathetic (as was the case with a reduced number, but nevertheless notable, Scottish Chartist associations), as well as antagonistic in its construction of the Irish Catholic “Other”.

The present chapter will attempt to analyse the extent to which the typical Irish Catholic parish-school unit, the backbone of the Irish Catholic population as a whole, could be and was implemented within a Church system which was not particularly understanding of it. That this was a fact amongst factions of the Church of Scotland shall be demonstrated at the end of this chapter. Some contradictory aspects shall also be outlined relating to a subject that is still being challenged by contemporary historians, viz. the omnipresence of sectarianism in the west of Scotland.

3.1 The Roman Catholic Church and Its “Cradle-to-Grave Community”

In one of his articles, Bernard Aspinwall has noted that the influence of the Roman Catholic Church was quite unique in the way it tackled its believers and created a system for a “cradle-to-grave community” where the Church would play the leading part (cf. Aspinwall quoted in Brown 1993: 21). This may be one of the explanations for the perception, although fallacious, that the Roman Catholic Church and the Catholic community constituted a monolith. McCaffrey, for instance, has used the terms Irish and Catholic interchangeably not because “the distinction is regarded as unimportant, but because Irish interest in this context are almost always given identity by their religious connotations.” (ed. Devine 1991: 116). The interchangeability of the two terms was often used in the anti-Irish rhetoric and, also to a large extent, commonly accepted by the Scottish society in the west of Scotland.

The Roman Catholic Church in the west of Scotland, however, was a much more intricate institution. To begin with, given the stark anti-Catholic tradition, whilst not including the Scottish Catholic enclaves in the Highlands, it is quite surprising that Roman Catholic parishes could be founded. Furthermore, the Glasgow Presbytery of the Church of Scotland was one of the first opponents to the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 (cf. Bruce 2004: 14).

In terms of Irish Catholic parishes, Bruce has noted a pattern, especially in the west of Scotland with the following being built in the immediate aftermath of the Irish Famine: “Rutherglen was 1851; Wishaw, Chapelhall and Lanark were 1859; Carfin 1862; Mossend 1868; Shotts 1868; Newmains 1871; Longriggend and

Cambuslang 1878, Baillieston and Glenboig 1880, Uddingston 1883; Cadzow 1883; Shieldmuir 1891; Langloan 1892 and Newton 1894.” (Bruce 2004:10) The reason for this spread of Catholic parishes within a relatively short space of time can be explained by their scarcity in the first half of the nineteenth century. As Callum Brown has noted, the Catholic Church’s main concern at that particular stage was to provide a clergy, and the limited financial resources made plans for future church buildings very unlikely (cf. Brown 1987: 46).

This would lead to a further question: how could and did these parishes, once set up, operate within a mainly Presbyterian-based clerical system? There are two points that need to be made here: firstly, the hierarchical structure within the Church, and, secondly, its financial means, or more specifically, how its funds were raised.

One of the first aspects of the Catholic Church in Scotland, when analysing its hierarchy, is that it was not devoid of difficulties. With Irish priests not being allowed to take higher positions within the Scottish Catholic Church, a rising tension between the Scottish Catholic clergy and the Irish Catholic one, most notably in Glasgow between the late 1820s and the 1860s, became inevitable (cf. Brown 1993: 20). Brown has the following explanation for this phenomenon: “[...] the Scottish Catholic Church, officially non-existent since the Reformation, remained a mission from Rome under Scots Catholic bishops and administration drawn from north-eastern districts.” (ibid.1993: 20). The distrust was mutual, with the Irish priesthood being suspicious of the Scottish Catholic representatives, and the Scottish Catholic clergy constructing an image of their co-regionalists which was not in the least flattering, and which, as will be shown later in this chapter, was unfortunately also eventually embraced by the Church of Scotland in 1923 (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 36).

Aspinwall observed the following “traits” added to the description of the Irish clergy by their Scottish Catholic counterpart: “their alleged abrasiveness, political sympathies and lack of education were embarrassing” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 36). The fear that the Catholic Church in Scotland would end as a faithful replica to the one in Ireland, especially with the overwhelming influx of Irish Catholics after the 1850s, had probably had its contribution in creating this stereotype as well.

These anxieties did not disappear with the appointment to the Archdiocese of Glasgow of a neutral party, the English bishop Charles Eyre, in 1869 (cf. Bruce 2004:13-14), and the Irish clergy's support of the political Home Rule movement could only complicate the situation further (cf. Brown 1987:47), with the Church of Scotland demanding that the Scottish Catholic Church should "keep its house in order."(Brown 1987:47)

Hence, the only viable solution for the Irish clergy, although this in time proved not to be entirely beneficial, was the creation of a full hierarchical structure under the Pope, viz. Ultramontanism (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 37). Achieved in 1878, the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy had an admirable effect, as Aspinwall has observed: "83 priests, 52 permanent chapels, a nunnery and an estimated 150,000 mainly Irish faithful in 1838 grew by 1855 to 131 clergy, four convents, about 100 chapels, and numerous Sunday and day schools for around 200,000 nominal faithful". (ed. Mitchell 2008: 35) This had also led to a growing number of Irish Catholic priests within the Archdiocese of Glasgow, which was increased from a mere 100 in 1850 to 540 by 1910 (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 33). Nevertheless, this did not include a financial contribution from either of the two established Presbyterian Scottish Churches which had separated in 1843 (cf. Finlay 2004:96), nor from the state, and the Irish clergy had to rely on its own organisational skills to raise funds. Bruce and Bradley have noticed that these tended to comprise a variety of activities, ranging from winter concerts, soirees, excursions (cf. Bruce 2004: 31) to the creation of football clubs, such as the Celtic FC (cf. Bradley 1995:135). Aspinwall has also remarked the rapid expansion of Catholic voluntary associations: "In 1838 there were none but they reached 51 by 1880. By 1914 1,010 parochial organisations operated including 463 in the Glasgow archdiocese."(ed. Mitchell 2008: 36) Hence it could be argued that to some extent the Irish Catholic clergy and parish maintained its character as it did on Irish soil.

An important aspect, however, needs to be mentioned at this stage: as much as the Irish Catholic settlers may have contributed to the fund-raising actions initiated by the Catholic Church, it remains doubtful whether this could have achieved any success without the support of the Scottish wealthy elite. Aspinwall has noted a trend amongst the 19th-century Scottish middle- and upper classes, i.e. the conversion to Catholicism, whose financial endorsement and patronage,

although in decline during the Home Rule movement, remained nevertheless vital until the Great War (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 38).

