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**A FORGOTTEN 'GREATER IRELAND': THE
TRANSATLANTIC DEVELOPMENT OF
IRISH NATIONALISM, 1848-1882**

by

Adrian Neil Mulligan

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
WITH A MAJOR IN GEOGRAPHY**

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2001

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entitled A Forgotten 'Greater Ireland': The Transatlantic Development
of Irish Nationalism, 1848-1882

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A.N.M

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the relationship between nationalism and globalization. Today, amidst increasing levels of global displacement and deterritorialization, nationalism not only remains the most important political force in the world, but is in fact experiencing a resurgence. Unfortunately however, the theorizing of nationalism remains largely incapable of explaining why this should be so. I argue that the problem lies in the fact that nationalism is both a historical and a geographical phenomenon, yet only the construction of nationalist temporal narratives has been problematized, whereas comparative analysis of nationalist spatial narratives remains scarce.

This dissertation seeks to rectify this failing by focussing on extra-territorial dimensions of nationalism, and in particular the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism, 1848-1882. In this task, it draws on the Irish nationalist press and the personal correspondence of key political actors to illuminate the manner in which numerous narratives of Irish nationalism were forged out of a web of communication between the globally dispersed Irish diaspora. I argue that a number of creative extra-territorial interventions were made in the development of Irish nationalism; interventions since marginalized in the dominant narrative of Irish nationalism. Through an analysis of the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism in the nineteenth century, this dissertation locates a number of these marginal sites to reveal the underlying hybridity of the historical narrative, thus opening up the possibility for more spatially complex models of nationalist identity formation.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Like oil lamps we put them out the back—

of our houses, of our minds. We had lights
better than, newer than...

then a time came, this time and now
we need them. Their dread, makeshift example:

they would have thrived on our necessities.
What they survived we could not even live.

By their lights now it is time to
imagine how they stood there, what they stood with,
that their possessions may become our power:

Cardboard. Iron. Their hardships parceled in them.
Patience. Fortitude. Long-suffering
in the bruise-colored dusk of the New World.

And all the old songs. And nothing to lose.

(Eavan Boland 1990, 'The Emigrant Irish')

Eavan Boland's poem, 'The Emigrant Irish', urges the Irish today to remember their migrant past, to embrace diasporic experience and to put an end to a culture of selective forgetfulness. In recent years, the Irish republic has experienced a remarkable period of economic prosperity, but with such rapid changes come challenges. In a dramatic reversal of fortunes, Ireland now attracts record numbers of immigrants from around the world, from highly skilled pharmaceutical workers to penniless unskilled refugees. As a

result of such rapid change, questions concerning what it means to be Irish now swirl through society, while cities such as Dublin witness an increasing number of racist and anti-immigrant attacks. In response to questions relating to the challenges of building a tolerant multicultural society however, and with regard to acute labor shortages, there is a growing awareness among Irish politicians that the experience of the Irish diaspora might be able to provide some useful insights. In addition, it is also hoped that in developing political and institutional relations with the Irish diaspora, Ireland may continue to develop economically in this era of globalization.

On February 2, 1995, President Mary Robinson delivered a rare address to the Houses of the Oireachtas (the Irish Parliament), entitled 'Cherishing the Irish Diaspora'. On the 150th anniversary year of the Great Famine, President Robinson's address urged the Irish people to recognize Irish communities abroad, and to draw strength from the diversity of Irish diasporic experience. President Robinson asked that the Irish people include the stories of Irish overseas in their ongoing narration of national identity, so as to escape the narrow territorial confines of Irishness. In discussing the value of these diasporic stories, in the context of the peace process in Northern Ireland and amidst growing alarm at the racism and ethnocentrism prevalent in Irish society, she stated that;

The more I know of these stories the more it seems to me an added richness of our heritage that Irishness is not simply territorial. In fact Irishness as a concept seems to me at its strongest when it reaches out to everyone on this island and shows itself capable of honouring and listening to those whose sense of identity, and whose cultural values, may be more British than Irish. It can be strengthened again if we turn with open minds and hearts to the array of people outside Ireland for whom this island is a place of origin. After all, emigration is not just a chronicle of sorrow and regret. It is also a powerful story of contribution and adaptation. In fact, I have

become more convinced each year that this great narrative of dispossession and belonging, which so often had its origins in sorrow and leave-taking, has become – with a certain amount of historic irony – one of the treasures of our society. If that is so then our relation with the diaspora beyond our shores is one which can instruct our society in the values of diversity, tolerance and fair-mindedness.

(President Mary Robinson 'Cherishing the Irish Diaspora, 02.02.1995)

The population of the Irish republic is now approaching four million people, a number which the country last witnessed in the final haemorrhaging decades of the nineteenth century. Living outside of Ireland today there are an additional 3 million Irish citizens, who can be found primarily in Great Britain, but also elsewhere in Europe and in the United States. In addition to this total number of Irish citizens, it has been estimated that there are a further seventy million people of Irish ancestry globally, most of whom can be found in the United States. It is surprising however, considering Ireland has always been an emigrant nation, that the Irish nation state has been unwilling to acknowledge the vast numbers Irish citizens who live abroad. For example, to this day, the three million Irish citizens who live outside of the borders of the Irish republic are denied political representation in Ireland. They remain disenfranchised therefore, by virtue of their extra-territoriality.

In recent years however, as witnessed by President Mary Robinson's remarkable speech and largely in response to Ireland's tremendous economic growth, Irish politicians have begun slowly to reach out to Irish citizens and those of Irish ancestry overseas, in an effort to forge relationships across local, national and global scales. This sea change in nationalist attitudes was most clearly marked in 1998, when the population of the Irish

republic voted in favor of amending the Irish constitution so as to facilitate the involvement of Northern Irish Protestants in the peace process. As a result of the Belfast Agreement for example, Article 2 of the Irish constitution was amended so as to be more inclusive of all identities on the island, while acknowledging the Irish republic's ties to its global diaspora;

It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.

(Article 2 of the Irish Constitution, amended 1998)

Reaching out to the Irish diaspora today in such a manner, although deeply problematic, is considered by some Irish politicians to be a necessary step towards enhancing the Irish nation politically, economically and culturally.

How and why the Irish managed to forget, or chose to ignore a large part of their national history however, are questions which remain to be addressed. In particular there are a number of historical discrepancies which need to be rectified. Instead of looking solely to today's Irish diaspora to provide answers to Ireland's recent problems therefore, I argue in this dissertation that it might be more useful to look to Ireland's past and to the frequently underacknowledged role that the Irish diaspora played in the development of Irish nationalism. Despite the fact that Irish nationalism benefited greatly from the support of the Irish overseas, for much of the twentieth century a state-sanctioned national narrative has imagined Ireland territorially, to be a monocultural nation state.

This, despite the fact, that the Irish Proclamation of Independence in 1916 had quite clearly acknowledged the support of the Irish diaspora when it stated that Ireland was “supported by her exiled children in America”.

The Irish therefore, have quite clearly forgotten that they were an emigrant nation, maybe not in Ireland but in their history, overseas. I will argue that this is largely the fault of scholars of Irish nationalism who repeatedly ignore the experiences of Irish people once they have left the island of Ireland. This situation in turn I argue, is indicative of the fact that the theorizing of nationalism so often remains securely and unproblematically bound within the territorial boundaries of the nation-states being examined. As a result, scholars of nationalism have been incapable of properly conceptualizing extra-territorial dimensions to nationalism.

I argue that this significant misconceptualization stems from the fact that the study of nationalism is a task primarily undertaken by historians who either ignore space or leave it under-theorized, and hence historical scholarship remains packaged within nationally prescribed boxes. As a result, while historians continue to demythologize nationalist temporal narratives and the manner in which nations ‘imagineer’ their past, a similar rigorous analysis of spatial narratives has yet to occur. So often therefore, space is taken for granted; presumed only to be a neutral void where things just happen to take place. As a result, nationalism is only theorized when bundled into the spaces produced by nation-states. This is unfortunate, since, as the Irish example illustrates, nationalism can not only predate the formation of a nation-state, but also therefore any subsequent spatial logic applied to legitimate the new state.

Today, developed countries such as Ireland are experiencing a dramatic acceleration in the processes associated with globalization, whereby people and places around the world are becoming ever more interconnected. Accompanying this most recent wave of globalization is a deluge of scholarly debate concerning the increasing compression of economic, political and cultural universes. Recent scholarship has conceptualized global space as a space of circuits, and has attempted to measure the quickening pulse in the flow of capital and information, and to trace the movement of people through an increasingly hierarchical global system. In this task, there has been talk of the crucial role played by global cities such as New York and London as top tier intersections, in order to illustrate the impact of globalization but also to reaffirm the continuing importance of place in shaping its outcome (King 1995).

As globalization now causes national boundaries to become ever more permeable, scholars point to alternative forms of political organization and mobilization being forged in transnational spaces. Such 'new social movements', including those that champion human rights or which rally around environmental concerns, harness global communications in an attempt to leave the nation-state behind in their drive to appeal to a global political consciousness (Morley and Robins 1995). To assume that nationalism has reached its zenith however, after more than two hundred years, would be premature. In fact, amidst the increasing levels of global displacement and deterritorialization, nationalism is actually experiencing a resurgence and remains possibly the most important political force in the world today. Unfortunately however, theory concerning nationalism remains largely incapable of explaining why this should be so. The problem

I believe lies in the fact that nationalism remains too securely corralled within the territorial boundaries of the very nation-states it seeks to analyze, and as a result, remains incapable of properly accounting for extra-territorial influences.

In conceptualizing nationalism as process, it is my hope to reveal the role it plays in the politics of identity formation and as a medium which shapes interaction between the local and the global. In the quest to homogenize difference, global influences are often treated as anomalous incidents in the narrative of the nation; spatial or temporal contradictions best relegated in favor of a more rooted, and hence more cohesive storyline. By uncovering the interdependence between globalization and nationalism over time however, using the case of Irish nationalism as a historical example, one is able to recognize such incidents as being far from anomalous. In fact they reveal the underlying hybridity of the historical narrative, thus opening up the possibility for more spatially complex models of nationalist identity formation.

In tracing the connections between nationalism and globalization with regard the politics of identity formation, I also draw from recent social theory which focuses upon the production of space and the social construction of scale. These are two inter-related processes directly implicated in the project of nation-building. Such scholarship argues that scale should not be employed simply to locate local, national or global events, but instead theory should seek to understand the role that scale plays in actually shaping social practice. Such scholarship is interested in globalization, but primarily only with what impact recent economic transformations might be having on the construction of scale at the global, local or state level. There are many other opportunities however, for

scholars to examine the social production of space and scale differently, as the geographer Sallie Marston (2000) points out.

Using the example of Irish nationalism in the nineteenth century therefore, it is my aim to uncover the role that Irish Americans particularly, as well as Irish with international experience played in its development. In addition, I also seek to understand how scale construction relates to the forging of Irish national identity – before there even existed an Irish nation-state. As an oppositional movement, late nineteenth Irish nationalism could be considered similar to the ‘new social movements’ of today; taking advantage of improved global communications such as the telegraph, the transatlantic steamship and newspaper publishing, to broadcast a message across vast distances and to forge alliances between Irish diasporic groups and Irish in Ireland. In this regard, Irish nationalists managed to harness the power of scale construction in order to transcend the territorial boundaries of the British and American nation-states primarily. With this in mind therefore, it is my intention to examine the roles played by key transnational political actors; individuals who occupied the interstices between the global, national and local scales, and who used such interstitiality to guide the course of Irish nationalism. In addition, I will trace transatlantic circuits of revolutionary capital, and also the imagining of a transatlantic Irish nation.

The following chapters represent a lengthy critical analysis of the manner in which Irish nationalism developed outside of the island of Ireland during the nineteenth century, particularly focussing on the role played by Irish Americans. Chapter Two charts the manner in which the concept of nationalism has been theorized, and illuminates how it is

to be conceptualized in this particular thesis. Chapter Three consists of a literature review of the important historical scholarship pertaining to nineteenth century Ireland and to Irish America. In addition this chapter functions so as to introduce the reader to the historical context of the period. Following this review of the literature, Chapters Four, Five and Six are historical in nature, and chart the extra-territorial development of Irish nationalism –while hopefully avoiding the pitfalls of appearing too structurally determined. This is achieved I hope, through the illumination of a complex range of historical geographies in which real people and real experiences are seen to shape the story of Irish nationalism. It is an approach which results in an incredibly complex and somewhat fragmented historical narrative, but one which I believe more accurately portrays the manner in which Irish nationalism developed extra-territorially during the nineteenth century. The historical chapters are followed by Chapter Seven, which gathers together and develops further the many theoretical strands alluded to in the preceding progression of historical geographies, so as to offer some conclusions concerning the extra-territorial development of Irish nationalism and the implications of this story to theories of nationalism.

Benedict Anderson argues that print-capitalism was crucial to the development of nationalism and to the forging of a deep horizontal comradeship. Nowhere was this more true I believe, than amongst Irish communities around the world during the second half of the nineteenth century; a period when newspapers proved crucial to articulating nationalist ideology and to disseminating it to a wider audience. To Irish people in Ireland and to those dispersed globally, I will argue that the common experience of

reading the same nationalist news in a number of periodicals helped the Irish to imagine themselves as a vast global community, as well as constantly reassuring them that their cause was a strong, common and righteous one.

