
“A NEW ENGLAND IN ALL BUT NAME”¹

Institutional and Intellectual Manifestations of Settler Colonialism at Trinity College, Dublin

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¹ Ulster poet Ó Gnímh cited by Jane Ohlemeyer. “Conquest, Civilization, Colonization: Ireland, 1540-1660,” *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 41.

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I dedicate this thesis to my dad, the reason behind my passion for history. Thank you for all the long evening chats that start with a question and end nearly an hour later with our dining room table covered with books and maps. I wouldn't be who I am without you.

Abstract

“Settler colonialism” emerged as an analytical tool in the twentieth century as scholars attempted to both understand and reckon with the history of colonization. It describes a distinct means of conquest that relies on the replacement of a native population with a settler group in the form of the elimination or displacement of a people and/or a culture. This thesis explores the traditional settler colonial framework within the context of Trinity College, Dublin. Founded in 1592, Trinity College functioned to control the Irish population and solidify the settler group who will later be known as the “Anglo-Irish.” Yet, just as Ireland was ambiguous, Trinity College was ambiguous, as both sit uncomfortably within the framework of settler colonialism.

For the purposes of this work, I rely on three historical periods: Trinity’s foundation, Trinity and the long eighteenth century, and finally, Trinity in the twentieth century. In the first chapter, I examine Trinity College’s founding goals of simultaneously assimilating Gaelic Irish and ensuring that the New English remain within Ireland. Chapter Two focuses on the period of globalization and revolution of the long eighteenth century. I explore the methods by which Trinity College and its scholars challenged and modified revolutionary ideas within the Irish context. And, finally, in Chapter Three, I show how Trinity College administration and scholars manipulated and mobilized Trinity’s history to defend their place as a settler colonial institution within the new Irish Free State. These three periods provide a means of understanding the framework of settler colonialism within Ireland and its outcomes in the formation of the “Anglo-Irish.” I rely on the work of Trinity College scholars and administration, legislation within Ireland, and documentation of Trinity College’s history.

Trinity College’s interactions throughout its history provide a glimpse of the Irish colonial tension. Settler colonialism requires institutions that we may not think of as colonial,

like universities. Yet such institutions and the people within them often operate as distinct and even oppositional agents. This work helps to provide a means of assessing and reexamining the institutional and intellectual role within the framework of settler colonialism within Ireland. Doing so becomes critical, especially as many of these institutions now must reckon with their legacies in the postcolonial world.

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My ancestors who traveled from Ireland: Patrick O'Rourke (emigrated between 1842 and 1845), John Hugh O'Neill (emigrated in the late 1840's), John Patrick Fahy (emigrated in 1847), and the many others who traveled across the ocean for a better life, thank you for the many opportunities that decision provided.

I respectfully acknowledge that the land of Duke University occupies the ancestral land of the Eno, Occaneechi, and Tuscarora people, along with many other Indigenous peoples. I give thanks and honor to the First Peoples of this land and their descendants.

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Introduction

In February of 2021, in a talk entitled “Irish Universities and Imperial Legacies,” Trinity College, Dublin professor Ciaran O’Neill claimed:

More than any other Irish university, empire created Trinity, and the profits of imperialism maintained it all the while it produced graduates and fellows that furthered European imperialism.²

Established in 1592, Trinity College, Dublin emerged to expand the English empire and educate English settlers and Gaelic natives. Having now celebrated over 400 years of history, Trinity College administration and students are grappling with their own complex legacies. Working within Trinity’s Colonial Legacies project, twenty-first century historians of Trinity wrote, Trinity College “had evolved into an exporter of colonial ideologies and servants” while simultaneously offering “critiques of the very actions it chose through its students.”³ Trinity scholars like Edmund Burke, Wolfe Tone, and William Molyneux produced anti-imperialist critiques while others acted as tools of colonization for the English. How do institutions like universities serve as a means of solidifying empire? How can we begin to understand Trinity College’s role in Ireland, particularly in the broader context of institutional accountability and decolonization? Through this thesis, I argue that Trinity College, Dublin occupied an ambiguous space, creating settler colonial groups and eliminating their native counterparts alongside producing some of the empire’s most potent criticisms. To begin this conversation, I qualify the

² Ciaran O’Neill. “Irish Universities and Imperial Legacies,” Global Irish Network Discussions, Trinity College Dublin, <https://www.tcd.ie/trinitylongroomhub/media/news/articles/2021-02-19-Colonial-Legacies.php>.

³ “Trinity Colonial Legacies.” Trinity College, Dublin, <https://histories-humanities.tcd.ie/research/colonial-legacies/about.php>.

framework of settler colonialism within Ireland, rooted fundamentally in Ireland's ambiguous relationship to England, "Britain," and colonialism itself.

Kingdom or Colony?

Many historians have struggled with how to classify Ireland's relationship to the English colonial enterprise.⁴ Was Ireland a colony within the British colonial landscape? Or was it a kingdom, an "equal partner" within the empire?⁵ This academic dilemma has led many to consider that the two, kingdom and colony, cannot be disentangled.⁶

Historian Alvin Jackson provides a clear description of this seeming paradox:

For Ireland was not only a half-hearted colony, it was also a half-hearted component of the imperial metropolis; and Irish people who might be constrained at home also had access to the Empire and to the social and economic opportunities. For Ireland, therefore, Empire was simultaneously a chain and a key: it was a source both of constraint and of liberation.⁷

One of the foundational works within this discussion is J.G.A. Pocock's article entitled "British History: A Plea for a New Subject" from 1975⁸ In it, Pocock attempted to redefine how to understand British history within the English-speaking Atlantic world, in which he insists each nation cannot be separated from the greater whole.⁹ This integrated approach, termed the New British History, laid the groundwork for questions about the relationship between Ireland and

⁴ See: Nicholas Canny. *Kingdom and colony: Ireland in the Atlantic world, 1560-1800*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988); Jane Ohlmeyer. *Making Ireland English: The Irish aristocracy in the seventeenth century*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Nicholas Canny. *Making Ireland British, 1580-1650*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). Brian Mac Cuarta, ed. *Reshaping Ireland 1550-1700: colonization and its consequences: essays presented to Nicholas Canny*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011).

⁵ Kevin Kenny. "Ireland and the British Empire: An Introduction," *Ireland and the British Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 2.

⁶ Stephen Howe. "Questioning the (Bad) Question: 'Was Ireland a Colony?'" *Irish Historical Studies* 36, no. 142 (2008): 138–52.

⁷ Alvin Jackson. "Ireland, the Union, and the Empire, 1800-1960," *Ireland and the British Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 136.

⁸ J. G. A. Pocock. "British History: A Plea for a New Subject." *The Journal of Modern History* 47, no. 4 (1975).

⁹ Ibid.

England within the greater context of state formation in the British Isles and the Atlantic World.¹⁰ History could not be told just through Britain's global role but Ireland's place within a globalized empire.¹¹

The historiographic story relies on several contentious aspects of Irish history. From June 1541 onwards, although Ireland was declared a kingdom by Henry VIII, the English settlers began the process of colonization that would dominate the Tudor/Stewart period. Elizabeth I, as with her predecessors, Edward and Mary, sought to continue such efforts through methods like the establishment of plantations, like in Ulster and Munster, and the erasure of Irish culture.¹² Utilizing language developed throughout the period that compared the Irish to the ancient Britons (whom the Romans had "civilized") and Indigenous people in North America, the Crown justified their civilizing position within Ireland.¹³ As Cavanagh writes, "Civilizing Ireland was as much physical as it was mental, as much political as it was ideological."¹⁴ A few decades later, Britain became an overseas empire, placing Ireland not just in an Atlantic but a globalized empire.

The Act of Union (1801) theoretically made Ireland "an equal partner in the United Kingdom," incorporating Ireland into the United Kingdom.¹⁵ It is a moment where kingdom vs. colony is complicated by another category, "nation." Cork anthropologist Joseph Ruane led a study into the language of colonialism employed in Irish historical development. He noted that,

¹⁰ Jane Ohlemeyer. "Seventeenth-Century Ireland and the New British and Atlantic Histories," *American Historical Review*. (April 1999).

¹¹ Howe, "Questioning the (bad) question: 'Was Ireland a colony?,'" 148.

¹² Edward Cavanagh. "Kingdom or Colony? English or British?," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, Vol. 4, No. 2. (2013).

¹³ Jane H. Ohlemeyer. "A Laboratory for Empire?: Early Modern Ireland and English Imperialism," *Ireland and the British Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). 29.

¹⁴ Cavanagh, "Kingdom or Colony? English or British?."

¹⁵ Kenny. "Ireland and the British Empire: An Introduction," 2.

following the nineteenth century, “reference to colonialism has been unusual.”¹⁶ Yet, simultaneously, Ireland remained subordinate to England. The legacies of colonialism endured, unable to be shed by union. As Ronnie Munck wrote in his work entitled *The Irish Economy: Results and Prospects*, “the Act of Union marked a new era in which Ireland ‘assumed the dependent position of classical imperialism whereby it was subordinated as a provider of cheap labour and raw materials to the dominant power.’”¹⁷ By the early twentieth century, the rise of nationalist groups and protest brought a new reality to Ireland with the emergence of the Irish Free State in 1922.

These distinctions are important in understanding the ambiguity of the Irish position. How can Ireland be both kingdom and colony? The Irish story is not so simple as colonizers and colonized, Gaelic Irish and English settlers, or Catholicism and Protestantism.¹⁸ Rather, it is this complexity that defines the Irish experience.

The Origins of “Settler Colonialism”

Just as Ireland’s position relative to England was unclear, the methods used to control the Irish people were equally uncertain. Within the broader framework of New British History, Ireland appeared as a laboratory of colonialism, an ambiguous testing ground for colonial strategies.¹⁹ Rather than united on a single policy, the early modern England struggled to determine the best method of subduing the Gaelic Irish population: annihilation or assimilation.²⁰

¹⁶ Joseph Ruane. “Colonialism and the Interpretation of Irish Historical Development,” *Approaching the Past: Historical Anthropology through Irish Case Studies*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 296.

¹⁷ Terrance McDonough. “Introduction,” *Was Ireland a Colony?* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), ix.

¹⁸ Cavanagh, “Kingdom or Colony? English or British?.”

¹⁹ Lorenzo Veracini. “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*. (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2016), 5.

²⁰ Ohlemeyer, “A Laboratory for Empire?: Early Modern Ireland and English Imperialism,” 27.

One of the clearest examples of the former view is Edmund Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*. Spenser claims that, to effectively colonize Ireland, England must "reduc[e] that salvage nation to better government and civility."²¹ Similar language can be found in *A Discovery of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued* (1612), where Attorney General for Ireland Sir John Davies writes the Irish are "little better than Cannibal" and "wilde and barbarous."²² This "aggressive imperialism" took the form, in some regions of Ireland, as plantations.²³ Under the plantation framework, the Crown established settlements of English colonists with the hopes of improving the overall culture of Ireland and beginning the process of civilizing the Gaelic Irish. Some of the most notable plantations existed in Munster and Ulster, coinciding with the early English colonization of the Americas: Jamestown and the lost colony of Roanoke.²⁴ In fact, two explorers of the Americas, Walter Raleigh and Richard Grenville also received grants to create plantations in Munster.²⁵

Importantly, however, due to a lack of financial resources, assimilationist policies occurred alongside state-sponsored imperialism.²⁶ These policies were regionally divided throughout the Irish landscape. Many urban spaces, like Dublin, operated as hubs of assimilationist policies while rural locations often were filled with plantations. Even within this division, Dublin had some plantation-like formations, and many rural plantations simultaneously worked to integrate and "civilize" Gaelic Irish and Old English. No single civilizing model can

²¹ Edmund Spenser. "A View of the Present State of Ireland." (Renascence Editions, 1596), 1.

²² J. Davies. *Historical relations, or, A discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never intirely subdu'd nor brought under obedience of the crown of England until the beginning of the reign of King James of happy memory.* (Dublin, Printed for Samuel Dancer, 1666), 151-186.

²³ Ohlmeyer, "A Laboratory for Empire?," 27.

²⁴ Connolly, "Settler Colonialism in Ireland," 54.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 54.

²⁶ Ohlmeyer, "A Laboratory for Empire?," 28.

be applied to Ireland.²⁷ Motivated in part by the threat of foreign invasion, several aspects must be included in how civilization was defined within the Irish context: religion, culture, and language. These can all be summarized within the concept of “Anglicization” and the hope of creating the ideal, loyal subject.

Both methods, however, contain notable elements of settler colonialism. The notion of settler colonialism existed in early writings on colonial expansion. In fact, historians like J.R. Seeley began noting the differences between imperialism and the creation of colonies. As Seeley writes, “Whatever political maxims are most applicable to one, are most inapplicable to the other.”²⁸ As a term, however, settler colonialism was first used in the 1920’s to distinguish between the convict colonialism in New South Wales and the settler colonialism in South Australia.²⁹ Although only suggestive of the use of the term “settler colonialism,” the ngram below provides a look into the term’s use from the period of 1900 to 2019 in printed books.

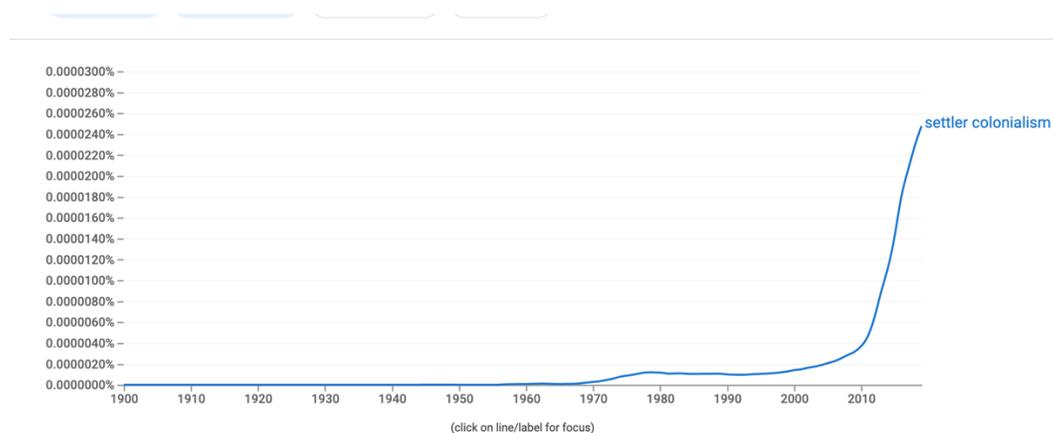


Figure 1: Google Ngram of incidents of the term “Settler Colonialism” in Printed Books, 1900-2019

Source: https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=settler+colonialism&year_start=1900&year_end=2019&corpus=26&smoothing=3

The modern definition of settler colonialism took decades to form. Initially fragmented in discourses and approaches, the branch of colonial studies emerged during the “age of

²⁷ Ohlmeyer, “A Laboratory for Empire?,” 28; Montañó, *The Roots of English Colonialism in Ireland*, 3.

²⁸ J.R. Seeley cited in: Veracini, “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” 3.

²⁹ Veracini, “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” 4.

decolonization” in the 1950’s and 1960’s.³⁰ Variations on the initial colonial studies followed: neocolonialism, internal colonialism, postcolonialism, and new imperial history.³¹ Settler colonialism, however, was not a consolidated theory until the 1990’s and 2000’s with the work of Australian scholars like Wolfe.³² Its initial formation heavily relies on Wolfe’s monumental work: *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (1999), the journal *Settler Colonial Studies*, founded in 2011 by Lorenzo Veracini, and similar work by James Belich on the settler colonial experience in New Zealand.³³ Some notable case studies include the Spanish, Portuguese, and British models of colonization to regions like Australia, Latin America, North America, South Africa, among many others.³⁴

Settler colonialism shares some similarities to other forms of colonization, most notably being its asymmetrical power structure. Critically, it is reliant on an unequal relationship between settler and native. However, instead of being defined by a single act, the “invasion is a structure,” the persistent inclusion of a new settler group into another society.³⁵ Settler colonialism is not simply displacement but replacement.³⁶ It is additionally focused on three

³⁰ Veracini, “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” 2; A. Memmi. *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. (London: Earthscan, 2003).

³¹ Veracini, “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” 2; Natsu Taylor Saito. *Settler Colonialism, Race, and the Law: Why Structural Racism Persists*. (New York: New York University Press, 2020), 41-51.

³² Veracini, “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” 2; Jeffrey Ostler and Nancy Shoemaker. “Settler Colonialism in Early American History: Introduction.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (2019), 361.

³³ Patrick Wolfe. *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of the Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event*. (London: Cassell, 1999); James Belich. *Making Peoples, A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996); James Belich. *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); James Belich. *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders From the 1880s to the Year 2000*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001).

³⁴ M. Bianet Castellanos. “Introduction: Settler Colonialism in Latin America.” *American Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (2017), 778.

³⁵ Wolfe, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native;” Williams, *Stampede*, 28.

³⁶ Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of the Anthropology*, 2.

primary factors: “land, territory, and sovereignty.”³⁷ The replacement requires elimination for the purposes of occupying and controlling land, what Wolfe terms the “logic of elimination.”³⁸ For instance, in the context of North America, Indigenous people were pushed off their land and removed to make room for the settler colonial group. And, with that removal, a new society of settlers form in the land formerly occupied by the Indigenous people.³⁹ The goal was absolute eradication of a people, a “zero-sum game” in which settlers would accept nothing less than the complete control of land regardless of loss of Native life.⁴⁰ Events like the massacre of Native people in Gnadenhutzen in 1782 appear as an extension of the following mentality expressed by one such militiamen: ““When they killed the Indians the country would be theirs, and the sooner this was done the better.””⁴¹

Many of the studies of settler colonialism have focused on the cases of Australia, North America, South Africa, and Palestine to name a few. However, Ireland sits uncomfortably in that literature. Through this thesis and utilizing settler colonial works like that of S.J. Connolly, Patrick Wolfe, and Lorenzo Veracini, I provide proof of the importance of the settler colonial framework for understanding the subjugation of the Irish people. Furthermore, I examine the complexity of the Irish position as one that does not fall neatly into definitions of settler

³⁷ Stepha Velednitsky, Sara N.S. Hughes, and Rhys Machold. “Political geographical perspectives on settler colonialism,” *Geography Compass*, Vol. 14, No. 6 (June 2020).

³⁸ Patrick Wolfe. “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native.” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 8. December 21, 2006; Gina Caison. *Red State: Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, and Southern Studies*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 3; Judy Rohrer. *Staking claim: Settler Colonialism and Racialization in Hawai'i*. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016), 1-3; Cole Harris. *A bounded land: reflections on settler colonialism in Canada*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2020), 3-5; Anthony W. Wood. *Black Montana: settler colonialism and the erosion of the racial frontier, 1877-1930*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021), 2-3.

³⁹ Kimberly A. Williams. *Stampede: Misogyny, White Supremacy, and Settler Colonialism*. (Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fenwood Publishing, 2021), 28; Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of the Anthropology*, 2.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 1.

⁴¹ Walter L. Hixon. *American Settler Colonialism: A History*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), ix.

colonialism and rather that Ireland truly was the testing grounds of colonization methods. And, fundamental to that effort was institutions like universities.

Elimination within Ireland was not just of a people but their culture too. Foundational to the assimilation measures within Ireland was education. The English crown set aside land for “key civilizing institutions” such as churches, towns, schools, and Trinity College.⁴² Established in 1592 by the Charter of Elizabeth I with the goal of becoming a tool of empire, Trinity College became a place to “shap[e] young minds and secur[e] religious and political conformity.”⁴³ Settler colonialism requires institutions to solidify the settler expansion into the new region. This work was actively resisted by Catholics, including the Old English and Gaelic Irish, as many chose to send their sons abroad. In fact, by 1800, there were forty-one Irish seminaries and convents across Europe.⁴⁴

However, Trinity College reflected not only assimilationist ambitions more broadly but its limits. Trinity restricted and at times outright disallowed the teaching of the Irish language. Many New English settlers found such dismissals of Irish culture and its educational system a reason to stay in Ireland rather than send their children abroad. However, there were many struggles throughout the period of my thesis, making it what some have termed “an incomplete conquest.”⁴⁵ Several scholars have attempted to identify the exact reasoning for such failure. One critical component on a national level was the unwillingness of the medieval Old English settlers and the Gaelic Irish to accept the Reformation and instead continued to remain loyal to Rome.⁴⁶ And, some, even after an education at Trinity, actively combatted English rule. One notable

⁴² Ohlemeyer, “Conquest, Civilization, Colonization: Ireland,” 29.

⁴³ Ibid. 36.

⁴⁴ Ibid. 30.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 68.

⁴⁶ Connolly, “Settler Colonialism in Ireland,” 53.

example which will be explored in greater detail is William Bourke who both participated in the 1641 rebellion and married a Catholic following his graduation from Trinity College.⁴⁷

The Creation of the Anglo-Irish

At the center of many of the English colonization efforts in Ireland were the settlers themselves. The concept of the “Anglo-Irish” arises in the twentieth century to give a name to a phenomenon with much deeper roots. According to Bradbury and Valone definition, “[The] ‘Anglo-Irish’ is a categorization that subsumes the ethnic, religious, and social complexities dating back to the twelfth century conquest of Ireland.”⁴⁸ What were these distinguishing factors of the Anglo-Irish? Arguably, one of the most important factors was religion. As has been discussed, religion’s importance manifests from the New English goals of anglicanization of the Gaelic Irish and Old English. Religion thus signified the potential for unification and subjugation of Ireland. Julian Moynahan includes several additional aspects in his definition: the Anglo-Irish “tended to be Protestant and overwhelmingly loyal to the English crown, and had its power and privileges secured by the English civil and military presence.”⁴⁹ While including religion, Moynahan recognized additional components that separated the New English from the Old English, namely both loyalty and privileges. As was mentioned, land ownership within the Old English group had dramatically decreased during the Tudor colonization of Ireland. The Catholic Old English essentially became “indistinguishable from the native Irish through assimilation to the Irish language, customs and culture, and social system.”⁵⁰ Critically, however, the Old

⁴⁷ Ohlemeyer, “Conquest, Civilization, Colonization: Ireland,” 31.

⁴⁸ Bradbury and Valone, “Introduction,” 12.

⁴⁹ Julian Moynahan. *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 4.

English who converted to Protestantism became another important component within the settler identity.

With the failure of the Act of Union in 1801, questions of the Anglo-Irish identity emerged.⁵¹ In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Anglo-Irish would simply refer to “the English living in Ireland,” though outside Ireland, they would simply be considered “Irish.”⁵² Into the nineteenth and twentieth century, groups like the United Irishmen attempted to push the Protestant and Catholics groups to become united behind efforts to liberate Ireland from British control. Unlike the previous centuries, groups began claiming that all inhabitants of Ireland are equally Irish because of their shared home and experience under British rule. They claimed that only through operating as a single force can they become independent from England. This evolution highlights a critical aspect within settler colonialism: “settlers typically act on their own behalf, not as agents of distant metropolises.”⁵³ As settlers distinguished themselves further from the colonial power, the ability of the Crown and the English Parliament to control and regulate the ambitions and efforts of settlers diminished.