With the Irish Catholic church-building schemes came also the founding of Catholic schools. Even though, the first Catholic schools in Glasgow, for instance, had already been founded as early as 1834, their ability to cope with the rising number of Catholic children was minimal (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 35). Their case was not unique, as on a nationwide scale in the 1860s, both denominational or Catholic schools and non-denominational ones were heavily dependent on rates, fees, subscriptions and donations or gifts (cf. Bruce 2004: 26). Thus, although the educational system in place at the time was not specifically aimed at a deliberate exclusion of Catholic schools, it had this dire effect due to the promotion of financial contributions which the majority of Irish Catholics could not afford to pay. The proportion of Catholic pupils remained low and only a very small percentage could gain access to education:

During the 1870s and 1880s, only the very ‘deserving’ poor were excused payments, and even when parliament ordered in 1889 that fees be abolished some boards like that of Glasgow maintained them because of pressure from middle-class parents fearing an influx of working-class children into the more expensive board schools. Not until 1893 did the Glasgow board abolish fees and thus reduce the social segregation between its schools. (Brown 1987:200)

Even though the 1872 Education Act stipulated that education was obligatory for all children and demanded the establishment of a school board for every burgh, the denominational schools, and implicitly the Catholic children, could still not benefit to a large extent (cf. Devine 2006:493). There were further later unsuccessful attempts to solve the issue, as it was in 1882 with the Glasgow Trades Council, who recommended candidates for the School Board prepared to reduce fees by arguing that ‘by proper application of endowments, the rate charges for the education of the working classes would be lessened.’ (Hamish 2000:125) The Catholic schools’ dependency on patronage and voluntary contribution was not significantly reduced. Interestingly, the middle Protestant stratum also sympathised with the Catholic community, as was the case with the founding of the Catholic Schools Society which was endorsed by Protestant manufacturers (cf. Bruce 2004: 25). On the whole, however, the overall educational needs could not be met until as late as 1919

due to factors such as: “[...] too few schools, too few properly qualified teachers, meager post-primary provision, and in Lanarkshire at least gross overcrowding by 1918-19 with more than one-third of its schools enrolling more pupils than they had places.” (Brown 1987:201)

If prior to the turn of the century, the Irish Catholic clergy was reluctant to accept the state’s regulations under which the schools could maintain their denominational character, the passing of the Education (Scotland) Act in 1918 led to a change in attitude (cf. Bruce 2004: 27). As Lynch had noted, the direst aspect of the problem was that the fund distribution was tackled at a local level with the elected school boards as decision-makers, often to the detriment of the Catholic schools (cf. Lynch 1992: 398). It was this aspect which the Education Act of 1918 changed radically, as Catholic schools became officially incorporated within the Scottish educational system and safeguarded by state-funding (cf. McCaffrey 1998: 126). This action, in turn, was not welcomed by the Scottish middle-class, and much less by the members of the Church of Scotland which saw in this Act another form of “Rome on the Rates” (cf. Finlay 2004:96). Moreover, the antagonistic nature towards this Act seemed to endure, with one of the Church committees from the Presbytery of Glasgow reaching the following conclusion in a report sent to the General Assembly in 1923:

The Education Act of 1918—passed through Parliament when Scotland was deeply and painfully preoccupied with the problem of the war—has proved an immense boon to the Roman Catholic Church. It has made her in proportion to her numbers the most richly-endowed Church in Scotland, and has securely entrenched her in the very schools she has either sold or leased to Education Authorities.[...] an over-taxed and financially distressed Scotland has to pay immense sums for the lease or purchase of buildings, which the Scottish people control only to a limited extent. (CH1/2/359:759)

The stance the committee took is ironic and, moreover, based on erroneous facts. McCaffrey has shown that despite the new circumstances, the Roman Catholic Church’s gains would come at a cost:

[...] the Roman Catholics in Scotland would have to cede outright control of their schools in return for some guarantee as to their religious character and become integrated into the public sector. Even before the 1918

Education Act accomplished this, the Scotch Education Department and the larger school boards were making moves in this direction in 1911. (McCaffrey 1998: 126)

Thus, in spite of the advantages which the Education Scotland Act stipulated, its full implementation was to take another ten years (cf. Bradley 1995: 153).

3.2 Sectarianism—the Endemic Phenomenon in the West of Scotland?

The extent to which sectarianism was an omnipresent phenomenon in the west of Scotland has been hotly debated in recent years by historians and sociologists alike. There seems to be a very clear-cut divergence of opinion in terms of regarding sectarianism as endemic. Seen from a sociological and anthropological viewpoint Bruce, Glendinning, Paterson and Rosie have defined the phenomenon as “a widespread and shared culture of improperly treating people in terms of their religion.” (Bruce 2004:4) Bradley, on the other hand, has argued that sectarianism cannot be ignored due to its representation of an “anti-Catholic dimension in Scottish life” (Bradley 1995: 96). In another essay dealing with ghettoisation, Bradley has even suggested that the process of assimilation in case of the Irish Catholic immigrants was mainly achieved by means of external coercion: “The implication is that such immigrants to Scotland were compelled to assimilate rather than integrate: a necessary pre-requisite to acceptance and ultimately, improvement and advancement.” (ed. Boyle and Lynch 1998: 97). Thus, according to Bradley, by ignoring these aspects, one would also be unaware of the disparagement of the Catholic Irish within a more dominant framework such as the British Protestant or Scottish Presbyterian culture. (cf. ed. Boyle and Lynch 1998: 111).

In one of his analyses Gallagher, whilst not denying the presence of sectarianism, has pinpointed an important fact by drawing a parallel with another similar milieu, i.e. Liverpool: “Unlike Liverpool for instance, the Catholic community in Glasgow was not heavily ‘ghettoised’ despite the existence of focal points in both cities. Scoto-Irish Catholics were relatively better provided with church organisations, and –until 1914—were relatively free from the overt physical and political anti-Catholicism.” (Gallagher quoted in Brown 1993: 22). This would therefore contradict Bradley’s statements. By the same token, Brown has shown

that if the two phenomena of sectarianism and ghettoisation were to be found in parts of the west of Scotland not located within Glasgow city itself, but in its industrialised satellite towns and villages (cf. Brown 1993: 22). Gallagher has provided a further explanation for this: “During the nineteenth century sectarian incidents tended to occur, not in large centres like Glasgow, but in smaller communities on the lower reaches of the Clyde or in Lanarkshire where there was often a greater degree of residential segregation on ethnic lines because of the much sharper economic rivalry that had occurred in earlier decades.” (ed. Devine 1991: 23).

There would be another facet to what Gallagher meant by competition on the Clydeside’s labour market, around which a whole word-of-mouth mythology was built up in time: the “‘No Irish Need Apply’ notices” (Bradley 1995: 135). Bradley considers the notices as clear evidence for open discrimination against the Irish Catholic; an idea thoroughly supported by Brown, who has also argued that this pattern of discrimination continued well into the 1930s (cf. Brown 1987:235). Thus, according to Brown “the entry to skilled occupations has been slowed down by the hostility of Protestant employers (apparent [sic] during the slump of the 1930s when ‘No Catholics need apply’ signs appeared at some factories) and of Protestant artisans and their trades unions.” (Brown 1987:235) Nevertheless, neither Bradley nor Brown has provided a clear-cut example of a work place where this type of discrimination was openly carried out.

