

Chapter 6

Print Culture Landscapes 1880-1922

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Writing in 1894 in the American journal *The Outlook: A Family Magazine* the Irish poet and novelist Katharine Tynan identified the Irish Literary Revival as a distinctive movement within the wider trends of English literature. For her, the Revival had begun with the Gaelic poetry that ‘had been exquisitely translated into English by Edward Walsh, Ferguson, Mangan, Callanan, and others, thirty or forty years ago’, and had reached its zenith with the publication of Douglas Hyde’s *Love Songs of Connaught* (1893), a collection that brought ‘fresh and exquisite earth-songs’ to a wider English audience than the previous Revival poets had been able to capture.¹ Tynan was at this stage immersed in the movement herself, having recently published her collection of poetry *Irish Love Songs* (1892), and was in a good position to comment upon its development and direction.² She recognised from the outset that the Literary Revival had a potentially much wider reception than the native Irish market alone. There were also the British and American reading publics, and she concluded that the Revival’s main effect was to develop ‘in every little Irish town [...] a bruit of literary societies and movements, and for once Irish literature is on the markets of the world’.³

For the aspiring Irish writer it was obvious that the international metropolises of London and New York provided a better hunting ground than their homeland for those that sought publication. Demand for the Celtic element amongst London booksellers had been strong at least as early as the publication of Matthew Arnold’s influential *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (1867), which sought to

¹ Katharine Tynan Hinkson, ‘The Literary Revival in Ireland’, *The Outlook: A Family Magazine*, 49:26 (30 June 1894), p. 1189. *The Outlook* was the organ of the Christian Union in America but maintained a strong focus on literature.

² For an authoritative account of the writings of Katharine Tynan see Whitney Standlee, *Power to Observe: Irish Women Novelists in Britain, 1890-1916* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014).

³ Katharine Tynan Hinkson, ‘The Literary Revival in Ireland’, p. 1189.

reclaim Celtic artistic production from the prejudice and sectarianism prevalent amongst the British establishment. Arnold's work strove to lead 'towards solid ground, where the Celt may with legitimate satisfaction point to traces of the gifts and workings of his race, and where the Englishman might find himself induced to sympathise with that satisfaction and to feel an interest in it'.⁴ Ironically, Arnold reproduced some of the worst excesses of the very prejudice he was trying to defuse, in that he reified the supposed traits of the Celts and looked for their embodiment in literature. For Arnold what separated the Celts from the major cultural achievements of the Greeks was a degree of control, a rejection of material reality:

The Greek has the same perceptive, emotional temperament as the Celt; but he adds to this temperament the sense of *measure*; hence his admirable success in the plastic arts, in which the Celtic genius, with its chafing against the despotism of fact, its perpetual straining after mere emotion, has accomplished nothing.⁵

Nor was this comparison without context; Arnold was aware of the groundswell in the production of, and appetite for, Celtic works of literature that his own critical writings sought to exploit. This upsurge in supply and demand would culminate in an explosion of a diverse range of print material associated with the Irish Literary Revival, its commentators, and its consumers. This essay will outline some of the developments in Irish print culture between the Revival and the Civil War in 1922. In doing so, it will touch on the themes of commercialisation, religion, and aesthetics to give a snapshot of some representative examples of a vast and changing print media. This media existed in a globalised market and was structured along transnational lines, swapping commentators and ideas across national borders. This essay will look at women writers of the Revival itself, Victorian travel books, academic debates, Irish writers in decadent journals, working-class writing, and Catholic publications, amongst others, to offer an insight into types of material being produced and a flavour of the debates contained in the print culture landscape of the period.

⁴ Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1867), p. v.

⁵ Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 103.

Of course the Revival was, at its core, a nationalist movement, excited by the hopes of developing a national literature. But what Arnold had identified, and Tynan was also aware of, was that a key aspect of this movement was the promotion of the Revival to English readers within the context of the cultural prejudices of the British market. There is here a contradiction within the print media of the Revival, in that it was dependent upon and directed towards English and American markets, in order to disseminate its nationalist ideas both at home and abroad. The Revival then must be seen in light of wider popular movements in print cultures throughout the Anglophone world. The rise of Arnoldian Celticism in literature has its commercial counterpart in the rise of wealth amongst the Victorian middle classes and a consequent desire for travel and information about remote parts of the globe being opened up by the growth of the railways. This consumer desire for the novel and the picturesque would lead to an explosion of print media of which the Revival was a constituent part. For example, the 'Pictures' series of travelogues contained illustrated accounts of journeys through countries such as Norway, the Netherlands, Australia, America, Canada, Scotland, England, India, France, Germany, Egypt and Ireland. These works sought to capture for their English readership the way of life of nations which were rapidly changing under the processes of late industrialisation.