Additional Stories of Trinity’s Role in Empire

Trinity offers many stories about empire, mine being one such story. Others include Trinity’s function as a landlord within the Irish borders, its role within global imperialism, and its relationship to missionary projects, each of which further highlight that Trinity was deeply involved with empire. I provide a sampling of those stories below.

⁵¹ Jill Marie Bradbury and David A. Valone. “Introduction,” *Anglo-Irish Identities: 1571-1845*. (Cranbury: Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp., 2008), 11-12.

⁵² *Ibid.* 12.

⁵³ Veracini, Lorenzo. “Introduction: Settler colonialism as a distinct mode of domination,” 4.

Trinity was a colonizer in itself. Within the carving out of Irish land under the plantation system, Trinity received 27,593 acres, territory which they rented out and profited from.⁵⁴ The land became a site of contention throughout the period I investigated as questions of both authority and ownership arose. By the eighteenth century, Trinity College had property in fourteen counties, making it one of the largest landowners in Ireland.⁵⁵ Most notable, documentation in the nineteenth century describes the issues tenants faced with their landlord, like that of Sir J. Calvert Stronge.⁵⁶ In a document entitled, *A Statement as to the Dealings of the Board of Trinity College, Dublin with their Tenants and Perpetuity Grantees*, Stronge opens with this volatile history. He writes:

The extensive confiscated estates conferred upon the College after the close of the Desmond and O’Neil wars have been held by the ancestors and predecessors of the present grantees, as tenants of the College, during from 200 to 300 years.⁵⁷

Trinity did not directly manage its estate. Tenants maintained the land of the estates from its condition of “utter misery and desolation” (as described by Sir Walter Raleigh and Edmund Spenser during the Elizabethan period).⁵⁸ A middleman would hire out thousands of subtenants, becoming an intermediate landlord. Under a 1635 statute, the leases would be made for 21 years with rent equally no less than half the “true value” of the land.⁵⁹ The Board would allow renewals at the end of each lease through the payment of a renewal fine.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Annaleigh Margey. “Plantations, 1550-1641,” *The Cambridge History of Ireland*, Vol. 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁵⁵ W.J. Lowe. “Landlord and tenant on the estate of Trinity College Dublin, 1851-1903,” *Hermathena*, No. 120. (Summer 1976), 5.

⁵⁶ Sir J. Calvert Stronge. *A Statement as to the Dealings of the Board of Trinity College, Dublin with Their Tenants and Perpetuity Grantees*. (Dublin: Printed by Sealy, Bryers & Walker, n.d, 1886).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Stronge, *A Statement as to the Dealings of the Board of Trinity College, Dublin with Their Tenants and Perpetuity Grantees*

⁵⁹ Stronge, *A Statement as to the Dealings of the Board of Trinity College, Dublin with Their Tenants and Perpetuity Grantees*; Lowe, “Landlord and tenant on the estate of Trinity College Dublin,” 6.

⁶⁰ Lowe, “Landlord and tenant on the estate of Trinity College Dublin,” 6.

The passage of the Trinity College Leasing and Perpetuity Act (1851) changed the relationship between tenants and their landlord. The first section of the act gave the Board the power to grant 99-year leases, granting the tenants substantial security.⁶¹ They also provided reimbursements for any development made to the land. Yet, security of tenure and compensation for improvements did not combat the real issue: the cost of rent.⁶² Hence, increases in the cost of rent throughout the nineteenth century decreased the old landlordism in Ireland and led to the sale of the college estate (culminating in the Wyndham Act of 1903).⁶³

Another thread that was not explored in this thesis is Trinity's role within global civilizing missions. Utilizing language from over a century prior on plantations and notions of savagery, Dean of Derry George Berkeley (now namesake for one of Trinity College's libraries) and Fellows of Trinity College, William Thompson, Jonathan Rogers, and James King appealed to the King in 1725 for a charter to establish of a college or seminary in Bermuda (a project that ultimately failed). They write: "It is of earnest desire of all those who have the interest of religion at heart that something more should be done in order to the propagating of the Gospel among the savage Americans and the better supplying of Churches in your Majesty's Foreign Plantations."⁶⁴

Many of the stories outside the ones that I investigate share the same common themes of ambiguity of empire and the role of institutions and individuals within colonization. They highlight the distinct ways that Trinity College operated within the colonial landscape that

⁶¹ Ibid. 8.

⁶² Ibid. 6.

⁶³ Ibid. 5.

⁶⁴ George Berkeley, William Thompson, James King. "Petition of George Berkeley, Dean of Derry, and William Thompson, Jonathan Rogers and James King, Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin to the King," *The Calendar of State Papers, Colonial: North America and the West Indies 1574-1739*. (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis Ltd., 1725).

transformed Ireland and the world. The sheer magnitude of Trinity's involvements is still being uncovered.

Structure of the Thesis

My thesis consists of three chapters, telling the story of Trinity College from its inception in 1592 until the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922. The first chapter begins the story with a discussion on early colonization efforts in Ireland, to Trinity's establishment, and finally to the War of the Three Kingdoms (1642-1651). I argue that the Crown and the English settlers developed Trinity College as a tool within the colonial project. Yet, given the divisions within Protestantism, Trinity College became a microcosm of debates over different colonial ideas. This chapter is divided into two parts: Trinity's institutional role and its founding figures. For these purposes, I investigate two Trinity administrators: James Ussher and William Laud.

The second chapter investigates the evolution of Trinity College in what scholars have termed the long eighteenth century (1688-1815). On an institutional level, Trinity continued to occupy an ambiguous position within Ireland, often forced to evolve in response to revolutionary ideals infiltrating Ireland. The second part of this chapter looks at how former Trinity students wrote about empire and at times, produced criticisms of the very institutions and positions that they occupy. For this chapter, I examine the writings and life of William Molyneux, Edmund Burke, and Wolfe Tone.

The final chapter tracks how Trinity College students and administration mobilized a specific history of Trinity College and the settler community, the Anglo-Irish, to justify their position within Ireland. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Trinity's symbolic presence in Ireland following the rise of nationalist groups and the emergence of the Irish Free State.

Sources, Methodology, and Intervention

It is critical to acknowledge the limitations of this research. This thesis relies on primary and secondary sources both digitally available and available through the Duke University Library system. A few sources had been pulled from Trinity College's own archives. Yet, archival limitations caused by continued COVID-19 travel restrictions make the study unrepresentative of the full scope of university history and documentation that could potentially be uncovered.

I. Primary Sources

The primary sources for my thesis include historical documentation on the college, English and Irish legislation, and scholarship from Trinity administration and former Trinity students. While acknowledging that the scholars I have chosen to discuss do not represent the only opinions within Ireland or even Trinity College, they provide a means to study the scope of opinions at Trinity, representing a microcosm of religious and political beliefs. Some of the scholars and administration include theorist Edmund Burke and colonial representative William Laud. The opposition of such individuals appears as a reflection of the ambiguity of both Trinity's and the Irish position within the English colonial project.

II. Secondary Sources

To complete this project, I rely on numerous secondary sources primarily from the following three categories: Irish-English colonial history, the theoretical underpinnings of settler colonialism and identity, and Trinity College scholarship. The first category has been discussed extensively throughout this introduction. The most notable modern historians within Trinity College scholarship are R.B. McDowell and D.A. Webb, both of whom created extensive works cataloging the history of Trinity College, Dublin.⁶⁵ Prior to their works, aside from a few

⁶⁵ R.B. McDowell and D.A. Webb. *Trinity College Dublin, 1592-1952: An academic history*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); D.A. Webb "Religious Controversy and Harmony at Trinity College Dublin over Four Centuries." *Hermathena* (1992); R.B. McDowell. "Trinity College Dublin and Politics." *Hermathena* (1992).

mentions in narratives on university and Irish history, few scholars had published works on Trinity College beyond the histories of the College that I will discuss in Chapter Three and the two-volume collection by Constantia Maxwell and Kenneth C. Bailey in the late 1940's.⁶⁶ Expanding on such narratives of Trinity College, I utilize frameworks of theorists like Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini to discuss the cultural eradication of the Gaelic Irish and the creation of a settler identity: the Anglo-Irish.

This thesis exists within parallel discussions of colonial institutions in Europe and land-grab universities in the United States and such institutional positions within colonial frameworks. One recent project at Trinity College, however still incomplete, examines the legacies of Trinity College, Dublin within the colonial landscape.⁶⁷ The 24-month post-doctoral fellowship that began in early 2021 under the direction of Dr. Ciaran O'Neill and Dr. Patrick Walsh will produce a publication to explore such legacies. However, their investigation focuses on Trinity's imperial roles, such as in India and Africa, that involved current and former departments of the College. Additionally, they consider commemorative practices, such as the naming of Trinity's library after George Berkeley in 1960. Unlike this work, I focus on Trinity and its scholars within Ireland as a colonial power and manifestation of settler colonialism. As must be acknowledged, no nation exists in isolation, I believe the internal English-Irish experience can provide critical framing for global discussions.

Alongside these discussions, students and faculty have been grappling with the commemorative practices of their universities, particularly those that exist within the colleges' racial and colonial past. University and student-led commissions have attempted to reevaluate

⁶⁶ Kenneth C. Bailey. *A History of Trinity College Dublin, 1892-1945*. (Dublin: The University Press, 1947); Constantia Maxwell. *A History of Trinity College Dublin, 1591-1892*. (Dublin: The University Press, 1946).

⁶⁷ "Trinity Colonial Legacies." Trinity College, Dublin, <https://histories-humanities.tcd.ie/research/colonial-legacies/about.php>.

these histories, like the recommended renaming of 10 buildings on the USC campus, the renaming of Duke’s Carr Building, and the removal of Confederate statutes from the University of Texas campus.⁶⁸ Even at Trinity College, students are advocating for the renaming of Berkeley Library (as Berkeley himself was a slave owner).⁶⁹ As Trinity postdoctoral fellow Clare Moriarty noted, “Universities should be leading the charge in trying to make amends for ways they have benefitted from oppressive histories.”⁷⁰

This thesis also contributes to a developing conversation about land-grant universities in the United States. Scholars like Leigh Patel, Meredith McCoy, Roopika Risam, and Jennifer Guiliano, investigate academic institutions in the United States that are built on slavery and stolen Indigenous land. The “Land-Grab Universities” (LGU) project studies the eleven million acres of land stolen from tribes, bands, and communities for the establishment of the roughly 52 land-grant universities under the Morrill Act of 1862.⁷¹ As they write, “students, faculty, and staff at land-grants occupy the shadows of these violent, genocidal processes that forcibly expropriated lands from Indigenous people and communities.”⁷² Their research investigates institutions like the University of Florida, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the

⁶⁸ WLTX. “USC reports recommends removing names of Storm Thurmoood, Longstreet, Thomas Cooper from campus buildings.” *News19*, July 16, 2021; Duke Today Staff. “Carr Building to be Renamed.” *Duke Today*, December 1, 2018; KVUE-TV Austin. “University of Texas removes Confederate statutes from campus.” *USA Today*, August 21, 2017.

For more, see: Jonathan Drew. “Duke University removes statute of Robert E. Lee after it was vandalized.” *Chicago Tribune*, August 19, 2017; Susan Svrluga. “As colleges grapple with racist legacies, a monument at Ole Miss will finally go.” *The Washington Post*, June 19, 2020; Mary Wood. “Professors: It’s Legal to Take Down Confederate Monuments.” *University of Virginia*, August 31, 2017; Jasmine Aguilera. “Confederate Statutes Are Being Removed Amid Protests Over George Floyd’s Death: Here’s What to Know.” *Time Magazine*, June 24, 2020; Greta Anderson. “Students Reckon with Racist Past.” *Inside Higher Ed*, July 6, 2020.

⁶⁹ Joe Humphreys. “What to do about George Berkeley, Trinity figure head and slave owner?” *The Irish Times*, June 18, 2020; Kate Henshaw. “TCDSU to support campaign to rename the Berkeley library.” *Trinity News*, February 22, 2022.

⁷⁰ Humphreys, “What to do about George Berkeley, Trinity figure head and slave owner?”

⁷¹ Meredith McCoy, Roopika Risam, and Jennifer Guiliano. “The Future of Land-Grab Universities,” *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring 2021). University of Minnesota Press. 169; Robert Lee and Tristan Ahtone. “Land-grab universities,” *High Country News* (March 30, 2020), <https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.4/indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities>.

⁷² McCoy, Risam, and Guiliano, “The Future of Land-Grab Universities,” 169.

University of Arizona, to name a few. Additional work has been done by High Country News in Colorado on data related to Land-Grab Universities across the United States, Avery Smith, Hine Funaki, and Liana MacDonald on Aotearoa New Zealand University, Theresa Stewart-Ambo on the role of land-grab universities on higher education, Kaisha Esty on Rutgers' position as a land-grab college, and Joseph A. Myers Center for Research on Native American Issues & Native American Student Development on the University of California's legacy.⁷³

Likewise, within the context of Trinity College, Dublin, the forceful removal of Gaelic Irish and the use of appropriated land remains at the core of the institution. Yet, importantly, Trinity College and Ireland maintained a quasi-colonial relationship to England, occupying an ambiguous space between kingdom and colony. The colonization methods were varied and oftentimes, incomplete. It is through this thesis and the three historical moments that I will examine both the role of Trinity College within settler colonialism as it attempts to create “a new England in all but name,” and how it reckons with this history.⁷⁴

⁷³ Avery Smith, Hine Funaki, and Liana MacDonald. “Living, breathing settler colonialism: the reification of settler norms in a common university space,” *Higher Education Research & Development*, Vol. 40, Issue 1 (January 11, 2021); Geoff McGhee and High Country News. “HCN Investigation - Land-Grab Universities,” <https://github.com/HCN-Digital-Projects/landgrabu-data>; Robert Lee, Tristan Ahtone, Margaret Pearce, Kalen Goodluck, Geoff McGhee, Cody Leff, Katherine Lampher, and Taryn Salinas. “Land-Grab Universities,” *High Country News*, <https://www.landgrabu.org/>; Tom Almeroth-Williams. “The great university land-grab,” *University of Cambridge*, <https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/great-university-land-grab>; Theresa Stewart-Ambo. “The Future is in the Past: How Land-Grab Universities Can Shape the Future of Higher Education,” *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 1 (Spring 2021): 162-168. Kaisha Esty. “Rutgers: A Land-Grant College in Native American History,” *Scarlet and Black: Slavery and Dispossession in Rutgers History*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2016): 150-9; Joseph A Myers Center for Research on Native American Issues & Native American Student Development. *The University of California Land Grab: A Legacy of Profit from Indigenous Land – A Report of Key Learnings and Recommendations*. University of California, Berkeley (2021).

⁷⁴ Ulster poet Ó Gnímh cited by Jane Ohlemeyer. “Conquest, Civilization, Colonization: Ireland, 1540-1660,” *The Princeton History of Modern Ireland*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 41.

Chapter One

Foundation and Founders

In 1603, writing to Roman Catholics in Ireland while in exile, Jesuit controversialist Father Henry Fitzsimon asserted the following:

A certain illustrious Baron, whose lady, my principal benefactress, sent his son to Trinity College. Notwithstanding my obligations to them for my support, I, with the utmost freedom, earnestness, and severity, informed and taught them that it was a most impious thing, and a detestable scandal, to expose their child to such education.⁷⁵

Working alongside the Crown, the English settlers of Ireland established Trinity College as one of several institutions built on the hopes of strengthening the settler colonial project. Trinity, from its foundation in 1592 to the War of the Three Kingdoms (1642-1651), facilitated one of the key objectives of settler colonialism: the arrival of settlers known as the New English with the intentions of restraining the most dangerous aspects of Gaelic culture and maintaining an English stronghold in Dublin.⁷⁶ As historian James Belich writes, an “emigrant joined someone else’s society, a settler or colonist remade his own.”⁷⁷ Thus, its importance in crafting and formalizing notions of civilization and settler identity that would foster at once a unified and yet more divided Ireland lies at the heart of this chapter.

I argue that the English Crown and their English settlers, faced with rival imperial projects and a failed conquest during the reign of Henry VIII, chose to develop Trinity College

⁷⁵ Henry Fitzsimon. *Words of comfort to persecuted Catholics, written in exile, anno 1607, Letters from a cell in Dublin castle, and Diary of the Bohemian war of 1620.* (Dublin: M.H. Gill & Son, 1881), 56.

⁷⁶ Patrick Wolfe. *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event.* (London: Cassell, 1999), 1; Lorenzo Veracini. *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview.* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 2-3.

⁷⁷ James Belich. *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 53.

as a tool in the English colonial project. While both restricting and eradicating aspects of Gaelic Irish culture, the settlers established Trinity College to ensure a long-lasting settler presence. Although the term itself would not appear until the late nineteenth century, the settler community (and mythology) that would become known as the Anglo-Irish is advanced and takes root in the founding of Trinity College.⁷⁸ Yet, facing competing ideologies and interests from the College's founders, Trinity College occupied a similarly ambiguous settler colonial form as Ireland itself. As such, Trinity College became a microcosm of competing ideas about how colonization should happen or if it should at all.

To explore the foundation of Trinity College, Dublin, the chapter is split into two sections: the institution and its founding figures. The institution, examined through the history of English colonization of Ireland and Trinity's founding documents, offers insight into the goals of the Crown and the settlers who founded Trinity College. Yet, settler colonialism is not a static nor simple process. The Irish are not one people nor the colonizers themselves united. And, the splintering within Protestantism complicated the religious conversion efforts beyond the Protestant-Catholic binary. These different factors mean that an Irish Protestant colonial university was bound to be ambiguous and complex. For these purposes, I investigate two Trinity administrators: James Ussher and William Laud.

The Roots of English Colonization In Ireland

The English first colonized Ireland in the twelfth century. In the papal bull *Laudabiliter* (1155), Pope Adrian IV declared King of England, Henry II, Lord of Ireland, an attempt to assert

⁷⁸ Julian Moynahan. *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination on a Hyphenated Culture*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3.

the king's authority and expand his territorial holdings.⁷⁹ Fourteen years later, a group led by Richard de Clare, 2nd Earl of Pembroke (also known as "Strongbow") and other English leaders staged an unauthorized invasion into Ireland.⁸⁰ Henry II followed with a well-equipped army, landing in Ireland in 1171 and demanding their submission.⁸¹ Regardless of efforts to organize the territory and control the region, much of what we today think of as Ireland was well beyond the power of the English Crown and settlers.⁸² Instead, they focused their efforts on walled coastal towns like Dublin: a region that later became known as the Pale.⁸³ Yet, some of the settlers in the Pale and beyond were Gaelicized and hence integrated into Irish society rather than the opposite, a reality that became increasingly dangerous for the ability to control the volatile territory.⁸⁴

Henry Tudor's victory over Richard III in 1485 at the Battle of Bosworth marked the coming of the Tudors to the English throne and between Ireland and England. Although for centuries, the conflict between England and Ireland was not necessarily about religion, it soon became so. Henry VIII broke from Rome and established an English church under the supreme rule of the king instead of the pope: a series of events often known as the English Reformation. Yet, although no longer obedient to the Pope and the Church of Rome, the English Church did not look like any Protestant Church.⁸⁵ Henry VIII and his advisors further attempted to expand

⁷⁹ Connolly, "Settler Colonialism in Ireland from English Conquest," 49; Pope Adrian IV, Translated by John O'Driscoll. *Laudabiliter*. 1827. Cited from: John O'Driscoll. *The History of Ireland Vol I*. (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1827), 416-417.

⁸⁰ S.J. Connolly. "Settler Colonialism in Ireland from English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century," *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*. (London: Routledge, 2022), 49; Mary Platt Parmele. *Short History of England, Ireland, and Scotland*. (Chapel Hill: Project Gutenberg, 2010), 205.

⁸¹ Parmele, *Short History of England, Ireland, and Scotland*, 205-206.

⁸² Annaleigh Margey. "Plantations, 1550-1641," *The Cambridge History of Ireland*, Vol. 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁸³ Hackett, *Story of the Irish Nation*, 89-91; Connolly, "Settler Colonialism in Ireland from English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century," 49.

⁸⁴ Hackett, *Story of the Irish Nation*, 85.

⁸⁵ D.G. Newcombe. *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*. (London: Routledge, 1995), 1-3.

their authority in Ireland in 1541, with the declaration that he was no longer Lord, but King in Ireland. Regardless, the Irish people refused to renounce their Gaelic customs for English law and instead promoted the Catholic Counter-Reformation within their borders. Their religious allegiances often resulted in alliances between the Catholic nations of Spain and France and the Church of Rome itself against the English.⁸⁶ The English Crown came to understand that control of the Irish signified the survival of the Protestant monarchy.

Elizabeth I (1533-1603), as with her predecessors, Mary and Edward, hoped to progressively expand her reign outside the Pale. Following the limited English Reformation, a failed conquest and reformation of Ireland under Henry VIII, and the expansion into the New World, Ireland's threat to English control grew. Ireland thus became a testing ground for different methods of controlling and subduing the unruly Irish population.⁸⁷ At times overlapping, these methods included violent altercations, civilization, educational reform, plantations, religious conversion, among much else. The Crown struggled to discover and ultimately finance the best means of appropriately addressing the Irish Question.

One such method was the brutal destruction of the Irish people. Sir Henry Sidney, appointed as lord deputy of Ireland in 1565, began the period of Elizabethan conquest with his state-building program.⁸⁸ Prior to his deputyship, English colonization efforts had been focused on the Pale.⁸⁹ Despite Gaelic Irish opposition, Sidney hoped to enforce the Act of Uniformity

⁸⁶ Constancia Maxwell. *A History of Trinity College, Dublin: 1591-1892*. (Dublin: University Press, 1946), 2; Karl S. Bottigheimer. *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 80-85.

⁸⁷ Jane H. Ohlemeyer. "A Laboratory for Empire?: Early Modern Ireland and English Imperialism," *Ireland and the British Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 20.

⁸⁸ Nicholas Canny. *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: A Pattern Established, 1565, 1576*. (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1976); Nicholas Canny. "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (1973), 575-98; William Palmer. "The Problem of Ideology in the Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: A Comparative Approach?" *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua* 19, no. 3 (2015), 129-130; Colm Lennon. "Protestant Reformation, 1550-1641," *The Cambridge History of Ireland*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁸⁹ William Palmer. "The Problem of Ideology in the Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland," 129-130.

(1560) coupled with the Twelve Articles (1567).⁹⁰ Utilizing English commanders, Sidney worked to take land from northeast Ulster and southwest Munster and distribute it among the English.⁹¹

Despite this, many of the Irish led local rebellions to fight off the English invaders. One of the most notable of these was the rebellion of Shane O’Neill, resulting in O’Neill’s head being shipped off to Dublin and displayed in front of Dublin Castle.⁹² The English engraver who accompanied Henry Sidney to chronicle his campaigns against the O’Neills and Ireland more generally, John Derrick, asserted that his “soule doeth detest their wilde shamrocke maners,” and that the Irish are “brutisher than beastes.”⁹³ In fact, according to Derrick, the Irish people had “wholy extinguisht...the glorie of Irelande.”⁹⁴ Such language provides the justification of the inferiority of the Irish, and consequently the necessity of English colonization of Ireland.