The primary archive utilized in the three historical chapters therefore is the Irish nationalist press published in Dublin, Ireland and in New York City during the period 1848 to 1882. Described by the historian Richard M. Kain (1981) as a “vast untilled field”, Irish nationalist periodicals of this period I believe represent a greatly under-utilized source for scholars. So often such newspapers are used only as a source of quotations, but I argue that it is important to understand the manner in which they were fully implicated in nationalist struggles, and the role they played in a fast-changing society.

In this regard it is crucial that these nationalist newspapers be placed in their proper context, and Irish society in the second half of the nineteenth century, it should be realized, was marked by many changes. These included an increased level of literacy; it being a period during which newspapers were increasingly read in libraries, public houses or in the newsrooms aligned with various institutions, by those who might not be able to afford them. In addition, a newspaper might be read aloud or even rented for a period of time; the historian Virginia Glandon (1985) suggesting that often a single newspaper might be consumed by ten or more people. This was an age therefore, when the medium of daily print had a great impact on society, as it became the primary means by which people could be informed of local, national or global affairs, and of course Irish nationalism was only too happy to interpret this news to the people of Ireland. It was also

an age of rapid advances in communications and technology, during which people witnessed the introduction of railways, steamships, improved roads and the telegraph, all of which greatly facilitated the growth of the newspaper.

From the 1840s, when Thomas Davies edited the influential Irish newspaper *The Nation*, Irish nationalism benefited from its close relationship with the profession of journalism. To an expanding lower middle class in a country undergoing rapid urbanization, journalism offered young Irishmen (and they were almost unanimously young men) a respectable profession, especially if they had any political aspirations. As the century progressed, and taxes were abolished on newspapers, they became an increasingly cost-effective means by which political parties could express their opinion. In the United States, such newspapers as the *Irish World* and the *Pilot*, published in Brooklyn and Boston respectively, played a crucial role in uniting Irish communities in the New World. Such newspapers spoke the language of Irish nationalism, and like in Ireland helped the reader to imagine themselves as part of a larger community, whose center was Ireland. Like in Ireland, the Irish press in the United States played important roles for political parties, disseminating their ideologies across the nation and sometimes around the globe. With its front page full of local Irish news, its other pages crammed with Irish-American and global affairs, the *Irish World*, boasting a readership of 125,000 for its weekly edition, united Irish nationalists transatlantically.

Although certain newspapers were of great importance to the transatlantic development of nationalism and although they constitute an important source to the scholar, there is one principle limitation with using them. Because they were often

published under conditions of great secrecy, at least in Ireland, it is often impossible to find information on the editors or to obtain accurate circulation figures, other than those lauded by the editors themselves. While this is the case, it is possible to gauge their enormous impact on Irish society by glancing at the continued use of various forms of coercive legislation by successive British governments who greatly feared the power wielded by the Irish nationalist press. During the second half of the nineteenth century Irish nationalist newspapers were frequently seized by the authorities, newsrooms closed, editors and publishers arrested, imprisoned and sometimes sent into exile. By focussing on only the major nationalist newspapers edited by key political figures in the development of Irish nationalism, and by widening the net to include those newspapers published in New York City, I hope to have circumvented some of these difficulties. The bulk of this newspaper analysis was conducted at the New York Public Library, the National Library of Ireland, Dublin, and at the Library of University College Cork. In this task, the *NewsPlan* project in Ireland, which has microfilmed a number of these nationalist periodicals, proved invaluable.

The second archive which I employ is the personal correspondence of key nationalist political actors who were influential in the forging of Irish nationalism, transatlantically, during the second half of the nineteenth century. Much of this material is held at the New York Public Library and at the National Library of Ireland, Dublin. The letters have been compiled from a number of personal collections and though they represent an incomplete historical record, nevertheless proved a useful additional means with which to understand the mentality of Irish nationalists during this period. The letters provide evidence for

example, of massive flows of revolutionary capital from the United States to Ireland to support Irish nationalism. In addition, the letters can sometimes enable the scholar to chart the movements of these cosmopolitan and highly mobile Irish nationalists; on their journeys throughout Ireland, Europe and the United States. In certain cases the letters also detail sensitive information concerning the state of military preparedness. Wary of their mail being intercepted by the authorities, such letters often use pseudonyms and employ the language of international capitalism so as to avoid detection. As a result, starting a revolution may be referred to as the opening of a factory, the buying of rifles might be referred to as the purchasing of machinery, and deploying soldiers as hiring machinists.

A final archive which I have used in my task of reconstructing the forging of Irish nationalism during this period, is the photographic archive. In this regard, the files of the British authorities on various suspect Irish nationalists proved invaluable. Held at the National Archives in Dublin, these 'Crime Branch Special Reports' detail the biographies, histories, movements and correspondence of thousands of individuals compiled during the second half of the nineteenth century. By virtue of the expanding role of the state in the daily lives of people, increased surveillance and bureaucracy as well as the criminalization of Irish nationalism, the scholar today can benefit from a wonderful archive. In the following historical chapters, certain photographs of 'Fenian suspects' are reproduced so that faces can sometimes be put with names. It is also my hope however, that these haunting images of previous moments in time and space might

also enable the reader to arrive at a deeper understanding of the individuals involved who risked their lives so that Ireland might be free.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Nationalism continues to be a difficult concept to define, but in this chapter I will review some of the most relevant of the many and varied attempts which have been made to do just this. The genesis of modern nationalism can be found in Europe and North America during the late eighteenth century, and since then it has become the dominant form of political organization in the world. One of the reasons why nationalism is so difficult to define however, is because it appears in such an infinite number of guises. It is therefore important that any theoretical engagement with nationalism examines the particular context in which it is situated, and therefore speaks of *nationalisms* not *nationalism* (Alter 1989).

A Primordialist Approach to Nationalism

One of the most basic of approaches to the study of nationalism is known as a primordialist approach. It is a scholarly approach most popular among nineteenth century historians who sought to legitimate the nation-state by locating it as the latest step in an ancient and perfectly natural progression. For primordialists, the nation has existed since time immemorial, and they also believe that past national triumphs can be achieved once more in the future. Rooted in such a manner in history and in territory, and sharing

some combination of distinctive traits such as a common language or religion, the primordialists regard the national community as deserving of political autonomy. This primordialist approach however, is deeply flawed by the fact that some of its strongest advocates, being nineteenth century historians primarily, have had very close relationships with nation building projects. Ireland is no exception.

A good example of such a primordialist viewpoint can be found in the work of Ernest Renan, a French scholar who worked to ground the French nation state in a mystical primordial past. Questioning what attributes were required to create a nation, Renan delivered a famous lecture at the Sorbonne in Paris on March 11, 1882. He argued that although nationalism was the product of many factors, including a common language or religion, shared history or territory, it could not be reduced to such factors alone. Instead, Renan believed that the nation was a spiritual principle and in the concluding his lecture proclaimed; "Man is the slave neither of his race, his language, nor his religion; neither of the courses of the rivers, nor the mountain ranges. One great aggregate of men, of sound spirit and warm heart, created a moral conscience that is called a nation" (Renan, 1882).

A Modernist Approach to Nationalism

The primordialist approach has come under increasing attack since the 1960s by scholars such as John Breuilly, Eugene Kamenka and Ernest Gellner who argue that nationalism is not ancient, but is in fact a modern artifact. Situating the emergence of nationalism within the context of Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such scholars argue that the growth of nationalism as a political force should be

understood alongside the rise of modernity. Nationalism therefore is associated with the industrial revolution, economic integration, the growth of bureaucracy and the enfranchisement of the masses (Hutchinson 1994).

While all agreeing that nationalism is a product of modernity, modernists nonetheless do differ on the particulars. John Breuilly for example, focuses on the role of the state as being crucial to the growth of nationalism. In Breuilly's view, the state persuades its body of citizens that they inhabit a bounded sovereign territory and that they are deserving of self-government. Unfortunately, in conflating nationalism and the state, Breuilly's analysis is limited by the fact that nationalisms can exist without respective states, such was the case of Irish nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Eugene Kamenka on the other hand is a modernist scholar who argues that amidst the breakdown of traditional notions of community, nationalism filled a recently vacated socio-psychological niche in the process of identity formation. In arguing that nationalism is a political ideology brought about by transitions in European society, namely the French and industrial revolutions, he states; "[h]istorically, then, modern political nationalism arises in the course of stabilising or making possible the transition from autocratic to democratic or at least popular government. It is a re-casting and re-formation of communities and of political boundaries in circumstances where the old basis of the polity has been radically undermined" (Kamenka, 1973).

Ernest Gellner takes a similar position regarding the question of nationalism's origins, believing that it is the product of the industrial revolution and of the introduction of mass education which promoted homogenization (Gellner 1983). He argues that the most

universal expression of nationalism is the desire to unite the state as a political unit with the state as cultural unit. The result is a world map consisting of clearly demarcated, unproblematic national units. As Gellner states;

[C]onsider the history of the national principle; or consider two ethnographic maps, one drawn before the age of nationalism, and the other after the principle of nationalism has done much of its work. The first map resembles a painting by Kokoschka. The riot of diverse points of colour is such that no clear pattern can be discerned, in any detail... Look now instead at the ethnographic and political map of an area of the modern world. It resembles not Kokoschka, but, say, Mogdiliani, there is very little shading; neat flat surfaces are clearly separated from each other, it is genuinely plain where one begins and another ends, and there is little if any ambiguity or overlap.

(Gellner, 1983: 139-140)

A Constructionist Approach to Nationalism

The constructionist approach is a variant on the modernist approach, and one to which most modernists would subscribe although none voice as expertly as such scholars as Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm. For constructionists, nationalism is a truly modern artifact and, as Benedict Anderson proposes, the nation is an imagined community, made possible by economic integration, the growth of the middle class, and by print-capitalism (Anderson 1983). Crucial to envisioning the nation, such media as the newspaper and the novel facilitated a perceived community among a highly literate population. Exclusively bounded in space and time, its members could feel a bond of kinship with each other –while reading the morning newspaper for example –though they might never meet. As an imagined community, Anderson also believes that nationalism is constructed along a trajectory; grounded in the past and projected into the future. As

he states; "If nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical', the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, glide into a limitless future" (Anderson, 1983).

Since nationalism is solely a product of modernity however, Anderson does not explain what the substance of this "immemorial past" might be. It is likely that he would agree with Eric Hobsbawm who also rejects the idea that nationalism might be primordial, and instead closely linked it to a process Hobsbawm describes as the 'invention of tradition'. As an imaginative venture, the process of nation-building involves the careful selection of a fictional history in which to root the community, especially at times of increased social dislocation when group cohesiveness might be perceived as being under threat. To this end, Hobsbawm believes that nationalism employs repetitious social practices involving ritualistic and symbolic themes, in an effort to establish continuity and to inculcate supposedly age-old values. As he states; "[t]hey are highly relevant to that comparatively recent historical innovation, the 'nation', with its associated phenomena; nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest. All these rest on exercises in social engineering which are often deliberate and always innovative, if only because historical novelty implies innovation" (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983: 13). In the case of Ireland however, the British state introduced educational reforms and newspapers in order to forge a British imagined community out of the Irish, and to marginalize those who resisted. And yet these moves failed completely. This failure points to the principle problem with the modernist and constructionist approaches to nationalism: they fail to properly explain the origin of

nationalism's power, when it is used as a tool by political elites. For nationalism to make so much sense to so many people, how can the past with which it promotes and grounds itself be purely fictional? The reality is that it cannot be, and an ethnicist approach to nationalism explains why this is the case.

An Ethnicist Approach to Nationalism

While admitting that nationalism is largely a product of the modern-state and that it is partly tied to such factors as industrialization, economic integration, the growth of bureaucracy and elite agendas, A.D. Smith argues that its roots lie further back in time, deep within the realms of pre-modern ethnic identity. In his attempts to construct a more general framework with which to theorize nationalism, Smith utilizes the French term 'ethnie', in order to illuminate the older foundations upon which, he believes, national identity has been built. Smith's 'ethnie' is a unique collective cultural unit whose sentiments stem from previous historical epochs. He identifies six components crucial to defining an 'ethnie'; a common myth of descent, a shared history, a distinctive culture (characterized by traits such as language), an association with a specific territory and a shared sense of solidarity and belonging. Smith sees the world therefore, as a complex ethnic mosaic in which some nations have co-opted ethnic components while some 'ethnie' have co-opted nationalist components (Smith 1986).

By so firmly situating the emergence of nationalism within a modern era however, Smith contends that modernists create an artificial disjuncture; the transition from a pre-modern, traditional society to a modern society apparently taking place overnight.

Instead, Smith takes an ethnicist approach to challenge those who interpret nationalism as modern and who discount anything pre-modern as an inventive fiction. He accuses such scholars of being historically shallow (Smith 1996). Smith argues that the rise of modern nationalism is actually a story of ethnic resurgence, a reawakening of past themes relating to shared myths of origin, ways of life, and sense of history and space. Smith contends that these features of nationalism characterized ethnic polities, albeit at a much more local level, in Egypt and Greece, long before the modern era. He argues therefore that scholars should pay greater attention to the pre-existing ethnic foundations from which the state borrowed, and that in many instances the presence of an ethnic core community was crucial in the process of nation-building. In short therefore, he believes that nationalism (as we now know it) is modern, but its popularity may well stem from the fact that it sells itself, and trades with, the currency of previous ages.