In a more recent study, Bruce et al, have found no proof of one single poster or of a photograph nor a depiction in the daily papers of the day (cf. Bruce 2004: 2). This in turn may prove how powerful the perception of a collective memory can be in spite of its orally transmitted character, and thus lead towards the creation a fallacious construct.

A plausible explanation for this outcome might be the symbolisms revolving around the anti-Catholic Orange tradition, which, as has been shown in the previous chapter, although it did rally a significant membership in Scotland throughout the Home Rule campaign, it did not play a decisive role on the political stage. Moreover, its inner structure based on lodges, which at first glance might strike as a direct appeal to the middle classes, was not necessarily the case: “Orangeism was largely a raucous working-class movement with a penchant for drunkenness and

street brawling, too close an association with it would alienate respectable middle-class supporters.” (Finlay 2004:94) In terms of the influence of the Irish Home Rule campaign it needs to be mentioned that its effects went much deeper in the province of Ulster than the west of Scotland, as by 1912 on the shipyards in Belfast all Home Rule supporters irrespective of their religious affiliation were dismissed (cf. Howell 1986: 94).

An analysis of an interesting case on the Clydeside comes in support of this theory. Foster, Houston and Madigan focused on two of Glasgow’s adjacent burghs: Govan, mainly Catholic, and Kinning Park, mainly Protestant, and the extent to which these two communities coalesced or were demarcated over a four-decade period (1860-1901). The case is all the more compelling as the majority of Irish immigrants in these burghs had originated from the two segregated communities in Ulster (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 66). A parallel with the concomitant events which occurred in Belfast have revealed a few notable disparities.

Firstly, what could be perceived as “spatial separation” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 66), was by far more conspicuous in Belfast in the 1860s than on the Clydeside: “Unlike Clydeside, the scale of segregation in Belfast and other urban centres continued to increase thereafter—doing so particularly sharply in the 1880s and 1890s and by then assuming a level of intensity quite unlike that in Govan and Kinning Park.” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 66). The rise of the Home Rule campaign, on the one hand, and Unionism on the other hand, were undoubtedly two powerful catalysts which led to further clashes between the two communities in Ulster. Interestingly, however, these two phenomena did not have the same effect in Govan and Kinning Park, where the case of spatial separation stagnated (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 87).

Secondly, in terms of exclusion of the Irish Catholic from certain work sectors, Foster has noted that, once again, this was a more typical case in Belfast:

In Belfast it mainly operated through closely controlled exclusion from entire industrial sectors. Catholics were excluded entirely from all jobs, skilled and unskilled, in most shipbuilding and engineering works and certain docks. [...] On Clydeside all Irish immigrants in general were relegated to the less skilled jobs—but had access to the full range of industrial and service occupations. (ed. Mitchell 2008: 68)

Moreover, the attempt of Ulster Protestant employers to hire an all semiskilled Protestant niche in these two dock areas and thus transpose this habit onto parts of the Clydeside failed (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 88).

A last important point mentioned in the analysis of Foster is the problematic around the perception that equally violent uproars between Irish Catholics and Protestants occurred concurrently in both Belfast and the Clydeside. If this perception were to be taken into account, then it could be argued that a main feature of Ulster sectarianism had already been transposed onto the west of Scotland by the end of the nineteenth century. This, however, is a fallacy: “Belfast saw its worst rioting of the century in 1886. No riots occurred in Govan in 1886 and only one in the 1870s. This happened in 1874 when Orangemen returning from the 12th July demonstration in central Glasgow were involved in a fracas with Home Rulers”. (ed. Mitchell 2008: 88)

By the same token, John Burrowes, analysed what the newspaper accounts of August 1875 described as the “Battle of Partick”, an open clash between the Irish Catholics, who were commemorating Daniel O’Connell’s centenary, and the Irish Protestant Orange members whose presence had been acutely felt prior to the event (cf. Burrowes 2008: 130). In spite of the fear of imminent disaster, the effects of the rioting were not, as Burrowes pointed out, adverse:

There were no deaths. No petrol bombs were thrown. No fires were lit.[...] No soldiers had to be dispatched [...] The riot had not spread to the other areas of the city, where there was a far greater proportion of Irish settlers, areas such as Bridgeton, Calton, the Gorbals, Anderston and Townhead. Even at worst, the riot at Partick was nothing like the widespread disturbances they have known so many times over the years in Belfast and Londonderry.(Burrowes 2008: 154)

In the two cases mentioned above relating to the riots in Govan and Partick an important aspect should not be left out, viz. rioters from both sides were arrested by the police and hence neither party got preferential treatment. Moreover, in Glasgow and its satellite towns and villages the Orange parades had faced a fifty-year ban from the Glasgow Council prior to 1873 (cf. Burrowes 2008: 181).

Nevertheless, these features of Clydeside cohabitation along the Irish Catholic-Protestant lines if they were known at the time, were most certainly not used by the Church of Scotland’s prophets of doom, who, in the aftermath of the

Great War and with the loss of a generation of young men on the Western Front, could see in the Irish Catholic community only another menace to the nation as a whole.

3.3 “*The Scots Are a Dying People*”

In his book *Caledonia, or the Future of the Scots* published in 1928, George Malcolm Thomson made some very sinister predictions regarding the Irish immigration into Scotland:

The Scots are a dying people. They are being replaced in their own country by a people alien in race, temperament and religion, at a speed which is without parallel in history outside the era of the barbarian invasions. [...] Where they come the Scots go. The Scottish lion and the Irish bull will not lie down together. Already there are villages that are entirely Irish, and towns that are predominantly Irish; already the Roman Catholic communion is the largest in Glasgow. (Thomson 1928: 10)

Unfortunately, this was not an isolated case amongst the Scottish “intellectuals” of the 1920s. The foundations for the so-called scientific facts that the Scottish nation had all the reasons to worry about an “Irish invasion” had already been laid firstly by the Presbytery of Glasgow on 29th May 1923 and followed by the General Assembly’s infamous document entitled: *The Menace of the Irish Race to Our Scottish Nationality*, which was published by the Church of Scotland later that year. Its aim was to draw support from among political circles, but above all, to win back a high proportion of the Presbyterian believers as both Churches were undergoing a crisis; viz. the rise of secularisation (cf. Finlay 2004: 95). The following analysis will pinpoint the committee’s report’s main features in constructing the Irish inferior “Other”, but also the reasons why its aims were not eventually reached.