A few decades into the colonization effort, Edmund Spenser appealed to similar notions as Derrick in his work, *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1596), yet with more extreme solutions. Through a debate between two characters, Eudoxus and Irenius, Spenser describes the deficiencies and abuses of the Irish people. Appealing to notions of “savagery,” Spenser argues

⁹⁰ Lennon, “Protestant Reformation, 1550-1641.”

⁹¹ William Palmer. “The Problem of Ideology in the Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland,” 129-130.

⁹² Hackett, *Story of the Irish Nation*, 117; Ciaran Brady. “From policy to power: the evolution of Tudor reform strategies in sixteenth-century Ireland,” *Reshaping Ireland, 1550-1700: Colonization and its consequences*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), 25; Bottigheimer, *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, 98.

⁹³ John Derricke. *The Image of Irelande with a Discoverie of Vvoodkarne, Wherin is Moste Liuely Expresse, the Nature, and Qualitie of the Saied Wilde Irishe Woodkarne, their Notable Aptnesse, Celeritie, and Pronesse to Rebellion, and by Waie of Argumente is Manifested their Originall, and Ofspryng, their Descent and Pedigree: Also their Habite and Apparell, is there Plainly Showne. the Execrable Life, and Miserable Death of Rorie Roge, that Famous Archtraitour to God and the Croune (Otherwise Called Rorie Oge) is Like Wise Discribed. Lastlie the Commyng in of Thyrlaghe Leonaghe the Greate Oneale of Irelande, with the Effecte of His Submission, to the Right Honourable Sir Henry Sidney (Lorde Deputie of the Saied Lande) is Thereto Adioyned. made and Deuised by Ihon Derricke, Anno 1578. and Now Published and Set Forthe by the Saied Authour this Present Yere of our Lorde 1581. for Pleasure and Delight of the Well Disposed Reader.* (London: By J. Kingston for] Ihon Daie, 1581).

⁹⁴ Ibid.

that the Irish people are far beyond the possibility of civilization therefore justifying their absolute elimination.⁹⁵

Spenser put a great deal of blame not only on the Gaelic Irish but the “Old English,” those descendants of the Anglo-Norman settlers. He insists:

[T]hey boast they performed to the King, in bringing all the Irish to acknowledge him for their liege, they did great hurt to his title, and have left a perpetual gall in the mind of the people.⁹⁶

As powerful remnants of the Anglo-Norman Period with ties to both England and the European mainland and strong Catholic loyalty, the Old English presented a threat to the Crown.⁹⁷ In particular, Spenser argued that the Old English had the potential to push the Gaelic Irish towards disobedience and rebellion. As indicated by Spenser’s writing, the colonization of Ireland was not just a conflict between “colonizer” and “colonized,” but a complex and multi-sided conflict among the Gaelic Irish, the Old English, and the vigilantly Protestant New English.

Distinct from the violent methods some theorists argued for, the methods employed in the Pale contained the elements of plantation development: another answer to the Irish Question. The establishment of a plantation often began with the suppression of a rebellion.⁹⁸ After such acts, the land would be divided and assessed for settlement to use for land grants.⁹⁹ Finally, the Crown would introduce settlers to the land, changing the demographics of the territory and thereby subduing the population through the restriction of a Gaelic Irish cultural presence. The new group of settlers, known as the New English, arrived to “plant” the civilizing ideals. The settlers were distinct from the original settlers, termed the Old English, by both their prestige and loyalty

⁹⁵ Brady, “From policy to power: the evolution of Tudor reform strategies in sixteenth-century Ireland,” 25.

⁹⁶ Edmund Spenser. *A View of the Present State of Ireland*. (Renaissance Editions, 1596), 6.

⁹⁷ D. George Boyce. *Nationalism in Ireland*. (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2003), 73.

⁹⁸ Margey, “Plantations, 1550-1641,” *The Cambridge History of Ireland*.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

to the Crown. Within the framework of settler colonialism, the New English were settlers who came to Ireland to culturally replace the Gaelic Irish and Catholic Old English. Most importantly, the goal was to replace the Old English as “guarantors of security and political order, the agents of social and economic development, and the standard bearers of reformed faith.”¹⁰⁰

Historian Jane H. Ohlemeyer writes that civilization for the period was achieved by:

How unruly subject could be reformed, how overmighty lords could be tamed, how thuggery and feuding could be replaced with law and order, how labour could be channelled into production rather than destruction, and how Irish culture and customs could be replaced with English ones.¹⁰¹

The notions of civilization allow for the possibility for reform, a chance to rejoin the loyal subjects of the Crown. One of the most important aspects of civilization was religious conversion or at the very least, loyalty to the Crown over the Church in Rome. Civilizing also included changes to language, custom, and social habits: many public acts that were deemed critical to control and signified greater loyalty to the Crown.¹⁰²

Building a Colonial University

With the establishment of New English settlers in the Pale, two questions remained: how to civilize the Gaelic Irish and Old English while maintaining a New English settler presence. These questions form the basis of settler colonialism as an ongoing process. It is not simply the movement of people but their sustained establishment in a new region. With these realities in mind, the Crown and settlers established Trinity College.

Although not the first place of higher education in Ireland, as the Royal College of Dublin had existed since 1311 by a Bull of Pope Clement V, Trinity College was the first

¹⁰⁰ Connolly, “Settler Colonialism in Ireland from English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century,” 53.

¹⁰¹ Ohlmeyer, “A Laboratory for Empire?,” 27.

¹⁰² Bottigheimer *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, 102.

founded following the Reformation and the violent persecution of Catholics in Ireland.¹⁰³ The Royal College, having been rebuilt in 1583 by a Catholic merchant within Protestant Dublin, had been religiously ambiguous. That is, until 1588, at which point it became a Protestant university under the guidance of Scottish settlers, James Fullerton and James Hamilton.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, much of the education within the Irish borders existed within the walls of monasteries and in the households of “great Gaelic princes and Anglo-Norman nobles.”¹⁰⁵ The Protestant settlers considered such education as illegitimate, compared to what could be offered by the Crown and the Church of England. Thus, many of the New English and Protestant Old English settlers believed that a wholly Irish university with Protestant ties was missing in Dublin.¹⁰⁶

Without proper education, the settlers and the Gaelic Irish alike began sending their children abroad. One of the New English settlers, Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork, argued that his children must be “bred in England and abroad in the world, and not to have their youth infected with the leaven of Ireland.”¹⁰⁷ The university provided the means of transforming the Irish Catholics into the ideal subjects and maintaining the presence of New English settlers, thereby increasing stability and control in the Irish borders. To control Ireland, the settlers themselves must remain in Ireland. And, beyond the issues of the Protestant settlers, many Irish and Old English scholars made their way to the continent or England to receive an orthodox religious education.¹⁰⁸ And, with the increased religious divisions between France, Spain, and England,

¹⁰³ Bottigheimer *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, 114.

¹⁰⁴ Ford, *James Ussher*, 25.

¹⁰⁵ R.B. McDowell and D.A. Webb. *Trinity College Dublin: 1592-1952: An Academic History*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 1.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 25.

¹⁰⁷ R.F. Foster. *Modern Ireland: 1600-1972*. (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 14.

¹⁰⁸ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 1; Bottigheimer *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, 114.

the proximity of Gaelic Irish and Old English to such ideologies presented a new threat, one that Elizabeth I and the New English colonists hoped to challenge.

To establish the college, the Corporation of Dublin, led by Archdeacon of Dublin Henry Ussher and Cambridge Fellow Luke Challoner, petitioned the Irish Council for a charter and the land of a dissolved monastery: All Hallows' Priory.¹⁰⁹ A few decades prior, Henry VIII had dissolved hundreds of monasteries in England, Ireland, and Wales to formally disconnect the kingdom from the Roman Catholic Church. The Dublin Corporation had maintained the land since the Priory's disbanding and was carved out through the land grant process.¹¹⁰ With the steeple from the Priory transforming into the College tower, Trinity becomes not just an institution for the propagation of settler colonialism but a colonizer itself, taking the place of the formerly Catholic structures.¹¹¹ It is this notion that seeps into the very foundation of Trinity.

After appealing to Elizabeth I and finally receiving a charter in 1591 along with estates in the South and West of Ireland, the college founders struggled to find the finances to support the college.¹¹² The Queen's donations (a yearly gift of £400) alone were not enough for the university. Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam made an appeal to property owners across Ireland for the proper funding to repair the Priory and transform it into the "mother of a University."¹¹³ His official request noted: "whereby knowledge, learning, and civilitie may be increased to the banishing of barbarisme, tumults, and disordered lyving from among them."¹¹⁴ Thus, part of the

¹⁰⁹ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 2; Roland Budd. *The platforme of an universitie: All Hallows' Priory to Trinity College, Dublin*. (Dublin: Particular Books, 2001), 32-34.

¹¹⁰ Margey, "Plantations, 1550-1641," *The Cambridge History of Ireland*.

¹¹¹ Budd, *The platforme of an universitie*, 47.

¹¹² *The Book of Trinity College, Dublin: 1591-1891*. (Belfast: Marcus Ward & Co., Limited, Royal Ulster Works, 1892), 6.

¹¹³ "Charter of Elizabeth I," <https://www.tcd.ie/Secretary/assets/pdf/Charter%20Elizabeth%20I.pdf>.

¹¹⁴ Lord Deputy and Councill William Fitzwilliam. Correspondence to Irish Gentry (1592). Full excerpt from: Denis Caulfield Heron. *The Constitutional History of the University of Dublin: With Some Account of Its Present Condition, and Suggestions for Improvement*. (Nabu Press, 2010), 22-24.

argument used to request donations and financial support for the university was distinctly tied to notions of barbarism and instability.

Elizabeth I acknowledged such justifications in a letter to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, the Lord Chancellor, and the Council of Ireland:

Our people, whereof many have usually heretofore used to travel into France, Italy, and Spain to get learning in such foreign universities where they have been infected with popery and other ill qualities, and so become evil subjects.¹¹⁵

It is this letter that Elizabeth I describes her justification for building Trinity College, one that is shared by many of the founders.

In the Elizabethan charter of Trinity College, the founders of Trinity College were given the privilege of limited self-governance. They write:

“We will, grant, ordain, and decree for us, our heirs and successors...as it shall happen that any provost in any manner be removed or ceased to be...then and successively the aforesaid fellows and their successors then surviving or the majority of them may elect and name a suitable provost within three months next following”¹¹⁶

This power to appoint one’s own provost granted the administrators some degree of freedom in the legislation, decrees, and decisions of Trinity College. Although the college was supposed to be complicit with the Crown’s objectives, by its very form, it had the potential to depart from them as well. As such, they will then be able to push off and delay attacks from the Crown with this newfound independence.

The construction of the university began on March 13, 1591 on the land of the former Roman Catholic Priory of All Hallows. Yet, the use of stolen Catholic land from decades prior coupled with the radical teachings made many Catholics continue sending their children abroad.

¹¹⁵ *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland, of the Reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth.* (Dublin: A. Thoms & Sons, 1861), 227-228.

¹¹⁶ “Charter of Elizabeth I,” <https://www.tcd.ie/Secretary/assets/pdf/Charter%20Elizabeth%20I.pdf>

Rather than uniting these opposing branches of Irish society, the divisions within the population deepened and the hopes for reform seemed to have been wasted. As historian Karl Bottigheimer writes, “Trinity was immediately suspected of heresy in the eyes of most of the Irish and Old English.”¹¹⁷

From its foundation, the binary of Protestant and Catholic did not hold, as more and more groups challenged the Church of England. While Trinity purported to align with the Church of England, its founders, with diverging religious values, often took a different approach. Within Protestantism, increasingly radical groups emerged, the most notable at Trinity being the Puritans. Puritanism surfaced in the sixteenth century not as a reform movement seeking to “purify” the Church.¹¹⁸ As was described, although Henry VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church, many of the practices remained the same. Remnants of the Roman Catholic Church like vestments (termed “popish rags” by Trinity provost Adam Loftus) and Communion were deemed illegitimate by Puritan teachings.¹¹⁹ The Puritans aligned themselves with Calvinism, a system of beliefs developed by sixteenth century Protestant reformer John Calvin in Geneva.¹²⁰

In modeling Trinity College after universities like Oxford and Cambridge, hotbeds of Puritanism, the founders created more internal divisions on the question of education. In fact, many Irish Catholics were concerned by the Trinity’s continued importation of Provosts and faculty from Cambridge, Travers, Alvey, and Temple, where Puritanism was the accepted

¹¹⁷ Bottigheimer *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, 114.

¹¹⁸ Francis J. Bremer. *Puritanism: a very short introduction*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 22; Elizabethanne Boran. “An early friendship network of James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh, 1626-1656,” *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 116-119.

¹¹⁹ Wallace W. Marshall. *Puritanism and natural theology*. (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2016), 2; Lennon, “Protestant Reformation, 1550-1641.”

¹²⁰ Bremer, *Puritanism: a very short introduction*, 24; Marshall. *Puritanism and natural theology*, 2.

faith.¹²¹ Thus, while, in theory, the early Trinity administration encouraged the Gaelic Irish to enter the university, such biases and fears created an artificial barrier to entrance.

Although with the importation of faculty, the teachings and methodologies at Trinity College often excluded portions of the population as well. In line with the goals of civilizing the Irish people, the Crown initiated religious policies in 1629 in which undergraduates were made to attend daily services and once a week catechetical instruction and examination.¹²² However, no religious tests were instituted until the 1637 charter issued by Charles I (1625-1649) under the Chancellor William Laud in which such requirements were made of Fellows of the university.¹²³ Here, it was to exclude Puritans not Catholics. The requirement highlights the microcosm of Protestant divergence at Trinity, as the settlers themselves were not united behind a single vision for the College.

Yet, rather than providing a space for the religious conversion of Irish Catholics, Trinity College appeared to many in Ireland as a “seminary of a colonial Protestant minority.”¹²⁴ To accommodate such an understanding and the lack of Catholic students, James I suggested that Irish-speaking and Trinity-educated clergy be transferred to live amongst the ““natives of Ireland”” to bring them up ““in civility, learning, and religion.””¹²⁵ Trinity thus became a place of creating loyal subjects from a pool whose allegiance was already much higher than many in Ireland. As an extension of maintaining control, they would be sent elsewhere with the hopes of spreading devotion to the Crown.

¹²¹ Bottigheimer *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, 114-115.

¹²² D.A. Webb. “Religious Controversy and Harmony at Trinity College Dublin over Four Centuries.” *Hermathena* (1992), 96.

¹²³ Alan Ford. *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 26.

¹²⁴ Bottigheimer, *Ireland and the Irish*, Pg. 114.

¹²⁵ James I cited in: R.B. McDowell. “Trinity College Dublin and Politics.” *Hermathena* (1992), 116.

The Founders of Trinity College

I. James Ussher (1581-1656): A Conflicted Puritan

Described by English jurist and theorist John Selden as “*judicio singulari, usque ad miraculum doctus*” (by a singular judgment, even to the miracle of the learned), James Ussher’s perspective provided one of the earliest foundations to the university and set the course for the next century.¹²⁶ Born into a wealthy, established Protestant Old English family in Dublin, Ussher did not belong to the New English settler colonial class that many others at Trinity College would. Instead, he existed within the early settler group that did not integrate into Gaelic Irish culture. Given his family’s historic power in Ireland, he was in the unique position of potentially uniting the Old and New English groups.

Ussher received his Bachelor of the Arts degree in 1598 at thirteen years old. This was followed by his Masters in 1600, Bachelor of Divinity in 1607 and Doctor of Divinity in 1613, all at Trinity College. Ussher’s student notebooks primarily contained books by and about the French Calvinist Pierre de la Ramée (Peter Ramus). Philosopher and educational reformer Peter Ramus (1515-1572) was used as a means to replace Aristotelian logic (as Ramus himself was known for the famous thesis: “Whatever is to be found in Aristotle is false”) and was often used in Puritan institutions, like Oxford and Cambridge.¹²⁷ Beyond the location itself, scholars considered Ramist thought to be tied to Puritan scholasticism, radical in its considerations of the relationship between man and the divine.¹²⁸ With notebooks filled with Ramist diagrams, it was

¹²⁶ W. MacNeile Dixon, *College Histories: Trinity College, Dublin*, (London: F.E. Robinson & Co., 1902), ix; McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 10; Boran, “An early friendship network of James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh,” 116.

¹²⁷ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 39; Pierre Albert Duhamel. “The Logic and Rhetoric of Peter Ramus.” *Modern Philology* 46, no. 3 (1949), 163–71.

¹²⁸ Duhamel, “The Logic and Rhetoric of Peter Ramus,” 168.

clear that Ussher was influenced by such ideas.¹²⁹ As late as the 1630s, sermons delivered by Ussher often relied on “Ramist skeletons.”¹³⁰

Regardless, scholars debate the impact that Ussher’s education had on his spiritual and intellectual views. Some claimed that Ussher overcame Puritan influences to conform with the Church of England and “one who by the end of his life had rejected Calvinism and ‘almost obliterated’ Trinity’s impact.”¹³¹ Within this line of argument, scholars point to Ussher’s own fear of being acknowledged as a puritan when going to England. In fact, in both 1612 and again in 1619, Ussher brought letters of recommendation that specifically claimed that he was not a puritan.¹³²

Following his graduation from Trinity, Ussher became a Professor of Theological Controversies or Divinity, though he termed the position “Professor of Sacred Theology.”¹³³ His choice followed his father’s passing, in which Ussher inherited a substantial trust. He passed much of it over to his uncle, only keeping enough to maintain the college and continue his collection of books (later donated to the Trinity College Library).¹³⁴ Trinity College also appointed Ussher as catechist, a position in which he presented before members of the Irish government on religious matters and controversies.¹³⁵ While working as a professor, Ussher served as the Vice Chancellor of the University until 1640, the year he left for England, and Vice-Provost. Trinity College administration offered Ussher the position of provost and

¹²⁹ Ford. *James Ussher*, 40.

¹³⁰ Ibid. 40.

¹³¹ Ibid. 44.

¹³² Richard Parr. *The life of the most reverend father in god, james usher, late lord arch-bishop of armagh, primate and metropolitan of all ireland with a collection of three hundred letters between the said lord primate and most of the eminentest persons for piety and learning in his time ... / collected and published from original copies under their own hands.* (London: Printed for Nathanael Ranew, 1686), 15.

¹³³ Dixon, *College Histories: Trinity College, Dublin*, ix; McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 1.

¹³⁴ Philip Styles. “JAMES USSHER AND HIS TIMES.” *Hermathena*, no. 88 (1956), 15.

¹³⁵ Ibid. 16.

chancellor at various points in his career, though never accepted.¹³⁶ It was still clear, however, that Ussher was working behind the scenes at Trinity, like in the choice of provost following William Temple's provostship and the duration of fellowships.¹³⁷

Ussher did develop an acceptance and at times, an advocacy for puritan beliefs. This can be seen in those he chose to interact with in Ireland (primarily in Puritan circles).¹³⁸ When appointing individuals to positions of leadership at Trinity College, one can note a pattern of Puritanism with individuals like William Temple, Richard Sibbes, John Preston, and Joseph Mede.¹³⁹ These connections expanded beyond the ministry to include the Puritan gentry, like the Barringtons of Hatfield, Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, and John Winthrop.¹⁴⁰ When purchasing books for Trinity College, Ussher sought out nonconformist Christopher Goodman.¹⁴¹ Perhaps, the best analysis of Ussher's life could be summarized by Alan Ford's commentary: "For Ussher, the two [referring to his puritan education and life as a conformist bishop] were part of the seamless protestant whole."¹⁴²

Another notable link to Puritanism came from Ussher's own writing. In 1615, Ussher produced the *Irish Articles of Religion*. Although the document was accepted and signed by the Crown, it got Ussher into controversy with its doctrinal ties to Puritanism. Some in the English Parliament insisted that it was "an absolute Plot of the...Calvinians in England to make themselves so strong a Party in Ireland, as to obtain what they pleased."¹⁴³ In fact, with the increase in religious pressure, it resulted in James I choosing Lancelot Bulkeley for the position

¹³⁶ Boran, "An early friendship network of James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh," 119.

¹³⁷ Ibid. 119.

¹³⁸ Boran, "An early friendship network of James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh," 116.

¹³⁹ Ibid. 119-120.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 125.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. 130.

¹⁴² Parr, *The Life of the most Reverend Father in God, James Usher*, 118-120.

¹⁴³ Ibid. 15.

of Archbishop of Dublin over Ussher.¹⁴⁴ After an interview with the King, Ussher was able to regain royal favor, and he became bishop of Meath in 1621. While there, he preached before Catholics with such an effect that their priests forbade them attending.¹⁴⁵ He later became the Primate of all Ireland (also known as the Archbishop of Armagh) in 1625.¹⁴⁶

Ussher's *A Discourse on the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and the British* (1631) offers insight into his religious beliefs and perspective on the beliefs of the Gaelic Irish, or those who were then termed the "ancient Irish."¹⁴⁷ At this point in Ussher's career, he had moved to serve Charles I. England was facing the rise of Arminian clergy, notably figures like Richard Montagu and William Laud, who challenged the fundamental tenets of the Church of England.¹⁴⁸ Arminianism arose in the seventeenth century in response to Calvinist and Puritan ideas, asserting beliefs in clerical hierarchy and free will.¹⁴⁹ Ussher's position as the Archbishop of Armagh and the Primate of Ireland made him especially posed to comment on these religious divisions.

The 1631 document is addressed to Sir Christopher Sibthorp, one of the justices in the Court of Ireland. They had written several documents either together or to each other during this period, most importantly, for this work, Sibthorp's own work entitled "*A friendly advertisement to the pretended Catholics of Ireland*" (1623).¹⁵⁰ It is this document where Ussher's own piece

¹⁴⁴ Styles, "JAMES USSHER AND HIS TIMES," 17.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 20.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. 17-18.

¹⁴⁷ James Ussher. *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and Brittish*. (London: Printed by Robert Young for the Partners of the Irish Stocke, 1631), 1.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. 136.

¹⁴⁹ Nicholas Tyacke. "The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered." *Past & Present*, no. 115 (1987), 201-2.

¹⁵⁰ Sir Christopher Sibthorp. *A friendly aduertisement to the pretended catholickes of ireland declaring, for their satisfaction, that both the kings supremacie, and the faith whereof his majestie is the defender, are consonant to the doctrine delivered in the holy scriptures, and writings of the ancient fathers, and consequently, that the lawes and statutes enacted in that behalfe, are dutifully to be observed by all his majesties subjects within that kingdome / by christopher sibthorp ... ; in the end whereof, is added an epistle written to the author, by the reverend father in god, iames vssher bishop of meath*. (Dublin: Printed by the Societie of Stationers, 1623).

was embedded and then later reprinted as a stand-alone copy in 1631. The Sibthrop document challenges the authenticity of Catholic beliefs that do not even abide by their own doctrines and teachings. By placing his own document within this work, we get another glimpse of what Ussher may believe with regards to the Catholics; they are a danger to the ideological purity of the church.