Nationalism –Directions

It is clear from the previous discussion that the concept of nationalism has had a special relationship with the discipline of history. Contemporary historians however, such as Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm have become adept in decontextualizing nationalism and analyzing the manner in which it so often constructs the past in a certain flattering light. Nationalism however, is not only a historical phenomenon but also a geographical one; constructing not only a sense of national time but also national space; a historical narrative apparently inseparable from a sovereign territory.

Unfortunately however, scholars continue to take for granted the seemingly natural division of the world into nationally bounded units, and thus fail to adequately theorize nationalism's relationship with space. This is a serious failing to be sure, since not only is time dynamically transformed into national history but so too is space dynamically transformed into national territory; the community imagined in a single shared temporal and spatial frame. Benedict Anderson admits as much, in his introduction to the second edition of *Imagined Communities*, in which he acknowledges that de-valuing space was a serious theoretical flaw in his original analysis. As he states; "...I became uneasily aware that what I had believed to be a significantly new contribution to thinking about nationalism – changing apprehensions of time – patently lacked its necessary coordinate; changing apprehensions of space" (Anderson, 1983). Also inadequately theorized however, is nationalism's relationship with processes of globalization, as both are facets of modernity. An understanding of nationalism not only as a temporal but also a spatial ideology could go some way to rectifying this. In this regard, nationalism could best be theorized as a flexible response to processes of globalization as they impact differentially upon place and the politics of identity formation.

In fact, the quickening pulse of globalization today has resulted in the resurgence of nationalism in the face of time-space compression, increased transnational economic activity, improved global communication and the growth of transnational social movements. As Hobsbawm argues, the pulse of nation-building seems to quicken at times of increased social dislocation, when group cohesion becomes a much sought after commodity. In this respect Hobsbawm shares such a perspective with Johann Arnason, a

sociologist who has argued that recent advances made in globalization theory should contribute to understandings of nationalism. Arnason suggests that nationalism involves a continual reactivation of tradition within modernity; traditions associated with the forging of a unified ethno-history, rooted in place and space-bound within the parameters of the nation (Arnason 1990). This is the pre-existent ethnic core of which A.D. Smith talks, and with respect to the processes of dislocation and displacement, nationalism internalizes the global horizon; acting as a membrane which provides the connections to, and shelter from, the forces of globalization. It is through such a strategy also, that nationalism assumes its taken-for-granted character, and thus carefully shields its mechanisms from the prying eyes of historians for example.

Globalization thus both weakens nationalism at the same time as it strengthens it. Nationalism has been described above all else as the “desire to bring cultural and territorial imperatives together” (Johnson 1995: 98), and this desire is especially felt during periods when nationalism’s apparently natural rootedness is called into question. At such times it might thus become necessary to re-historicize and re-spatialize nationalist identities within a new global framework. I propose therefore that it is time that scholars turn their attention to the manner in which such deterritorialization, and subsequent reterritorialization, takes place and their role in the politics of identity formation.

In order to properly theorize nationalism therefore, it is essential that scholars analyze what has been left out of the national narrative; what spaces and times have been regarded as contradictory in nationalism’s selective quest for purity, homogeneity and a

spatial fix. By only questioning nationalist framing of history and not geography, theory further legitimates sedentarist thinking and fails to recognize the impact that globalization has had on the project of nation-building through processes of dislocation and displacement. As the anthropologist, Ana Alonso points out; “[p]lacements that cannot be incorporated are privatized and particularized, consigned to the margins of the national and denied a fully public voice” (Alonso 1994: 389). In this age of increased globalization, if nationalism is ever able to come to terms with increased social diversity, it is essential that scholars uncover the manner in which the displaced have been relegated in the narrative; those whose mobility undermines the supposedly natural bond between people and place (Alonso 1994).

Space, Scale and Nationalism

In order to problematize and denaturalize the space of the nation-state as the only ontologically given container of nationalism, it is necessary to deploy a theoretical language of space. It is unfortunate however, that so often in theory, space is considered neutral, vacuous or taken-for-granted, and even the discipline of geography could be regarded as ‘space-less’ in this regard to a certain extent (Shields, 1997). It constantly reifies bounded conceptualizations of space so as to envision more manageable theoretical units which are seen to represent larger economic, political or cultural processes. The city for instance represents urbanization just as the nation-state represents nationalism in the bulk of theory. Such theoretical logic however is inherently flawed, because processes of urbanization comprise the city, just as processes of nationalism

comprise the nation-state, and not vice-versa. Theory must concentrate on the processes at work therefore and should not presume predetermined outcomes. In addition it should question the manner in which such representations of bounded territorial units of space operate, and for whom.

The relevance of this conceptualization to questions of nationalism, is that I propose that scholars begin to think outside of national boxes in order to highlight the development of nationalism and the politics of nationalist identity formation in a global arena. No longer is it possible to assume that the space of the nation signifies a fixed notion of national identity. In this regard, I argue that the theorizing of nationalism could benefit enormously from recent social theory which has attempted to explain the manner in which space and society are dialectically interconnected.

In this project, the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre could be regarded as something of a guru; his *La Production de L'espace* being finally translated into English in 1991. Lefebvre focuses primarily on developing a theory of space, and the core of his argument is that space is a social product; unbundled and unstable, uneven and above all else, political. Lefebvre's theory of social space could provide a fruitful way to problematize the fixed spatial framing of nationalism that is so often taken for granted. It allows scholars instead to observe the fluidity of space and the multiple ways in which it can be organized by ideologies such as nationalism. Social space therefore, cannot be regarded as static and bounded, although nationalists for example might want to give the impression that it is.

In this next section therefore, I illuminate some recent social theory undertaken by geographers, which seeks to analyze the implications of regarding both space and scale as a social product. Most of this work does not attempt to theorize nationalist identity formation, instead focusing upon the power of the state, capital and labor in socially producing space and scale for their purposes. In their rejection of ontologically given fixed geographical scales however, such as the 'national', I believe that such approaches can provide us with a theoretical language of space enormously beneficial to theorizing nationalism.

The Social Production of Space

Despairing at the fact that spatial terms are used so abstractly in the world today and that any analysis of space remains scattered across a range of disciplines, Lefebvre recognizes that a unitary theory of space is needed, and proposes his conceptualization of space as social product to be the key. A Marxist, Lefebvre believes that the capitalist mode of production has exerted the greatest influence over space; as a means of production, control, domination and power. Social space he argues, is not only a product but also the means of production – it is somewhat self-perpetuating in that once social relations are projected in space and become thus inscribed, the process produces more space (Dear, 1997). Under the control of specific groups therefore, social space in fact contains and assigns places to both the social relations of production and the social relations of reproduction. Space is thus a social artifact, an embodiment of social

relations and a historical record of 'uneven development', but one that is also productive, fluid and dynamic (Smith, 1983).

To function properly, such relationships must remain concealed however, and in this regard, Lefebvre believes that what he terms a 'double illusion' is in fact at work. While appearing transparent and perfectly innocent, space in fact works to legitimize certain relationships of power. The social production of space is thus an inherently political activity, and by using organic metaphors for example, certain arrangements of social relations can be naturalized, historicized, territorialized or ignored completely. The anthropologist, Ana Alonso for example, discusses how states employ arborescent imagery in order to cement the bond between people, heritage, territory and the state. She points to such examples as the privileging of the Sierra redwood in United States nationalism or the royal palm tree on the Cuban national shield (Alonso 1994). It is for this reason that bounded notions of national space remain so taken for granted in theory. As Lefebvre states; "[t]he apparent translucency taken on by obscure historical and political forces in decline (the state, nationalism) can enlist images having their source in the earth or in nature, in paternity or in maternity. The rational is thus naturalized, while nature cloaks itself in nostalgias which supplant rationality" (Lefebvre, 1991).

In conceptualizing the social production of space, Lefebvre believes that a dialectically related triad of the perceived, the conceived and the lived is of crucial importance to understanding how the social production of space is implicated in relations of power. Firstly, he points to 'spatial practice' which he believes is the manner in which a society 'secretes' space. Secondly, there are 'representations of space', by which

Lefebvre points to certain codes which signal the proper relations of social production and reproduction in space. Finally, the triad includes 'representational spaces', which he believes are lived spaces that are nonetheless symbolic in that they convey certain social meanings. With regard nationalism, such thinking can reveal the manner in which the nation-state might 'secrete' space in the form of a landscape littered with memorials, statues and streets renamed to thrust a new nationalist iconography into the daily lives of those who inhabit this monumental geography.

Space therefore, should cease to be regarded as a static container, Lefebvre having fully illustrated the crucial role that it plays in the forging of social relations, to the extent that it becomes those social relations. In this regard, social theory has not only reasserted the social importance of space in recent years, but has also begun to theorize the manner in which social space is scaffolded as a hierarchical framework of spatial scales. The following section represents a review of this formulation of a theoretical language concerning the social production of scale. It is my intention to offer some suggestions as to how this language problematizes taken-for-granted notions concerning the scale at which nationalisms are articulated and practiced.

The Social Production of Scale

Triggered by a recent increase in the pace of globalization, contemporary social theory analyzing the production of scale has focused primarily upon the question of whether the power of the state, in producing the scales to facilitate capital accumulation,

has been debilitated. In this task it often implicitly draws upon neo-Gramscian state theory in order to theorize the relationship between culture and power.

Writing from a jail cell in the early twentieth century, Antonio Gramsci was an Italian Marxist who developed the concept of hegemony in order to illuminate the manner in which social groups rule. He envisaged civil society as a battlefield upon which various groups deployed ideological weaponry in order to negotiate consent, and legitimate their particular viewpoints. This complex world of power and resistance is one of competing hegemonies, in which power is naturalized by way of cultural inscription. Gramsci's theory of hegemony can provide a useful framework with which to develop a better understanding of how nationalism is narrated; ignoring certain spaces, times and experiences in favor of others, so as to temporalize and territorialize identities.

Social theorists analyzing the social production of scale argue that there is no pre-ordained hierarchical framework for ordering the world, and that scholars should instead examine how such scales as the 'national' for example are socially produced by the state, as well as the manner in which they are transformed over time (Brenner 1997,1998). Space cannot be socially produced therefore, without also being socially scaled – and like space, scale too is fluid and shifting. Scale therefore, is a tool with which the world and its organization can be framed by discourses such as nationalism, and through this geographical ordering and demarcation, it is possible to shape future social activity.

Through the production of space and scale therefore, the world is differentiated into an infinite variety of taken-for-granted compartments, of which the nation-state could be considered a prime example. The logic of such spatial packaging is rarely questioned,

although geographers, literary and cultural theorists, and feminists have been at the forefront of developing a language of space which attempts to do just this. The fact that there is a language of temporal difference, but not spatial, is a situation which exasperates the geographer Neil Smith. As he states; “[w]here are the political debates over the scale at which neighborhoods are constructed, the boundaries of the urban, what makes a region of the nation-state, or indeed what makes the global scale?” (Smith 1993).

Smith’s comments are directly applicable to the study of nationalism where scholars have thoroughly problematized the manner in which nationalism frames history and temporalizes identities, but have failed to be so rigorous with regard the spatial dimension.

Much of the recent work by geographers analyzing the social construction of scale however, has done so from a politico-economic perspective. Both Neil Smith and Neil Brenner for instance, employ a Marxist analysis to argue that the role of the nation-state in particular, is the result of a territorial compromise to resolve the conflicting demands of capitalist competition. The production of nationalist space is regarded largely in politico-economic terms therefore, as the creation of a controlled environment and bounded space, in which to maximize profit for all concerned (Smith 1993, Brenner 1997, 1998). Social space under capitalism is however, being constantly reconstituted and reconfigured, especially under conditions of increased globalization which produces greater levels of global interconnectivity.

From Lefebvre’s conceptualization of social space as a scaffolding of spatial scales, Neil Brenner in fact develops the notion of a scalar fix in order to illustrate the manner in

which the contradiction between fixity and motion in the circulation of capital is overcome. Basically, capital accumulation is dependent upon place yet it annihilates space in the process. The result, Brenner argues, is a scalar fix – a hierarchical stacking of geographic scales which appears stable and thus facilitates the continued (re)territorialization of capital (Brenner 1998). Spatial scales therefore, such as the 'national', cannot be considered 'natural', but are in fact socio-historical constructions. Through their geographical organization of the world, they provide a framework for social action, but as a result are actively politically contested.

Social theory and the analysis of the social production of space and scale need not be solely confined however, to examining the state and economics. In fact, I want to suggest some of the ways in which such spatial theorizing might prove profitable in overhauling theories of nationalism with regard identity formation. Brenner for instance, discusses the contradiction between fixity and motion inherent in capital accumulation, but I want to argue that a similar contradiction exists in the development of nationalism. While nationalism is actively involved in the process of territorializing identity in the face of globalization it could itself be regarded therefore, as a product of globalization and increased deterritorialization.