Irish Pictures, published in 1888, and including an Ordnance Survey map, was one such attempt to depict the culture and history of Ireland for this audience.⁶ Its author, Richard Lovett, tried to defuse any political conflict and to widen his readership by acknowledging the difficulties of Irish history and including a list of great Irish historical figures from across the spectrum:

Sad and troubled as much of the past of Ireland has been, she has no reason to fear comparison in regard to the men she has produced. No section of Great Britain can show abler men in their respective spheres of life than Patrick and Columba, Brian Boru and Shane O'Neill, James Ussher and Bishop Berkeley, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Gough, Oliver Goldsmith and Edmund Burke, Henry Grattan and Daniel O'Connell.⁷

⁶ C  il  n Parsons has written of the centrality of the Ordnance Survey to Irish writing. See C  il  n Parsons, *The Ordnance Survey and Modern Irish Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁷ Richard Lovett, *Irish Pictures* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1888), p. 12.

The decision to disavow the political realities of the late 1880s in the Land League and the Home Rule movement by appealing to the achievements of Irish historical figures may speak of the commercial realities of the day and the pressing need to prioritise sales over political factionalism, but it also points to one of a number of competing and complementary voices that were being produced by print media in the Anglophone public sphere. W.B. Yeats's famous account of the 'long gestation' of Irish nationalist sentiment after the fall of Charles Stuart Parnell in 1891 is contradicted by the substantial amount of equally nationalist Revival print material published in the forty years prior to it.⁸ It is better to see the Revival in a more transnational context where the markets in the literate and educated urban centres of late industrialised western societies drove a renewed interest in national myth and folklore.⁹ This Revival was characterised by a number of different pressures that ensured that the public sphere of political and cultural debate would remain contested throughout the decade of the 1890s.

As well as commercial, literary, and cultural publications that engaged with Irish politics the debates over Irish political identity also continued within the more rarefied atmosphere of academic publishing. Irish history in this period could serve as a vehicle for political point scoring, particularly around the issue of national self-governance. William Hartpole Lecky's five volume *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* was seen at the time as a necessary corrective to the worst prejudices of the Oxford University historian, and editor of the influential literary journal *Fraser's Magazine*, James Anthony Froude. Froude's *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* baldly claimed that:

In a world in which we are made to depend so largely for our well-being on the conduct of our neighbours, and yet are created infinitely unequal in ability and worthiness of character, the superior part has a natural right to govern; the inferior part has a natural right to be governed.¹⁰

⁸ See W.B. Yeats, *Autobiographies* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1961), p. 559.

⁹ For a comparative international example of this see Kati Nurmi, 'Imagining the nation in Irish and Finnish popular culture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', in Brian Heffernan, *et al* (eds.), *Life on the Fringe?: Ireland and Europe, 1800-1922* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2012), pp. 39-61.

¹⁰ James Anthony Froude, *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 1 (New York: Schribner, Armstrong and Co., 1873), p.2.

Lecky's insistence that, 'on the whole the direction and the power of England were everywhere in the ascendant and her policy was a policy of extermination' seemed a clearer account to Irish nationalists of the inequalities of a colonial relationship.¹¹ Nor was the debate exclusively confined within the academy; as one critic has pointed out, Froude's work was discussed widely across the newspapers and magazines of Ireland, England, and America, and its main focus lay in the political sphere rather than in the academic: '*The English in Ireland* was Froude's protest against the movement for Irish self-government and its threat of disruption of empire'.¹² This crossover in the print media between the political and the academic even infected a subject as specialist as the Classics; the Trinity don John Pentland Mahaffy's *Greek Life and Thought: From the Age of Alexander to the Roman Conquest* was read by Oscar Wilde as an allegory of the Irish political landscape, and in particular, William O'Brien's land reform agitation. Wilde said it was an attempt 'to degrade history to the level of the ordinary political pamphlet of contemporary party warfare' and noted the obvious political parallel where Mahaffy 'begins his history by frankly expressing his regret that Demosthenes was not summarily put to death for his attempt to keep the spirit of patriotism alive among the citizens of Athens!'.¹³

Just as politics influenced academic literature in this period, for some writers of the Revival, politics was the whole reason for the creation of any literature. In order to capture something of the febrile excitement of the Revival one only need look at some of the journals that were created during it. One writer who wrote in the spirit of what Jean Paul Sartre might later recognise as a literature of engagement, was the young Methodist, Alice Milligan. For Milligan, art did not exist in "some quiet paradise apart" but within the "noisy field of political warfare".¹⁴ With her collaborator and friend Anna Johnston, she edited first *The Northern Patriot* and then *The Shan Van Vocht*. In her role as editor

¹¹ William Hartpole Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 1 (London: Longmans Green, 1892), p. 10.

¹² Froude's history was perceived as a direct attack on Irish self-government. For more on this see Donal McCartney, 'James Anthony Froude and Ireland: A Historiographical Controversy of the Nineteenth Century', *Irish University Review*, 1:2 (Spring, 1971), p. 241.

¹³ Oscar Wilde, 'Mr Mahaffy's New Book', *The Pall Mall Gazette* (9 November 1887), p. 3.