Continuing in his method of religious debate that framed much of his career, Ussher challenges the religious legitimacy of Catholicism, turning towards the Scriptures. He notes how the Bible was translated: “In the Old Testament I observe that our Writers doe more usually follow the translation taken out of the Septuagint (Greek translation), than the Vulgar Latine, which is now received in the Church of Rome.”¹⁵¹ He explained core Protestant values: “faith alone justifieth.”¹⁵² He discussed the concept of purgatory, prayers for the dead, and worship of God. All this highlights how Ussher challenged Catholicism. He was, at heart, an intellectual, challenging opposing faiths through debate.

One of Ussher’s biggest contributions to Trinity College was his library donation. In Trinity’s early years, it had no more than 40 works, including the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero.¹⁵³ Luke Challoner, Ussher’s father-in-law, went on the first book buying exhibition and returned with 250 items from London booksellers. Ussher continued the tradition and went on numerous journeys to search for works for the library. In 1640, Ussher went to England on one such exhibition and was soon trapped with the impending War of the Three Kingdoms (1642-1651). Caused by numerous building divisions, both religious and political, the War of the Three Kingdoms was a series of conflicts between the English Parliament (known as the

¹⁵¹ Ussher, *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish*, 7.

¹⁵² Ibid. 16.

¹⁵³ Peter Fox. *Trinity College Library Dublin*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 6-7.

“Parliamentarians”) and the Crown (known as the “Royalists”). Ussher had Royalist sympathies and refused to sit before the English Parliament at Westminster.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, the books to be donated to Trinity were confiscated and sold by Parliament.¹⁵⁵ Ussher’s friend, Royalist John Selden, bought the works and returned them to Ussher.¹⁵⁶ Following the beheading of Charles I, Oliver Cromwell became the Lord Protector, setting into motion the Parliamentary Republic. Given his Royalist ties, Ussher lost his money and property aside from his books. Ussher bequeathed the collection to his daughter who sold it to Oliver Cromwell.¹⁵⁷ After several decades of negotiation, the books finally made their way to Trinity, where they still reside.

Catalogs of these works provide another layer to Ussher’s beliefs and how such beliefs will then physically manifest on the Trinity College campus. Ussher prioritized scientific works considered Puritan in nature, like William Fulke and Robert Recorde.¹⁵⁸ They additionally selected works that fell in line with Ramist teachings, like the work of Omer Talon.¹⁵⁹ Both Challonner and Ussher mirrored a “‘Puritan’ style college library,” collecting the body of knowledge that would provide the intellectual foundation of Trinity College for decades to come.¹⁶⁰

One of the few biographies of James Ussher, developed from Ussher’s own personal archive and shaped by the circumstances of the War of the Three Kingdoms, is that of Richard Parr (1617-1691), entitled *The Life and Death of the Most Reverend Father in God: Dr. James*

¹⁵⁴ John Aikin. *The lives of John Selden, Esq. and Archbishop Usher : with notices of the principal English men of letters with whom they were connected.* (London: Printed for Mathews and Leigh, by Harrison & Leigh, 1812), 265; Ford. *James Ussher*, 40.

¹⁵⁵ Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 25.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 25.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 27.

¹⁵⁸ Elizabethanne Boran. “The libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, 1595-1608,” *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation.* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 85.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 86-87.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 115.

Usher, Late Lord Arch-Bishop of Armagh and Primate and metropolitan of all Ireland (1686).¹⁶¹ Richard Parr was a close friend, confidant, and chaplain to Ussher, owing much of his career advancement to their relationship.¹⁶² Written in 1686, this source mobilizes and manipulates the history of Ussher within the context of the War of the Three Kingdoms and the following conflict. At the point Parr is writing, Cromwell has died, replaced by Charles II and then his Catholic brother James II. With the threat of deposition on the horizon, Parr separates Ussher from Puritan movements and Catholic faith, effectively redefining his life and many of those connected to him (including himself). As a good Anglican, Parr wanted Ussher to appear moderate but as an opponent of James II, he highlighted Ussher's anti-Catholic beliefs. In fact, because James II was on the throne at the time of its publication, royal censors required Parr to eliminate some of the anti-Catholic passages.¹⁶³ The work is framed with an opening biography coupled with a series of letters written by Ussher and his peers. Prior to each letter, Parr provides a short description, particularly cutting any ties readers may assume between Ussher and both Puritanism and Catholicism.

On education, Parr describes that Ussher focused on learning all books, including those of the Church of Rome. He insists that Ussher "was able to dispute with any of the Popish Priests, as he did often with the Prime of them."¹⁶⁴ In fact, many Catholic religious leaders, like Bishop David Rothe of Ossory and the Franciscan provincial Francis O'Mahony, feared being directly tied to Ussher.¹⁶⁵ Instead, when receiving correspondence from Ussher, they would use

¹⁶¹ Parr, *The Life of the most Reverend Father in God, James Usher*.

¹⁶² James B. Leslie. *Armagh clergy and parishes : being an account of the clergy of the Church of Ireland in the Diocese of Armagh, from the earliest period, with historical notices of the several parishes, churches, &c.* (Dunbalk: W. Tempest, 1911).

¹⁶³ Ford. *James Ussher*, 5.

¹⁶⁴ Parr, *The Life of the most Reverend Father in God, James Usher*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Bernadette Cunninham and Raymond Gillespie. "James Ussher and His Irish Manuscripts." *Studia Hibernica*, no. 33 (2004), 82-84.

intermediaries to provide information about manuscripts at the Vatican and other such spiritual questions. Beyond correspondence, Ussher turned to the Church of Ireland to answer many of his spiritual questions, utilizing texts like the Book of Armagh (ninth century document on St. Patrick with a near complete copy of the New Testament) and the Register of Clogher (documents of the early Clogher diocese). Such learning functioned as a critical aspect of Ussher's ability to reform the Church of Ireland. He used his knowledge to help others commit to the Church, what Parr called "the study of gaining Souls."¹⁶⁶

Another component of Ussher's efforts in asserting the strength of the Church of England was through debating Catholic leaders. In describing a debate between Ussher and Henry Fitzsimmons, a Jesuit priest held at the Castle of Dublin for religious treason, Parr writes:

But it seems that after one or two Conferences the Jesuite had enough of it; for though he deposed him at first, yet he did not care to have any more to do with him; for, after the second Conference, this boasting Goliath declined the Combate with this stripling; and not without cause, for he had felt the quickness of his Wit, the strength of his Arguments, and the skill in Disputation; so that this Jesuite quickly left the Field.¹⁶⁷

Much of this, Parr argues, was taught by Trinity College, as Ussher worked hard to be both well-read and well-educated from his Bachelor of the Arts. His perspective on the proper means of dealing with the "Popish Problem" is perhaps a glimmer of what Trinity hoped all its students would thus foster, as Ussher was their first student.

In fact, Parr describes that Puritans in Ireland hoped Ussher would adopt Puritanism, recognizing his intellectual capabilities and prestige would bolster their movement. As Parr claims, Ussher was "thus remarkable for Piety and Learning," but "he could not escape the Fate of extraordinary men:" "Envy and Detraction."¹⁶⁸ The document sought to instead vindicate the

¹⁶⁶ Parr, *The Life of the most Reverend Father in God, James Usher*, 8.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 6.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 15.

Primate “from these unjust accusations of his differing from the Church of England.”¹⁶⁹ Thus, with the publication of the biography, Parr attempted to use Ussher as proof of the loyalty of the Church of Ireland. With Ussher’s position as Primate of All Ireland at the time of his death, he represented the Church’s values. Parr manipulated his history with the political intentions of disparaging Catholicism and Puritanism while simultaneously uplifting the Church of Ireland.

II. William Laud (1573-1645): An Arminian Shift in Trinity’s History

William Laud presents a new layer to the settler colonial narrative as an individual structuring and shaping a settler colonial institution without becoming a settler himself. Perhaps more well-known as Archbishop of Canterbury, Laud became involved with Irish religious development in the 1620’s and served as the Chancellor of Trinity College from 1633 until his death in 1645. Working through the 1st Earl of Strafford, Thomas Wentworth, Laud transformed Ireland into a testing ground for Arminianism.¹⁷⁰ His work in education and universities began with Oxford, where he took the position of chancellor.¹⁷¹ There and again later at Cambridge, he rewrote statutes, oversaw discipline, among much else.¹⁷²

Laud’s role at Trinity began prior to his appointment as chancellor. Following the reign of James I, the English privy council warned the Trinity fellows against choosing their own provost without the Crown’s approval.¹⁷³ The fellows began appealing to Laud to preserve this freedom. Instead, Laud advised Charles I on who to put in the position rather than granting Trinity independence.¹⁷⁴ James Ussher advocated for his cousin, Robert Ussher, for provost.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 79.

¹⁷⁰ Alan Ford. “‘That Bugbear Arminianism’: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin,” *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 135-136; Alan Ford. “Correspondence between Archbishops Ussher and Laud.” *Archivium Hibernicum* 46 (1991), 5-6.

¹⁷¹ Ford, “‘That Bugbear Arminianism’: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin,” 136.

¹⁷² Ibid. 136.

¹⁷³ Ibid. 140.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. 140.

When writing to James Ussher on the matter, he wrote: “I heartily love the Freedoms granted by the Charter, and would have them maintained.”¹⁷⁵ Shortly after, Laud had Robert Ussher appointed to the position of provost. However, his position was short-lived, as Robert Ussher resigned following his appointment as Archdeacon of Meath.

When reluctantly agreeing to the position of chancellor on September 14, 1633, Laud demanded that he be given the freedom to revise the College, which he claimed had ““been as ill governed as any college in Christendom, or worse.””¹⁷⁶ As William Holden Hutton observed in 1913, Laud chose to reform Trinity College under the Oxford model, one he had attempted just a few years earlier.¹⁷⁷ The English government had become increasingly concerned that both the Church of Ireland and its university were a “puritan breeding ground,” particularly following a long string of Puritan provosts.¹⁷⁸ His goal was to solidify Arminianism within Trinity College.

During his time as Chancellor, he rarely visited Ireland, distinguishing him from many of the foundational Trinity College figures. Interestingly, it seems that his continued proximity to the Crown made him most deeply connected to Charles I’s goals (though not the foundational goals written in the Elizabethan Charter). Under the definitions within settler colonial theory, Laud is not a settler within Ireland. However, through his decisions at Trinity College, it is clear that he advocates for settler colonial practices, at least his own form of such practices.

¹⁷⁵ William Laud. “Letter CXLII: A Letter from the Right Reverend William Laud Bishop of London, to the most Reverend James Usher Arch-bishop of Armagh,” *The life of the most reverend father in god, james usher, late lord arch-bishop of armagh, primate and metropolitan of all ireland with a collection of three hundred letters between the said lord primate and most of the eminentest persons for piety and learning in his time ... / collected and published from original copies under their own hands.* (London: Printed for Nathanael Ranew, 1686), 409.

¹⁷⁶ William Laud cited in: McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 13.

¹⁷⁷ William Holden Hutton. *William Laud*. (London: Methuen & Co, LTD, 1913). 166.

¹⁷⁸ Ford, *James Ussher*, 50; Ford, ““That Bugbear Arminianism’: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin,” 138.

On May 25, 1637, Laud presented a new charter to Charles I, one in which reformulated from the founding goals of the university.¹⁷⁹ His initial changes included: installing a new Provost (William Chappell, former fellow at Christ's College and John Milton's tutor), revising initial statutes, and the surrender of the Elizabethan charter to be replaced with a new charter and new statutes.¹⁸⁰ With the appointment of Chappell, Laud attempted to expand the power of the provost.¹⁸¹ He began by pursuing a detailed enquiry into Trinity's policies, students, and staff.¹⁸² This resulted in the ultimate removal of some of those individuals, particularly those aligned with Puritanism, who were then replaced with scholars from English universities.¹⁸³ William Chappell, in particular, focused on adding his peers from Cambridge in order to gain more control of the college.¹⁸⁴

Hoping to align the college with Arminianism, Laud focused his attention on religious life at Trinity. In describing his religious goals in Ireland, Laud wrote:

“I am most confident that... since the Reformation there was never any deputy in that kingdom intended the good of the Church so much as your lordship doth.”¹⁸⁵

Laud had substantial freedom in determining the religious policies in Ireland and more specifically, Trinity College.¹⁸⁶ Working alongside Wentworth, he banned the Irish prayer book in favor of the English prayer book, rewrote Trinity statutes, and implemented various policies in line with Arminianism.¹⁸⁷

¹⁷⁹ “Charter of Charles I.” (1637), <https://www.tcd.ie/Secretary/assets/pdf/Charter%20of%20Charles%20I%20-%201637.pdf>.

¹⁸⁰ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 14.

¹⁸¹ Ford, “‘That Bugbear Arminianism’: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin,” 148.

¹⁸² Ford, *James Ussher*, 50.

¹⁸³ Ford, “‘That Bugbear Arminianism’: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin,” 142.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 143.

¹⁸⁵ Hutton, *William Laud*, 169.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.* 151.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 149.

The reforms to the education system itself were also included into Laud's overhaul of Trinity. Within the teachings at Trinity, Laud believed Peter Ramus, the inspiration for much of the teaching at Trinity College, stood for Puritanism rather than the Church of England. Laud thus deemed his methodology dangerous. As such, Trinity took a step towards Aristotelian teachings, and Fellows were made to lecture more often in Greek.¹⁸⁸ Under Laud, there is a clear narrowing of the definition of Protestant to exclude the Puritans that had dominated the university for the previous decades. He also expanded beyond just fellows in divinity to add two fellows: one in medicine and the other law.¹⁸⁹

An entry in the Register praised Laud for having:

Gratiously reformed the students, happily promoted new Statutes and rich amplifying of the buildings ... and wonderfully increased the College Plate and stocke, reduced all things into a blessed order, and faithfully governed by the space of sixe yeares as a glorious pattern of sobriety, justice, and godlyness.¹⁹⁰

This document points to the fact that Laud provided greater stability to the university. Having faced decades of uncertainty and financial instability, suddenly, with Laud's reforms, the university was once more put on track and though brief, was supported more heavily by the Crown.

A few years after his appointment to the position of chancellor, Laud, like Charles I, was ultimately accused of treason through his Arminianist practices, which many believed led straight to Rome. The Irish parliament claimed William Chappell had "subverted the ancient foundation" of Trinity College.¹⁹¹ As Sir William Boswell wrote to William Laud in 1640:

¹⁸⁸ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 15.

¹⁸⁹ Ford, "That Bugbear Arminianism': Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin," 149.

¹⁹⁰ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 16.

¹⁹¹ Ford, "That Bugbear Arminianism': Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin," 154-155.

“they esteem our Clergy little better than Papists.”¹⁹² This conflict resulted in the War of the Three Kingdoms, leading to the ultimate establishment of the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell.

In a letter written four years before his death, an anonymous writer reflects on Laud’s career:

“Therefore in uncontrolled pride you reign’d
Virtue oppos’d, all vices you maintain’d ;
Which made men thinke you had an itching hope
To be some Cardinall or little Pope”¹⁹³

On January 10, 1645, William Laud was beheaded on Tower Hill after accusations of treason by the Long Parliament (1640-1660). Such was how the career of William Laud was constructed, one in which the fear of Catholicism rose, and it seemed Rome entered England’s borders. This does not discount his impact on Trinity, but instead, highlights the societal changes that led to the War of the Three Kingdoms. What will happen to Trinity following these contentious periods will be explored in Chapter Two.

Conclusion

Trinity's origins in the 1590s to the beginnings of the War of the Three Kingdoms (1642-1651) was a marked shift in the practice of settler colonialism at the hands of the English Crown in Dublin and Ireland. The English Crown was facing the questions of the disloyal Old English, religious division, and political uprisings. The solutions were divided: were the Irish, including

¹⁹² Sir William Boswell. “Letter XVII. A Letter from Sir William Boswell, to the most Reverend William Laud late Arch-bishop of Canterbury, remaining with Sir Robert Cotton’s choice Papers,” *The Life of the most Reverend Father in God, James Usher*, 27.

¹⁹³ *Mercuries Message, Or the Coppy of a Letter Sent to William Laud Late Archbishop of Canterbury, Now Prisoner in the Tower* 1641. London, s.n.].

the dangerous, ever-present Old English, just a lost cause or could they be reformed and rehabilitated?

Trinity College was a manifestation of the possibilities of reforming the Irish people. Through a combination of conversion efforts and planting of Trinity scholars throughout Ireland, the Irish Catholics could become the ideal loyal and stable subject. James Ussher and William Laud provide a glimpse of the ideological foundations of the university. Each played a notable role in these years, determining the intellectual landscape that would trickle into the centuries to come. The next two chapters will explore how Trinity College continued to develop, as it became increasingly integrated on the world stage and faced greater instability at home.

Chapter Two

Trinity College and the World: Navigating the Threat of Revolution

Historians coined the term “long eighteenth century” to describe the period of British history from the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.¹⁹⁴ It is simultaneously a period of revolution and globalization, subjugation and empowerment, change and status quo. Populations grew, emigration bloomed, and the British empire (a commonly accepted term by the nineteenth century) expanded.¹⁹⁵ Simultaneously, questions of authority within Empire emerged, particularly between the Crown and Parliament.

Through this chapter, I examine the long eighteenth century in the lens of Trinity College, Dublin and its scholars. I begin by continuing the story from Chapter One at the conclusion of the War of the Three Kingdoms. I then examine the following three former Trinity College students: William Molyneux, Edmund Burke, and Theobald Wolfe Tone. Each of these provide an additional layer to the overarching narrative of Trinity College and the emerging identity of the “Anglo-Irish.” The difficulties of such an ambiguous space only increased with the globalization of both Ireland and England. As will become clear, a university cannot contain its production and the people. The chapter will conclude in 1801 with the failed Act of Union.

On the institutional level, I argue that Dublin’s increased globalization in the face of revolutions, namely the French and American Revolutions, highlighted that Trinity College continued to occupy an ambiguous space, unable to produce a single imperial or national identity. Unlike the expectations that manifested in the early charters of Trinity College, Trinity

¹⁹⁴ P.J. Marshall. “Introduction,” *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume II: The Eighteenth Century*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

was not an isolated institution, able to operate outside the limitations and restraints of the historical moment. Instead, for its own survival, Trinity had to evolve while facing its own internal divisions and difficulties.

The second part of this argument examines the intellectual thought of former Trinity students. These chosen scholars provide an examination into the distinct kinds of settlers each producing different ideas about empire. Some produce criticisms of the very institutions and positions they occupy. For each of these subjects, I ask how they viewed themselves, how they viewed the British Empire, and how they conceived of Ireland's relationship to the British Empire to provide proof of the diversity of thought and its subsequent threat to colonial unification during the long eighteenth century.

Trinity College at the End of the War of the Three Kingdoms: “The Dreadful Cromwellian Episode”¹⁹⁶

Like all of Ireland, Trinity College, Dublin was shaken by the War of the Three Kingdoms (1642-1651).¹⁹⁷ The College lands and its positions fell into “rebel” hands, the supporters of the English Parliament over the Crown.¹⁹⁸ Soon after, the king of England, Charles I was executed, and the Commonwealth of England was created. Given this new reality, Trinity College experienced internal massive shifts. In 1649, the English Parliament passed an act for the “better advancement of the Gospel and learning in Ireland.”¹⁹⁹ In it, the English hoped to both “set[tle] and main[tain]...the Colledge” referring to Trinity College, and establish another

¹⁹⁶ P.W. Joyce cited in: John Cunningham. “OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE ‘CROMWELLIAN’ SETTLEMENT OF IRELAND.” *The Historical Journal* 53, no. 4 (2010): 919.

¹⁹⁷ Barbara Donagan. “Atrocity, War Crime, and Treason in the English Civil War.” *The American Historical Review* 99, no. 4 (1994), 1137.

¹⁹⁸ R.B. McDowell and D.A. Webb. *Trinity College Dublin: 1592-1952: An academic history*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 17.

¹⁹⁹ England and Wales. 1649. *An Act for the Better Advancement of the Gospel and Learning in Ireland* London, Printed by Edward Husband and John Field.

university in Dublin.²⁰⁰ The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was granted the authority to execute “rules, directions, statutes, ordinances, and instructions” with the approval and confirmation from the English Parliament.²⁰¹

Mirroring the political uncertainty in England and within the greater Irish landscape, Trinity itself had rapid turnover in several university positions, particularly chancellor and provost. In continuation with the 1649 act, in 1651, the English government chose a new provost for the College by the Lord Protector of England, Oliver Cromwell: Samuel Winter. Winter was a graduate of Emmanuel College, “the main nursery of Puritanism in Cambridge” and an English native.²⁰² The nominee Winter traveled to Ireland with the English commission,²⁰³ as Trinity was “left destitute by the Fellows and Students and thereby brought almost to ruine.”²⁰⁴ Some of the former Fellows returned, and the English continued to appoint many new Fellows and Professors.²⁰⁵

Rather than becoming chancellor following the removal and ultimate execution of Archbishop Laud, the Marquess of Ormonde, James Butler, fled with the “exiled court of Charles II.”²⁰⁶ Henry Cromwell, the son of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, took the position in 1654.²⁰⁷ One of his earliest allies was the provost himself who led the Cromwellian party in Ireland.²⁰⁸ However, most within Trinity College were “prepared to tolerate the rule of

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 728.

²⁰¹ Ibid. 730.

²⁰² McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 17.

²⁰³ J.W. *The Life and Death of the Eminently Learned, Pious, and Painful Minister of the Gospel, Dr. Samuel Winter, Sometime Provest of Trinity Colledge Near Dublin in Ireland Together with some Rare Examples of Gods Gracious Answers to His Prayers, upon several Occasions* (London: Printed for Tho. Parkhurst, 1671), 8.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. 10.

²⁰⁵ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 18.

²⁰⁶ T.C. Barnard. “Trinity at Charles II’s Restoration in 1660: A LOYAL ADDRESS.” *Hermathena*, no. 109 (1969), 44.

²⁰⁷ Ibid. 44.

²⁰⁸ T.C. Barnard. “Planters and Policies in Cromwellian Ireland.” *Past & Present*, no. 61 (1973), 31.

either King or Protector in the knowledge that at such a safe distance from the seat of power the principles of neither would be applied with remorseless rigour, and that their consciences would have at least a little freedom for manoeuvre.”²⁰⁹ An anonymous writer posed in an obituary for Dr. Samuel Winters: “the Colledge was suddenly replenished with many Religious, and hopeful young men.”²¹⁰

Three years after the English government recalled Henry Cromwell in 1659, Ormonde returned to Ireland, assumed the position of Lord Lieutenant, and took over as chancellor.²¹¹ In 1660, Charles II regained the Crown. As R.B. McDowell writes, “The Restoration marked the beginning of a stable happy relationship between Trinity, the state, and the established church, which lasted...for two hundred years.”²¹² The College then made a sharp transition to Anglicanism, one that would last the next two centuries, at least in theory.