Much of the literature analyzing the social production of scale, primarily because of its politico-economic concerns, talks of nation-states, thus conflating the two terms. It is important to realize however, that nationalisms can exist independently of states and that most states are not nations in the strictest sense of the term in that they do not contain a single homogeneous people. It is also important to realize that the production of scale is

not completely a project which imposes identities in space and facilitates the domination of the weak by the powerful. In fact, the power to fix scales and territorialize identity can also offer the possibility of resistance, in the words of Brenner, serving “not only as a tool of disempowerment, exclusion and domination but also as a means to construct empowering, inclusive, and even emancipatory counter-geographies” (Brenner 1997b). I wish to argue therefore, that nationalisms, not necessarily aligned with states, can be equally empowered through the harnessing of scale and the construction of scalar fixes, in order to project a stable identity in space.

In the case of nationalist resistance movements, this would involve a counter-spatial hierarchy with which to forge an alternative framing of the world. Paying attention to space and conceptualizing the development of nationalism in this manner would be particularly applicable, I believe, to the case of Irish nationalists who constructed an image of a ‘Greater Ireland’ at a global scale during the late nineteenth century. This imagining of the Irish nation beyond the seas could be regarded as a temporary scalar fix, which Irish nationalists employed to wrest control of the island from the British. As arguably the most globalized of populations following the Great Famine and the dispersal of the Irish to all parts of the globe, the case of Irish nationalism could clearly illuminate the manner in which space and scale can be harnessed for the purpose of resistance. After all, Gramsci talked of how no hegemony was ever complete, and Lefebvre acknowledged that space contains many ‘contradictions’, because those in power often experience difficulty in completely controlling the production of it. As Lefebvre states; “[t]he bourgeoisie and the capitalist system thus experience great difficulty in mastering

what is at once the product and the tool of their mastery, namely space. They find themselves unable to reduce practice (the practico-sensory realm, the body, social-spatial practice) to their abstract space, and hence new, spatial contradictions arise and make themselves felt" (Lefebvre, 1991).

Irish nationalism, I wish to argue, was forged out of such spatial contradictions. In the second half of the nineteenth century a large proportion of the Irish were no longer rooted in Ireland but had been globally dispersed, primarily to the Northeastern cities of the United States. It is my contention that transnational political actors, who ranged from soldiers to politicians to newspaper editors, played a crucial role in exploiting this contradiction, and that Irish nationalism benefited remarkably during this period, from its growth in the cracks between the American and British nation-states, taking advantage of improved communication networks designed to facilitate the circulation of capital and information.

Borders and Boundaries

In attempting to spatially overhaul the theory of nationalism through an examination of spatial contradictions – as sites of creative intervention in nationalism narratives – I believe it is also important that geographers pay attention to such blossoming fields as cultural studies. Representing a multi-disciplinary effort to illuminate such processes as the forging of hybrid identities in the cracks and overlaps betwixt and between nation-states, cultural studies can offer a model with which to break the shackles of territorially contained theory. By abandoning the rigid spatial framing of past theories of

nationalism, it might be possible therefore to analyze processes of nation-state formation within a larger global schematic, and thus perhaps hint at alternative and more pluralistic models of identity formation. The following therefore represents a brief overview of this scholarship as it might pertain to the study of nationalism.

As previously discussed, in response to the impact that processes of globalization have had on the world during the past thirty years especially, geographers have taken notice. They have done so however, primarily from a politico-economic perspective; analyzing increased flows of capital, information and people but failing to question the logic of territorial containment. As a result, although examining how nation-states are being impacted by a greater degree of porosity at their borders, the fact that such a nation-state system exists remains largely taken for granted.

Recent literature in cultural theory however, has begun to theorize nation-state borders not just as spaces through which goods and people flow, but instead as "highly contested and dynamic areas of ideological, cultural and physical turmoil" (Mitchell 1997: 106). Through its focus on such concepts as hybridity, marginality, liminality, in-betweenness and the experience of diasporic groups, cultural theory constitutes a powerful critique of taken-for-granted national narratives premised upon fixity, containment and rooted identity.

In describing the nation as a narrative for example, Homi Bhabha conceptualizes the process of nation-building as the telling of a story about the origins of a community, their moments of character building and their hopes for the future. The nation can thus be regarded as a 'transitional social reality', and an ongoing process of negotiation and

articulation particularly visible Bhabha argues, at its borders and boundaries. As he states; “[t]he boundary is Janus-faced and the problem of outside/inside must always itself, be a process of hybridity, incorporating new ‘people’ in relation to the body politic, generating other sites of meaning and, inevitably, in the political process, producing unmanned sites of political antagonism and unpredictable forces for political representation” (Bhabha 1994). It is along the borders and boundaries especially that the naturalness of nationalism is called into question, and these margins exist not only in space but also in time.

To break the sedentary spell which nationalism has cast upon theory, the key is to illuminate the in-between spaces and times which have remained obscured by nationalist imaginings. Nationalism envisions identity growing organically within the territory of the nation-state, but identities are forged through the articulation of cultural difference and might in truth therefore emerge from the margins. As Bhabha himself argues; “[i]t is in the emergences of the interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference – that the intersubjective and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated (Bhabha 1994).

In discussing such interstices, Bhabha is not simply employing a metaphorical device, but it is ideally the job of geographers to map the corresponding geographies and histories of these crucial moments in the process of nation-building. Such in-between spaces and times could be located not only along physical border zones but also among the experiences of diasporas, refugees and exiles, and through processes of displacement, dislocation and deterritorialization which force people to re-articulate identities in new

environs. The forging of Irish nationalism in the nineteenth century provides an illuminating example of these processes, for Ireland's boundaries could be located temporarily in British, American, Canadian or Australian cities for example, especially in the decades following the Great Famine during which millions of Irish emigrated. As a spatial extension of a proto-Irish nation-state, it is my intention to reveal how vital the Irish diaspora in the United States was to the development of nationalism in Ireland. While territorializing Irish nationalism in the soil of Ireland remained of crucial importance, the existence of a deterritorialized transnational Irish identity nonetheless acted as a crucial source of instigation and imagination for such processes, as well as proving beneficial in many other regards.

Characterized by their hybridity and multilocality, diasporic groups develop strategies by which to transcend nation-states in order to forge alternative social, economic and political networks (Vertovec 1998). In this regard their very presence could be regarded as threatening to nation-building strategies grounded in myths of autonomous identity rooted in territory. It is not surprising therefore that in much nationalism theory, the presence or absence of such diasporic groups is almost completely ignored. In fact, Robin Cohen believes, that over time such diasporic experiences have been ideologically suppressed by the nation-state (Cohen 1999). I contend that this might be especially true in the case of those nationalisms which benefited greatly from being exported and reaffirmed in different contexts overseas. Irish nationalism falls into this category and is proof especially, that nationalisms and states are not as spatially congruent as so many might presume.

A focus on borders and boundaries in cultural theory can encompass many different disciplines, and in her work the anthropologist Liisa Malkki examines the forging of a Hutu national identity in the refugee camps of Tanzania during the 1970s. The existence of such displaced and stateless peoples Malkki believes, represents a challenge to the taken-for-granted national ordering of things. As such, she believes, they represent a 'categorical anomaly'; characterized deviant by virtue of the fact that they occupy the interstices and hence have no rooted identity. As Malkki states; "[o]ur sedentarist assumptions about attachment to place lead us to define displacement not as a fact about sociopolitical context but rather as an inner pathological condition of the displaced" (Malkki, 1992). In the refugee camps however, Malkki argues that nationalism actually increased in importance among the uprooted, who constructed a mythico-history in order to explain their history, their predicament and to express their desire to return home, someday.

Diasporic identities are woven partly from those threads of memories which have been carried across the middle-passage from lives known before. Bhabha refers to such memories as 'partial culture', meaning "the contaminated yet connective tissue between cultures – at once the impossibility of culture's containedness and the boundary between" (Bhabha, 1994). In many ways therefore, diasporic identity is initially based more on memory and public commemoration than on territory (Gilroy, 1994). Similar sentiments are voiced by Breckenridge and Appadurai when they state that "[d]iasporas always leave a trail of collective memory about another place and time and create new maps of desire and of attachment" (Breckenridge and Appadurai, 1989).

Although globalization, as Cohen has pointed out, has enhanced diasporic forms of social organization and our awareness of them, such experiences are not necessarily a postmodern condition, but one that is thoroughly modern – despite what nation-states have informed us. There exists a hidden story of modernity therefore, one that includes nationalisms existing without nation-states and of people inhabiting lives characterized by states of ‘double-consciousness’, by virtue of their experiences living both inside and outside of nation-states (Gilroy, 1993). Such questions arise therefore, as to whether diasporas pre-date the nation-state and whether they will succeed such identity formations. Is displacement in fact a more ‘natural’ state? Are nationalisms forged from diasporic experience? Do territorializing impulses emerge not from the center, but from the margins?

Today, diasporic and other forms or deterritorialized social identities continue to challenge nation-states and thus undermine their taken-for-granted notions of territory, bounded space and rooted identity. In fact a whole new vocabulary is being forged which, in the words of Paul Gilroy, “...now registers the constitutive potency of space, spatiality, distance, travel and itinerancy in human sciences that had been premised on time, temporality, fixity, rootedness and the sedentary” (Gilroy, 1994). In order to truly understand however, why such margins, such ‘third time-spaces’ offer such enormous possibilities of intervention in dominant narratives it is crucial that scholars properly theorize how and why the nation is conceptualized in bounded space (Bhabha, 1994). Only by uncovering the role that the production of space and place plays in nation-building and the manner in which peoples’ identities are mapped on ‘multiple spatial

grids', can we ever begin to understand the uneven experience of displacement (Gupta, 1992).

This is especially the case when one considers that many of the interventions made by those who are displaced, are still made within a dominant nation-state paradigm. It is crucial therefore that these marginal sites of intervention which challenge the narrative of the authentic nation, are not left in the abstract – to only result in empty theory. As Kathryne Mitchell argues, fellow geographers have a role to play in historically and geographically locating these sites, but it is also imperative that they not automatically be conceptualized in terms of a progressive transnational culture, as has often been the case. Instead, she warns scholars to be aware of the fact that such liminal locations can equally serve the interests of capital accumulation.

CHAPTER 3

IRISH NATIONALISM, IRELAND AND IRISH AMERICA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, A LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter I wish to review the manner in which recent historical scholarship has analyzed the development of Irish nationalism in Ireland and Irish America during the second half of the nineteenth century. Despite the many interconnecting strands which bound Ireland to the United States during this period, the literature primarily falls into two camps; that concerned with the national history of Ireland and that with the national history of the United States. As such these literatures represent a diverse body of work, and the following represents a review of notable and important developments within each camp.

Such a bifurcated situation however, I contend again, results from the fact that scholarship fails to question taken-for-granted assumptions concerning national space. As a result, our understanding of Irish nationalism during this period remains constricted within a bi-polar territorial framework that obscures the importance and complexity of transnational interconnections, however brief those interconnections might have been. In other words, I argue that since the Irish nation was once conceptualized as extending far beyond the borders of what later became the Irish nation-state, scholarship on the subject should also embody this transnational scale of national development.

The profession of Irish history evolved alongside Irish nationalism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was common therefore for historical scholars to lend their services to the national cause, not only picking up a pen but also perhaps even picking up a rifle on occasion. As a result, the history of Ireland came to be constructed in the style of a grand narrative of struggle against centuries of imperial aggression. Conforming to strict time periods, this traditional approach to Irish history read therefore as an unfolding drama; a battle between good and evil in which good ultimately prevailed. The forging of such a national narrative proved crucial to the imagining of community and to the development of an Irish national identity, and until relatively late in the twentieth century this official story held sway.

The 1960s and 1970s however, represented a period in which a new generation of historical scholars began to deviate from this traditional approach to Irish history, and as such it represents the formation of what has since been variously tagged a more 'liberal', 'revisionist' or 'postmodern' perspective. Such a perspective has either focussed upon previously ignored chapters in Irish history (considered contradictory to the thickening plot-line previously constructed), or it re-reads traditional chapters in a new light. My own interest in such scholarship lies primarily in the analysis of Irish history and the development of Irish nationalism in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, and the role played by Irish America in this regard.

The Significance of the Great Famine

Beginning in the years of the Great Famine, the period 1848-1882 was one marked by mass starvation and massive emigration, as well as by great political, economic and social change in Ireland. Traditionally considered to be a watershed event in the history of the country, the Great Famine continues to be revisited by scholars to this day. In the last quarter century or so, a number of historians such as J.C. Beckett, F.S.L. Lyons and Roy Foster began to re-examine the Great Famine, in order to situate it within a broader schema. In *The Making of Modern Ireland 1603-1923* for example, J.C. Beckett (1966) continues to regard the Great Famine as a cataclysmic event, although he believes it may not have been the main trigger for change, as had been previously assumed, since there had actually been previous famines in Ireland, albeit at a lesser scale. In his book, *Ireland Since the Famine*, F.S.L. Lyons (1971) believes the Great Famine was a disaster which fast changed the political and psychological climate of Ireland for the remainder of the century, and that its magnitude remains significant.