¹⁴ Alice Milligan quoted in Catherine Morris, 'Becoming Irish? Alice Milligan and the Revival', *The Irish University Review*, 33:1 (Spring-Summer, 2003), p. 79. For more on the literature of commitment see John Paul Sartre, trans. Bernard Frechtman, *What is Literature?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).

she sought to 'connect the North with broader revivalist initiatives in other parts of Ireland, Britain and America'.¹⁵ The first number of *The Shan Van Vocht* set its eclectic tone by containing poetry, short stories, excerpts from Irish nationalist histories and an account of the tombs of the Irish nationalist dead. One contribution, 'In the North Countrie' is a character sketch and ghost story in the classical Revivalist mode that depicts a once powerful peasant farmer in his cottage, haunted by the ghost of his lost love:

It was a tranquil, lonely spot; eerie, too in the autumn twilight when the slow-creeping mists rose up from the bog stretching for miles around, and many were the tales told of an evening by the folk living on the high land of lights that flashed all over the bog at the very moment that Jamie Boyson set his candle in his cottage window to guide the "wee grey woman" up the rugged loaning to her seat in his chimney corner.¹⁶

Such stereotypical Revivalist stories aimed to entertain, but they also served the more serious purpose of showing the wealth of folk culture and history in Ireland that constituted, according to the Revivalists, the main wellspring of Irish cultural identity. *The Shan Van Vocht* ran for some forty issues over three years (January 1886 – April 1889) and included articles by Douglas Hyde, Alice Furlong, Nora Hopper, T. C. Murray and James Connolly. Many of the contributors and those involved in its support and circulation would go on to be founding members of the revolutionary women's group Inghinidhe na hÉireann, including Milligan, Johnston, Furlong, and Maud Gonne. Milligan was central to the promotion of nationalist ideology through her role in traveling the countryside lecturing and performing tableaux vivant for theatre groups.¹⁷ One of the stated objectives of Inghinidhe na hÉireann was:

To discourage the reading and circulation of low English literature, the singing of English songs, the attending of vulgar English entertainments at the theatres and music hall, and to combat in every way English influence, which is doing so much injury to the artistic taste and refinement of the Irish people.¹⁸

¹⁵ Morris, 'Becoming Irish? Alice Milligan and the Revival', p. 80.

¹⁶ Iris Olkryn [Alice Milligan] and Ethna Carbery [Anna Johnston], 'In the North Countrie: Character Sketches, No. 1, Jamie Boyson', *The Shan Van Vocht*, 1:1 (January 1896), p. 8.

¹⁷ For more on the centrality of theatre and literature to the nationalist movement see R. F. Foster, *Vivid Faces: The Revolutionary Generation in Ireland, 1890-1923* (London: Allan Lane, 2014), *passim*.

¹⁸ Margaret Ward, *Unimaginable Revolutionaries: Women and Irish Nationalism* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), p. 51.

The Shan Van Vocht took a similarly strident line when it came to English culture corrupting Irish identity, but it was keen to promote a vision of Irishness that could include both Protestant and Catholic traditions. In its closing editorial it praised the organ of the Gaelic League in America *An Gaodhal* and attacked Dublin-based newspapers for stoking sectarian tensions:

We sincerely thank our friends in America for the support they have given to us, and the Irish-American Press for their continual approving notices. We cannot forebear expressing our regret that the National papers of Dublin have not shown us similar encouragement and that as part, possibly, of the unfortunate sectional policy which is shattering the forces of Ireland at present. We conscientiously did our best to steer clear of these sectional differences, and perhaps that contributed to our want of success by depriving us of the backing of any party.¹⁹

Both Milligan and Furlong made substantial contributions to the Irish revolutionary spirit through their political agitation and the dissemination of nationalist propaganda in *The Shan Van Vocht*.²⁰ The politically engaged literature of the Revival permeated into different spheres of the print media. However, there were always those Irish writers who saw politics as distinctly outside of the realm of literature and sought to promote their art for its own sake within the British and American markets.

The presence of Irish authors in decadent magazines is something that jars with their Revivalist credentials today, yet it is important to remember that the two terms were not seen as mutually exclusive. For example, W.B. Yeats was able to see Oscar Wilde's, 'life and works as an extravagant Celtic crusade against Anglo-Saxon Stupidity'.²¹ Writers as diverse as Wilde, George Moore, Yeats and George Egerton were published together in what are now considered some of the major decadent journals of the 1890s. When Wilde chose to publish *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) in the American periodical *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* he was making a statement about the international appeal of his writing.²² Wilde's text disavows all political ideologies in its pursuit of art. From the opening page, Wilde's effusive style hints at his manifesto for the ascendancy of art:

¹⁹ Anonymous, *The Shan Van Vocht*, 4:4 (April 1899), p. 68.

²⁰ For a comprehensive account of Milligan's life see Catherine Morris, *Alice Milligan and the Irish Cultural Revival* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013).

²¹ W.B. Yeats, 'Oscar Wilde's Last Book', *United Ireland* (26 September 1891), p. 5.