From the very onset the report by the Presbytery of Glasgow, although it states the “alarm and anxiety” (CH1/2/359:750) as far Irish Roman Catholic immigration is concerned, it clearly delineates the sympathetic attitude towards the Irish Ulster Protestants, who “are the same race as ourselves and of the same Faith, and are readily assimilated to the Scottish population.” (CH1/2/359:750) By contrast, the Irish Catholic would not be able to undergo the process of assimilation

as: “They remain a people by themselves, segregated by reason of their race, their customs, their traditions, and above all, by their loyalty to their Church, and gradually and inevitably dividing Scotland, racially, socially and ecclesiastically.” (CH1/2/359:750) The open antagonism is thus presented as justifiable since the Catholic Church with its faithful community surrounding it seems to have willingly severed itself from the rest of Scottish society. Further “scientific” justifications follow in their focus of “the abnormal growth of the Irish race” (CH1/2/359:751) in the west of Scotland. The authors of the report, Christopher N. Johnston and William Main, also cite a number of statistics comprised by the committee which was meant to speak for itself: “According to the committees statistics the Irish population had grown from 327,239 in 1881 to 432,900 in 1901, to 518,969 by 1911 and had reached 601,304 by 1921. [...] In the twenty years, 1901 to 1921, the Irish population increased by 39 per cent, while the Scottish population increased by only 6 per cent.” (CH1/2/359:753)

Thus the committee’s main fear is revealed: that the Irish “alien race” would, in time, gradually supplant Scottish society in their own country (cf. CH1/2/359:752) and furthermore, this was already becoming a reality with the young skilled Scots’ *en masse* emigration: “Meanwhile there was going on a great exodus of the Scottish race. [...] Compelled by the economic pressure of the Irish race, young Scottish men and women—the flower of the nation—left their native land, and sought to build up their fortunes in America and the Dominions.” (CH1/2/359:752) The main argument for this unfounded panic was therefore what the committee deemed as the disproportionate Irish Catholic influx *vis-à-vis* the Scottish exodus, which in their opinion would have inevitably led to a further imbalance: “[...] the Irish race in our midst will increase, while the Scottish race decreases.” (CH1/2/359:756)

A further parallel between the native Scots and the alien Irish is drawn to emphasise the irreparable consequences Scotland were to face, if this phenomenon were to materialise: the Scots, the committee argues, “have a gift of speech, an aptitude to public life, and a prominent place in political, county, municipal, and parochial elections,” whereas the Irish “are poor partly through intemperance and improvidence, and they show little inclination to raise themselves in the social scale.” (CH1/2/359:758)

The report proceeds by shifting its antagonism towards the Roman Catholic Church, which, in its role as the pillar of the Irish community, is seen as the propeller for the continuation of the Irish influx into the west of Scotland. The Roman Catholic Church representatives not only seek to encourage more Irish people to settle in Scotland, but are also planning to convert the Scots to the much-hated Catholic faith (cf. CH1/2/359:758-9). Moreover, another argument for it underlined by the committee would be the seemingly exaggerated benefits the Catholic Church has received with the passing of the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 because: “[...] the Roman Catholic Church, loaded with wealth received from an overburdened nation, is using it for the purpose of securely establishing a Faith in their land that is distasteful to the Scottish race, or of supplanting the people who supplied these riches by a race that is alien in sympathy and in religion.” (cf. CH1/2/359:760).

The end of the report is strikingly similar to its beginning and stresses the negative impact that the Irish Catholic immigration has had on Scottish soil by destroying “the unity and homogeneity of the Scottish people” (CH1/2/359:751) and the impossibility of a peaceful cohabitation between the Irish and Scots, with Ulster alluded to as a plausible explanation :

Fusion of the Scottish and the Irish races in Scotland—just as it was in Ireland—will remain an impossibility. The Irish are the obedient children of the Church of Rome; the Scots stubbornly adhere to the principles of the Reformed Faith. The Irish have separate schools for their children; they have their own clubs for recreation and for social intercourse; they tend to segregate in communities, and even to monopolise certain departments of labour to the exclusion of the Scots. (CH1/2/359:761)

In a word, the Irish were “intruders”, “an alien race” very much inferior to the Scottish “racial supremacy,” and moreover, a bad influence on the Scots and an imminent threat (cf. CH1/2/359:760-61). As shocking as the perception of these statements might be in a present context, in 1923 when another document based on the above-mentioned report was issued by the Church of Scotland, i.e. *The Menace of the Irish Race to Our Scottish Nationality*, this was not met with enmity from the very onset. The explanation for it, as has been already shown at the beginning of this section, was that social Darwinism and eugenics could have easily passed for

science by a small niche who deemed itself to be intellectual during that period. The use of this rhetoric has undergone an intricate analysis by contemporary historians, who have also defined the cause of its failure within the wider context of the post-Great War era and the growing phenomenon of secularisation.

Firstly, what must have come as an unexpected shock to both the Free Church and the Church of Scotland alike was the gradual but certain decline in church adherence in the decade that followed the Great War. As was shown in the report, the bad influence of the Irish and the Roman Catholic Church were later on regarded as the main culprits for this outcome. Graham Walker has noted that, by contrast, by the turn of the twentieth century, this tendency had not been the case: “Protestant church adherence in Scotland peaked in 1905, and it is perhaps true to say that its simultaneous influence over high and low echelons of Scottish society was never more pronounced.” (ed. Devine and Finlay 1996: 253). The aftermath of the Great War, with its demystification of honour and courage and the undermining of morale after the unnecessary loss of thousands of young soldiers in redundant battles, changed this attitude radically.

The fact that this was complemented by another wave of *en masse* Scottish emigration made the Irish community, which by this point could be regarded in many ways a minority, more conspicuous. This was the case with its perception by the Church of Scotland. As Brown has observed, the Scottish non-Presbyterian population had risen by 1851 to 8.7 per cent and by 1914 to 15 per cent (cf. Brown 1993: 19). This percentage did not, however, refer exclusively to the Irish Catholic adherents, and, as has been demonstrated in Chapter 1, Catholicism had appealed not only to Irish immigrants but to Scottish Highlander migrants as well (cf. Mitchell 2008:24).

Gallagher and Finlay have both noted that within both Scottish Presbyterian Churches a sheer denial of the ongoing process of secularisation had probably been the main factor for pinning down the Irish Catholics as the scapegoat (cf. Gallagher 1987: 137). Gallagher has pointed out in his book, *Glasgow: the Uneasy Peace* that: “In their different ways, these matters only helped to sting a small but growing number of ministers whose church was not as confident of *its* identity”. (Gallagher 1987: 137) Furthermore, Brown has noted that it was also secularisation which had determined the two Churches to re-unite and stand as a joint body against a

Catholic Church which seemed to be more successful in attracting adherence (cf. Brown 1987:202).