In an address before Trinity College, Ormonde states: “We have great cause for rejoyceing thereat, being fully assured that the sad and perishing Condition of o[u]r University & Colledge will be taken into yo[u]r Ex[c]ellencies most prudent care and consideration.”²¹³ Notable accusations were made against the “late Pretended Provost,” Samuel Winter as well as “allegations that loyalists had been excluded from office during the decade.”²¹⁴

When James II, brother to Charles II, came to power in 1685 with his open toleration of Catholics, many Protestants at Trinity feared a return to Catholic rule. The King involved himself in the affairs of the College through the attempted appointment of Arthur Greene to lectureship

²⁰⁹ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 18.

²¹⁰ W., J. *The Life and Death of the Eminently Learned, Pious, and Painful Minister of the Gospel, Dr. Samuel Winter*, 11.

²¹¹ Barnard, “Trinity at Charles II’s Restoration in 1660,” 44; Andrew Carpenter. “A COLLECTION OF VERSE PRESENTED TO JAMES BUTLER, FIRST DUKE OF ORMONDE.” *The Yale University Library Gazette* 75, no. 1/2 (2000), 65.

²¹² R. B. McDowell. “Trinity College Dublin and Politics.” (Hermathena, 1992). 117.

²¹³ Barnard, “Trinity at Charles II’s Restoration in 1660,” 48.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.* 45, 48.

with a supposed stipend and the admission of Bernard Doyle to a vacant Fellowship, both of whom had Catholic ties.²¹⁵ The former failed, but the latter presented a threat to the university's unity with his refusal to take the Fellow's oath.²¹⁶

In 1688, following the removal of James II, the duke of Ormonde, then chancellor of Trinity, was one of the first to swear allegiance to William III and Mary.²¹⁷ Ireland, however, remained under the control of James II's Lord Lieutenant with James II later arriving in Dublin in March 1689.²¹⁸ Although some of the fellows waited on James II upon his arrival, the college continued to protest against the establishment of additional fellows by James II and smuggled many treasures to England.²¹⁹ When William III finally extended his power to Ireland, many Irish protestants viewed him as a "providential deliverer" from their experiences under Irish Jacobitism.²²⁰

The Long Eighteenth Century and the Reformation of Trinity College

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the divisions of the previous decades lingered as disputes between Whigs and Tories increased. The Whigs believed that the Tories aligned themselves with the Jacobites, or those who supported James II of England. Although a minority among Irish Protestants, Jacobites still presented a threat to the internal stability within Ireland.²²¹ The Whigs aligned with the Dissenters (heirs of the Puritans), the Church of England, and Parliament, proof of the continuation and development of the past divisions. The College

²¹⁵ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 28.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.* 28.

²¹⁷ McDowell, "Trinity College Dublin and Politics," 117.

²¹⁸ J.C. Beckett. "The Government and the Church of Ireland under William III and Anne." *Irish Historical Studies* 2, no. 7 (1941), 280.

²¹⁹ McDowell, "Trinity College Dublin and Politics," 118.

²²⁰ McDowell, "Trinity College Dublin and Politics," 118; Beckett. "The Government and the Church of Ireland under William III and Anne," 280-282.

²²¹ Ian Campbell Ross. "Was Berkeley a Jacobite? Passive Obedience Revisited." *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an Dá Chultúr* 20 (2005), 18.

readily welcomed the Whigs but was challenged by the notion that even moderate Tories aligned themselves with the Catholics supporters of James II.²²²

In fact, a Scottish man named Edward Forbes who was to receive his M.A. from Trinity College declined to drink to the memory of King William III at a supper before conferring degrees.²²³ The Board of Trinity College then expelled Forbes, and the Senate deprived him of all degrees.²²⁴ It is important to note, however, that the Senate was not in full agreement. However, the vote was ultimately divided by 76 votes to 6.²²⁵ Similar acts occurred over the following years, including “the wrenching of the baton from the hand of King William’s statue in College Green.”²²⁶

Archbishop William King was horrified to see Trinity College, which he “regarded as ‘a seminary of divines to supply the Church of Ireland,’ becoming ‘a nest of Jacobites.’”²²⁷ With a Jacobite rebellion beginning in September 1715 in Scotland, the government in London strengthened the army in Ireland.²²⁸ Simultaneously, in March of 1716, the College Board elected George, Prince of Wales, to the position of chancellor to replace Ormonde. The eighteenth century also began a succession of new provosts: Richard Baldwin (1717-58), Francis Andrews (1758-74), and John Hely-Hutchinson (1774-94).²²⁹ Each will provide further proof of the institutional evolution of Trinity College in response to internal and external threats and leaders with new visions for the university.

²²² McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 33.

²²³ *Ibid.* 33.

²²⁴ *Ibid.* 33.

²²⁵ McDowell, “Trinity College Dublin and Politics,” 118.

²²⁶ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 34.

²²⁷ McDowell, “Trinity College Dublin and Politics,” 120.

²²⁸ Ross, “Was Berkeley a Jacobite?,” 17.

²²⁹ The years mark their time as provosts.

Baldwin graduated from Trinity College in 1689. At this point, he fled to England due to the Jacobite occupation of the College.²³⁰ As a staunch Whig and Protestant, this moment was transformative for Baldwin's career, dedicating himself to "uphold the principles of the Revolution, to crush the Jacobites wherever they appear, and to use the College, whatever his colleagues might think, as an instrument to assist in this aim."²³¹ His commitment extended beyond the end of his life, bequeathing his entire fortune and land to his alma mater.²³²

Provost Andrews' time in his position was limited. Yet, he was foundational in globalizing Trinity College. His confidence and leadership transformed the College, pulling it "out of its rather fusty obscurity into the world of Society."²³³ By society, it seems that Provost Andrews envisioned ways in which Trinity College students and fellows could enter the global academic arena and be viewed as equals. Although his focus was more on socialization than perhaps scholarship, he continued pushing the College towards greater success by Andrews' globalization model.

Soon after his death, John Hely-Hutchinson took the position as Provost. Considered an unexpected pick to the position, having little involvement in academic life, Hely-Hutchinson was a married layman, lawyer, and Member of the House of Lords and the Irish House of Commons. It was particularly unprecedented given that no other Provost had been married. As historian Thomas J. Westropp writes, it was "to the great anger of the Fellows of T.C.D." that Hutchinson was appointed Provost, "although he was a layman."²³⁴

²³⁰ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 37.

²³¹ *Ibid.* 37.

²³² Claire Gogarty. "Building Finances of Trinity College, Dublin, in the Early Eighteenth Century." *Dublin Historical Record* 50, no. 1 (1997), 73.

²³³ *Ibid.* 52.

²³⁴ Thomas J. Westropp. "A Glimpse of Trinity College, Dublin, under Provost Hely Hutchinson. (From Original Letters)." *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* 8, no. 75 (1888): 400.

Despite his efforts to modernize the College with new courses and procedures, he was still, however, considered power-hungry and both harsh and arbitrary towards those under his power, resulting in much criticism.²³⁵ In fact, much of his time as Provost was spent in “open or thinly disguised civil war.”²³⁶ In a letter on April 27, 1791 to express his frustration over changes in the faculty, Dublin barrister George Stacpoole wrote the following:

A long advertisement appeared in the *Dublin Evening Post*, setting forth the extraordinary conduct of the Provost, who, in addition to his other manifold breaches of the statutes, has assumed to himself the power of transferring lands to any Fellow he pleases.²³⁷

Hutchinson also went before the College Board on numerous occasions to challenge the education system of Trinity College.²³⁸ He asserted that the standard for classical teaching was far inferior to the teachings of the sciences, a claim that was quickly debunked by the Fellows.²³⁹ All of these conflicts were never resolved though it is symbolic of the disagreements that formed the bulk of Hutchinson’s time as provost.

Interestingly, in 1793, the legislation barring many Catholics from positions of authority in the College was abolished.²⁴⁰ Provostship and Fellowships were still barred to Catholics but all oaths and declarations for graduates (notably those that denied transubstantiation) were removed. The ones that remained were oaths of allegiance to the Crown and the repudiation of the rights of the Stuarts (referring to the House of Stuart which included James I through Queen

²³⁵ McDowell and Webb, *Trinity College Dublin*, 55.

²³⁶ *Ibid.* 56.

²³⁷ Westropp, “A Glimpse of Trinity College, Dublin,” 403.

²³⁸ WILLIAM BEDELL STANFORD. “CLASSICAL STUDIES IN TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, SINCE THE FOUNDATION.” *Hermathena*, no. 57 (1941): 8.

²³⁹ *Ibid.* 8.

²⁴⁰ D. A. Webb. “Religious Controversy and Harmony at Trinity College Dublin over Four Centuries.” (*Hermathena*, 1992) 101.

Anne).²⁴¹ Regardless, divisions on the admittance of Catholics continued for the following decades.

The 1790s was also filled with a surge of radicalism within the College. The United Irishmen, formed in the wake of the French Revolution to challenge English authority and advocate for Irish representation, met regularly on campus.²⁴² One party of the members led to chants such as ““Citizen Bonaparte”” and ““Long live the Republic,”” leading to the expulsion of several undergraduates.²⁴³ Similar expulsions continued throughout the period.

Trinity College Scholars On Empire

To examine the ways in which former Trinity College students reckoned with the period, particularly the revolutions in France and America, I will examine three scholars: William Molyneux, Edmund Burke, and Theobald Wolfe Tone. The scholarship emerging from former Trinity students highlights the many layers of the kinds of settlers. In fact, some of the former Trinity students presented potent critiques of empire and profound support for the Irish. Thus, through examining these scholars, I provide proof of the ideological and intellectual struggle as Trinity’s scholars encountered the world.

William Molyneux (1656-1698): An Appropriated Revolutionary

As indicated by Molyneux’s death date, William Molyneux was writing prior to the Age of Revolution. Yet, his most famous work, *The case of Ireland’s being bound by acts of parliament in England, stated*, was republished throughout the eighteenth century, mirroring moments of increased social unrest within Ireland.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ Ibid. 101.

²⁴² McDowell, “Trinity College Dublin and Politics,” 124.

²⁴³ Ibid. 124.

²⁴⁴ J.G. Simms. *Colonial Nationalism: 1698-1776*. (Cork: Mercier Press, 1976), 9.

Grandson to Adam Loftus, Molyneux began at Trinity College, Dublin in 1671 at barely 15, where he “conceived a great dislike for the traditional courses of study, such as Mathematics and Greek, and developed an interest in the activities of the recently founded Royal Society of London” in 1671.²⁴⁵ He went on to study law at Middle Temple in London for three years, where he produced several tracts that now reside within the Trinity College libraries.²⁴⁶ While in London, he developed an admiration and ultimately, a friendship, with John Locke through his brother, Thomas Molyneux.²⁴⁷ Most of their relationship was based in a series of letters, sixty of which survive to this day, as Locke and Molyneux both discussed their own theories.²⁴⁸ This friendship will be critical in understanding Molyneux’s writings and personal philosophy.

Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, as Jacobite forces took over Dublin, Molyneux and the other Williamites fled from Dublin to London until William III of Orange’s capture of the Crown in 1690.²⁴⁹ Shortly after his return to Dublin, Molyneux entered the political arena. In 1692, Molyneux was elected a member of the Irish parliament, representing University of Dublin (the degree-awarding body of Trinity College) and soon after, published his work *The case of Ireland’s being bound* (1698).²⁵⁰ It is thus Molyneux who, in part, represented Trinity College’s interests, or at least his version of such interests.

The case’s relevance to Trinity College is rooted in how some leading figures of Trinity have viewed their own and more broadly, Ireland’s, relationship to the British empire. With Molyneux, there begins to be a condensing between the Gaelic Irish and the English settlers, an

²⁴⁵ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 19; John Locke. *Correspondence of John Locke*. (Charlottesville: IntelLex Corporation, 2004), 478-479; Patrick Hyde Kelly. “General Introduction,” *The Case of Ireland’s Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated Dublin, 1698*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2018), 3.

²⁴⁶ Locke, *Correspondence of John Locke*, 478-479.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Kelly, “General Introduction,” *The Case of Ireland*, 6.

²⁴⁹ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 21; Kelly, “General Introduction,” *The Case of Ireland*, 4-6.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. 22.

understanding which is critical for his advocacy for Irish rights over that of the mother country. It is thus with this in mind that I will examine this work.

There were two primary focuses to Molyneux's 1698 published work: the appellate case of the bishop of Derry, William King, and the textile issue.²⁵¹ The former was a suit brought by William King against the Irish Society (the London-based companies that were granted property in Ulster under James I) on the issue of land and fishing rights.²⁵² The bishop had appealed his case to the Irish house of lords, which found in his favor.²⁵³ It was then appealed by the Irish Society who found that the "Irish decision was coram non iudice" or that the Irish house of lords had no appellate jurisdiction.²⁵⁴

The latter was related to Irish textiles. As dictated in 1660, Ireland was forbidden to export wool from Ireland except under licenses that were restricted to English ports. As compensation, Ireland was encouraged to develop the manufacture of linen, a material that was much less lucrative.²⁵⁵ In the 1690s, Ireland had expanded its manufacturing of "new draperies," which created opposition to those in England who feared the new competition.²⁵⁶ A lobby was formed, led by Bristol merchant John Cary (1649-1722), to press the English parliament to fight against their exportation.²⁵⁷ Supported and sponsored by Sir Edward Seymour (1632/33-1708) of the House of Commons, a bill was passed to prevent the export of Irish wool.²⁵⁸

²⁵¹ Ian McBride. "The Case of Ireland (1698) in Context: William Molyneux and His Critics." *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature* 118C (2018), 204-205; Kelly, "General Introduction," *The Case of Ireland*, 7-9.

²⁵² McBride, "The Case of Ireland (1698) in Context: William Molyneux and His Critics," 204-205.

²⁵³ "Jurisdiction." Ulster Historical Foundation. <https://www.ancestryireland.com/history-of-the-irish-parliament/background-to-18th-century-ireland/jurisdiction/>.

²⁵⁴ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 26.

²⁵⁵ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 24; Kelly, "General Introduction," *The Case of Ireland*, 7-9.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 24-25.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 25.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 26.

In 1695, Cary wrote “An Essay on the State of England in Relation to its Trade, its Poor, and its Taxes,” responding to the matter in which he claimed Ireland was a colony:

Especially when that Colony sets up a Separate, and not only provides sufficient of both for its self, but by the Overplus, supplies other markets, and thereby lessens its Sales Abroad.²⁵⁹

In essence, Cary argues that Ireland is a colony whose trade must be for the greater profit of the mother country rather than in their own interests.²⁶⁰ He justifies this further with the consideration of keeping such profit “out of the Hands of Foreign Powers and Popish Cut-throats.”²⁶¹ A similar piece, entitled “A letter from a gentleman in the country,” argued that “Ireland is most dangerous to the Trade of England.”²⁶² Each of these point to the anti-Irish sentiment within trade discussions coupled with the perceived inferiority of Ireland as a colony to England.

On September 26, 1696, in a letter to John Locke on the subject, Molyneux said the following: “England most certainly will never let us thrive by the woollen trade; this is their darling mistress and they are jealous of any rival.”²⁶³ He continues with language that distinguishes England as a perceived other: “we” versus “them” and “our” versus “their.”²⁶⁴ Such language plays into the settler colonial distinctions between the mother country and its respective settlers. No longer was Molyneux an English settler but instead considered himself to be Irish. He even talks proudly of Ireland, writing “There is no country with better land...our land is

²⁵⁹ John Cary. *An Essay on the State of England in Relation to its Trade, its Poor, and its Taxes, for Carrying on the Present War Against France* by John Cary, Merchant in Bristoll (Bristol: Printed by W. Bonny for the author, and are to be sold, by Sam. Crouch, and Tim Goodwin, also by Tho. Wall, and Rich. Gravett, 1695), 63.

²⁶⁰ McBride, “The Case of Ireland (1698) in Context: William Molyneux and His Critics,” 204-205.

²⁶¹ Cary, *An Essay on the State of England in Relation to its Trade, its Poor, and its Taxes*, 99.

²⁶² [John Toland], *A letter from a gentleman in the country, to a member of the house of commons, in reference to the votes of the 14th instant* (n. pl., n.d.).

²⁶³ John Locke. *The Works of John Locke Esq; In Three Volumes. The Contents of Which Follow In The Next Leaf. With Alphabetical Tables.* (Arkose Press, 2015), 531.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 531.

cheaper.”²⁶⁵ Each of these statements plays into Molyneux’s personal condensing of settlers into Irish.

Inspired by Locke’s *Two treatises of government*, Molyneux wrote his work on the right to representation and to government by consent. Furthermore, through its publication, Molyneux hoped to address, as he writes, “How far the Parliament of England may think it Reasonable to intermeddle with the Affairs of Ireland, and Bind us up by the Laws made in their House.”²⁶⁶ He wanted to examine the English claim to Irish conquest and legal precedence that granted English control in Ireland.

He goes on in this letter to express the caution with which he handled this subject, even “hav[ing] dedicate[d] it to his majesty” (referring to William III).²⁶⁷ The dedication goes on to preeminently justify the invasion of William III into both England and Ireland and his claim to power. It is, in part, a protective measure against Molyneux’s own persecution. Later, he separates himself from the “Wooll or the Wooll-trade,” “Forfeitures or Grants,” and any “Solicitous” behavior.²⁶⁸ This argumentative strategy helps to eliminate some of the potential ulterior motives that would be used to challenge Molyneux’s argument. He claims: “I am as Free from any Personal Prejudice in this Cause as ‘tis possible to Expect any Man Should be.”²⁶⁹

He begins his argument with a radical appeal to the universal characteristics of all mankind: “for ‘tis the Cause of the whole Race of Adam that I Argue: Liberty seems the Inherent Right of all Mankind.”²⁷⁰ He then connects such religious convictions to the case of Ireland,

²⁶⁵ Ibid. 531.

²⁶⁶ William Molyneux. *The Case of Ireland Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England Stated*. (Dublin: Joseph Ray, 1698), 4.

²⁶⁷ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 29.

²⁶⁸ Molyneux, “Preface to the Reader,” *The Case of Ireland Being Bound*.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid. 3.

most importantly, the “Right, which England may pretend to, for Binding us by their Act of Parliament.”²⁷¹ He then breaks the argument into what he perceives to be the two principles by which England claimed authority in Ireland: “the Imaginary Title of Conquest or Purchase or on Precedents and Matters of Record.”²⁷² It is these characteristics that Molyneux attempts to discredit in his work. He contests the former, the conquest of Ireland, by arguing that Ireland made a peaceful submission to England: “For here we have an Intire and Voluntary Submission of all of the Ecclesiatical and Civil States of Ireland, to King Henry II.”²⁷³ Based on a doctrine from Locke’s writings, Molyneux claims that the Irish were not bound by conquest because of the willingness to be conquered. He complicates this argument with the notion of just and unjust conquest. Just conquest, as Molyneux understands it, is one in which the conquerors have “right on [their] side to Attack a Nation in an Hostile manner; that those who oppose him are in the Wrong.”²⁷⁴ In essence, Molyneux is expressing that it is only those who take up a sword against the conquering kingdom.²⁷⁵

The only group he deems eligible for subjugation on these grounds are the “Ancient Race of the Irish,” those who had not joined Henry II in conquering Ireland.²⁷⁶ He concludes that, because few native Irish still exist, the “Just Conqueror gets no Power, but only over those who have Actually Assisted in that Unjust Force that is used against him.”²⁷⁷ And even those native

²⁷¹ Ibid. 4.

²⁷² Ibid. 4.

²⁷³ Ibid. 13.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. 18.

²⁷⁵ McBride, “The Case of Ireland (1698) in Context: William Molyneux and His Critics,” 208.

²⁷⁶ Molyneux, “Preface to the Reader,” *The Case of Ireland Being Bound*, 19.

²⁷⁷ Ibid. 20.

Irish, Molyneux states, do not inherit the guilt of their fathers.²⁷⁸ In essence, this means the subjugation would not translate beyond the individuals to their estates and posterity.²⁷⁹

Other writers acknowledged the failure of England to distinguish between the three ethnic communities in Ireland: the English, the Irish, and those they termed the “English Irish.”²⁸⁰

Described by Richard Cox in 1698:

They are Englishmen sent over to conquer Ireland, your Countrymen, your Brothers, your Sons, your Relations, your Acquaintances, governed by the same king, the same Laws, of the same Religion, and in the same Interest, and equally engaged in the same common cause of Liberty.²⁸¹

The inability to acknowledge these differences was preserved to be fundamental to the arguments made by thinkers like Richard Cox. In contrast, Molyneux focused on the issue of legislative independence, stemming from Ireland’s placement within the British multiple kingdom.²⁸²

In Molyneux’s discussion on precedent, he enumerates medieval statutes that he believes point to the inability of statute law to come into effect without the approval of the Irish Parliament.²⁸³ Molyneux argued that “it was not until after the Irish rising of 1641 that new laws (that is, other than those declaratory of existing custom) were passed by the English parliament for Ireland.”²⁸⁴ He lists several following 1641 which include: the Adventurers’ Act of 1642 and the Irish Act of Settlement (1662).²⁸⁵ Yet, he claims Irish submission to such legislation was

²⁷⁸ Ibid. 24.

²⁷⁹ Ibid. 26.

²⁸⁰ McBride, “The Case of Ireland (1698) in Context: William Molyneux and His Critics,” 207.

²⁸¹ Sir Richard Cox. *Some Thoughts on the Bill Depending before the Right Honourable the House of Lords for Prohibiting the Exportation of the Woolen Manufactures of Ireland to Foreign Parts, Humbly Offer'd to their Lordships* (Dublin: Joseph Ray, 1698).

²⁸² McBride, “The Case of Ireland (1698) in Context: William Molyneux and His Critics,” 208.

²⁸³ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 32.

²⁸⁴ Ibid. 33.

²⁸⁵ Ibid. 33.

purely voluntary, in that it was in the Irish people's best interest to abide by such laws.²⁸⁶ He continues to state that such submission does not mean that the individual "obtains an Authority over [him] and that ever hereafter [he] must Obey him of Duty."²⁸⁷

It is in this moment Molyneux's connection to Locke becomes clear:

But I shall yet go a little further, and venture to Assert, That the Right of being subject Only to such Laws to which Men give their own Consent, is so inherent to all Mankind, and founded on such Immutable Laws of Nature and Reason, that 'tis not to be Alien'd or Given Up, by any Body of Men whatsoever.²⁸⁸

This quotation is comparable to Locke's notion of consent of the governed based in his *Second treatise of government*, one that will prove to be fundamental to the arguments surrounding the American Revolution. It is an argument rooted in reason and the common rights of man.

He concludes with several final arguments, yet notably one on taxation. He states that "if one Law may be Imposed without Consent, any Other Law whatever may be Imposed on us Without our Consent. This will naturally introduce Taxing us without our Consent."²⁸⁹ He continues to state that taxation without consent is "little better, if at all, than down-right Robbing me," something he then assumes all of the "Free People of England" would abhor.²⁹⁰

Interestingly, as Simms identifies, this case as a whole is not extended to include the Catholic majority, proof of the internal limitations of Molyneux's own argument within the Irish context.²⁹¹

The reaction to this publication was dramatic. In 1698, the book was debated before the House of Commons. They attempted to uncover the scope of the argument, that is how many

²⁸⁶ Molyneux, *The Case of Ireland Being Bound*, 112.