The problem however, as Roy Foster (1988) has pointed out, is that because of the magnitude of the devastation wrought by the Great Famine, its horrors have hence consumed all historical perspective. Foster for one, is therefore critical of traditional approaches to Irish history which dichotomize social relations in terms of a battle between colonizer and colonized; between landlord and peasant. He believes that this approach obscures the complexity of such events as the Great Famine, and that Irish society was in fact, far more multidimensional than commonly characterized. While continuing to attribute blame to the British government for the catastrophe, Foster

nonetheless attempts to trace the cause of the Great Famine therefore, to the uneven development of the Irish agricultural economy (Foster 1988). Historians such as Kevin Kenny however, who could be described as post-revisionist, have since sought to temper this revisionist perspective. Although Ireland was vulnerable to ecological and demographic disaster, Kenny for example, believes that blame should still be attributed to the British government who used the Famine as an opportunity to bring about economic, social and moral changes (Kenny 2000).

The Great Famine therefore remains of crucial significance in any history of nineteenth century Ireland, and is hence also an important factor in any study of the development of Irish nationalism. In traditional approaches to the study of Irish nationalism however, while the Great Famine is acknowledged as triggering significant social change, its effects on Irish nationalism are not seen to crystallize until the 1870s. As a result, the couple of decades immediately following the Great Famine often appear as a lull in the development of Irish nationalism. My contention is that these lost decades result from the refusal of scholars to acknowledge any extra-territorial dimensions to Irish nationalism.

Since the introduction of the potato to Ireland from the Americas in the seventeenth century, the Irish population had exploded. In the period 1672-1732, the population of Ireland doubled to over two million inhabitants, and in the period 1732-1788 it doubled again to over four million. By 1841, the population had doubled once more to over eight million individuals, resulting in extreme pressure on the land. To this day, there have never been so many living Irishborn people. Completely dependent upon the potato crop,

and in a country in which industrial development had been stymied under colonial rule, millions of Irish lived a precarious existence at subsistence levels, renting plots of land in rural areas.

When the airborne fungal infestation, 'phytophthora infestans' swept the country, it devastated the potato crop and hence the only source of food for these millions of rural, landless poor. In the period 1846-1855, of the eight million inhabitants of Ireland, over a million died of starvation and related diseases, and more than two million fled the country (Kenny 2000). The Irish had known emigration before, in the pre-Famine period 1815-1845 for example, when over a million Irish had ventured overseas, but these numbers were small in comparison to those in the post-Famine years. The Great Famine therefore marked a rapid increase in the number of Irish people emigrating, and the landless poor who inhabited the western seaboard of Ireland were particularly hard hit.

The Irish in the United States

The Irish emigrated overwhelmingly to the United States where, by the mid-nineteenth century there was already a sizable Irish emigrant community. Significant Irish emigration to the New World had actually begun as early as the seventeenth century when the British ruler, Oliver Cromwell, sold an estimated 12,000 Irish into slavery in the Caribbean. Most of these individuals were overworked and died quickly of disease. In the United States however, an estimated 100,000 Irish had arrived voluntarily during the seventeenth century. They did not coalesce as a cohesive emigrant group however, as they were overwhelmingly single Catholic men who worked as indentured servants. In

the eighteenth century however, between 250,000-400,000 Protestants arrived in the United States from the Irish province of Ulster. They settled primarily in the Northeast but soon developed a reputation as frontiersmen, and by the early nineteenth century to be Irish in America meant being of hardy Protestant stock (Kenny 2000).

In the nineteenth century however, and especially following the Famine, this definition of American Irishness was radically transformed, by millions of Irish Catholics who arrived on American shores. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Irish nation therefore extended far beyond the shores of Ireland to such cities as New York, the primary destination of Irish emigrants. In the post-Famine period, these Irish Americans maintained ties with home; brothers, sisters, mothers and sometimes entire rural communities eventually following the first few intrepid souls overseas, their passage pre-paid in dollars. Overwhelmingly Catholic, by the year 1890 there were almost two million Irishborn individuals resident in the United States, as well as a further three million second-generation Irish, who could claim both parents born in Ireland. Globally, by the year 1890, a phenomenal 39 percent of all Irishborn were not resident in Ireland (Foster 1988, Kenny 2000).

Irish Nationalism in the United States

In New York, Irish nationalism grew at an infectious rate and it is my argument that such cities became virtual extensions of Ireland during the post-Famine period. Any history of Ireland should attempt to trace the experiences of diasporic groups to foreign shores, but unfortunately it is prevented from doing so by a taken-for-granted state-

centric approach. This, despite the fact that the territorial boundaries of the British state which then encompassed Ireland, had been rendered largely inconsequential by virtue of the mass-exodus of Irish during this period.

More recent scholarship of the 1960s and 1970s does at least begin to acknowledge the impact that this massive diasporic population had on Ireland during this period. J.C. Beckett for example, briefly argues that Irish America remained a hot-bed of Irish nationalist fervor in the decades immediately following the Great Famine. F.S.L. Lyons too, believes that continued diasporic support of Irish nationalism and their lobbying power in foreign countries proved crucial to internationalizing Great Britain's domestic 'Irish Question' (Lyons 1971). As Lyons states; "[i]t was not just that within the shores of Ireland the old bitterness of a depressed peasantry against an alien and often ruthless landlord class was reinforced...It was rather that this hatred, this bitterness, this resentment was carried overseas, and especially to America, by nearly four million Irish men, women and children who left their homeland decade by decade and year by year in the half century after the Famine" (Lyons 1971: 4). In casting diasporic nationalism purely in terms of bitterness and a pathological hatred of Britain, Lyons appears reluctant to fully explore Irish nationalism overseas. As is the case with much Irish historical scholarship on this period, diasporic nationalism such as that which bloomed in the United States is treated largely as a concern of American and not Irish history (which, it is presumed, could only have taken place on the island of Ireland). This is a problem, because such thinking fails not only to question the supposedly stable relationship between nationalist identity and place, but also nationalism's territorializing impulse.

Although the recent work of such historians such as Kevin Kenny is deserving of praise for its emphasis on the Irish Diaspora, the study of Irish history nonetheless remains bound by state-centric conceptions of territory. It is a fact painfully evident in the following statement made by Kenny, indicative I believe of the manner in which space remains theoretically undervalued in the theorizing of nationalism. As he states; “[t]he story of the great Irish migration to America makes sense only if it is examined in terms of two intersecting national histories, Irish and American, overlapping in time but divided by the Atlantic Ocean” (Kenny 2000: 4). Physically, the Irish may have been divided by an ocean, but in terms of imagined space and the territorial construction of an Irish nation mentally, it is my argument that Irish America was in fact much closer to Ireland for a brief period of time. I believe it is crucial that scholars begin to theorize this borderland (created by massive emigration), not as an overlap or contradiction in the national rubric of space, but as a zone in which new versions of Irish nationalism were articulated.

Roy Foster is one historian who refuses to treat the revolutionary ferment of the post-Famine period as purely home-brewed, and instead seeks to illuminate such transnational interconnectivity as that which existed for example, between the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States, and the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Ireland. In addition, Foster is also critical of the traditional reading of Irish history during this period which seeks to separate revolutionary nationalism from any subsequent constitutional national activity. Instead he urges scholars to analyze the links between the two, and the manner in which

later diplomatic channels were opened in the 1870s by virtue of earlier violence having occurred.

Assimilation and Exile

Roy Foster, like many other Irish scholars who seek to explain the growth of Irish nationalism in the United States during this post-Famine period, relies too heavily however on the manner in which it has been interpreted by American historians. Like Irish history, American history also remains packaged within unproblematized notions of national space, and therefore the history of Irish Americans is cast solely within a New World context.

Like Lyons therefore and many other Irish historians, Foster simply attributes the growth of Irish nationalism in the United States to the needs of emigrants in their new society. In this regard, he interprets the growth of diasporic nationalism using an assimilation model, to argue that Irish nationalism in the United States was largely a product of resentment, alienation, poverty and of the emigrant's desire for acceptance and respectability in a new society. While this explanation is a valid one, since Irish nationalism was used as a banner around which Irish Americans rallied to improve their lot in the United States, it nonetheless obscures the complexity of Irish American society. Irish America in the second half of the nineteenth century was not solely composed of the middle class or of those who aspired to middle-class status, the majority of Irish Americans were in fact working class, and their experiences should not be relegated to some transitional or peripheral stage.

Using the assimilation model therefore – as many scholars of Irish nationalism have been prone to do, in their struggle to explain Irish nationalism in the United States during this period – is deeply problematic. This is primarily because it presumes that Irish Americans became accustomed to their new lives and aspired to become middle-class citizens from the moment that they stepped off the ship. As a result, the assimilationist model not only ignores the diversity of Irish America, but also the fact that Irish immigrants in America may have occupied a more interstitial position for a period of time, one that was characterized instead by ‘double consciousness’ and a sense of dual loyalty (Gilroy 1993). Typical for example is the viewpoint of F.S.L. Lyons, who states that; “[w]ith domestic preoccupations of the Irish Americans we are not here concerned, though for a proper understanding of their actions it has to be realized that these preoccupations were intensely important to them, starting, as most of them had done, from the lowest abyss of poverty, they wanted desperately to climb up to acceptance and respectability...Irish independence would allow them to enter more freely into the benefits of American independence” (Lyons, 1971).

Illuminating the Diversity of Irish America

Although this is part of the story, that Irish nationalism was geared towards American ends, it is however not the whole story since many Irish emigrants remained tied to events in Ireland. In addition, it also completely ignores the role played by small cadres of Irish nationalists who used the United States as a base of operations from which to forge Irish nationalism transnationally, and who cared nothing about becoming better

Americans. These individuals played a crucial role in the development of Irish nationalism, and were often as influential in the United States as they were in Ireland. In their constant traversing of the Atlantic ocean they helped to unite Ireland and Irish America as a single complex Irish world in pursuit of national independence.

Unfortunately however, because the history of Irish nationalism has been predominately conceptualized as being contained within the national territory of Ireland, the role played by these transatlantic revolutionaries in the forging of Irish nationalism is either omitted, or their transnational mobility downplayed in favor of a more rooted existence in Ireland.

Most of the historical scholarship examining the Irish in America during the nineteenth century is dominated by the Famine refugees and their experiences in the United States. This scholarship details their bewildered arrival and settlement in such cities as New York and Boston, and depicts them as completely unprepared and ill-equipped for their new lives in a modern urban society far from home. From this lowly position however, these new Irish Americans are regarded as fast social climbers, and the historical narrative is typically one which details a meteoric rise out of the ghettos.

Typical is the approach taken by Lawrence J. McCaffrey (1976, 1992, 1997) for example, who employs somewhat questionable pseudo-psychological reasoning in order to account for the cultural 'baggage' that the Great Famine refugees carried with them. Such a viewpoint actually appears repeatedly in scholarship pertaining to Irish-American society during this period; a presumption that these emigrants were somehow dysfunctional when they first arrived, and hence unable to fit into American society. McCaffrey also relies upon stereotypical assumptions in order to ascertain that Irish

American political skills were largely a product of the "gregarious character of the Irish personality". Meanwhile, the presence of Irish nationalism amongst these recent arrivals is again regarded as being a product of their intense hatred of Great Britain, as well as being a survival mechanism in the new context in which the Irish found themselves. As McCaffrey states for example; "[i]n response to the pressures, hostility and prejudices of Anglo-American Protestant nativism, Irish nationalism jelled and flourished in the ghettos of urban America as a search for identity, an expression of vengeance, and a quest for respectability" (McCaffrey 1976: 68). His argument therefore, is that the Irish nationalism which bloomed amongst Irish immigrants to the United States should be regarded largely in terms of their becoming American. McCaffrey does point out however, that the history of Irish Americans should be viewed as part of the totality of Irish history.

Perhaps the most important recent book which analyzes the history of Irish America is *Emigrants and Exiles* by the historian Kerby Miller, which represents a major advancement on any previous studies. A truly monumental and exhaustive effort, Miller urges historians to study the plight of the Irish diaspora in the nineteenth century not just in terms of political conflict and colonial subjugation in Ireland, but also in terms of a broader picture; of a traditional Irish society adjusting to a rapidly modernizing world. Two products of this situation were emigration and Irish nationalism, while Irish-American nationalism bridged the gap. Miller examines the unstable hybrid culture that was Irish America, and unlike previous scholars is willing to include both Ireland and the United States in his transnational perspective.

In particular, Miller is interested in the exile motif; in other words the predilection for nineteenth century Irish Americans to style themselves as political 'exiles' from the land of their birth. Miller refuses to deal only with Catholic Famine immigrants, and through an analysis of previous work dealing with Irish America, and an examination of immigrant letters, and memoirs, as well as poems and ballads, he attempts to reconstruct an evolving Irish-American consciousness. Rooted in ancient traditions, it was a fatalistic worldview which he believes greatly shaped their experiences in America. Although most had emigrated to better themselves, Irish immigrants nonetheless allayed any guilt they might have felt by blaming others, such as the English government or Irish landlords, for their fate. As Miller states; "...disappointments abroad encouraged a Catholic Irish propensity to avoid individual responsibility for innovative actions such as emigration and to fall back on communally acceptable "explanations" embedded in archaic historic and literary traditions and reinforced by modern Irish political rhetoric" (Miller 1985:277). The exile motif of course, was only further strengthened by the dramatization of the plight of real Irish political exiles who sought support for their nationalist cause and for Irish American institutions during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Another influential historian of Irish America who also discusses this propensity of emigrants to style themselves as exiles from Ireland during this period is Hasia Diner. In her analysis of Irish emigration to the United States, which she divides into four distinct stages, Diner argues that it was economics which played the most important role in the Irish emigrant's decision to leave Ireland in the nineteenth century, and not political or

religious persecution. In the style of much immigration history, Diner envisions successive waves of Irish emigrants washing up on the shores of the American nation-state, their lives marked by sudden rupture, dislocation and displacement. In fact, Diner identifies four waves. First, there were those who arrived in the United States prior to the Great Famine. Second, there was the largest wave of all; a tsunami of misery during which over one million Irish fleeing the Great Famine were deposited in the United States, during the 1840s and 1850s. Third, there were those immigrants who arrived in the post-Famine period during the second half of the nineteenth century, and finally Diner identifies those Irish immigrants who began to arrive in the United States in larger numbers again during the 1970s (Diner 1996).