²² Wilde was not the only Irish author to write *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*. For example, Seumas MacManus, the folklorist and husband of Anna Johnston, was a regular contributor on Irish culture and

From the corner of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as usual, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey coloured blossoms of laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly to be able to bear the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadow of birds in flight flitted across the long tussore-silk curtains that were stretched in front of the huge window.²³

Such writing could not be mistaken for anything but the sensuously charged language of the aesthetic movement, of which Wilde's novel would become the flag-bearer. This passage nods towards Walter Pater's 'gemlike flame' of art criticism and as Richard Ellmann pointed out, after its serialisation, 'Victorian Literature had a different look'.²⁴ The effects of the publication of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are hard to overstate and it brought Wilde notoriety in reviews on both sides of the Atlantic. Wilde's reputation also had an impact on other Irish writers and their work for literary journals, such as George Moore who had written for a magazine that Wilde had never actually published in, but would be perennially linked to, *The Yellow Book*.

George Moore is not often associated today with the decadent movement, but he was present along with Pearl Mary Theresa Craigie at the famous dinner for the *The Yellow Book* and chose it for the publication of their co-authored comedy *The Fool's Hour*.²⁵ The journal itself would close in scandal following the Wilde trial. He was spotted carrying a yellow book on the morning of his arrest and this was mistakenly reported in the press as *The Yellow Book*.²⁶ Moore also published in *The Savoy: An Illustrated Monthly*, a magazine edited by Arthur Symons with the express idea of distancing itself from the scandal of *The Yellow Book* by denying any guiding ideology but the presentation of good

legends. See Seumas MacManus, 'Irish Courtship', *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, 82:492 (December 1908), pp. 739-746.

²³ Oscar Wilde, 'The Picture of Dorian Grey', *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* (July 1890), p. 3.

²⁴ Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (London and New York: MacMillan and Co., 1888), p. 250; Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1987), p. 269.

²⁵ George Moore and John Oliver Hobbes, 'The Fool's Hour: The First Act of a Comedy', *The Yellow Book*, 1 (April 1894), pp 253-272. John Oliver Hobbes was Craigie's pseudonym. W.B Yeats, who also published in *The Yellow Book*, was present at the dinner in a black cape and sombrero. For more on this see Adrian Frazier, *George Moore 1852-1933* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 230-234. Also see W.B. Yeats, 'The Blessed', *The Yellow Book*, 13 (April 1897), pp. 11-13. The Irish author George Egerton also contributed to the first issue. See George Egerton, 'A Lost Masterpiece, a City Mood, Aug. '93', *The Yellow Book*, 1 (April 1894), pp. 189-196.

²⁶ For an account of this see Philip Clarke, 'A Wilde Association', *Lambda Book Report* (November 2000) pp. 24-27.

literature: 'We are not Realists, or Romanticists, or Decadents. For us, all art is good which is good art'.²⁷ Despite this disavowal, *The Savoy* would remain linked in the mind of the British reading public to *The Yellow Book*.²⁸ Being associated with controversy was always an established way to promote one's writing and Moore was joined in *The Savoy* by other Irish writers such as George Bernard Shaw and Yeats.²⁹ If there was a strong presence of Irish writers in specialist literature publications in the last decades of the nineteenth century, then they played an equally notable role in more mainstream publications. One Irish journalist that stands out for his contribution to the print media, and in particular to newspapers, is T. P. O'Connor.

O'Connor was born in Ireland in 1848 to working-class parents and he would become one of the most influential journalists working in Fleet Street. Amongst his notable achievements were the foundation of *The Star* (along with Shaw, Henry William Massingham, Gordon Hewart and Sidney Webb) and *The Sun* newspapers, and a reworking of American-style public interest stories for the British market. Such was his influence that upon his death in 1929, 'many acclaimed him as the Father of Modern Journalism'.³⁰ O'Connor was also a long standing Member of Parliament for Liverpool's Scotland District, remarkably returning on an Irish Parliamentary Party ticket.³¹ It was out of Liverpool that he published the literary newspaper *T. P.'s Weekly*. The newspaper made important contributions to the literary sphere and was the first to serialise Joseph Conrad's *Nostramo* in Britain. O'Connor was an early and vocal champion of Conrad's genius, despite the famous author finding the newspaper

²⁷ Arthur Symons, 'Editorial Note', *The Savoy: An Illustrated Monthly*, 1 (January 1896), p. 7.

²⁸ For more on the shared history of *The Savoy* and *The Yellow Book* see Laurel Blake, 'Aestheticism and Decadence', in Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker (eds.), *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines: Volume 1, Britain and Ireland 1880-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 76-100; W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1961), pp. 322-323.

²⁹ See George Bernard Shaw, 'On Going to Church', *The Savoy: An Illustrated Monthly*, 1 (January 1896), pp. 13-28; W.B. Yeats, 'The Binding of the Hair', *The Savoy: An Illustrated Monthly*, 1 (January 1896), pp. 135-140; George Moore, 'The Future Phenomenon', *The Savoy: An Illustrated Monthly*, 3 (July 1896), pp. 98-99.