²⁸⁷ Ibid. 112.

²⁸⁸ Ibid. 113.

²⁸⁹ Ibid. 170.

²⁹⁰ Ibid. 170-171.

²⁹¹ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 36.

Irish people approved of Molyneux's logic.²⁹² They were additionally offended by the author's decision to dedicate his work to King William. A committee was established by the House of Commons to write a statement about its contents.²⁹³

In the statement that was then presented to the king, they claim that “‘the bold and pernicious assertions’ of Molyneux” were located within “a wider attempt by some of the king’s ‘subjects of Ireland shak[ing] off their subjection to and dependence on this kingdom.’”²⁹⁴ It was officially declared “‘of dangerous consequence to the crown and people of England by denying the authority of the king and parliament of England to bind the kingdom and people of Ireland.’”²⁹⁵

Based on such a response, many in Ireland feared that Molyneux's work was poorly timed and would result in worse conditions than before. Shortly after its publication, in 1699, the English parliament passed an act banning the export of Irish woolens to the continent and American colonies, a direct challenge to Molyneux's own argument.²⁹⁶ Furthermore, several works were published in response to Molyneux's writings. One, written by English lawyer and writer William Atwood, was titled “The history and reasons of the dependency of Ireland upon the imperial crown of the kingdom of England, rectifying Mr. Molineux's *State of the case of Ireland's being bound by acts of parliament in England*.” He was an additional supporter to the censure of Molyneux's work, arguing that its continued publication weakened the kingdom as a whole, a desire which was never fulfilled.

²⁹² Ibid. 38.

²⁹³ Ibid. 38.

²⁹⁴ Ibid. 39.

²⁹⁵ Ibid. 39.

²⁹⁶ Ibid. 41.

Later nationalist leaders appropriated William Molyneux for other revolutionary purposes. Like was discussed with Richard Parr's use of James Ussher's biography and will be seen in Chapter Three, histories can be mobilized and in this case, they are utilized for revolutionary purposes. The following decades, Molyneux's work was republished several times, uniquely aligning with periods of political unrest. Some of these include 1706, 1719, 1720, 1749, 1770, and 1776, marked by historical events surrounding the publication like the instability within the American colonies. Some contained distinct prefaces like that in 1770 published by John Almon who describes the "cruel treatment" of the Americans (likely penned by Henry Flood).²⁹⁷

Writing on the work, Benjamin Franklin stated:

I send you a late edition of Molyneux's *Case of Ireland* with a new preface, shrewdly written. Our part is warmly taken by the Irish in general, there being in many points a similarity in our cases.²⁹⁸

As such quotations indicate, Molyneux's work had made it across the Atlantic and into the hands of revolutionary leaders further challenging English authority. They also noted the clear similarities between the two cases: a settler colonial class being dominated by the mother country.

The 1776 preface further acknowledged such similarities in stating the following:

[When the British parliament] have attempted to trample the most valuable privileges of one country and threaten to usurp an authority over the liberties of this. The same lust of domination which hath led them to encroach on the constitutional right of our fellow subjects in America may, if their attempt shall succeed, lead them to bind Ireland by their laws in all cases whatsoever.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁷ Patrick Kelly. "William Molyneux and the Spirit of Liberty in Eighteenth-Century Ireland." 137.

²⁹⁸ Simms, *Colonial Nationalism*, 70.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 70.

This edition found its way to the libraries of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.³⁰⁰ It is this shared spirit and this new realization of the similarities between the Irish and American situation that will further promote the liberation of Ireland from English rule. It was not until 1779 that Molyneux's text became distinguished from issues within the American colonies.³⁰¹ Works like *The Alarm* later cited Molyneux's work as the "“manual of Irish liberty.”"³⁰²

Edmund Burke (1729-1797): A Conservative Theorist

Younger than many of his peers, Burke was only fifteen when he entered Trinity College in 1744. By some historians, Burke was known as a defender of Charles Lucas (1713-71), a radical Dublin politician who published many copies of Molyneux's previously discussed work. Irish scholar Justice Samuels claimed Burke was the anonymous author of following four tracts: *A Free Briton's Advice to the Free Citizens of Dublin*, which first appeared in November of 1748.³⁰³ Applying Lockean principles and written in a classic Burke fashion, the pieces described the importance of a government formed by the people. Yet, such claims were made without proof, and very little is known with certainty about Burke's early political life. Others have examined the records of debates, particularly in the Trinity College Historical Society and the *Reformer*, Burke's Trinity journal.

In 1747, Edmund Burke established an early iteration of the Trinity College Historical Society. They met thirty-two times over the course of the year and began to dwindle away. Despite how short-lived it was, historian Patrick Geoghegan claims the club was "“a formative

³⁰⁰ Ibid. 71.

³⁰¹ Patrick Kelly. "William Molyneux and the Spirit of Liberty in Eighteenth-Century Ireland." 141.

³⁰² Ibid. 141.

³⁰³ Gaetano L. Vincitorio. "Edmund Burke and Charles Lucas." PMLA 68, no. 5 (1953), 1048.

experience for Burke as he studied how to construct an argument, defend a position against attack, and think on his feet.”³⁰⁴

They met for the first time on April 21, 1747 at a house on George’s Lane in Dublin, calling themselves “the Academy of Belles Lettres.”³⁰⁵ It later became more commonly known as the Club.³⁰⁶ Its goals, as written in the Club’s rules and laws, were to “provide opportunities for ‘correcting our taste, regulating and enriching our judgment, brightening our wit, and enlarging our judgment.’”³⁰⁷ Interestingly, the first formal debate, held on April 28, 1747, focused on a question that Molyneux attempted to tackle decades before: Irish manufacturing. The year before, on May 8 1746, a law had been passed that restricted discussion of “any question ‘relating to the Gov-ernment of our country which may possibly affect our loyalty.’”³⁰⁸ Despite this, the debate criticized the British government’s treatment of Irish textiles and manufacturing.

It is hard to determine what of such arguments and debates were rooted in the quality of the argument or Burke’s personal beliefs. Yet, notably, when the club broached the subject of Jacobite leniency, Burke was in opposition.³⁰⁹ And, despite its short duration, the Club had a long-lasting impact on Trinity College. Burke himself kept the Minute Book.³¹⁰ In 1770, he passed it along to Professor and Trinity College graduate Michael Kearney to argue for the founding of another student society: the Historical Society.³¹¹

³⁰⁴ Patrick Geoghegan. *Trinity College Dublin: The College Historical Society and Debate: 1770-2020*. (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2020), 1.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 2.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 2.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 2.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 3

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 4.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.* 5.

³¹¹ *Ibid.* 5.

He organized the newspaper called *The Reformer* (ran for thirteen issues) and focused on many literary pursuits.³¹² *The Reformer* was a weekly paper written primarily by Burke beginning in 1748.³¹³ Distinct from writings by radical Charles Lucas, Burke expressed his love of the Catholic faith, having been raised by a Catholic mother.³¹⁴ In the seventh issue of *The Reformer* (March 1748), Burke wrote on the experiences of the “downtrodden,” arguing in favor of lower rents and the development of industry rather than the Irish-focused arguments that Lucas favored.³¹⁵ The eleventh issue focused on religion and what Burke deemed as enemies to religion: “infidelity and blind zeal.”³¹⁶ Regardless, much of his writing in *The Reformer* focused on aesthetics and poetry.³¹⁷

Burke graduated in 1748 at nineteen years old. Following graduation, he enrolled in Middle Temple in London. Following a failed law career, Burke published several satires and philosophy pieces, including *On the Sublime and Beautiful* (an anonymous parody of the work of Henry St. John) and *A Vindication of Natural Society*. Both received very little notice, pushing away the possibilities of a career in literature, a path that began with his time at Trinity.³¹⁸ In 1760, he aided his cousin William Burke in the revisions of *An Account of European Settlements in America*. In it, they admire the American colonies and argue in favor of freedom of trade.³¹⁹ Such convictions will carry through his political and literary career.

³¹² Geoghegan, Trinity College Dublin: The College Historical Society and Debate, 1; Thomas H.D. Mahoney. *Edmund Burke and Ireland*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 5.

³¹³ T.O. McLoughlin. “The Context of Edmund Burke’s ‘The Reformer.’” *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an Dá Chultúr* 2 (1987), 37.

³¹⁴ Vincitorio, “Edmund Burke and Charles Lucas,” 1051.

³¹⁵ Vincitorio, “Edmund Burke and Charles Lucas,” 1051-1052.; Mahoney, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*., 5.

³¹⁶ Mahoney, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*., 6.

³¹⁷ Vincitorio, “Edmund Burke and Charles Lucas,” 1053.

³¹⁸ George Fasel. *Edmund Burke*. (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983). 3.

³¹⁹ Dennis O’Keeffe. *Edmund Burke*. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2009), 4.

Historian George Fasel argues that by the early 1760s, Burke is making a transition towards politics.³²⁰ In 1761, Burke returned to Ireland and first attempted to pass legislation to provide relief for Catholics in Ireland.³²¹ During this year, he wrote *Tract on the Popery Laws* (published after his death). In it, he describes the laws regarding Catholics in Ireland and claims that, because of such policies, “Great Britain...never can draw from that country all the advantages to which the bounty of nature has entitled it.”³²² The laws against the Catholics, according to Burke, creates a society of two classes. From a practical rather than ethical standpoint, the depression of Irish Catholic abilities makes the English unable to reap the full benefits of Ireland.³²³ Appealing to theorists like John Locke and his contemporary, William Molyneux, much of Burke’s argument is rooted in notions of “common rights,” bestowed by human nature.³²⁴

Four years later, Burke resigned from his position as private secretary to Hamilton and returned to London.³²⁵ Influenced by his time at Trinity, Burke started another debate club that met to discuss literary topics, as they deemed political topics too controversial.³²⁶ During the same year, he took a position as the private secretary of the British Whig Statesman and the second Marquis of Rockingham, Charles Watson-Wentworth.³²⁷ Within the next year, Burke entered the House of Commons. However, Burke faced substantial disadvantages upon his entrance into politics. Despite his academic qualifications from Trinity College, the following three factors, his Irish identity, Whig values, and familial Catholic ties, led many to question his

³²⁰ Fasel, *Edmund Burke*, 3.

³²¹ Mahoney, *Edmund Burke and Ireland.*, 12-15.

³²² Edmund Burke. *Tracts Relative to the Laws against Popery in Ireland.* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1881).

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Fasel, *Edmund Burke*, 4; Mahoney, *Edmund Burke and Ireland.*, 26-28.

³²⁶ Mahoney, *Edmund Burke and Ireland.*, 26.

³²⁷ Fasel, *Edmund Burke*, 4.

loyalty.³²⁸ He was able to confer some prestige as a landed gentleman with the purchase of six-hundred-acres of land in 1768.³²⁹

Burke's early political writings in this period were *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770), *Speech on American Taxation* (1774), and *Speech on the Conciliation with America* (1775). Like how Trinity College itself was made to evolve by political circumstance, much of Burke's political writing appeared as reactionary to contemporary events, rather than inspired by "external wisdom."³³⁰ Furthermore, these pieces each highlight the ways in which Burke challenged the English Empire. In the first, he claims that the actions of George III (particularly noting moments of nepotism) violated the constitutional values. The following two argued for leniency and support for the American cause.

Similarly, in a letter to the Duke of Richmond in September 26, 1775 on the topic of Parliamentary support of the American Revolution, Burke wrote:

[Ireland] has the balance of the empire and perhaps its fate for ever, in her hands. If the parliament which is shortly to meet there should interpose a friendly mediation... it is impossible that they should not succeed. If they should only add to this a suspension of extraordinary grants and supplies for troops employed out of the kingdom... they would preserve the whole empire from a ruinous war.³³¹

This was in response to the possibility of the Irish parliament condemning the American rebels and continuing to support the military efforts with the transfer of troops. Burke believed that the rejection of such proposals could bring about a conciliatory policy for the Irish people.

His advocacy for the Catholics of Ireland continued, as he wrote in a 1779 letter: "If I am so happy as to have contributed...to the relief of...the Roman Catholics of Ireland from

³²⁸ Ibid. 5.

³²⁹ Ibid. 5.

³³⁰ Michel Fuchs. *Edmund Burke, Ireland, and the fashioning of self*. (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1996), 1.

³³¹ Edmund Burke. *The works and correspondence the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*. (London: F&J Rivington, 1852), 294-295.

oppressions that I always thought not only very grievous to them, but very impolite to the state, I am more than enough rewarded.”³³² Throughout the letter, Burke argues in favor of legislation that would relieve the Catholics of some of the economic hardship they faced. His Catholic tolerance continues to be fundamental to his political career.

During the 1780s, Burke focused his efforts on British rule in India. Rather than supporting the very colonial projects that Trinity College represented, he notably targeted Warren Hastings, the British Governor General in India.³³³ Burke accused Hastings of misconduct while in Calcutta. Historian Mithi Mukherjee argues that through this trial, Burke challenges notions of colonialism, advocates for the rights of the colonized, and articulates many of his political views that will form the last decade of his life.³³⁴ These notions conflict with Hastings and the imposition of absolute power by European nations. In 1786, Burke put his impeachment before the House of Commons and was successful.³³⁵ Yet, when the decision reached the House of Lords, Hastings’s political connections were impossible to fight.³³⁶

Burke also felt compelled to write about the French Revolution of 1789. The following year, he produced his most influential work, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. The *Reflections* was a letter for French correspondent, Depont, who asked Burke for his thoughts on the French Revolution. In this work, Burke argued against the French Revolution, claiming that it represented the dangerous power of abstract ideals over gradual reform and tradition. He writes:

To give freedom is still more easy. It is not necessary to guide; it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a free government, that is, to temper together these opposite

³³² Ibid. 403–404.

³³³ Fasel, *Edmund Burke*, 8.

³³⁴ Mithi Mukherjee. “Justice, War, and the Imperium: India and Britain in Edmund Burke's Prosecutorial Speeches in the Impeachment Trial of Warren Hastings.” *Law and History Review* 23, no. 3 (2005): 589–630.

³³⁵ Fasel, *Edmund Burke*, 8.

³³⁶ Ibid. 8.

elements of liberty and restraint in one consistent work, requires much thought, deep reflection, a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind. This I do not find in those who take the lead in the National Assembly [referring to the revolutionary assembly formed in 1789 in France].³³⁷

Through this piece, we see Burke as the Revolutionary and the Reformer, the conservative and the radical, each coming into view in how he describes and challenges the French Revolution. It is not necessarily a denial of the roots of the French Revolution, as Burke continues to advocate for the rights of man, but a cautionary tale of unrestrained power, rash rebellion, and unrelenting radicalism. He paints a picture of the French monarchy as lawful, particularly focusing on Marie Antoinette. The rebellion was thus motivated by an obsession with abstract notions of the rights of man that lead to the creation of a “feeble government.”³³⁸

In response to this work, Trinity College granted Burke an honorary degree as the “powerful advocate of the constitution, as the friend of public order and virtue and consequently of happiness of mankind.”³³⁹ Five years later, they requested to hang his portrait in the College.³⁴⁰ These symbolic actions appear as proof of Trinity’s allegiance with the conservative side of Burke’s career, rather than acknowledging the radical early years.

He retired from political life in 1794. In 1796, facing near financial ruin, Burke received a government pension that resolved his struggles. In one of Burke’s last notable works, *A Letter to a Noble Lord*, Burke challenges those who opposed the pension, particularly the Duke of Bedford, because of Burke’s radical views.

Affirming his own views and career, Burke writes the following:

³³⁷ Edmund Burke. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. 1790, <https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3113/burke/revfrance.pdf>, 203.

³³⁸ Ibid. 191.

³³⁹ McDowell, “Trinity College Dublin and Politics,” 121.

³⁴⁰ Ibid. 121.

To be ill-spoken of, in whatever language they speak, by the zealots of the new sect in philosophy and politics, of which these noble persons [referring to the Duke of Bedford] think so charitably, and of which others think so justly, to me, is no matter of uneasiness or surprise. To have incurred the displeasure of the Duke of Orleans or the Duke of Bedford, to fall under the censure of citizen Brissot or of his friend the Earl of Lauderdale, I ought to consider as proofs, not the least satisfactory, that I have produced some part to the effect I proposed by my endeavours.³⁴¹

When Burke died in 1797, he requested to be buried in an anonymous grave out of fears that his remains would be desecrated.³⁴² This burial site has yet to be located.

Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-1798): An Anti-colonial Rebel

Whereas Molyneux was a descendant of the New English elite and Burke a descendant of the Old English, Tone relied on scholarships to attend Trinity College. As historian Henry Boylan writes, “Tone’s background and education in no way foreshadowed his romantic and tragic life.”³⁴³ It is through the lens of Tone’s life that the faults and failures of the institutional construction of the empire become clear.

At an early age, Tone aspired to become a soldier, claiming that: “I thought that an ensign in a marching regiment was the happiest creature living.”³⁴⁴ This was, in part, rooted in his own philogyny: “that a red coat and cockade, with a pair of gold epaulettes would aid me considerably in my approaches to the objects of my adoration [referring to women].”³⁴⁵ Despite his initial inability to pass the Trinity entrance exam, he was persuaded by pressure from his father to retry.³⁴⁶ He then entered Trinity in February of 1781 at the age of seventeen as a pensioner (“those undergraduates who paid fees, but at the lowest level, £15 a year -- made up

³⁴¹ Edmund Burke. *A Letter to a Noble Lord and Other Writings*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

³⁴² Fasel, *Edmund Burke*, 10.

³⁴³ Henry Boylan. *Theobald Wolfe Tone*. (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1981), 1.

³⁴⁴ William Thobald Wolfe Tone. *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*. (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1998), 3.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 3.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 3.

the majority of the student body”).³⁴⁷ Regardless of his financial background, Tone, now wearing the Trinity College gown, was conferred the unique privileges of the elite institution. This included entry into the gallery of the House of Commons.³⁴⁸ Trinity College students were thus not treated as anything less than the elite of society, creating a critical level of detachment.

Despite having won a scholarship in 1784, he was disappointed by his education at Trinity that did not meet his desires to pursue a military career. When his father refused, Tone rebelled, abandoning his studies for a year to read military books.³⁴⁹ These fits of rage pushed Tone’s graduation back to 1786.³⁵⁰

Tone did find success in the Historical Society, founded by Edmund Burke in 1747. There, Tone “won two medals for oratory, a further medal for an historical essay, and was elected Auditor (equivalent to the position of president) in his final year.”³⁵¹ On the club, Tone later wrote: “a most admirable institution, of which I had the honour to be Auditor and also to close the Session with a speech from the Chair – the highest compliment which that Society is used to bestow.”³⁵² Yet, historians who have studied Tone’s arguments concluded that “he showed little or no trace of radical ideas at this time.”³⁵³ It is likely this club, where he met many of his Trinity friends that led him to claim: “I preserve, and ever shall, ... a most sincere affection for the University of Dublin.”³⁵⁴

³⁴⁷ Sean McMahon. *Wolfe Tone*. (Cork: Mercier Press, 2001), 15.

³⁴⁸ Marianne Elliot. *Wolfe Tone*. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 14.

³⁴⁹ Boylan, *Theobald Wolfe Tone*, 5.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 5.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.* 5.

³⁵² George D. Burtchaell. “Theobald Wolfe Tone and the College Historical Society.” *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* 8, no. 75 (1888), 391.

³⁵³ Tone. *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, viii-ix.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.* ix.

His career in law began at Middle Temple in January of 1787. In describing this time, Tone claimed: ““After the first month I never opened a book, nor was I ever three times in Westminster Hall in my life.””³⁵⁵ He hated practicing law, continuing to find avenues and ways to pursue a military career. In fact, in the summer of 1788, Tone prepared a memorial for submission to the Prime Minister on establishing a military colony on the Sandwich (now Hawaiian) Islands.³⁵⁶ This was ignored if not outright rejected by the Prime Minister. When his father wrote to him about the family’s bankruptcy, Tone flew into a fit of rage.³⁵⁷ He decided to enlist in the India Company with his brother, William.³⁵⁸ Yet, the season of enlistment had passed. Tone stated: ““Had it been the month of March instead of September... I should most probably at this hour be carrying a brown musket on the coast of Coromandel.””³⁵⁹ His logic for joining seemed to be rooted in abstract notions of manhood rather than authentic and absolute support for the colonial cause.

Tone decided to return to Dublin, taking a degree of Bachelor of Laws in February of 1789.³⁶⁰ He was called to the Bar the following term and went on the Leinster Circuit.³⁶¹ And, as with was made clear throughout Tone’s life, he again found the law an inadequate vocation: ““the law grew every day more and more disgustful.””³⁶² He then turned to politics.

At this point, the Irish Parliament still restricted Catholics, unable to neither sit in it nor elect members.³⁶³ Furthermore, “234 of the 300 seats were still the personal property of

³⁵⁵ Ibid. 8-9.

³⁵⁶ Ibid. 10.

³⁵⁷ Ibid. 10.

³⁵⁸ Ibid. 10.

³⁵⁹ McMahan, *Wolfe Tone*, 25

³⁶⁰ Boylan, *Theobald Wolfe Tone*, 11.

³⁶¹ Ibid. 11.

³⁶² McMahan, *Wolfe Tone*, 25.

³⁶³ Ibid. 27.

individuals,” thereby further restricting the potential representative nature of the Irish Parliament.³⁶⁴ As Tone could not afford to buy himself into government through a pocket borough, he sought one of the few remaining elected seats.³⁶⁵

He was a member of the Whig party until, following the publication of two radical political pamphlets, he became deemed too radical for the party.³⁶⁶ Although not outright rejecting King George III’s role in Ireland, “he urged that Ireland should spurn the idea of being a satellite and claim its ‘rank among the primary nations of the world.’”³⁶⁷ Such writings appear as a switch in Tone’s career from that of the ideal Irish subject, at least in appearance, to the political radical who actively objected to the English colonial project in Ireland.

Noting the Anglican tithes that Catholics were required to pay among many other notable acts of discrimination, Tone decided that he had to support the Catholic cause. It is during this period that Tone wrote one of his most famous works: *An Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland*, a document he signed as “Northern Whig,” despite his supposed informal removal from the party. In fact, it is this document that deepens many dividing lines between Tone’s own views and the more conservative Whigs.

In it, he opens with questions on why the situation in Ireland is how it is. He states: “The proximate cause of our disgrace is our evil government, the remote one is our own intestine division, which, if once removed, the former will be instantaneously reformed.”³⁶⁸ Because the government is English, Tone argues that it could not possibly authentically represent the interests

³⁶⁴ Ibid. 27.

³⁶⁵ Ibid. 27.

Pocket boroughs were boroughs in which representation was controlled by a person or family.

³⁶⁶ Ibid. 28.