Thus, the fear of another “Irish invasion” was further amplified by the fallacious perception that, the emigration of the skilled strata of Scottish society would leave behind only “the young, weak and infirm to face the Irish onslaught”. (Finlay 2004:93)

In spite of the furour within the Church of Scotland over the issue of Irish immigration, the reports issued in 1923 did not find many supporters in the sector it had initially targeted, i.e. the British government. Moreover, this was firmly declined by the then Conservative government who had a surprising response to the Church of Scotland’s proposal of curbing further Irish immigration by imposing restrictions. The government could not impose such measures, as Ireland, by now turned into the Irish Free State, was still part of the British Empire and it was its unity that took precedence in this context (cf. Bruce 2004: 14). Europe’s and its former empires’ experience of severe internal splits after the Great War must have been an important catalyst for Britain in maintaining its *status quo*. Bruce has pointed out that the government had also its own statistics which firmly contradicted the ones that had been handed in by the Church of Scotland (cf. Bruce 2004:43). Interestingly, the *Glasgow Herald*, a newspaper that had not always been in favour of the Irish Catholics, went a step further also and published a census which showed that the number of Irish-born in Scotland had been in sharp decline in the 1920s (cf. Bruce 2004:43)

Although other similar attempts were made to instigate the British political landscape and draw the attention of the Scottish electorate, most notably by right-wing parties with fascist overtones such as the Scottish Protestant League led by Alexander Radcliffe (cf. Bradley 1995: 154), these also failed to materialise in the interwar period. It is this aspect in historiography that is of paramount importance and Bradley fails to mention: in spite of their occurrence these forms of anti-Catholic antagonism did not cause a nationwide uproar and with their rise came also the swift fall.

4. The Irish Disturbances in the West of Scotland

The reinvention of Irishness did not strictly focus on cultural features and Catholicity alone. The element of nationalism and republicanism respectively, were embedded and became deeply ingrained in the Irish mindset, perhaps even more so with the onset of the Home Rule movement. As Garvin pointed out: “It was not until well into the nineteenth century that republican ideas of a sort gained a firm hold in the minds and proportion of the Catholic majority in the country. Prior to then, most Irish Catholics were probably monarchist in their political thinking, such as it was.”(Garvin 1996: 11) These ideas, however, were promoted by a specific niche in Ireland, a revolutionary middle-class elite, who by the latter part of the nineteenth century could already delineate the features of a future autonomous Irish state. (cf. Garvin 1996: 13) The outbreak of the Great War brought more of Ireland’s internal issues to light, and with the repeated failure of the British government to find a viable solution more bitterness followed. These in turn, materialised into political organisations which would become even more acute after the Easter Rising of 1916.

4.1 “*When Pearse Summoned Cuchulain to His Side*”*

In the aftermath of the Great War, the Irish soldiers from the west of Scotland and their contribution within the Scottish Highland Light Infantry and the Cameronians were all easily forgotten in a society overwhelmed by a stark sense of defeatism (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 127). The fact that Irish-born soldiers had been recruited in these Scottish regiments, the Cameronians in particular, is perhaps in itself a historical irony—the regiment had derived its name from Richard Cameron, the leader of the most fanatical faction of the anti-Catholic Covenanters (cf. Devine 2006:76). Elaine McFarland has specified that: “It is only against the background of the relentless grind of war that the community’s reaction to external political developments, such as the Easter Rising, can be understood.”(ed. Mitchell 2008: 138). There are, however, a few other points which also need to be considered within this context.

* Yeats, William Butler. “The Statues” in *Collected Poems W.B. Yeats*. London Wordsworth, 2000.

Firstly, as has been shown in the Chapter 2, by the beginning of the twentieth century the Liberal Party had already attempted to pass two Home Rule bills for Ireland, but to no avail. Prior to the outbreak of the Great War another disastrous attempt was made in 1912 which was followed by further strikes and riots in Dublin due to low wages (cf. Howell 1986: 110). It was during these events that the central figures of the Easter Rising of 1916 would make their voices heard, i.e. James Connolly and Patrick Pearse, who, in spite of their common goal, represented quite different political spectrums. James Connolly was the leader of the lesser-known Irish Citizen Army, more of a trade-unionists group than a party, whereas Patrick Pearse had established himself as the head of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the followers of the failed Fenian movement in the previous century (cf. Howell 1986: 100).

Connolly is all the more an interesting political figure as he also had a Scottish background—he was born into an Irish immigrant family in Edinburgh, to which he would return in order to advocate his strong Marxist beliefs to the Irish community (cf. Howell 1986: 43). Patrick Pearse equally promoted the new Gaelic cultural revival and tried, although only to a very limited extent, to convert the Irish Catholic community in the west of Scotland. During his lectures he even “spoke of ‘a battle to the death...between the Irish mind and the English mind in Ireland.’” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 117)

Connolly’s socialist ideas were also combined with what the working class in Ireland could now relate to the most, viz. nationalism. Its perception, as Connolly himself noted in his diaries, would strongly differ in the province of Ulster: “ This is the reason—their unfortunate isolation as strangers holding a conquered land in fee for rulers alien to its people—that the so-called Scotch of Ulster have fallen away from and developed antagonism to political reform and mental freedom.” (Howell 1986: 97) Connolly’s fusion of nationalism and socialism was met with a lot of suspicion in its incipient stage, the main reason for it being that it “faced a difficulty with Catholic and other propagandists who presented Socialism as English and therefore anti-national.” (Howell 1986: 122) His fundamental ideas for a socialist Irish society had to blend in with both the Catholic and the newly revived

Gaelic traditions (cf. Garvin 1996: 126). By 1914, Connolly had some bleak prognostications in terms of the Anglo-Irish political relationship:

If the British Government once more throws off the mask of constitutionalism and launches its weapons of repression against those who dare to differ from it, if once more it sets in motion its jails, its courts martial, its scaffolds, then the last tie that binds these men to the official Home Rule gang will snap. (Howell 1986: 144)

What needs to be mentioned about Connolly's rhetoric, however, is that it had aimed almost exclusively at the Irish working class, as it was "[...] the only secure foundation upon which a free nation can be reared." (Howell 1986: 150) This was only one of the many aspects that Sinn Fein would emulate after 1916 (cf. Howell 1986: 123). On the eve of the Easter Rising Connolly firmly believed that "Ireland could make a distinctive and significant contribution to the destruction of capitalism. [...] The expectation rested on the claim that the British Empire played within world capitalism." (ibid. 1986: 135) To put it differently, this was also an opportune moment for the radical Irish to gather their strength and strike whilst Britain, deeply engaged in the Great War, would have found it much harder to fight on so many fronts. That, at least must have been Connolly's erroneous belief. The outcome of the Easter Rising was the opposite of what Connolly and Pearse had expected, but it was the ensuing notion of martyrdom attached to the event, and implicitly directly associated with its leaders, which played a decisive part in the rhetoric of the growing Sinn Fein (cf. Howell 1986: 123). Nevertheless, Connolly's ideal of a socialist Ireland would not be realised.