Like R.F. Foster, Diner attempts to contextualize the Great Famine in terms of the state of the Irish economy and increasing population pressure on the land, but her prime concern is with the impact that the Irish immigrants had on American society. In this regard, Diner points to the task of institution building to which the Irish applied themselves in the second half of the nineteenth century, and primarily in the northeastern cities of the United States. It is Diner's belief that church-based organizations, trade unions, newspapers, political parties and Irish nationalist organizations, acted as crucial buffers in protecting the Irish from nativist hostility. Diner shares this perspective with the historian Kevin Kenny (2000), who also argues that the Catholic Church and the Democratic party not only provided a refuge for Irish Americans as well as a means by which eventually to attain power, but that they also both helped to shape Irishness in the United States. Although my concern is primarily with illustrating the manner in which

Irish nationalism was a crucial transatlantic institution in the post-Famine period, I would like to point out that another crucial transatlantic institution, the Catholic Church, has not been neglected in studies of Irish America.

There is a small proportion of scholarship however, which does analyze the impact that this American brand of revolutionary fever had in Ireland itself during the post-Famine period. For the large part however, it consists of factual accounts; historical narratives meticulously constructed, but which nonetheless do not attempt to gauge any overall impact that Irish Americans might have had on the development of Irish nationalism. At best though, such approaches attempt to trace Irish-American financial support for Irish nationalist causes during this period, and do not concern themselves with ideological or physical involvement. Arnold Schrier (1997) for example, discusses what he terms the 'return tide', by which he refers to the estimated \$34 million sent home to Ireland from the United States in personal remittances in the forty years after the Great Famine. This money took the form of bank drafts, money orders, cash and steamship tickets, and Schrier believes it must have had an enormous impact on the Irish economy, though ascertaining exactly how, remains a very difficult task. Any funding of Irish nationalist organizations however, Schrier believes was solely the result of Irish-American resentment for Britain, or perhaps a product of sentimental romanticism.

Much of the historical scholarship concerning Irish immigrants in the United States during the nineteenth century therefore conforms to the grand narrative; from the rupture of leaving one's place of birth to the initial confusion of a new life, before charting the emigrant's rapid rise up the social ladder towards greater assimilation. The existence of

Irish nationalism in the United States has only been analyzed within this state-centric escalator model. Quite unprepared for life in modern American cities, it is argued that the Irish soon forgot regional loyalties belonging to past lives and instead discovered a commonality of Irishness essential for survival. In recent years however, the assimilation model has been questioned by historians who argue that it is one-dimensional in its assumption that the only assimilation which occurred was the Irish becoming middle class. With regards to scholarship pertaining to Irish nationalism, I believe that the assimilation model has also misled historians into believing that the growth of Irish nationalism in the United States was solely a means for Irish emigrants to attain middle-class status. This is a failing, because it ignores the fact that Irish nationalism in the United States appeared in many other guises.

Mobility, Labor, Race and Gender

During the second half of the nineteenth century there were many layers of Irish American society, each interconnected to a greater or lesser degree with events in Ireland, and each with its own vision of Irish nationalism, constantly evolving in response to unique changing circumstances. At the most basic level however, it is important to realize that Irish Americans were employed overwhelmingly in the unskilled sectors of the economy, as laborers and as domestic servants. Any degree of assimilation or social mobility evident, occurred therefore mainly within the working class and by the 1870s a greater proportion of Irish Americans were employed in semi-skilled or skilled professions, though quite often in the same trade of canal construction or iron smelting

for example in which they had started. Although these Irish Americans bought homes, they were by no means middle class and any further social advancement often had to wait until the following generation, although it was by no means assured (Kenny 2000).

In the Western United States, Irish Americans fared better and recently historians such as David Emmons for example, have begun to free the study of Irish America from its northeastern urban confines. Such work illuminates far greater levels of geographic mobility among Irish Americans than previously realized, as well as pronounced class stratification. In his wonderful account of Irish immigrants in the western mining town of Butte, Montana, for example, David Emmons focuses upon the late nineteenth century, a period which he believes has been under-valued by historians who focus instead solely on the era of the Great Famine.

The bulk of scholarship on Irish America seeks to temporally compartmentalize the various waves of immigrants who washed upon America's shores, but Emmons argues that there is more to the story of Irish emigration than the experiences of the 1.1 million impoverished Catholics who arrived in the period 1848-1854. During the second half of the nineteenth century, he believes that Ireland acted as a nursery for industrializing societies, and that Irish emigrating to the United States encountered Irish-American communities already intricately socially differentiated. These new arrivals were also increasingly mobile as the century progressed, and had arrived in America to work and to stay. The Irish, according to Emmons, "had wandered to America; they would wander in it, a part of a floating proletariat" (Emmons 1990: 6). Emmons therefore situates the Irish historically and geographically in a region which had previous only been analyzed in

terms of wagon trains and native-born Protestants – to prove that the Irish emigrant's impulse to travel west, sometimes did not dissipate in New York City.

The fact that the deep depression of the 1870s opened up many profound class divisions among Irish Americans is explained by Eric Foner (1978) in his excellent analysis of the Irish nationalist organization, the Land League. In particular, Foner illuminates the role that Irish nationalism actually played in introducing hundreds of thousands of Irish Americans to labor reform ideologies. Instead of being divided by class, as the traditional narrative of gradual assimilation would argue, Foner instead believes that the Land League united Irish Americans across class boundaries, and like David Emmons he widens the geographical frame to focus on such areas as the anthracite mining towns of Pennsylvania.

These regions, Foner believes, constituted a hotbed of both Irish nationalism and labor radicalism in the late nineteenth century, the two being intricately interconnected. In addition, he points to the importance of print-capitalism in the forging of an Irish community in the United States across vast distances – newspapers such as the *Irish World* published in Brooklyn, and the *Pilot* published in Boston for example. Foner's principal argument is that although Irish-American nationalism played a very important role in the assimilation process and the acquisition of middle-class values, those values did not dominate all of Irish America as scholars have previously presumed. He urges historians to stop treating the Irish-American working-class as a transitional rung on the ladder of upward social mobility and instead, to recognize that many Irish Americans never left this rung and their working-class lives therefore require proper analysis.

Another recent welcome development in the study of Irish Americans during the second half of the nineteenth century is that which analyzes questions of race, and whether or not Irish social advancement in the United States can be attributed to their whiteness. Before the Great Famine, Irish nationalist leaders such as Daniel O'Connell, popularly known as 'the Liberator' in Ireland, had been important advocates of the abolitionist cause, recognizing parallels between the plight of colonized Irish and enslaved Africans. During the 1840s, a number of African-American abolitionists, such as Lenox Remond, made speaking tours of Ireland and in fact, William Lloyd Garrison later named his famous American anti-slavery newspaper the *Liberator* in honor of Daniel O'Connell. Incidentally, a young Irishborn American by the name of Patrick Ford learned his trade at this newspaper. He went to found and edit the *Irish World*, perhaps the most popular Irish-American newspaper of the century. (Kenny 2000).

Although there were historic ties between Irish nationalism and the abolitionist movement, and although the Irish were themselves considered racially inferior on both sides of the Atlantic ocean, in the United States the Irish found themselves competing for the same jobs as African Americans in the post-Famine period. In his book, *How The Irish Became White*, Noel Ignatiev (1995) traces the manner in which the Irish were transformed from being a subject race to a dominant race, by virtue of their having crossed the Atlantic ocean. In what amounts to a radical reassessment of traditional histories concerning immigration and working-class formation, Ignatiev argues that late nineteenth century Irish Americans began to use their whiteness in order to secure advantages in a competitive and racist society. In this task, Ignatiev focuses upon race

riots and labor organization in such cities as New York, Boston and Philadelphia. He analyzes how Irish immigrants, who entered American society at the lowest rung on the ladder, slowly made such industries as textiles, ship-building and mining their own – as respectable white folks.

Ignatiev's argument, in fact, draws largely from the work of David Roediger (1991), who wrote a much more comprehensive analysis of the working class in America, *The Wages of Whiteness*. Roediger is critical of labor historians who refuse to acknowledge the role played by race, as a social construction, in working-class formation. For groups such as the Irish, performing the most menial of labor, Roediger would argue that their whiteness constituted a 'psychological wage', and they took full advantage of such concessions to improve their lot. It is important however, as Kevin Kenny (2000) points out, to realize that choosing whiteness was not necessarily a conscious choice by Irish Americans who wished to advance socially. The Irish only experienced a certain level of racism themselves when they arrived in the United States, and given the chance they gradually took advantage of a racial hierarchy which they realized over time, was stacked in their favor.

Amongst other welcome scholarly developments in the study of Irish America and Irish nationalism in the nineteenth century, has been an overdue analysis of the role of women. Hasia Diner (1983) for instance, in her book *Erin's Daughters in America* points out that more Irish women emigrated to the United States than men in the post-Famine period. Most of these Irish women were young and single, and they fled a patriarchal Irish society which offered them few economic opportunities. The Great Famine in

Ireland greatly diminished women's socio-economic status and it resulted in a radical defeminization of the Irish countryside. In the United States, Irish women gained greater levels of economic independence and self-sufficiency by virtue of their waged labor. Diner illustrates these processes with reference to the domestic service and textile industries which Irish women dominated in the northeastern cities of the United States.

While still propagating a story of economic mobility, Diner nonetheless differentiates between Irish Americans to argue that Irish women in fact might have been faster social climbers than Irish men. With reference to Irish nationalism however, Diner points out that women were not as actively involved as men during this period; nationalism being viewed as a masculine and public concern, especially in Ireland. As she states; "[t]he republic that the nationalists dreamed of creating bore a close resemblance to the one in which they lived, when it came to marriage and family and the role of women. The paucity of women activists and the lack of a women's agenda within the movement for Irish independence stands in stark contrast to almost all the modern revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (Diner 1983: 25). Diner refers here primarily to Irish nationalism as practiced by the Irish and not by Irish Americans. While nationalism was a highly patriarchal enterprise during this period, and women were scarce in the ranks of Irish nationalist organizations, more work is required to analyze the role of women in the forging of Irish nationalism. This is particularly the case with regard the role of Irish-American women who, because of their greatly improved social and economic status, did become actively involved in the fight for Irish freedom. A powerful illustration of this

point is the Ladies Land League of New York City, which exported their brand of female-led revolutionary activity to Ireland during the 1880s Land War.

Revising Ireland

In Ireland for much of the twentieth century, the writing of Irish history remained bound to the processes of state formation and to a teleological and territorialized narrative of the development of Irish nationalism. Recently however, such traditional readings of the past have been challenged by new approaches which seek to problematize nationalist historical accounts. The revisionist impulse however, has emanated not from history or geography but largely from the discipline of cultural studies and literary criticism. As a result, it has primarily been the task of non-historians to illuminate the fact that the Irish nation-state has been founded upon a 'fetishization of invented traditions' (Lloyd, 1999). Amongst the more worthy of these revisionist efforts, is the work by Declan Kiberd.

In *Inventing Ireland* for example, Kiberd considers the bulk of Irish historical scholarship in the twentieth century to have been narcissistic; promoting a metanarrative of Irish exceptionality and refusing to entertain the possibility that Ireland might share some postcolonial experiences with other similarly once-colonized peoples (Kiberd 1995). Kiberd argues that such historical blinkering on the part of Irish academics is a product of Ireland's cultural nationalist anchors, grounded at the turn of the century in a racist and sectarian ideology. In addition, he criticizes Irish historians for their atheoretical scholarship, and for their failure to question the limitations of evidence and to admit that they are creating the past, not just writing about it. In this regard, Kiberd

and other revisionists such as Seamus Deane frequently target the work of the historian Roy Foster whom they accuse of pretending to present history as pure and untampered with.

Whether Irish historians are guilty of metanarrating the past or not, modern Irish historical scholarship is now largely revisionist in character. The discipline of geography however, has been slow to follow this lead, but such wonderful texts as *In Search of Ireland*, edited by Brian Graham, represent an auspicious beginning. The book represents a much needed fresh approach to the study of Irish cultural geography, and illustrates how a heterogeneous Irish population draws upon the past to forge aspirations within a “complex geographical mosaic of locality, class and gender” (Graham 1997: xi). As a result the book illuminates the manner in which identities are shaped through a mythologization of past and present, which supports particular political ideologies such as Irish nationalism. Graham illustrates therefore, the manner in which hegemonic representations of place function within the national project of politicizing space. In this regard, geographers such as Nuala Johnson, elsewhere in the book, examine the crucial role that the landscape of western Ireland played in nationalist mythology at the turn of century.