³⁰ For a brief account of T. P. O'Connor's life see Francis Fytton, 'The Legacy of T. P. O'Connor', *The Irish Monthly*, 83:969 (May 1954), p. 173.

³¹ For more on O'Connor's contribution to local and national politics see John Belchem, *Irish, Catholic and Scouse: The History of the Liverpool Irish 1800-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007).

cheap and somewhat distasteful, privately referring to it as 'T P's Horror'.³² The newspaper also published many Irish authors and reviewed their works, and it remained an important organ for the dissemination of their writing throughout its various incarnations.³³ For example, Thomas MacDonagh's *Lyrical Poems* was reviewed in 1914 and found to be, 'concerned with a kind of spiritual autobiography, extremely vague in texture of thought, but happy in many incidentals of beautiful expression'. There was no recognition of the revolutionary spirit that would explode so violently within two years in the 1916 Easter Rising; although the reviewer did claim the author may have had some overarching theme, he is condemned for not expressing it: "'The Golden Joy" is a poem that evades any continuity of idea; the poet may have been aware of some continuity, but he does not convey it'.³⁴

It is unsurprising that a literary magazine edited by a Member of Parliament for the Irish Parliamentary Party would shun the writings of more advanced nationalists, but the magazine was catholic in its interests. The dramatist and poet Padraic Colum contributed an account of his early formation as an artist. He acknowledged his debt to W. B. Yeats and the Irish Literary Theatre and also to the tableaux vivant of the kind promoted by Alice Milligan in *The Shan Van Vocht*:

At the moment the most enterprising of the political associations was a women's club presided over by Miss Maud Gonne — Inghinidhe na hEireann or the Daughters of Ireland. They began their dramatic productions by tableaux and pageants representing scenes from Irish romance and Irish history. I saw some tableaux, and became anxious to write words for them.³⁵

T. P.'s Weekly was also an important outlet for the First World War poet Edward Thomas; he published many of his critical works there including the reclamation of minor and forgotten poets such as Stephen Duck and W. H. Hudson.³⁶ Some of the literary range of *T. P.'s Weekly* can be put down to the presence of Holbrooke Jackson as editor from 1908. He had briefly been involved with the literary

³² Cedric Watts, 'Nostromo in *T. P.'s Weekly*', *Yearbook of Conrad Studies (Poland)*, 3:3 (2007), p. 98. See Joseph Conrad, 'Nostromo; a tale of the Seaboard', *T. P.'s Weekly*, 3:64 (January 1904), pp. 128-129.

³³ For more on its publication history see Charlotte C. Watkins, 'To-Day', in Alvin Sullivan (ed.), *British Literary Magazines: The Victorian and Edwardian Age, 1837-1913* (London: Greenwood Press, 1984), pp. 416-422.

³⁴ C. K. B., 'The Sign of the Lyre', *T. P.'s Weekly*, 23:596 (April 1914), pp. 463, 463.

³⁵ Padraic Colum, 'How I Began', *T. P.'s Weekly* 23:582 (January 1914), p.3

³⁶ Edward Thomas, 'Stephen Duck – Poet', *T. P.'s Weekly* 23:597 (April 1914), p. 485; Edward Thomas, 'W. H. Hudson, Prose Poet and Naturalist', *T. P.'s Weekly* 23:599 (May 1914), p. 553.

magazine *New Age* before moving to *T. P.'s Weekly*. Jackson tried to revive *T. P.'s Weekly* when it was flagging in 1916 under the new title *To-Day* and he took that title with him when he went on to launch his own literary journal in March of 1917. *To-Day* would feature a number of important modernist contributors such as the innovative photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn, the poet Ezra Pound, and the Imagist poet Richard Aldington.³⁷ The magazine also carried a character sketch of W. B. Yeats where Jackson attempted a Shavian inversion of the poet's national identity:

William Butler Yeats is an undoubted Irishman, but he is an exceptional Irishman. He has the dreamful qualities and the poetic gifts of the English, for after all the great achievement of the English as a people is imaginative rather than material, it is Irishmen, Welshmen, and Scots who have built the British Empire.³⁸

To-Day also published an early essay of Yeats's on the Japanese Noh plays and was the first to print his experimental drama *At the Hawk's Well*.³⁹ As demonstrated by Yeats, avant garde literature was one of the channels through which an Irish national culture could be promoted. But national culture was a contested term, complicated by an overarching British identity, and the print media of the period reflected these fluid identity claims. The media offered as many versions of Irishness as there were readers and national identity could be claimed in both high-brow journals and newspapers aimed at the more common reader. The centrality of Irish writers to both *T. P.'s Weekly* and *To-Day*, one an Irish nationalist journal aimed at a local Liverpool market, the other a London-based modernist magazine, is a testament to the complexities of identity politics of the period and the markets in which they operated. But in some instances, literature played a secondary role when it came to promoting ideology, as was the case with the labour newspaper *The Irish Worker*.