4.2 Sinn Fein and IRA Support in Scotland—Myth or Reality?

The Easter Rising in Dublin received a mixed reaction from the Irish community in Scotland. As McFarland noted, the sympathy in the immediate aftermath of the events was lying rather with the Irish Parliamentary Party under John Redmond than the radicals under Connolly and Pearse (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 139). Moreover, "meetings in support of Redmond were organised by Irish organisations throughout Scotland, and there seems little evidence to doubt the claim of the Home Government Branch that the bulk of local sentiment was firmly behind him." (ed. Mitchell 2008: 139). This attitude would change in the months that followed,

although only to a limited extent; with the British government's acquiescence of the executions of the Rising's leaders (ed. *ibid.* 2008: 139). Nevertheless, as McFarland observed once again: "Sympathy with their plight was not extended to their political principles. [...] Republican activity was limited to a minority of enthusiasts".(ed. Mitchell 2008: 139).

These assertions, however, contradict the views of other historians, who have perceived the Irish Catholic community in the west of Scotland not only as a fervent moral supporter of republican views, but also as an ally in the subsequent Anglo-Irish War from 1919-1921. Finlay, for instance, has pointed out that with the rise to power of the more radical Sinn Fein, a plethora of branches followed in Scotland which he estimates at about "eighty branches in existence. Gun-running was carried out, and support for the war emanated from many quarters, convincing many in Scotland that loyalties within the Catholic community were first and foremost directed to Ireland." (Finlay 2004:95) Nevertheless, Finlay does not mention the specific locations of the estimated eighty branches nor the quarters where the smuggling of arms was allegedly coordinated from. Similar views have been shared by Gallagher and Bradley, who have also argued that: "In Scotland, the number of Sinn Fein clubs increased from twenty to eighty and a large number of IRA battalions were formed in the west of Scotland."(Gallagher quoted in Bradley 1995: 140). Gallagher has even suggested that "by 1921 almost every Scottish town with a sizeable Irish presence had its own IRA company." (Gallagher quoted in Bruce 2004:38) With reference to Ireland, Garvin has indicated that "British military intelligence estimated that 90 per cent of the population were Sinn Fein and supporters of 'murder'."(Garvin 1996: 140)

In order to have a better understanding of the events that followed and to gauge the extent to which the information mentioned above (relating to the support in the west of Scotland) can be accounted as plausible, a brief analysis of the key political components –Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army—needs to be made. As has been noted in the previous section, Sinn Fein was eager to exploit the aura of martyrdom that was built around Connolly and Pearse during the Easter Rising. The party had a different political agenda which did not include Connolly's socialist overtones and presented itself as a cross-class organisation (cf. ed. Augusteijn 2002: 104). Nevertheless, as it had been the case with Connolly, Sinn

Fein created a blend of ideologies and also emulated the features of the previously iconic Fenian movement by supporting Gaelic literary societies (ed. Mitchell 2008: 116). In spite of a benign emphasis placed on Gaelic cultural revival, Sinn Fein's main interest lay in the politics of an independent Ireland irrespective of the means used to achieve it (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 2). This can be noted in the 1918 Sinn Fein election manifesto: "It is on our unbroken tradition of nationhood, on a unity in a national name which has never been challenged, on our possession of a distinctive national culture and social order, on the moral courage and dignity of our people in the face of alien aggression." (ed. Augusteijn 2002: 108) It was the delineation of a separate Gaelic culture mixed with the notion of martyrdom of a country which had endured centuries of oppression that must have been the most appealing in the Sinn Fein rhetoric. This may be a further explanation as to why Sinn Fein also received the endorsement of Catholic bishops in Ireland until the end of the Anglo-Irish War in 1921 (cf. Comerford 2003: 113). Nevertheless, there was another organisation which would practice what Sinn Fein preached—the Irish Republican Army. The fact that its actions faced immediate retaliation from the British government stressed all the more the presence of the alien aggressor indicated in the Sinn Fein manifesto (cf. ed. Augusteijn 2002: 107).

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was mainly based on the Volunteers who had taken part in plotting the Easter Rising (cf. Garvin 1996: 127). On the other hand, cultural organisations with a strong political affinity for Sinn Fein like the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Gaelic League also supplied many volunteers during the Anglo-Irish War (cf. ed. Augusteijn 2002: 103). Their main motivation for joining, as Augusteijn has pointed out, was the "behavior of the government and the Crown forces during the revolutionary period" (ed. Augusteijn 2002: 104). By Crown forces was meant the Royal Irish Constabulary and the infamous division known informally as "the Black and Tans", which was mainly comprised of former English and Scottish war veterans, and who, as the Anglo-Irish War progressed, became more and more aggressive towards Irish civilians (cf. Burrowes 2008: 315). Thus, the Sinn Fein and IRA politics of reprisal became justifiable and as their main objective was now to effectively take over power, the members were not allowed to deviate from it nor get involved in unnecessary socio-economic questions (cf. ed. Augusteijn 2002: 104).

There is no doubt that these events must have had a resonance in the west of Scotland, all the more since the Irish Catholic community was caught in the middle. To whom should they now pay more allegiance: an ancestral land that was rebelling against British oppression or to the Empire that had allowed the Irish settlement in dire economic times? Mairtin O’Cathain has suggested that with the heroic death of James Connolly as a catalyst, the creation of some 75 clubs in Scotland ensued which would focus mainly on fund-raising (ed. Mitchell 2008: 122). The phenomenon is explained as follows:

The demise of parliamentary Irish nationalism and the subsequent rise and popularity in the cause of Sinn Fein that took place across Ireland, was replicated in Scotland and evidenced by the massive growth in Sinn Fein clubs, by the sympathetic response of the Scottish Catholic press under its post-war baron, Charles Diamond, and by the active and passive aid given to the Irish Republican Army (IRA). (ed. Mitchell 2008: 122).

O’Cathain’s argument is also that: “The majoritarian embrace of physical force Irish republicanism by the Irish in Scotland, historically brief though it was, turned the community outside in.” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 122). Burrowes also shares this view by explaining the way the Sinn Fein clubs were attracting both Irish-born as well as Scottish membership in Glasgow, but makes an important remark in this respect: “Sinn Fein and IRA supporters were less furtive in their activities in the 1920s than in the later stages of the Troubles” (Burrowes 2008: 317). With a recruitment office in Glasgow’s city centre and advertisements in local newspapers, they could have been easily found (cf. Burrowes 2008: 317). It is therefore questionable whether with this kind of exposure the illegal activities Finlay mentioned could have passed unnoticed. On the other hand, Hopkinson has pointed out that “To a great extent the Anglo-Irish War was a Munster and Dublin city affair.” (Hopkinson 2004: 10). In other words, the Anglo-Irish War was carried out on Irish soil and was mostly constricted to the twenty-six counties in the southern part which would comprise the Free State after 1922. Scotland’s Irish community did not protest openly and if there were factions within the Catholic community that supported the Irish cause it was certainly done in a tacit manner. More importantly, throughout this period, Hopkinson has noted that “the aims and achievements of the

IRA were very limited. At best the IRA achieved a military stalemate which prevented the British from administering the south and west.” (Hopkinson 2004: 9).