Another Irish historical geographer is W. J. Smyth, whose essay discussing a ‘plurality of Irelands’ is also included in Graham’s edited collection. Smyth draws from the tradition of Estyn Evans and T. Jones Hughs, and their analysis of the Irish landscape as a melding of environment and history, and thus a text to be decoded. Eager to illuminate the regional diversity of Ireland over time, his wonderful essay raises the

possibility of their having existed many 'Irelands' but he nonetheless remains locked within the national space we today call Ireland. As Smyth states; "[t]hus the answer to the simple question, 'Where is Ireland' cannot be answered in the singular. There have been and there are many Irelands. The crucial point is that Ireland is an island, the size, shape and space relations of which have had a profound influence on the cultural history of its people" (Smyth 1997: 19). Such thinking denies the enormous influence that Irish Americans had on Ireland during the post-Famine period, especially with regard the development of Irish nationalism transnationally. While Smyth argues that Ireland's relationships with other peoples and places have had a profound effect on the island, in particular with regard Great Britain, his analysis nonetheless fails to problematize taken-for-granted notions of national space and time. Perhaps the question, 'When and where was Ireland?' might be a better one.

Revisionism however, has attracted a great deal of criticism from those who believe that Irish academics are reneging on their social responsibilities. By illuminating the manner in which Irish nationalism imposed cultural homogeneity on the population, and by highlighting how Irish nationalism was instead forged from diverse and contradictory elements, Irish scholars however believe that they are opening up possibilities for future much needed more inclusive notions of Irishness. In this task of hybridizing the past, Irish geographers have an important role to play. This is especially the case, I believe, with regard illuminating the important, yet under-acknowledged role, that Irish Americans played in the forging of Irish nationalism.

In the following three historical chapters therefore, I will reconstruct the story of how Irish nationalism developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, but this analysis will not be contained within the national territory we today call Ireland. Instead, it is my intention to illuminate the manner in which this complex national story is in fact, transnational. Just because millions of Irish emigrated during this period in time, it should not be assumed that they left their nationalism behind in Ireland. In fact, I argue that it was often their most cherished possession. Reactivated in new contexts, their nationalism helped the Irish Diaspora to make some sense of their predicament, to unite under foreign skies and to channel their energies into insuring such dislocation and loss would never be repeated –because Ireland would soon be free. Thrown to the winds and to the oceans, the Irish diaspora extended the boundaries of Ireland symbolically and internationalized Irish nationalism at a global scale. In recapturing their stories, I follow the many paths that Irish nationalism took, while placing emphasis on the bonds which continued to unite these global Irish with their homeland, long after they had left. So often, scholarship treats such diasporic Irish nationalism as being solely the preserve of an American or an Australian context for example. It is my hope to rectify this failing.

CHAPTER 4

IN THE SHADOW OF THE GREAT FAMINE: FENIANISM, FILIBUSTERING AND FOLLY

With the accumulation of rents in Ireland, the accumulation of Irish in America keeps pace. The Irishman, banished by sheep and ox, re-appears on the other side of the ocean as a Fenian, and face to face with the old queen of the seas rises, threatening and more threatening, the young giant Republic:

*Acerba fata Romanus agunt
Scelusque fraternae necis.*

(Karl Marx 1867 in Marx & Engels 1972: 115-116)

Introduction

This is the story of how Irish nationalism developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, long before there ever existed an Irish nation-state, and of the crucial role played by the Irish Diaspora, in particular Irish Americans, in this development. Unlike the most commonly narrated version of this story however, it will not be territorially contained within the space that later became the Irish nation-state, nor will it be told from an unproblematic teleological perspective. Instead, I will illuminate the complex transnational and polyvocal character of this narrative, and will trace the transatlantic circulations, interconnections and flows from which, I argue, Irish nationalism benefited enormously during this period.

This, the first of three historical chapters, begins in the mid-nineteenth century, in the immediate aftermath of the Great Famine. It is a time when the Irish were one of the most globalized of peoples, having been forced to flee to the corners of the earth by the calamity which had struck their homeland. Often escaping the devastation of the Famine with only their lives and the clothes upon their backs, these refugees did however often carry with them one commonly cherished possession –a sense of Irish nationalism infused with a vehement hatred for British rule. Overseas, the Irish Diaspora reactivated this nationalism in new contexts, such as New York City, where it helped them make some sense of their predicament, to unite under foreign skies and to channel their energies into ensuring such massive dislocation and loss of life would never be repeated – because Ireland would soon be free.

The story begins in the year 1857 therefore, when Irish nationalists in New York City re-launched Irish nationalism in Ireland in a new guise. This first historical chapter consequently charts the rise and fall of this particular hybrid brand of nationalism, which became known as Fenianism, following a chronological path to retrace the important steps taken by the Irish Diaspora to further the cause of Irish nationalism in Ireland during this period. As such, this first historical chapter will begin to reconstruct some of the transatlantic circuitry then in place, and will explain how these transatlantic interconnections were utilized in the building of Irish nationalism. In this task, my analysis will revolve around three recurring themes; the crucial role played by transnational political actors, the formation of circuits of revolutionary capital and finally, the imagining of a transatlantic Irish nation.

In this chapter I will therefore seek to illuminate an evolving historical geography of 'in-betweenness' and will stress the importance of hybrid spaces and times as crucial sites and moments of creative intervention in the forging of Irish nationalism. Previously considered contradictory to the traditional national narrative rooted in what later became the Irish nation-state, and hence either downplayed or ignored, the creative interventions made by the Irish Diaspora took many different forms in the period this first historical chapter analyzes, c. 1857-1867. The historical narrative will therefore focus on such events as the Dublin funeral of an Irish revolutionary hero which, I argue, served as a public display of Irish nationalist strength in 1861, following the repatriation of his remains from the United States. In addition, I will also analyze how Irish nationalists in the United States, in conjunction with those in Ireland, organized a very successful fundraising fair in Chicago in 1864. And in what I will argue, is perhaps the most significant intervention of them all during this time period, I will conclude this chapter with an analysis of the role played by veterans of the American Civil War in organizing and leading an Irish revolution which took place in 1867.

In recapturing the stories of these men and women in this chapter, I therefore begin to follow the many paths which Irish nationalism took during the second half of the nineteenth century, placing particular emphasis on the bonds which continued to unite the Irish Diaspora with their homeland. So often, scholarship treats such diasporic Irish nationalism as being solely the preserve of another country's history. In this chapter it is my hope to begin to rectify this failing.

The Founding of a Transatlantic Brotherhood

In the autumn of 1857, James Stephens, a former Young Irelander, received a communiqué from an Irish nationalist organization in New York City which proposed that he found a new Irish revolutionary organization. It had been sent by the Emmet Monument Association, and accompanying it was also a letter from John O'Mahony, a friend and fellow Young Irelander whom Stephens had spent time with in Paris following the failed 1848 Rising, and before O'Mahony had made a name for himself as a New York Irish nationalist. The two documents asked Stephens to begin to form a new revolutionary organization in Ireland, dedicated to achieving Irish independence.

Both Stephens and O'Mahony had been members of the Young Ireland movement, a group of Irish nationalists who had grown impatient with the peaceful doctrine of their leader, Daniel O'Connell, and who, following his death, turned instead to a more physical brand of Irish nationalism which they hoped might prove more successful. This they did in the late 1840s, but it was to prove an ill-fated decision. Their uprising failed miserably in 1848 and the Young Ireland leaders were consequently forced to flee for their lives; primarily to the United States, where they joined hundreds of thousands of Irish men and women who had fled the horrors of the Great Famine.

In the years since the potato blight had first appeared in Ireland, in the summer of 1845, the country had experienced catastrophic levels of devastation, particularly in Western and South Western regions. Between 1845 and 1855, it has been estimated that 2.1 million Irish fled the country, and that as many as 1.5 million died of starvation or disease. On the eve of the Great Famine the Irish population numbered approximately

8.5 million. Many were already landless or existed at subsistence level on small plots of land planted with potatoes. Of those displaced by the catastrophe, the United States received the greatest number: almost 1.5 million impoverished Irish men and women (Miller 1985, Kenny 2000). The majority of Irish refugees fled to the port of Liverpool in Great Britain, often in boats loaded with grain and livestock for the export market, and in Liverpool they boarded ships bound for North America. They arrived, fever ridden and often starving, in northeastern American cities such as New York. There, united by their common origins, experiences and a history of resistance to British rule, there soon emerged a hybrid culture united by a new brand of Irish nationalism which bridged the gap between worlds.

Rural, and quite unprepared for life in a modern urban society, the Irish found work performing the most menial of labor; the men building canals, railroads or streets; the women in the textile industry or domestic service. In such institutions as Irish nationalism, the Catholic Church and increasingly the Democratic Party, the Irish found solace and faced down nativist hostility from such groups as the 'Know Nothings'. Fairly rapidly, neighborhoods of New York City soon took on a decidedly Irish flavor; clustered as they were around a church, neighborhood taverns or street gangs. In addition, such organizations as the state militia, in which thousands of Irishmen enlisted, also provided a unique opportunity to not only gain employment and to freely display one's sense of Irishness, but also to parade one's proud newfound sense of Americanness.

In addition to the militias, many other societies were formed by these Irish immigrants in their efforts to integrate into a new society; such as the Irish Emigrant Aid

Society, the Irishmen's Civil and Military Republican Union and the more secret Emmet Monument Association, the latter of which contained a number of exiled luminaries from the Young Ireland movement. As the historian, R.V. Comerford has pointed out, a significant number of the Young Ireland elite found "profitable employment in promoting Irish revolutionary doctrines among the Irish-American masses", and this was especially the case in New York City where some of the highest concentrations of Irish immigrants could be found (Comerford 1998: 33).

On January 1, 1858, Stephens replied to O'Mahony and the Emmet Monument Association in a letter conveyed to New York by a trusted courier, Joseph Denieffe, in which Stephens agreed to what he termed the "proposed co-operation of our transatlantic brothers" (Stephens in D'Arcy: 110). In this letter of reply, Stephens also stipulated that a regular flow of financial funding from New York City was of paramount importance to the success of the new venture. As he stated;

Now for the conditions. The first is money. There is a slight reproach in my words when I say you ought to have foreseen this, knowing us, and that we are without means and that the men of property are not with us. You would have shown a wise foresight by sending us the nerves of organization as of war. I should be able to borrow enough to go on with the work till I hear from you; that is, in a limited scale, and at great inconvenience to myself and friends, but anything like delay on your part will not only retard its progress, but otherwise injure the Cause and should you be unable to come into my terms, the business must be given up altogether. You must then be able to furnish from 80 to 100 pounds a month dating from the departure of bearer from New York.

(Stephens to O'Mahony 01.01.1858 in D'Arcy 1971:11)

From their experiences of exile, men such as Stephens and O'Mahony were well aware of the international scene, and of the fact that the British Empire was experiencing

some problems during this period; problems which they hoped Irish nationalism might be able to exploit. Though victorious, the war in the Crimea against Russia had been a costly and tiring affair for the British and now in the late 1850s, while they attempted to secure India, back at home Anglo-French relations had also deteriorated (Jackson 1999). It was thought therefore, that Ireland's opportunity might be imminent and Stephens wasted no time in asserting his leadership, informing his New York colleagues that he should act as a 'provisional dictator' (Stephens in D'Arcy 1971:11). The courier, Joseph Denieffe therefore returned to New York immediately with James Stephens' reply, and on St. Patrick's Day, 1858, returned to Dublin with a document signed by the "Irish Revolutionary Committee" of New York which appointed Stephens "chief executive of the Irish revolutionary movement" (Comerford 1998: 47). Denieffe also delivered \$400 and Stephens wasted no time in forming the new organization (D'Arcy 1971). In 1858, the market rate of exchange of currency was approximately 4.8 American dollars to every 1 British pound. Denieffe's \$400 therefore equated to approximately £83 in 1858 – a sum today, incidentally, which would be the equivalent today of almost \$8000 (U.S. Dept. of Labor).

That evening, in a timberyard on Lombard Street in Dublin, Stephens swore in the first members of what was then only known as the 'organization', but which later came to be known as the Irish Republican (or Revolutionary) Movement, or the Fenians. The structure of the organization was based upon that of various continental societies. It was oath-bound, and consisted of a number of circles of men, each headed by a center, 'A'. This 'A' commanded nine 'B's, and was known only to these officers beneath him. In

turn, each 'B' commanded nine 'C's, and each 'C' commanded nine 'D's –the rank and file. Following the first meeting, Stephens and Denieffe left Dublin on a tour of Ireland, financed with their American funds, to enroll new members.

They were most successful in swearing in new members and forming circles of the organization in urban areas. In regions decimated by the Great Famine, such as Kerry and West Cork, the population pressure had been lifted and surviving small farmers had begun to consolidate their grip on the land. The growth of the lower middle class in small towns such as Skibbereen for example, in West Cork, reflected farmers' need for services. Thus Stephens recruited primarily amongst the sons of small farmers and the shop assistants of such towns; young men who were educated but unable to advance in Irish society. In many respects, joining a revolutionary organization not only provided these men with a means to express their political opinions, but it also offered recreational and social opportunities previously unavailable, with the added glamour that the IRB was also very popular in the United States. In addition, Stephens' new brand of Irish nationalism tapped into a cult of masculinity then prevalent; offering recruits the chance to become a soldier, ready to fight for the honor of the nation. In regions such as West Cork, Stephens also discovered strong traditions of Irish nationalism as well as strong links with the United States, thanks to the Great Famine.