The Irish Worker was edited by James Larkin and was the principle organ for his distinctive version of Irish nationalism wedded to revolutionary socialism. The newspaper was first published in

³⁷ For more on the history of Holbrooke Jackson and *To-Day* see Charlotte C. Watkins, 'To-Day', in Alvin Sullivan (ed.), *British Literary Magazines: The Victorian and Edwardian Age, 1837-1913* (London: Greenwood Press, 1984), pp. 416-422.

³⁸ Holbrooke Jackson, 'Men of To-Day and Tomorrow: III, Mr W.B. Yeats', *To-Day*, 1:3 (May 1917), p. 97.

³⁹ W. B. Yeats, 'Instead of a Theatre', *To-Day*, 1:3 (May 1917), pp. 98-102; W. B. Yeats 'At the Hawk's Well: A Play', *To-Day*, 1:4 (June 1917), pp. 139-148.

1911; one of its key strengths was that it offered an eclectic mix of literature and politics to promote its message.⁴⁰ In the first edition Larkin set out his radical agenda for political reform by attacking the powerful farmers who were filling the political vacuum left by declining landlords: 'A land where the farmer or gombeen man, having, with money or by pledging the credit of the Irish people has been able to buy from the Kenmares, the Barrymores, and the other parasites – formerly known as the landlords – the land of the Irish people'.⁴¹ This attack was aimed at Wyndham Land Act (1903) that had seen the growth of strong farmers, and had ended landlordism as a major political force in Ireland.⁴² Larkin was opposed to this settlement, preferring a land agreement that would promote small-landholders' and labourers' rights. Larkin also used the *Irish Worker* to challenge Sinn Féin and Arthur Griffith whose support of capitalist principles he rejected. He rarely missed an opportunity to attack Griffith, especially as he saw Sinn Féin as an ideal recruiting ground for his own Irish Labour Party.⁴³ For Larkin, no agenda for Irish freedom was possible without a socialist solution:

Then, what do the remnant known as the Sinn Fein Party [sic] mean by Freedom? [...] The Official Sinn Fein Party [sic], of which Griffith is the prophet. A party or rump which, while pretending to be Irish of the Irish, insults the Nation by trying to foist on it not only economics based on false principles, but which had the temerity to advocate the introduction of foreign capitalists into the sorely-exploited country.⁴⁴

The Irish Worker was vital in the promotion of Larkin's ideas and also in the recruitment for his Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) and the Irish Labour Party. When the labour movement reached a crisis in the 1913 Lock-out it played an important role in maintaining morale and in keeping its readers informed, especially in a media landscape hostile to the strikers, under the influence of the press baron William Martin Murphy and his newspapers the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent*. *The Irish Worker* specialised in emotive accounts of strikes and the

⁴⁰ For more on the working class poets in the *Irish Worker* see Niall Carson, 'Irish Working-Class Poetry 1900-1960', in Michael Pierson (ed.) *A Cambridge History of Irish Working-Class Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁴¹ James Larkin, 'Our Platform and Principles', *The Irish Worker*, 1:1 (May 1911), p. 1

⁴² For a history of land agitation under the Irish Parliamentary Party see R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London: Allen Lane, 1988), pp. 400-428.

⁴³ For more on this see Niall Murphy, 'Sinn Féin and Hard Labour: the journalism of W. P. Ryan and Jim Larkin 1907-1914', *Irish Studies Review* 22:1 (February 2014), pp. 43-52.

⁴⁴ James Larkin, 'Our Platform and Principles', *The Irish Worker*, p. 1

oppression of the working-classes by their industrialist bosses, as this depiction of a tenement fire in Church Street in Dublin during the Lock-out shows:

From the debris of the fallen houses in Church Street they bore the hero's lifeless body – this time it was that of a boy of 17 years who worked in the factory of the sweater, Jacob [Jacob's Biscuits], and who, through the miserable wages paid by this exploiter of the working classes, was compelled to risk his life in the tenements of the city. A few hours previous he had been dismissed because men refused to betray their hero leader, and desert the faithful ranks of his gallant little Union fighting the fight of the oppressed and defenceless of the city. Young Eugene Salmon returned to the death-trap he called home, and as a mountain of blinding debris piled around him the young hero saved his baby sister and five others of the family.⁴⁵

The event was covered quite differently in the conservative *Irish Times* which focused instead on the landlady Mrs Ryan who was 'prostrate with grief at the catastrophe that occurred at her door and expressed deep sympathy with the sufferers', despite having been under notice from the corporation to repair the building. Of the 26 people who were living in the tenement, seven were killed in the fire when the building collapsed.⁴⁶ Such were the tensions in Dublin during the Lock-out that there was a full scale propaganda war being played out in the print media for the hearts and minds of its people. The *Irish Times* article was next to an article covering the trial of Larkin for breach of the peace and reported on him remaining in custody.⁴⁷ In this respect the mainstream print media (headed by Murphy) played a pivotal role in breaking the strike by framing the debate through the demonization of the workers. The legacy of that history has been a reduced labour political presence in Ireland in comparison with the other nations.