³⁶⁷ Ibid. 28.

³⁶⁸ Theobald Wolfe Tone. *An argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland*. (Belfast: Society of United Irishmen of Belfast, 1791), 8.

of the Irish people of which he considers himself to be. He further claims that only through the allowance of Catholics into the fight for liberation will Ireland be free. He points to the failed Revolution of 1782, in which the Irish won additional legislative victories with still many losses. This is despite arguments from Irish Parliamentary leader and politician Henry Grattan who claimed: “the Irish Protestant should never be free until the Irish Catholic ceased to be a slave [and that] by the charter of toleration those intestine divisions... ceased and with them the domination of Great Britain departed.”³⁶⁹

Launched by the Irish Volunteers, local militias throughout Ireland, the Constitution of 1782 removed the “formal subordination of the Irish to the British Parliament,” found in the Declaratory Act and Poyning’s law.³⁷⁰ Despite these perceived victories, Ireland remained a part of the English empire. The Volunteers even further identified flaws within the English governance of Ireland including unequal representation in Parliament through pocket boroughs, non-resident voters, among much else.³⁷¹ Tone points to the Protestant patriots’ unwillingness to join with the Catholics as the logic behind this failure.

Tone also pointed to the Catholics in his argument stating: “Look at France... where is the intolerance of popish bigotry now? Had not the pope been burned in effigy in Paris? Who would now attend to the ‘rusty and extinguished thunderbolts of the Vatican?’”³⁷² This is an important qualification to Tone’s argument, that the survival of Catholicism did not mean the maintenance of the international Catholic institutions and pope.

³⁶⁹ Thomas Bartlett. *Ireland: A History*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 188.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 188-189.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.* 191.

³⁷² *Ibid.* 208.

Tone's document had a huge impact throughout Ireland. Its publication led to Tone being invited to Belfast, the capital of Presbyterian Ulster.³⁷³ Ulster, at this point, also included Catholics as well as non-Anglican Dissenters. He assisted on the creation of the United Irishmen, "composing its key resolutions" and instigating reforms that included Catholics.³⁷⁴ Yet, ultimately, the Society of United Irishmen was suppressed by government decree. It is, in part, this decision that made Tone leave Ireland. He first went to America in January 1795. In the following year, he left for France, hoping to instigate a French invasion of Ireland.

France recognized that Ireland was England's weak point. Conquering Ireland would be a means of breaking the protective barriers surrounding England. They also realized that the Irish supplied the English with supplies and men for military efforts. Additionally, the Revolutionary French efforts did not stop in Ireland. Many imagined that republics would form in Scotland and England, freeing them from the tyrannical rule of the English Parliament.

Throughout Tone's memoirs, he writes about discussions he had with French military leaders to argue in favor of the French invasion of Ireland. Thus, when writing on what form of government the Irish would want in his declaration to France for help in the revolution, Tone stated:

'Most undoubtedly, a Republic.' He asked again, 'Are you sure?' I said, 'as sure as I can be of any thing: I know nobody in Ireland who thinks of any other system, nor do I believe there is any body who dreams of a monarchy.'³⁷⁵

³⁷³ Ibid. 207.

³⁷⁴ Ibid. 207.

³⁷⁵ Theobald Wolfe Tone. *Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone*. (London: H. Colburn, 1827), 18.

When Tone and the French forces ultimately invaded Ireland, it was a complete failure. The French were unable to evade the British blockade at Bantry Bay and instead were forced to land due to bad weather, an event that came to be known as the 1798.³⁷⁶

In the aftermath, the Irish Parliament passed the Insurrection Act, effectively suspending habeas corpus, establishing the suspect status for arrests, eliminating any oaths, among much else.³⁷⁷ The Parliament attempted to purify their forces through the removal of subversive elements.³⁷⁸ Responding to this new legislative development, the Protestant and agrarian Orange Order and the United Irishmen each challenged the English government. The United Irishmen were targeted by the government's attack as many of its leaders were in prison or had fled the country. Despite this, a French expeditionary force left for Dublin. Though the force was seized, uprisings began outside the capital. Its first form was put down quickly. A few months later, the prospect of French involvement again led to increased hope and involvement. It was shortly put down, and Tone himself was arrested. The rebellion was over, and over ten thousand rebels were killed.³⁷⁹

In a final letter to his letter, Tone wrote: "Be assured that I have died as I have lived, and that you will have no cause to blue for me."³⁸⁰ Theobald Wolfe Tone died on November 19, 1798. It has since been debated whether Tone took his own life or was executed earlier than the scheduled date. According to some reports, after he attempted to shoot his own neck, he claimed, "I am sorry I have been so bad an anatomist."³⁸¹ He died one week later. His son wrote on his death:

³⁷⁶ Bartlett, *Ireland: A History*, 216.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 218.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 219.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 224.

³⁸⁰ Tone, *Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone*, 367.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.* 370.

Stretched on his bloody pallet in a dungeon, the first martyr apostle of Irish union, and most illustrious martyr of Irish independence, counted each lingering hour during the last seven days and nights of his slow and silent agony.³⁸²

As in life, Tone refused to be ruled by the English government, choosing instead to sacrifice his life, becoming “the first martyr apostle of Irish union.”³⁸³

Within the same year, British prime minister William Pitt introduced the Act of Union before Parliament, hoping to resolve decades of divisions between the two regions and bring about political and financial stability.³⁸⁴ Two years later, the Act of Union was signed. Under the act, the Parliament of England, Scotland, and Ireland joined together, creating the United Kingdom.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the institutional failures of Trinity College in maintaining and codifying loyalty through the lens of three scholars: William Molyneux, Edmund Burke, and Theobald Wolfe Tone. During this period, Trinity College continued in its efforts to produce the ideal subject of the English empire and adapt to the ever-changing political landscape. Yet, their ideological indoctrination could only last so long as the scholars moved beyond the university and into political careers. And, in the Age of Revolution, these scholars became embedded into revolutionary ideologies that threatened the very core of Trinity’s foundational teachings. I will continue this discussion in Chapter Three to see how Trinity College conceived of their place within the English empire as they reflected upon their colonial past.

³⁸² Ibid. 370.

³⁸³ Georgina Laragy. “WOLFE TONE AND THE CULTURE OF SUICIDE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY IRELAND.” *History Ireland* 21, no. 6 (2013), 20.

³⁸⁴ Trevor McCavery. “Politics, Public Finance and the British-Irish Act of Union of 1801.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 10 (2000), 353; G. C. Bolton. “Some British Reactions to the Irish Act of Union.” *The Economic History Review* 18, no. 2 (1965), 367.

Chapter Three

Trinity College in the Twentieth Century: Rewriting the College's History

The politician and nationalist leader Kevin O'Shiel, who attended Trinity College from 1909 to 1913, did not think upon his time there fondly. When later writing about his experiences, he recalled that, on each St. Patrick's Day, Trinity students would target Catholics, violently beating them after the Catholic peaceful procession through the city. Not only did this "caus[e] unnecessary bad blood between the city and university," but did much to "make Trinity unpopular with the general populace, despite the number of leaders she gave to the nation."³⁸⁵ For O'Shiel, such incidents embodied Trinity's "fundamental colours," as a conservative anti-nationalist and colonial institution.³⁸⁶

The rise of the Irish Free State, numerous radical political groups, and social upheaval within the Irish borders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries led to great controversies and violence as each competed for their own stake in the reimagining of Ireland. Where, then, did the rise of nationalist sentiment and ultimately an independent Ireland leave an institution like Trinity College – as well as its faculty, students, and administrators – with deep connections to England and the colonial past? What role, in turn, did the college play in shaping those fateful events? And, what happens to the settler colonial identity centuries after their ancestors colonized Ireland?

³⁸⁵ O'Shiel quoted by: Eda Sagara. *Kevin O'Shiel: Tyrone Nationalist and Irish State-Builder*. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2013), 53; Rory Sweetman. *Defending Trinity College Dublin, Easter 1916: Anzacs and the Rising*. (Chicago: Four Courts Press, 2019), 32.

³⁸⁶ Sweetman, *Defending Trinity College*, 32.

I begin with the scholarly defense of Trinity as a settler colonial institution and its students as settlers. To describe the changing relationship of Trinity College administration and scholars to nationalism and the emerging identities, I turn to examine how some Trinity College faculty, administration, and scholars grappled with rewriting the College's own history in light of the transformative events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In particular, I track the emergence in those writings, and others, of a new concept of the "Anglo-Irish," which many of these authors mobilized to defend the institution, its identity, and the colonial enterprise. I end the chapter with a discussion of Trinity as an institution, considering its symbolic presence in Ireland with the rise of nationalist groups and the emergence of the Irish Free State. For many, Trinity still represented the very colonial power they hoped to eradicate.

Through this chapter, I argue that particular histories of Trinity College were deployed by some of the Trinity College administration and scholars in defense of the institution and the identities that were forged by settler colonialism. They repackaged Trinity's past to offer a new way of understanding Trinity's place within the Union, its role within the colonial enterprise, and the students' contribution in Ireland. As they struggled to come to terms with their relationship to Trinity College, Dublin and Trinity's relationship to Ireland, they produced different perspectives on the conflict, some of which did not necessarily align with the College top officials' own views. And, with the creation of the Irish Free State, Trinity as an institution continued to hold the ambiguous position it had for the previous centuries, its physical presence symbolic of a history of colonization but at the same time home to colonial criticisms.

Retelling of Trinity College's and Ireland's History: The Emergence of the Anglo-Irish

In the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, some of Trinity's administration, professors, and scholars began repackaging Trinity College's and Ireland's

history. Within these histories, the term, “Anglo-Irish,” appeared to describe the settler colonial identity from several centuries earlier. Three examples of these works are *The Book of Trinity College, Dublin: 1591-1891* (1892), *College Histories: Trinity College, Dublin* (1902), and *Anglo-Irish Essays* (1917). I bring these sources into conversation with one another to explain how nationalism influenced Trinity College scholarship and history-telling. For the writers I explore, each described themselves as “Anglo-Irish.”

The first work, *The Book of Trinity College, Dublin*, written in 1892, was made in celebration of the tercentenary of Trinity College. The book was completed by a committee appointed by the Provost and Senior Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin with each chapter written by a different member of the university.³⁸⁷ As the introduction of the work describes, “each author is to be regarded as accountable only for his own share of the work.”³⁸⁸ I focus on Rev. J.P. Mahaffy’s chapters on Trinity College’s origins because of the ways in which Mahaffy repackages Trinity’s foundation in alignment with theories of settler colonialism. As described in a Notice of Books published by the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland from 1892, the work was considered “the chief memorial...to mark the completion of the third century since the foundation of Ireland’s greatest seat of learning.”³⁸⁹ Yet, simultaneously, the notice claims “the book unfortunately suffers from the disadvantage of being written by many hands,” as well as rushed publication.³⁹⁰ The writer particularly points to the historical analysis within Mahaffy’s chapters, namely conclusions made about Henry Ussher (uncle to James Ussher), gesturing to oaths that did not actually exist for Fellows, and misreading maps provided by the College.³⁹¹

³⁸⁷ *The Book of Trinity College, Dublin: 1591-1891*. (Belfast: Marcus Ward & Co., Limited, Royal Ulster Works, 1892).

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 2, no. 4 (1892), 448.

³⁹⁰ Ibid. 451.

³⁹¹ Ibid. 453.

Regardless of the historical inaccuracies of Mahaffy's work, it provides a lens for examining how faculty defended Trinity College within the period of ever-increasing nationalism.

The second source, *College Histories: Trinity College, Dublin* (1902), was written eight years after *The Book of Trinity College, Dublin* by Trinity history M. Macneile Dixon. The beginning of the twentieth century at Trinity College was wrought with disagreements over the future of Dublin and, more broadly, Ireland. The dominant political ideology was Irish Home Rule, raising issues of "race" and "empire."³⁹² Even this idea would be reinterpreted by radical groups throughout the following decades. Students struggled to align themselves with the outside forces, at times forming oppositional groups within the walls of Trinity College itself.

Finally, I discuss the *Anglo-Irish Essays* by former Trinity student William Kirkpatrick Magee (also known by his pen name John Eglinton) in conversation with the above works. It is in this work that Magee describes the origin of the Anglo-Irish identity and its importance for Irish culture, particularly literary tradition. Additionally, it expresses his response to the insurgent efforts, notably the Easter Rising, as a former Trinity College student and self-proclaimed Anglo-Irish.

The Emergence of the Anglo-Irish

I never knew till now why it was that, whenever such of your half-Irish as I have seen, came to visit us in England, they appeared to be over-polite, over-conciliating, self-doubting, inferior kind of men. But now I know it. They are tyrants at home under us, and they must be inferiors *from* home, in our presence.³⁹³

The term, "Anglo-Irish," emerged in the nineteenth century to define the volatile group within Ireland that existed outside the bonds of English and Irish identity. Below is a books ngram

³⁹² Hugh Kearney. *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 177.

³⁹³ John Banim. *The Anglo-Irish of the Nineteenth Century: A Novel* (United Kingdom: H. Colburn, 1828), 3.

viewer with the term “anglo-irish.” Although suggestive rather than definitive, it provides a context for the emergence of the term Anglo Irish and its politically charged nature. The term does not appear until mid-1860’s, around the time many of the works are being published.

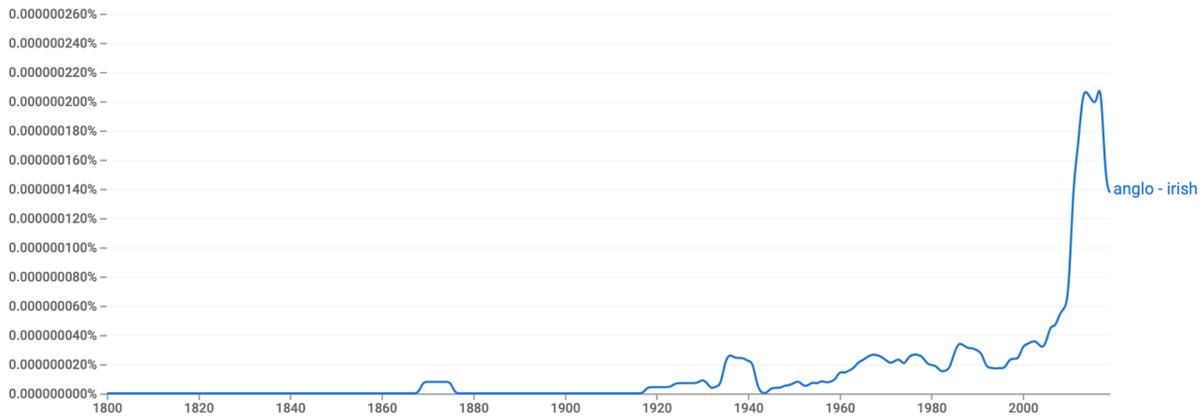


Figure 1: Google Ngram of incidents of the term “Anglo-Irish” in Printed Books, 1800-2020

Source: https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=anglo-irish&year_start=1800&year_end=2019&corpus=26&smoothing=3&direct_url=t1%3B%2Canglo%20-%20irish%3B%2Cc01in1%3B%2Canglo%20-%20irish%3B%2Cc00

What does the term “Anglo-Irish” mean? Fundamental to the settler colonization of Ireland, the Anglo-Irish are the Old English settlers who began arriving in 1167 with the Norman conquest of Ireland, many of whom became Protestant during the Reformation.³⁹⁴ It is a politicized identity that is used to denote the settler colonial class or identity. Some historians have claimed that the distinction between the Anglo-Irish and the Gaelic Irish boils down to class, as in the Anglo-Irish simply had greater wealth and privilege.³⁹⁵ I push beyond simply the class notions of the Anglo-Irish to show how the term came to be used as an all-encompassing identity group. With the divergence in religion, class, and race, culture is what unites the Anglo-Irish, at the very least, what Anglo-Irish writers have claimed set them apart both from the English and the Irish.³⁹⁶ With the rise of nationalist groups, many scholars recognized the

³⁹⁴ Julian Moynahan. *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 3; Elizabeth Grubgeld. *Anglo-Irish Autobiography: Class, Gender, and the Forms of Narrative*. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), xii.

³⁹⁵ Grubgeld, *Anglo-Irish Autobiography*, xv.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.* xvii.

instability of the Anglo-Irish settler identity's future in Ireland. As such, all three works claim that the Anglo-Irish were foundational in the development of Ireland and, for Mahaffy and Dixon, Trinity College. Utilizing figures like James Ussher to Wolfe Tone, the three authors apply the identity of "Anglo-Irish" retroactively to provide a defense for, in some cases, Trinity College, and in others, the very existence of the English settlers.

Within their respective understandings of the Anglo-Irish, there are several common threads. The first is the experience as an outsider, both within England and Ireland. Mahaffy discusses the different treatments for Anglo-Irish people in Ireland. When exploring the chapters written by Mahaffy, we must consider his desire to "make young Irishmen by birth into full Irishmen" through education.³⁹⁷ He hopes to push back against the distinctions made between the Anglo-Irish and the Gaelic Irish, ones that, as Magee notes, have been disastrous. While Mahaffy rarely explicitly uses the term "Anglo-Irish," he acknowledges the clear division between the two from the College's foundation.

Importantly, Mahaffy adds another layer to the story: religious persecution. He states that the early Provosts from English universities "were men who were baulked in their English promotion by their acknowledged Puritanism."³⁹⁸ Through colonization, Mahaffy acknowledges that these individuals were able to escape the persecution they would have faced in their homes. By this logic, they appear as outsiders within England and Ireland, what Joep Th. Leersen described in 1988 as the "'middle nation.'"³⁹⁹ This conclusion reached by Mahaffy is an early conceptualization of what will be termed settler colonialism.

³⁹⁷ W.B. Stanford and R.B. McDowell. *Mahaffy: A biography of an Anglo-Irishman*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), 124.

³⁹⁸ *The Book of Trinity College*, 17.

³⁹⁹ Joep Th. Leersen. "Anglo-Irish Patriotism and Its European Context: Notes Towards a Reassessment," *Eighteenth Century Ireland Society*, Vol. 3. (1988), 8.

Interestingly, such discussions of relative inclusivity can be posed alongside how Mahaffy notably repackages within his chapter: the discrimination of the Gaelic Irish. The opening chapter, “From the Formation to the Caroline Charter,” can be called a defense of Trinity College, appropriate given the context of the Royal Commission and the period of university reform. Citing scholars such as Roman Catholic historian Denis Caulfield Heron, he writes: “the Charter of England is neither exclusive nor bigoted as regards creed.”⁴⁰⁰ He additionally cites speeches by Adam Loftus as proof that they did not want to restrict the education but “ennoble their city by giving it a College similar to those of Oxford and Cambridge, and they succeeded.”⁴⁰¹ These facts are stated while he acknowledges the creation of the College was with the purpose of “subdu[ing] the turbulence and barbism of the Irish.”⁴⁰² Here, it seems he attempts to distinguish between the religious beliefs of the Irish and their identity as Irish. Yet the difficulty Magee presents is the inability of the Anglo-Irish people to recognize themselves as a distinct race. Their continued persecution has divided the group so substantially as to eliminate any sense of a collective, a recognized race outside of the Native Irish and the Anglo-Saxons.

Dixon considers another aspect of the divisions between the colonists and England. He examines what was occurring at Oxford and Cambridge to the structure of the early Trinity College. Unlike Oxford and Cambridge, Trinity College (later Dublin University) did not have the union of several colleges. Instead, Trinity consisted of one college, more like the “studium generale” of the Middle Ages.⁴⁰³ Trinity’s uniqueness is despite the founders’ efforts to recreate the Cambridge and Oxford experience within Ireland. Dixon concludes that, since the reign of

⁴⁰⁰ *The Book of Trinity College*, 16.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.* 5.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.* 3.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.* 22.

Charles II, “the authorities of Dublin University have ceased to think seriously of assimilating that institution to the English model.”⁴⁰⁴

Dixon’s understanding of Trinity College’s history is thus colored by the term, Anglo-Irish, that emerged in the nineteenth century. He re-constructs their history with the application of this understanding: colonizer vs. their mother country. Such an understanding appeals to notions of settler colonialism, a concept that has been discussed throughout this thesis. To summarize it once more, settler colonists in the Irish context exist between the “pro-English/anti-native Irish Ascendancy interests” and the “anti-English/pro-Irish national interests.”⁴⁰⁵ Yet, power dynamic exists within settler colonialism. Importantly, Dixon himself does not grapple with such a dynamic as scholars have done within the framework of settler colonialism: the colonist to the native.

He instead argues that the settler class accepted the natives, though not without claiming that the intellectual prosperity of Ireland was thanks to the Anglo-Irish rather than existing within pockets of native people. In this way, he points to the notion of rightful inhabitants. The Anglo-Irish’s continued aid and support of Ireland through the development of Trinity College grants them a legitimate place within Dublin and Ireland at large.

The second variable within this definition is a shared past. In explaining who the Anglo-Irish are, the writers often cited historical examples to create an Anglo-Irish mythology in Ireland. In the preface, Magee points to a centuries-long history for the Anglo-Irish in Ireland, stating:

More than a hundred years, in which he has assisted at the progress of democratic ideals in Ireland, have taught him tolerance, have infected his Protestant eudaimonism with a melancholy skepticism, have mitigated his unsuspecting selfishness and caused him

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid. 25.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid. 8.

many misgivings as he conned the records of his past, and have bound him by new and inextricable ties to the ancient population of this island.⁴⁰⁶

This narrative on the Anglo-Irish inserts them centuries prior to their formal linguistic creation in the nineteenth century.

One of the few times Mahaffy explicitly uses the word “Anglo-Irish” is in his description of James Ussher, one he defines as an ideological founder of Trinity College. In elaborating on the use of this term, Mahaffy describes Ussher as “a strong Protestant” who had a strong “apprehension of the ambitious policy of the Romish priesthood” and who had faced “many abuses in the system which he administered.”⁴⁰⁷ Mahaffy insists that this experience was “so common in the Anglo-Irish Protestant.”⁴⁰⁸ In this sense, he unites the Anglo-Irish settlers behind James Ussher within a common history and experience. Despite the abuses he faced, Ussher came to Ireland to “instruct the native Irish and to work out the regeneration of these barbarians by teaching them religion through the Irish language.”⁴⁰⁹ These are the characteristics with which Mahaffy begins to define the Anglo-Irish: devout, passionate, beaten down by abuses, yet ultimately fearful of the Roman Catholic Church. The description connects to Bartlett’s definition of colonial identity, particularly the following ingredients he lists: “a common set of goals, an insistence on standards, and a strong feeling of history.”⁴¹⁰ Yet, importantly, at this point in the history that Mahaffy is describing, the Anglo-Irish have not yet found a sense of place within Ireland or their previous home country, England.

Likewise, for Dixon, the founders, such as James Ussher and professors like Dudley Loftus belong in the group of Anglo-Irish. Ussher, interestingly, as described in Chapter One,

⁴⁰⁶ John Eglinton. *Anglo-Irish Essays*. (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1918), 3.

⁴⁰⁷ *The Book of Trinity College*, 20.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 20.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 20.