A thorough analysis on the overall perception of these events by the Irish Catholic community in the west of Scotland raises a lot of difficulties due not only to the scarcity of information provided so far, but also the contradictory stances the authors have taken. O’Cathain underlined the fact that even at present there is an ongoing debate about the actual number of Scoto-Irish membership in the IRA:

“There has been great disagreement about IRA numbers in Scotland in the years 1920-22. The most recent estimation by Hart gives a figure of 600 for 1920.” (ed. Mitchell 2008: 123). Another estimate suggests a rough number of 4,000 Sinn Feiners and 7,000 IRA supporters throughout Scotland prior to a tenfold drop in volunteer numbers in 1926 (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 123). Hopkinson has mentioned the so-called “Scotch accounts” from 1921 which referred to arms smuggling to Ireland and the involvement of Michael Collins in it, but only very succinctly and with no additional information (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 17). On the other hand, Hopkinson’s statistics on the IRA force in Ireland may shed some light in this respect, although the lack of specificity is still an issue which requires further research. According to Hopkinson, at the beginning of the Anglo-Irish War the estimate for IRA membership was 12,900 in possession of a total of 6,780 guns; but there was a significant difference between nominal and active membership, which was much lower in numbers. (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 127). Moreover, the active IRA membership at the end of the War in 1921 was estimated by one of its leaders, Mulcahy, to be no more than 3,000 mostly based in the county of Munster (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 16) The question that therefore arises in the context of the Irish Catholics in the west of Scotland would be: if the active IRA membership in Ireland during the Anglo-Irish War was not too high when compared to its overall population, how could this have been the opposite case in the west of Scotland where, again, in terms of inhabitants the proportion was much smaller?

Nevertheless, it was the politics of fear and deceitfulness that the IRA cunningly propagated to win their cause. That a mere allegation of illegal activity could easily turn into a snow-ball effect will be demonstrated in the following extracts from a case in *The Irish Disturbances Files*.*

* This case has also been analysed by Mr. David Ritchie in *Irish Immigration and Scotland: Church, State and Catholicism 1921 – 1926. Unpublished MSc, University of Edinburgh.*

On 15 October 1920, Sergeant McKenzie reported to have seen on the previous night at about 1 a.m. in Barrhead, Renfrewshire, what appeared to be “a large crowd of men, numbering about 200” (cf. NAS HH55/62) who, after a short period of time, split into two squads and proceeded one in the direction of Glasgow and the other towards Paisley (cf. NAS HH55/62). McKenzie also stated that “Some of them carried coats over their arm or shoulder.” (NAS HH55/62). At the very end of the report it is mentioned that: “The morning was very dark and a slight rain was falling which made everything very indistinct.” (NAS HH55/62). What is indicated in the report is thus rather a contradiction in terms: Sergeant McKenzie could spot a whole squad of 200 men, only to realise later that they had been quite indistinguishable. Nevertheless, the report was passed on to the next in command, the Procurator Fiscal, who in turn, decided to draw the attention of the Chief Constable of Glasgow. The report handed in on 18th October 1920 already had the subject “Sinn Feiners” attached to it, although nothing of the sort had been noted in the initial McKenzie report. (cf. NAS HH55/62). Moreover, it was mentioned that the now “identifiable” Sinn Feiners “appeared to be carrying something bulky” and thus alluding to weapons (cf. NAS HH55/62).

The Chief Constable was clearly alarmed by the information received as another report with additional information from “a private reliable source” was sent to the Director of Intelligence (cf. NAS HH55/62). The additional “reliable information” was that on the very same night of 14th October a Sinn Fein meeting was held in Greenock with “over 30,000 Sinn Fein Volunteers in Glasgow and the West of Scotland; that 20,000 had revolvers and 2,000 had rifles and that there was an abundance of ammunition.” (NAS HH55/62) Seen from an objective standpoint, it is interesting how the alleged reliable source had managed to produce such even numbers for the participants and their arms, unless of course, this information had been passed on from another source.

From the Director of Intelligence the new report was passed on to the Lord Advocate, who in turn, submitted a memorandum to the Secretary for Scotland based in London entitled “Illegal Drilling.” There is, however, an interesting point also mentioned by the Lord Advocate: “It should be pointed out that the Sinn Fein illegal drillings have not so far involved any active breach of the peace. On the

other hand I have been informed unofficially that the Orangemen in Lanarkshire (who must number some thousands) are drilling also.” (NAS HH55/62)

The Scottish Office reported to the Cabinet on what they viewed as “Illegal Drilling in Scotland” in another memorandum on the same day, 18th October 1920. To have an understanding of the outset of this case, the memorandum by the Secretary of Scotland is quoted in its entirety:

I desire to bring before the Cabinet an aspect of Sinn Fein activity in the West of Scotland which calls for attention, and for a decision as to the policy to be pursued. The facts, and the questions on which a decision is necessary, are set forth in a memorandum which I have received from the Lord Advocate, and a copy of which is attached hereto.

I do not know whether a similar situation exists in any part of England, but possibly it does (or may arise) in centres where there is considerable Irish element. Any action to be taken by the Authorities in Scotland might therefore have to be considered in the light of its effects in England, and, of course, with due regard to its bearing on the situation in Ireland.

It is for these reasons mainly that I have thought it necessary to lay the matter before the Cabinet. (NAS HH55/62)

The information referring to this case reached the War Office at White Hall on 21st October, 1920.

To summarise the key elements in the case presented above: what started out as a report based on information of which Sergeant McKenzie was not thoroughly sure, transformed into a very specific identification of Sinn Fein activity, i.e. drilling in Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire, which, in a space of four days became so alarming that the Scottish Office, the Cabinet and subsequently, the War Office in London all had to be notified of what was eventually deemed as illegal drilling in the whole west of Scotland.

One of the first striking aspects about these documents is that with one exception, i.e. McKenzie’s initial report, all make reference to Sinn Fein membership when in fact what was actually meant was the Irish Republican Army. As has been mentioned earlier in this section, it was the IRA which was in charge

of the guerrilla and drilling activities not the Sinn Fein, but as O’Cathain has also noted this confusion was quite common at British institutional level (cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 123).

Another aspect would be the remarkably high number of alleged supporters (30,000) indicated in the report by the Chief Constable of Glasgow. Even if the premise of this case were to be taken into account and there had truly been a secret gathering by the IRA members from the whole west of Scotland (as it was presumed by the Secretary for Scotland), it is very doubtful whether their numbers could have exceeded a few hundreds. As Hopkinson pointed out, at the time in Ireland, where the war was taking place the nominal membership did not even rise to half the number noted in the Chief Constable’s report (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 127). The same could be said about the alleged arms and ammunition. Irrespective of how impressionable some younger sections within the Irish community in Scotland might have been, it is questionable whether their financial backing could have in any way vied with the Irish-American diaspora (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 170). It has already been shown in the previous chapter that the Irish Catholic community in the west of Scotland as a whole had more important priorities in terms of fund-raising, viz. the building of more Catholic chapels and schools.