If the Lock-out was a disaster for the working-classes and Irish labour as a political force then one institution would be remembered with particular bitter resentment by the working-classes: the Catholic Church. The Church blocked 'Larkin's efforts to rescue the starving children of strikers by removing them temporarily to England [because this] apparently exposed vulnerable youngsters to

⁴⁵ Anonymous, 'Heroes led by a Hero', *The Irish Worker*, 19:3 (September 1913), p. 1. For more on the role of Jacob's biscuit factory and his relationship to his employees see Lauren Arrington, 'Revolutionary Genesis?: Jacob's Biscuit Factory and the Transformation of Ireland', *History Ireland*, 21:4 (July/August 2013), pp. 42-43.

⁴⁶ Anonymous, 'Church Street Disaster', *The Irish Times* (4 September 1913), p. 9.

⁴⁷ Anonymous, 'Charges Against James Larkin', *The Irish Times* (4 September 1913), p. 9.

the Satanic lure of Protestant evangelists, and therefore lost Larkin vital support'.⁴⁸ Part of the Church's concerns was that the working-classes of Ireland were being exposed to secularisation from English newspapers. In fact, a journalist for the *Irish Worker* had written to the Archbishop of Dublin to warn him that the Church's role in disrupting the strike would push the workers down more extreme paths:

In consequence of the venal and unprincipled lines on which the commercial press of Dublin is without exception conducted, the English labour papers have gained a firm foothold against the people here, and would not fail to give voice and point to public dissatisfaction. They would exploit any such attitude of the Church to the last inch, and the Socialist party of Dublin, a body quite distinct from the I.T.W.U., would assume a position in Irish life it has hitherto failed to secure.⁴⁹

On the whole the Church managed to maintain an official impartiality, whilst working to disrupt what it perceived as a threat that promised such disruptive social change. This apparent indifference was evident in its literary and political journals, such as *The Irish Monthly* which carried no mention of the Lock-out throughout 1913 or 1914. In a media landscape with limited visual material the Irish public were dependent upon newspapers and journals for their information; absences and lacuna in the coverage of events were often as important as what was directly addressed, and censorship through omission was an effective tool in framing debates (although much more difficult to trace retrospectively).

The Irish Monthly was a journal of literature and politics published by the Society of Jesus; it ran as a popular counterpart to their more academically focused title *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*. *The Irish Monthly* was founded and edited by one of Ireland's most enduring literary editors, Father Matthew Russell S.J. in 1873. The magazine ran until 1954 (finishing in the same year as another Irish literary magazine *The Bell*), with Russell maintaining his editorial role until his death in 1912. The magazine sought to promote Catholic literature and the spread of Catholic ideals within literature, but

⁴⁸ Alvin Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 193.

⁴⁹ James Joseph Hughes to William Joseph Walsh, quoted in Thomas J. Morrissey S. J., 'The 1913 Lock-Out: Letters for the Archbishop', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 75:297, (Spring 1986), p. 90.

also with a decidedly nationalist bent that sees it as an active player in the Revival in its early years.

Russell declared in his opening editorial that:

Not here only, but wherever an Irish heart beats true to the faith of St. Patrick, Catholic Ireland is there. Whether in a Glasgow factory or in one of the newest warehouses in Chicago, or in any out of all those holy convents from St. Leonard's to San Francisco whithersoever hard necessity, or enterprise, or religious zeal, may have driven or borne members of the Celtic family, they have brought with them everywhere the same yearning, passionate, unforgetting, and unquenchable love for the land and the faith of their fathers. Perhaps it may be granted to even so humble an organ as ours to make its voice heard so far away, and to help to awaken and cherish in many hearts the fullness and purity of that ardent and instinctive faith which is the special glory and bond of unity in our Race.⁵⁰

From the outset the magazine was a remarkable success, particularly in promoting women writers of the Revival such as Rosa Mulholland, Katharine Tynan, Alice Furlong, Dora Sigerson, M. E. Francis and Rose Kavanagh. It could also claim the distinction of having published ostensibly religious poems of Oscar Wilde's whilst he was still an undergraduate at Oxford.⁵¹ The magazine was eclectic in its tastes and published many Protestant writers of distinction, such as Wilde and W. B. Yeats, but its political and artistic focus was, on the whole, Catholic.⁵² Catholic magazines in this period formed one of a number of competing voices within the Irish public sphere and emerged to dominance in the twentieth century. For example, *The Irish Monthly* would publish a number of literary establishment figures that would be associated with some of the institutions of the State in post-independence Ireland, such as Raidió Teilifís Éireann and the Abbey Theatre. Writers such as Francis MacManus, M. J. MacManus, Gabriel Fallon, and Robert Farren would all publish regular contributions and could be seen as a cultural component of a triumphant Catholicism after 1922.⁵³

⁵⁰ Matthew Russell, 'Our Aims and Hopes', *The Irish Monthly*, 1:1 (July 1873), p. 2.