⁴¹⁰ Bartlett, ““A People Made Rather for Copies than Originals,”” 12.

emerged from the Old English established class in Ireland, rather than the New English who tend to make up the new Anglo-Irish group. Yet, despite these early distinctions in degrees of settlement, Dixon claims that the Anglo-Irish of Trinity College were “attacked as the fortress of an alien race and an alien religion.”⁴¹¹ Although thought of as alien, he believes that it is this group that shared in the “sacred love of the country,” regardless of their distinct origins.⁴¹²

In these cases, their appeal to such a notable historical figure for the College’s history as united with the Anglo-Irish movement of the nineteenth and twentieth century provides a historical and present-day vindication. They are connected to the Anglo-Irish bloodline that founded the intellectual institution of Trinity College, and therefore, are deserving of respect within Ireland.

Within the discussion of a historical mythology, the writers compose an argument in favor of the Anglo-Irish intellectual superiority. This is a defense of not only the institution, Trinity College, but the people within.

When describing the Anglo-Irish students of Trinity College, Mahaffy writes:

“It should be added here that one of the strongest natural reasons for the great prominence of the Anglo-Irish, and the extraordinary development of the British Empire, is that the English settlers of Elizabethan and Jacobean days were the boldest adventurers, the young men (often of good family) of the greatest energy and courage, to be found among the youth of England.”⁴¹³

Several important points must be pulled out of this quotation. One, Mahaffy acknowledges that the Anglo-Irish made up the largest portion of the student body. He additionally romanticizes the colonization through language like “boldest adventurers” and “great energy and courage,” each

⁴¹¹ W. Macneile Dixon. *College Histories: Trinity College, Dublin*. (London: F.E. Robinson & Co, 1902), x.

⁴¹² *Ibid.* x.

⁴¹³ *The Book of Trinity College*, 22-23.

of which acts as a defense of the Anglo-Irish.⁴¹⁴ Yet, he still considers the English settlers to be tied to England, unlike the previous commentary made on the Puritans settlers. Settler colonialism is the permanent transplantation of settlers and institutions eliminating some of the precolonial relationships.

It is when he describes the offspring that we see such ties being worn down. He asserts that, upon their arrival, the Anglo-Irish “and their quick-witted Irish wives produced a most uncommon offspring.”⁴¹⁵ Mahaffy goes on to describe the moral failings of the offspring, including robbery, vandalism, among much else. There seems to be a watering down effect of the original settlers due to the mixing of Anglo-Irish blood with the Irish native. These statements were not to delegitimize the role of the Anglo-Irish but propose the notion that Anglo-Irish purity was important to political stability and the failure came in the interactions with the Irish women. Those who maintained great importance at Trinity College were those who maintained pure bloodlines, like the Ussher family.

Dixon also describes the important role of the Anglo-Irish at Trinity College from the introduction of his work:

The three centuries since the foundation of Trinity College, Dublin, have made of England the widest as well as the most powerful of empires, but they have brought to Ireland, once the star of Western civilization, the home of learning and the arts, neither prosperity nor contentment.⁴¹⁶

He goes on to enumerate the reasons for such a statement, namely poverty and religious oppression.⁴¹⁷ In spite of the difficulties that the country faced, Dixon points to Trinity College

⁴¹⁴ Ibid. 23.

⁴¹⁵ *The Book of Trinity College*, 23.

⁴¹⁶ Dixon, *College Histories: Trinity College*, ix.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid. ix.

as a success, one which “must be ascribed to the virtues and the vigour of the Anglo-Irish breed.”⁴¹⁸

Moreover, Dixon personifies Trinity College, insisting that, while ruled by statutes “emanating from men like Laud and Stafford” and “founded at the instance of English colonists,” “her attitude” had been “far less hostile” to the native Ireland.⁴¹⁹ An important consideration from this quote is the distinction between the Gaelic Irish and the Anglo-Irish. Within his own definition, despite centuries of settlement, the Anglo-Irish remain a class outside the native Irish. Whether this division is either by choice or by force is unclear, but its acknowledgement is critical for understanding how the Anglo-Irish existed within Ireland.

At the beginning of his narrative, Dixon identifies an early division between the colonists and the mother country. He writes: “a race learned or might have learned the lesson...when the English by birth encounter the English by blood.”⁴²⁰ This encounter that Dixon describes is later epitomized by the request made by the colonists for Trinity College. Here, we can see the power dynamics at play within Ireland in which one group of people is required to plead for funds and support from another, greater force, the English. These are the power dynamics that existed between what Dixon describes as the Anglo-Irish and England itself.

The goal of Trinity College, as Dixon identifies, was to eliminate the threat of Roman Catholicism from within Ireland, as had been transferred by their foreign education. He additionally points to a quote from Adam Loftus, in which a generational perspective of Trinity College is made clear. Loftus writes:

⁴¹⁸ Ibid. ix.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid. xi.

⁴²⁰ Ibid. 1.

I pray you consider...your children by their birth in this place will, as it were, fall opportunely into the lap of the Muses, and that you need not hazard them abroad for the acquiring of foreign accomplishments, having a well-endowed University at your door.⁴²¹

Dixon's use of this quotation points to a future-driven argument as a component of Trinity College's origins. Trinity College was to continue to be a sanctuary of intellectual thought for the children of English settlers. This understanding provides proof to Dixon's previous point, in which he expands the definition of the Anglo-Irish to include all original students of the College (that is, many of those prior to the exclusionary measures under James I). This fact is true until, as mentioned, Trinity College's doors opened for many other identity groups.

Like Mahaffy and Dixon, Magee additionally claims that the Anglo-Irish exist outside the bounds of the Gaelic Irish and the English (who he calls the Anglo-Saxon). He writes that the Anglo-Irish feel "far more distinct from the Anglo-Saxon than he is from the mere Irishman."⁴²² It is such a distinction that Magee believes makes the Anglo-Irish "superiors of all the world."⁴²³ They are well-versed in the ideals and cultural traditions of the Anglo-Saxons and the Irish and thus have become open-minded to other cultural traditions. His commentary is despite political radical Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847)'s comment made less than a century before, that Irish Protestants were "'foreigners."⁴²⁴ Furthermore, this notion of Anglo-Irish importance continues the thread from Mahaffy and Dixon's claims of the foundational significance of the Anglo-Irish and adds an additional layer of superiority. The Anglo-Irish are not the Gaelic Irish but above them.

⁴²¹ Ibid. 7.

⁴²² Eglinton, *Anglo-Irish Essays*, 4.

⁴²³ Ibid. 4.

⁴²⁴ Bartlett, *Ireland: A History*, 266.

Additionally, the nondiscriminatory view within the Anglo-Irish is most obvious in Magee's discussion on religion. He states that of those Anglo-Irish who are Catholic, they are "little capable of starting an Inquisition as our Protestants of starting a Salvation Army."⁴²⁵ Their own experience of oppression at the hands of the Anglo-Saxons (in this sense, the British government) made them more accepting of other Christian belief systems.

With each of these stories, they write about the settler community in Ireland as critical to Irish formation. They utilize figures like James Ussher within the mythology of the Anglo-Irish. Mahaffy and Dixon extend the narrative to Trinity College, Dublin, legitimizing the institution's position in Dublin. History becomes a tool to be manipulated to explain and justify settler colonialism.

The Anglo-Irish and Nationalism

The repackaging of the Anglo-Irish extended beyond a historical mythology to include the contemporary nationalist movement. Despite the claims made by rebels, the scholars that I have explored in this chapter, aside from Mahaffy who remained the most Unionist of the group, considered the Anglo-Irish and by its connection, Trinity College, to be fundamental to the fight for independence. Tying the Anglo-Irish to Irish nationalist movements grants an additional layer of legitimacy to Trinity College as an Anglo-Irish institution and to the colonizers themselves.

To prove the patriotism of the Anglo-Irish, Dixon enumerates several key Trinity College scholars who he identifies with this group: Wolfe Tone, Sheil, Lefanu, Lever, among many others. In fact, he examines the phrase "Home Rule for Ireland," one that was written by Trinity College professor, Isaac Butt.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁵ Eglinton, *Anglo-Irish Essays*, 5.

⁴²⁶ Dixon, *College Histories: Trinity College*, xi.

He also points to Trinity College's disapproval for the Union of 1799. The Roman Catholics had supported such an act, motivated by desires for Catholic emancipation.⁴²⁷ Despite this, the Trinity College students also supported Catholic emancipation in an address given in this period.⁴²⁸ Interestingly, again, the definition of the Anglo-Irish expands to include all those who attend Trinity College. This is then qualified as Trinity College opened its doors to more and more students. It is with this understanding, that Dixon concludes: "Trinity College has been the intellectual nurse of political idealists, the fostering-mother of Ireland's patriot sons."⁴²⁹

Like Dixon, Magee also points to Wolfe Tone as one of the historical figures of the Anglo-Irish.⁴³⁰ Tone himself did not use such a term or identify himself with the Anglo-Irish, a term that, as was discussed, was not used during his lifetime. Yet, through Magee's distinct understanding of history, Tone fits into the Anglo-Irish class. Unlike Anglo-Irish ancestors, who worked as judges, sinecurists, etc., this new generation, which Magee claims Tone fits into, are "set up as rebels."⁴³¹ This shift has made the Anglo-Irish "'more Irish than the Irish themselves."⁴³² The rebellious attitude is then connected to the Irish Literary Movement, of which the Anglo-Irish were foundational.⁴³³ It is with this understanding that Magee begins his discussion on the Irish literature traditions.

Magee's notion of Anglo-Irish contradicts what critics like David Fitzpatrick have written, that men like Tone "retained their patriotism *despite* Trinity, and that their 'strength of character brought them survival out of all that was hostile and inimical to Irish nationalism.'"⁴³⁴

⁴²⁷ Ibid. xi.

⁴²⁸ Ibid. xi.

⁴²⁹ Ibid. xi.

⁴³⁰ Eglinton, *Anglo-Irish Essays*, 7.

⁴³¹ Ibid. 7.

⁴³² Ibid. 8.

⁴³³ Ibid. 8.

⁴³⁴ Sweetman, *Defending Trinity College Dublin*, 32.

Some former Trinity College students, like Eamon de Valera (president of Ireland) and Patrick Pearse (leader in the Easter Rising) maintained some loyalty to the College with their attendance to the occasional lecture.⁴³⁵ However, many turned away from this prominent Anglo-Irish institution that became synonymous with the ideals that they hoped to challenge. Despite Magee's insistence to recognize the efforts of the Anglo-Irish in the rebellion, Trinity College as the embodiment of an Anglo-Irish institution. Arthur Luce, a future vice-provost of the College, stated the college had "'backed the wrong horse' in 1916."⁴³⁶

The Easter Rising and Nationalist Movements

The origin of the Irish Free State and nationalist movements throughout Ireland brought new concerns to Trinity College: how to protect themselves as a symbol of colonialism to the Irish people. With the Irish Republican Brotherhood actively fighting for Irish independence within Dublin, the conflict and threat of destruction was right at Trinity's door.

On April 24, 1916, a group of 1,500 radical nationalists known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (a subset of the Irish Volunteers and former Irish National Volunteers) and a few hundred of the Irish Citizen Army led an armed insurrection against British rule in Ireland. Their aim was to establish the Irish Republic, independent of England. Independence had been debated for centuries, most recently the Home Rule movement.⁴³⁷ For six days, this force violently challenged the Crown forces, attempting to seize Dublin itself. The Irish Republican Brotherhood and their allies eventually surrendered on Saturday, April 29 with 450 dead (64 of whom were rebels, 132 were soldiers, and the remainder were civilians).⁴³⁸ The conclusion of the conflict resulted in the implementation of martial law and violent repression by the English

⁴³⁵ Ibid. 32.

⁴³⁶ Ibid. 28.

⁴³⁷ Maureen Buckley. "Irish Easter Rising of 1916." *Social Science* 31, no. 1 (1956), 49.

⁴³⁸ Bartlett, *Ireland: A History*, 391.

government. Many of the most prominent leaders were executed over the following weeks. This response made many change their support to independence. It should, however, be admitted that many reactions to the violence varied by class.⁴³⁹

During the week and shortly after, Trinity College remained closed. The Officer's Training Corps (OTC) worked to prevent the destruction of Trinity College, as had happened to much of Dublin.⁴⁴⁰ Despite their continued armed presence making Trinity appear as an impenetrable force within Dublin, many have questioned how Trinity remained entirely unscathed. Some justifications have been proposed, such as Trinity's vast size and the symbolic act of attacking Trinity.⁴⁴¹ Yet, as expressed in *Trinity in war and revolution* by Tomás Irish, "An attack on Trinity would be an attack on all elements of British rule, be they cultural, military, or political."⁴⁴²

Trinity administration's efforts to isolate themselves from Irish culture made some consider excluding Trinity College from the independent Ireland. Current Trinity professor Eunan O'Halpin wrote, "Trinity has fought tooth and nail to be exempted from Irish self-government between 1912 and 1922," believing themselves to be outside Ireland."⁴⁴³ One attempt was made to create an amendment that would remove Trinity College from Irish home rule.⁴⁴⁴ It was ultimately put down by members of the College.

Why then avoid Trinity College? Historian Rory Sweetman points to the sudden change in support by Irish Volunteer leader Eoin MacNeill (1867-1945) as a possible justification for

⁴³⁹ Ibid. 391.

⁴⁴⁰ Sweetman, *Defending Trinity College Dublin*, 22.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid. 30.

⁴⁴² Tomás Irish. *Trinity in war and revolution 1912 - 1923*. (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2015) cited in: Sweetman, Rory. *Defending Trinity College Dublin*, 34.

⁴⁴³ Sweetman, *Defending Trinity College Dublin*, 34.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid. 34.

such avoidance. As co-founder of the Gaelic League and Irish historian, MacNeill himself is considered the “‘ideological’ father” of the nationalism that motivated the Easter Rising though his view on political violence “was not one of easy permissiveness.”⁴⁴⁵ In fact, his disapproval of the Easter Rising resulted in a factional shift in the Irish Volunteers, leaving the Irish Republican Brotherhood to fend for themselves.

Regardless of the reason, with the locking of the Front Gate, “Trinity [became] merely a pantomime villain in the great national drama being staged on the streets of Dublin.”⁴⁴⁶ Furthermore, with the ensuing ceremonies in celebration of Trinity’s survival, it was made clear that Trinity “‘sought to portray itself as an establishment institution, one that had been loyal to Government and Crown in their time of need.’”⁴⁴⁷ It is with this understanding that Trinity College’s administration can be understood as a “‘sceptical observer of, rather than an actual participant in, the Irish Revolution.’”⁴⁴⁸

Although the Sinn Féin party disapproved of the Easter Rising, they reaped the benefits. Initially, the party supported a non-violent method towards independence, one that “did not violate a single clause of English Law.”⁴⁴⁹ Yet, on January 21, 1919, the Sinn Féin party switched their methods within the new political landscape. They declared independence, issued a “‘democratic programme,’” and ratified the Easter Monday republic.⁴⁵⁰ On the same day, in Soloheadbeg, two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary were shot by a group of Irish Volunteers (soon to be known as the Irish Republican Army (IRA)).⁴⁵¹ Although not an

⁴⁴⁵ Eoin MacNeill and Shane Nagle. “EOIN MACNEILL: THE MIND BEHIND THE EASTER RISING?” *History Ireland* 22, no. 1 (2014), 36.

⁴⁴⁶ Sweetman, *Defending Trinity College Dublin*, 29.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 25.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 27.

⁴⁴⁹ Buckley, “Irish Easter Rising of 1916,” 49.

⁴⁵⁰ Bartlett, *Ireland: A History*, 400.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.* 401.

approved action by the Dail (or the parliament formed by the Sinn Féin party), it served as the “Irish Lexington” and began the Irish War of Independence.⁴⁵² A truce was declared in 1921 after two years of fighting through the passage of the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

Within the following year, the southern region of Ireland, composed of 26 of the island’s 32 counties, became the Irish Free State. Despite previous efforts to push Trinity College outside the self-governing body, Trinity found itself in the middle of the newly independent Ireland.

Conclusion

Trinity College struggled to find its place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’ growing protests. In choosing and codifying the identity of Anglo-Irish, scholars mobilized Trinity’s history to claim that they served as the backbone of the rebellion and independence. Institutionally, Trinity avoided the conflict, instead providing a place for the Officer’s Training Corp (OTC) and sheltered within its walls. The violence during this period resulted in the Irish Free State, a newly independent southern Ireland.

⁴⁵² Ibid. 401; Buckley, “Irish Easter Rising of 1916,” 49.

Conclusion

The Legacies of Settler Colonialism

On February 17, 2017, Brian M. Walker wrote a letter to *The Irish Times* on Frank McNally's piece, "Sisters in Arms – An Irishman's Diary about sibling rivalry in Ireland's revolutionary years."⁴⁵³ In it, Walker claims that the term "Anglo-Irish" was inappropriately used when addressing the leader of southern unionists, the Earl of Midleton.⁴⁵⁴ He describes the history of the term, pointing to moments in which individuals like Lily Yeats actively challenged its use.⁴⁵⁵ He additionally cites a Trinity historian, Edmund Curtis, who rejected the term "Anglo-Irish," as it implied that "they were not wholly Irish."⁴⁵⁶ Walker concludes with the following thought: "Perhaps, in light of recent efforts to create a more inclusive sense of Irishness, it is a term which should be dropped."⁴⁵⁷

Ireland has a unique relationship to England. Many historians have debated if such a relationship constitutes a kingdom or colony, as legislation, theory, and intellectual thought each point to distinct points of view. This ambiguity is fundamental to the difficulties presented at Trinity College, Dublin from its very foundation in 1592. The inability to put Ireland perfectly into any single colonial framework presents important qualifications and limitations to the

⁴⁵³ Brian M. Walker. "Time to ditch the term 'Anglo-Irish'?" *The Irish Times*, February 25, 2017, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/time-to-ditch-the-term-anglo-irish-1.2988144>; Frank McNally. "Sisters in Arms – An Irishman's Diary about sibling rivalry in Ireland's revolutionary years," *The Irish Times*, February 17, 2017, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/sisters-in-arms-an-irishman-s-diary-about-sibling-rivalry-in-ireland-s-revolutionary-years-1.2978307>.

⁴⁵⁴ Walker. "Time to ditch the term 'Anglo-Irish'?"

⁴⁵⁵ Lily Yeats: "We are far more Irish than all the saints and martyrs – Parnell – Pearse – Madame Markievicz – Maude Gonne – de Valera – and no one ever thinks of them as Anglo-Irish" cited in: Walker. "Time to ditch the term 'Anglo-Irish'?"

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

colonial project. Yet, Trinity College with its overt efforts to plant a specific cultural and intellectual identity into Ireland, aligns most clearly with theories of settler colonialism as presented by theorists like Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini pose.⁴⁵⁸

As both Wolfe and Kimberly A. Williams have noted in their work, settler colonialism is an “ongoing process, a structure, and a system.”⁴⁵⁹ The creation of Trinity College and the transplantation of settlers did not conclude with the arrival of the last settler. Rather, in the following several centuries, Trinity College administration struggled to fit into the Irish borders and found itself legally pushed outside England. Trinity aided in eradicating the dangerous Irish culture to subdue the population and maintain a settler class in Ireland.

Through this thesis, I argue that Trinity College provides proof of the need of institutions within settler colonialism. Simultaneously, Trinity falls in line with Veracini’s theory that settlers often act in opposition from their respective mother country.⁴⁶⁰ While providing defenses to settler colonialism, intellectuals and administration at Trinity also produce some of its most potent critiques. Trinity’s distance from the English government coupled with the religious and ethnic divisions made the unity that England had hoped for impossible.

I explored Trinity College from the framework of settler colonialism and the emergence of a new settler class: the “Anglo-Irish.” In the first chapter, I examined the period of Trinity’s foundation in 1592 to the War of the Three Kingdoms (1642-1651). The three focuses of the chapter were James Ussher and William Laud. In the second, I looked at the Long Eighteenth

⁴⁵⁸ Lorenzo Veracini. *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); Patrick Wolfe. *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event*. (London: Cassell, 1999); *Rethinking settler colonialism: History and Memory in Australia, Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand, and South Africa*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

⁴⁵⁹ Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism*. Kimberly A. Williams. *Stampede: Misogyny, White Supremacy, and Settler Colonialism*. (Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2021), 28-29.

⁴⁶⁰ Veracini. *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*.

Century at Trinity College through the perspective of three former Trinity College students: William Molyneux, Edmund Burke, and Wolfe Tone. My final chapter studies how histories of Trinity College were mobilized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in an attempt to solve the very ambiguity that lies at Trinity's core.

The Legacies of Settler Colonialism

Today, Trinity College administration and faculty members are grappling with Trinity's involvement in the English colonial project. Directed by Dr. Ciaran O'Neill and Dr. Patrick Walsh, the Trinity Colonial Legacies project examines Trinity's connections to areas such as the Atlantic slave trade, early abolitionist movements, and anti-imperial critiques.⁴⁶¹ Beyond the production of intellectual criticisms and colonial doctrines, Trinity itself was "an instrument of colonial oppression in Ireland at foundation."⁴⁶² The fellowship hopes to produce a publication exploring such legacies and investigate the "College's commemorative practices."⁴⁶³ In the latter category, they identify the naming of a library after figures like James Ussher and George Berkeley and what such an act signifies in the greater university culture.⁴⁶⁴

Around the world, similar institutions are working towards a greater understanding of their own history. Institutions like Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Texas, and Oregon State University are asking questions about their respective histories and considering solutions to mitigate its past harm.⁴⁶⁵ Trinity, its legacies, and its efforts to now

⁴⁶¹ "Trinity Colonial Legacies." Trinity College, Dublin. <https://histories-humanities.tcd.ie/research/colonial-legacies/about.php>.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ Robert Lee, Tristan Ahtone, Margaret Pearce, Kalen Goodluck, Geoff McGhee, Cody Leff, Katherine Lanpher, and Taryn Salinas. "Land-Grab Universities." *High Country News*, <https://www.landgrabu.org/>; Paul Livengood. "UT starts process of renaming buildings, funding programs for underrepresented communities." *KVUE ABC*, October 6, 2020; Philip Marcelo. "MIT grapples with early leader's stance on Native people." *Indian Country Today*, October 23, 2021. Joelle Jones. "OSU develops tool to reconsider, remove racially harmful place names." *Koin*, April 12, 2022.

acknowledge the past can inform and shape dialogues on settler identity and colonialism. Its history, though ambiguous, carries many of the critical threads and challenges that are fundamental to understanding colonization.

Settler colonialism's impact extends beyond simply the act of settlers arriving in a new country. It is the creation of a new system, established with the hopes of subduing and eradicating a people and/or culture. To establish this system, colonizers must produce institutions that codify their ideology. Yet, as studied within the scholarship of Trinity's students and founders, Trinity becomes a microcosm of competing ideologies on colonialism. Thus, Trinity College, Dublin presents an important case study into the limitations and power of settler colonialism and the creation of a new identity group within the ambiguous Irish landscape.

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