One last interesting feature can be noted in this case from *The Irish Disturbances Files*: what the reports describe is a seemingly well organised IRA system both on Irish and British soil. This, however, was not altogether a fact. Hopkinson noticed that shortly before reaching an agreement on 11 July 1921, the British government was confused as to who they were supposed to negotiate with (cf. Hopkinson 2004: 14)

It was the perpetuation of this state of confusion which helped the IRA continue its localised activity where it was really needed, i.e. in the small regional pockets throughout Ireland.

With the signing of the Treaty in 1921, Ireland had gained the Dominion status and was thus still part of the British Empire. Nevertheless, the amount of autonomy it was granted came with restrictions as “the Free State constitution was to require an oath of fidelity to the British monarch in his capacity as head of the Commonwealth.” (Garvin 1996: 142) Thus an inevitable split within the Sinn Fein and IRA ensued. The failure of the two opposing factions, the pro-Treaty and anti-

Treaty, to come to a concession led to another bitter war—the Irish Civil War (1922-23).

4.3 South Irish, Northern Irish and Scoto-Irish Identities

The aftermath of the Treaty had also led, as it had been the case with the Home Rule movement, to the heightening of tensions in the province of Ulster where the delineation between Protestant Unionists and Catholic Nationalists had been much deeper-rooted. Hopkinson stressed that this “proved a prelude to a greatly increased level of violence—particularly on the border and in Belfast—in the six months following.” (Hopkinson 2004: 77) With the implementation of the partition in the year prior to the signing of the Treaty, two new entities were brought into being with Northern Ireland comprising six counties and Southern Ireland twenty-six, each with its own future form of government (cf. Comerford 2003: 43). In terms of Ulster’s disparate identities Graham Walker has noted that, on the one hand: “Northern Ireland Catholics [...] clung tenaciously to an ideal of Irish unity which owed everything to their plight in their Northern Ireland state and nothing to the discrete development of the independent Irish State in the rest of the island.” (Walker 1995: 99) On the other hand, the absence of a consistent dialogue between the Ulster Unionists and the British government also led to “a tendency to substitute a historically-fabricated abstraction for a highly complex and rapidly-changing reality”. (Walker 1995: 100)

In terms of the Irish nationalist movement Walker has pointed out that, as a whole, this was done “with a deep awareness of history, and it was adept at *using* history – at drawing upon past heroes, past acts of rebellion, past act of national-consciousness-raising, to build up a powerful propagandist message.” (Walker 1995: 102-3) It was a construct whose facets were gradually and successfully added, and its base which had come in the form of a cultural revival became a hallmark of Irish parties’ manifestos, such as Sinn Fein.

Whilst these Irish identities were being re-invented or revived, in Scotland, the Irish Catholic community, which by the beginning of the Irish Civil War was already a visible minority in the western part, was facing an acute identity crisis—

were they Irish Catholics first and Scottish second or the other way around, or was it a hybrid identity instead?

Graham Walker has suggested that the Irish nationalism propagated on the other side of the Irish Sea left “only a faint echo in Scotland where there was a general recognition that their distinctive civil society had been allowed to flourish”. (Walker 1995: 104) By the same token, Gallagher has argued that:

[...] the risk of deepening isolation from the host society leading to a disastrous breach was prevented by the unexpected outbreak of the civil war in nationalist Ireland not long after the 1921 peace treaty with Britain had brought about the formation of an Irish Free State. The spectacle of Irishman killing Irishman in this fratricidal conflict produced bewilderment and shock among the Irish in Britain. In Scotland as elsewhere it prompted many to throw aside their absorption in exile politics and to sink deeper roots in their chosen homeland. (ed. Devine 1991: 30)

Both McFarland and Gallagher have pointed out that the most determining feature in the identity of the Irish minority in Scotland was religion or class rather than the ancestral roots (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 30 and cf. ed. Mitchell 2008: 128). Bruce et al have further argued that the decisive shaping of the Irish identity in Scotland had already been consolidated in the immediate aftermath of the partition as this had “allowed the Irish question to slide from the front pages.” (Bruce 2004:38)

In 1932 Ireland’s Dominion status was dropped and Northern Ireland was to have its first parliament building at Stormont, Belfast. By the time these new settlements were acquiesced, the Irish community in Scotland with its generations of immigrants had already transformed into a minority with a hybrid Scoto-Irish identity.

Conclusion

There are many facets which demand further research on the inner and outer perception of the Irish community in the west of Scotland between 1850 and 1922.

The aspects analysed in this thesis are by no means exhaustible. Nevertheless, within this historical framework a few fallacies have become generally-accepted and an attempt at their demystification has been made in the present paper.

As has been shown, the process of Irish immigration did not automatically commence with the Irish Famine (1845-51), but was already a recurrent phenomenon during the first stages of the Age of Industrialisation (cf. Knox 1999: 34). By the same token, it was not only the representatives of one religious spectrum, i.e. the Roman Catholics, who became settlers in the new host country, but Irish Ulster Protestants as well (cf. ed. Devine 1991: 15). The extent to which this in turn had led to a transfer of sectarian elements to the west of Scotland has also been analysed. The conclusion which can be drawn in this respect is that, in spite of what appeared to be a facsimile of the Ulster province, the social cohabitation of the Irish Catholics and Protestants evolved in a quite different manner. While Ulster Protestantism's primary interest lay with the safeguarding of its political and economic interests (cf. Bruce 2004:60), "in Scotland, the key issue was class, and here Labour provided a 'secular canopy' within which individuals of all religions and none found their economic interests represented." (Bruce 2004:60)

This is also the reason why the construction of Otherness between the two religious spectrums was much deeper-rooted in Ulster than in the west of Scotland. As has been demonstrated, there have been attempts by Scottish institutions to demonise the Irish Catholic community by deeming it as inassimilable or even dangerous in its alleged endorsement of Irish republicanism. Nevertheless, the most important point regarding this issue is that it did not create *en masse* open hostility, nor did it lead to a more acute politicisation of religion, as it has been the case with Ulster (cf. Bruce 2004:43). The absence of Irish nationalism in the west of Scotland could be a plausible explanation for the reason why the bubble never burst in an area that was highly concentrated with both the Irish Catholic and Protestant element and which, moreover, seemed to have all the ingredients to make such an outcome inevitable (cf. Walker 1995: 104). There is one aspect, however, whose

importance cannot be ignored within this context: the role played by the second and third (perhaps even fourth) generations in the west of Scotland, i.e. their adoption of Irish elements whilst gradually adapting them to a Scottish identity. Whether this was a process determined by external coercion still remains highly debatable.

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