⁵¹ For example, Oscar Wilde, 'The True Knowledge', *The Irish Monthly*, 4 (1876), p. 594. Wilde published seven poems in the *Irish Monthly* see Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde*, pp. 71, 73.

⁵² Yeats published three early poems in the magazine, see W.B. Yeats, 'Remembrance', *The Irish Monthly* (14:157 (July 1886), p. 376; W.B. Yeats, 'The Meditations of the Old Fisherman', *The Irish Monthly*, 14:160 (October 1886), p. 528; W. B. Yeats, 'The Stolen Child', *The Irish Monthly*, 14:162 (December 1886), pp. 146-147.

⁵³ For more on this see Susannah Riordan, 'The Unpopular Front: Catholic Revival and Irish Cultural Identity, 1932-48', in Mike Cronin and John M. Regan (eds.), *Ireland: The Politics of Independence, 1922-49* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), pp. 98-120.

Just as *The Irish Monthly* maintained an editorial silence during the Lock-out so too did it maintain silence during and immediately after the Easter Rising. That said, there were some references to the Rising, but arising in a more oblique way. The Talbot Press was quick to exploit the events of Easter week by publishing *The Poems of Joseph Mary Plunkett 1887-1916* and this elicited a response in *The Irish Monthly*, an essay praising his artistic genius by Alice Furlong.⁵⁴ Although Furlong wanted to disavow political support for Plunkett it was clear where her allegiance lay, 'Rebel or patriot, let us regard him how we will, we shall always see through tears, wistful or proud as it may be, the young man going to his death with the wonder of youth still in his eyes'. For Furlong Plunkett's talent, despite the occasional 'cryptic utterance', placed him in the first order of Irish poets.⁵⁵ *The Irish Monthly* also carried a review of James Stephens's *The Insurrection in Dublin*.⁵⁶ Stephens's book helped change Irish public opinion of the leaders of 1916 and was recognised at the time as a classic account of the Rising. The review closes with praise for Stephens's writing and captures something of the sentiment felt by those reading it at the time, 'He comes near to poetry in a sentence such as this: "Ireland," he says, "was not with the revolution, but in a few months she will be, and her heart which was withering will be warmed by the knowledge that men have thought her worth dying for"'.⁵⁷ In this sense, the *Irish Monthly* was capable of promoting a covert nationalism that fitted with the changing public opinion of the Rising whilst maintaining overt neutrality.

No one account could comprehensively cover the entire print media landscape in Ireland between the Revival and political independence. However, in selecting some of the major spheres of publishing in the Revival, travel writing, academic debates, literary journals, socialist newspapers and Catholic magazines one can begin to see a wider picture of the rise of the commercial print of which

⁵⁴ Joseph Mary Plunkett, *The Poems of Joseph Mary Plunkett 1887-1916* (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1916).

⁵⁵ Alice Furlong, 'The Poems of Joseph Mary Plunkett', *The Irish Monthly*, 44:522 (December 1916), pp. 766, 767.

⁵⁶ James Stephens, *Insurrection in Dublin* (Dublin, Maunsel and Co., 1916).

⁵⁷ Anonymous, 'Some New Books', *The Irish Monthly* 44:522 (December 1916), p. 817. The book was also favourably reviewed by the other Jesuit journal *Studies* as its popularity grew. See John F. Boyle 'Review: The Irish Rebellion of 1916', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 6:22 (June 1917), pp. 334-335.

these media were part. To this one could add additional types of publications in political and religious pamphlets, the mainstream newspaper media, novels and magazines for the new woman to name but a few.⁵⁸ The explosion in commercial printing and rising literacy levels in Ireland created the push and pull factors needed to generate this expanded readership and its concomitant political development.⁵⁹ Tied to this were improvements in communication and in international finance that would create new opportunities for the transnational exposure of Irish writers and events on a global stage.⁶⁰ The Revival and the proliferation of Irish writers, writing, and print media all contributed to the development of a public sphere in which Irish political independence was first aired as a possibility before it could become embodied as a political reality.

⁵⁸ Tina O'Toole has most recently written of the 'new woman' phenomenon in Ireland. See Tina O'Toole, *The Irish New Woman* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁵⁹ Ciaran O'Neill has written of the importance of expanded Catholic education, see Ciaran O'Neill, *Catholics of Consequence: Transnational Education, Social Mobility, and the Irish Catholic Elite 1850-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁶⁰ Peter Knight has written of the explosion of market capitalism and of writing's centrality to its popularisation from the 1890s onward. See Peter Knight, *Reading the Market: Genres of Financial Capitalism in Gilded Age America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016). For an interesting example of transnational literary criticism in effect see Denise A. Ayo, 'Mary Colum, Modernism and Mass Media: An Irish-Inflected Transatlantic Print Culture', *Journal of Modern Literature* (Summer 2012), pp. 107-129.