In the autumn of 1858, Stephens himself visited New York City where he helped to officially establish the Irish Republican Brotherhood of America, with John O'Mahony as Director and supreme organizer. In March 1859, Stephens left New York for Paris, having raised \$2900 (approximately £600) (Comerford 1998). After he had departed,

O'Mahony named the American Organization, the "Fenian Brotherhood", in an attempt to summon up the spirit of the Fianna warriors of ancient Ireland. As he stated in April, 1859, O'Mahony now planned to expand the Brotherhood throughout the United States;

Boston is the best city I have on my roll. In it a full centre is now almost completed... Branches of our society have also been started in Vermont, Maine, and Connecticut. From Pennsylvania I have received a most satisfactory communication from the railroad men. If the plan proposed by them is carried out, it will bring overwhelming numbers into our ranks. In Milwaukee and Chicago, I expect that great things will be done.

(O'Mahony in D'Arcy 1971: 15)

During the 1850s therefore, Irish nationalism was reinvigorated by the transnational reciprocal relationship forged between the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States and the IRB in Ireland. The IRB relied heavily on their American benefactors for financial support, whilst the Fenian Brotherhood relied upon the IRB to rally the Irish people in Ireland to the nationalist banner once more. The Fenian Brotherhood benefited greatly from this partnership, and by the close of the decade, new Fenian circles had been established throughout New England, the Midwest, the Great Lakes region, and even farther afield in the newly created territories of Nevada, Utah and Oregon.

In managing this transnational partnership, out of which a new brand of Irish nationalism was fast taking shape, the transnational movements of such political actors as James Stephens and John O'Mahony proved crucial. Following Stephens' visit to New York City to help establish the Fenian Brotherhood in 1858, O'Mahony visited Ireland in 1860 to observe how American funds were being spent. Irish nationalism therefore was not contained within the shores of Ireland during this time period, and in fact it was lying

in a dormant state until being reactivated by the diaspora. Theirs was a nationalism born of dislocation and longing for a native land to which many knew they would never return. As a result, it was a nationalism based upon memory, as well as the public commemoration of these memories in the form of parades for example. From such moments as New York City in the 1850s, not only did the Irish diaspora make a crucial intervention in the course Irish nationalism was taking in Ireland, but they also charted a new course and provided the funding and managerial input necessary to keep it on track.

The Funeral of Terrence Bellew MacManus

The Fenian Brotherhood's penchant for public display and their desire to reterritorialize their particular brand of Irish nationalism in the soil of Ireland, was particularly evident in the form of a grand nationalist funeral which took place in 1861. Terrence Bellew MacManus was a Young Irelander who had played an important role in the Rising of 1848. Unlike some of his compatriots who managed to escape to such cities as Paris or New York, MacManus was among those Young Irelanders captured by the British, sentenced to penal servitude and transported to Van Diemen's land. Some years later however, he was the first to escape from captivity and, unable to return to Ireland, instead ventured to San Francisco.

Although MacManus had lived a life of relative obscurity in San Francisco before his death in January 1861, his remains were later exhumed by local Fenians and transported across the country via rail to New York City. Here a requiem mass was performed in his honor by Archbishop Hughes at St. Patrick's Cathedral. From New York, a Fenian

Brotherhood delegation accompanied MacManus's remains on a steamship back to Ireland, where a MacManus Funeral Committee awaited their arrival. At this time, the IRB was still a shadowy organization, but under the auspices of the Funeral Committee and the National Brotherhood of St. Patrick they now took charge of this very public event. Typical of the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland however during this period, Archbishop Cullen refused to perform mass for MacManus at Dublin Cathedral, since he disagreed with secret oath-bound republicanism which he considered a threat to the established religion and to the state. MacManus's remains instead lay in state at the Mechanics' Institute in Dublin, where vast crowds visited to pay their respects.

On November 10, 1861, Dublin witnessed its largest Irish nationalist demonstration with the removal of MacManus's remains to Glasnevin Cemetery. The event was meticulously planned and policed by Irish nationalists –and following the hearse was a procession some miles in length that numbered between seven and eight thousand men, many of whom marched in military-like fashion. The symbolism of the event was not lost on the thousands of observers who had lined the route and now observed a new era of Irish nationalism organized at a global scale (D'Arcy 1971, Jackson 1999). The historian, R.V. Comerford however, cautions that scholars should not automatically presume that the huge numbers who attended the funeral represents the strength of the IRB at this time, as many of those in attendance might have been drawn onto the streets by the sense of occasion (Comerford 1998).

Nonetheless, the MacManus funeral does represent an important attempt made by the Fenians to firmly situate themselves as the latest reincarnation of Irish nationalism, and in

the face of such huge popular support the British remained powerless to intervene. As such, in the hands of Fenians, memory is transformed and mobilized to become an important political weapon to be wielded against the British. The funeral therefore becomes a vehicle through which a new generation of Irish nationalists begin to reinvent tradition through ritual; to historicize and territorialize their cause in a selective reading of Ireland's history and geography. The MacManus funeral was such a success in fact, that Irish nationalists would continue to use such commemorative events in the years to come, in order to justify their goals and to establish their lineage. Just as the Fenians had publicly enshrined their Young Ireland credentials by laying MacManus to rest in Glasnevin in 1861, for decades to come this cemetery would continue to operate as a symbolic focal point of Irish nationalism. The Fenians had set a precedent, and with the passing of the years they themselves would take their place in the long narrative of nationalist struggle to be narrated by the latest manifestation of that struggle, keen to claim continuity and to draw strength from past martyrdom. As the Irish nationalist leader, Patrick Pearse stated, at a graveside in Glasnevin in 1915;

Life springs from death; and from the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations. The Defenders of this Realm have worked well in secret and in the open. They think that they have pacified Ireland. They think that they have purchased half of us and intimidated the other half. They think that they have foreseen everything, think that they have provided against everything; but the fools the fools, the fools! – they have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace.

(Patrick Pearse, O'Donovan Rossa Funeral, 1915)

The *Irish People* and the American Civil War

In addition to providing a very public display of a new brand of Irish nationalism, the MacManus funeral was also significant because it represented the return of an Irish exile accompanied by members of the Irish Diaspora who were ardent Irish nationalists. The IRB and the Fenian Brotherhood had now emerged from the shadows in Ireland, the leaders of this transnational nationalist alliance having realized that to increase popular support for their cause, it was crucial that they win the public relations battle.

In this task, a newspaper would prove to be essential, and two years after the MacManus funeral, James Stephens launched the *Irish People*, a Dublin-published journal which was to become the mouthpiece of the IRB. Financed with American funds, the newspaper reported on Irish and global news from a nationalist perspective. Among the many news items it covered however, two in particular I argue are of immense significance; its coverage of the American Civil War, and the newspaper's role in organizing a Chicago fundraiser for the nationalist cause. As I will illustrate, the *Irish People* was fully implicated in the nationalist struggle, and not only is it an excellent example of the role that print capitalism plays in the imagining of community at a range of different scales, but also the role that such newspapers play in raising money for the nationalist cause.

The Civil War in the United States had been raging for seven months by the time MacManus was finally laid to rest in Irish earth. Strongly aligned with the Democratic Party, and after having experienced at least a decade of nativist hostility towards their presence, Irish Americans were initially lukewarm towards Republican President

Lincoln's war with the Confederacy. The Civil War would prove to have enormous ramifications however, on the course that Irish nationalism was taking in the United States and in Ireland. In the United States, the war militarized thousands of Irish Americans. At the outbreak of the war, whole circles of the Fenian Brotherhood, anxious to prove their mettle on the battlefield, rushed to enlist. They were joined, over the course of the war, by untold numbers of Irish Americans as well as approximately 150,000 Irishborn men –40,000 of whom fought for the Union and 40,000 for the Confederacy. The Irish represented the largest proportion of foreign born troops in both camps. (Neidhardt, 1975, Comerford 1998).

Some of these men, especially those members of the Fenian Brotherhood or the Irish Republican Brotherhood, would have initially regarded the conflict as an opportunity to gain military experience for any future conflict in Ireland. A number of units were, in fact, almost entirely composed of Irishmen, such as the New York Sixty-Ninth, the Massachusetts Ninth, as well as a number of 'Irish brigades'. The Chicago Irish Brigade for example, was led by Colonel James A. Mulligan from 1861 until his death on the battlefield in 1864. From New York, a Young Irelander and 1848 exile by the name of Thomas F. Meagher, also commanded an Irish Brigade. At the Battle of Antietam, over half of Meagher's Irish Brigade were killed leading the Union charge.

In Ireland, with the American Civil War raging and most of the Fenian Brotherhood having taken to the battlefield, funding of the Irish Republican Brotherhood slowed to trickle. On April 7, 1862, for example, an exasperated Stephens wrote to O'Mahony

detailing the increased preparedness of his organization, but asking that more funding was needed;

One hundred and thirteen pounds from the whole American organization in a whole year! I should look on this as a small sum monthly, dating from the first month after you received the news of the MacManus demonstration here. Our friends at this side cannot understand their transatlantic brothers, and, without a speedy and a very marked improvement they will come to believe their hopes from America utterly delusive.

(Stephens to O'Mahony 04.07.1862 in D'Arcy 1971: 27)

In 1863, Stephens sent an envoy to the United States by the name of Thomas Clarke Luby, to embark on a fund-raising tour with O'Mahony. The two men spent five months on the road, during which time they addressed large numbers of Fenians in the camps of the Union Army, often addressing officers on the eve of battle. As Luby accounted in a letter to his wife;

I remained in General Corcoran's camp till the seventh day after the commencement of active hostilities there...Corcoran was anxious to get John O'Mahony and me out of harm's way...But we held our ground until we were able to finish our business by holding a nocturnal meeting of the officers. It speaks highly for Corcoran's patriotism that at such a time he managed to get the officers together for our purpose.

(Luby to his wife 05.06.1862 in D'Arcy 1971: 30-31)

Luby returned to Dublin in July, 1863, with \$489 (approximately £100), at which point Stephens decided he needed a means by which he could raise more money and increase the membership of his organization.

His answer was to launch the IRB's own newspaper, the *Irish People*, on November 28, 1863, and immediately the newspaper set its sights on the 'felon-setters'; those who betrayed Fenianism and who condemned the movement, especially from the pulpit. Before the launch, Stephens had written a letter to O'Mahony in New York in which he discussed his dreams for the newspaper which, despite high initial costs, he hoped might prove immensely worthwhile;

The paper will cost us from 1500 to 5000 pounds a year. It will, I need not say, be a useful weapon of attack and defense. It will, also, of course, be a powerful organ of propagandism...Still it has such serious disadvantages that, had you been able to supply the necessary funds, I should never have had anything to do with it. But, having consented to found it at all, you may rely on its being such a paper as this country has never seen.

(J. Stephens in D'Arcy: 31)

Stephens had brought many of the leading literary figures of the IRB organization to Dublin in late 1863 to work on the newspaper. Described as a 'goldmine of separatist declamation' (Comerford 1998: 109), historians have pointed to the appearance of this journal as proof that the IRB was now much more than a secret society. Immediately, the newspaper began to not only impress upon public opinion, but also began to create a sense of community and solidarity amongst Fenians throughout Ireland, Great Britain and the United States.

Following its launch in late 1863, the pages of the *Irish People* were dominated by news of the American Civil War and the activities in the field of the heroic Irish regiments. It is obvious that its editors, who represented the opinion of the IRB in Ireland during this period, believed that Ireland could benefit from the war. Not only did they

entertain the possibility that Great Britain might be drawn into the war in support of the Confederacy, but they also welcomed the military experience being gained by the Fenians –experience which they hoped could eventually be put to use back in Ireland, this despite the many casualties suffered by Irish regiments. A late 1863 editorial in the *Irish People* entitled “Fruits of the American War” provides a useful example of this perspective; in conclusion stating that;

In truth, this awful conflict that convulses America, gives food to Ireland, both for pride and hope. It is not something to exalt our souls, to see the great republic to-day leaning for support as much on her Irish, as on her native-born citizens; trusting for life and empire to Irish fidelity and valour, in her hour of trial and difficulty? And, when we reflect that all those officers and soldiers of Irish birth, who swell the legions of the states, will be disbanded at the end of the war, will find it hard to return immediately to their old pursuits, perhaps in most cases will feel disinclined to give up all at once the life of the soldier, will turn their eyes and hearts fondly towards the land of their birth –in all this, we ask, will anyone say that there is no ground of hope for Ireland?

(*Irish People* 12.26.1863: 73)

In a similar vein, on January 2, 1864, the *Irish People* also reprinted a letter sent to the *Irish-American* newspaper in New York, from a soldier serving in Chattanooga, Tennessee, with the Army of the Cumberland, which stated that;

The rebellion has given to Ireland a quarter million tried veterans, and thousands of trusty leaders, who can man a battery, build a fort, command an army, and live without a commissariat. When I say that the Fenian Brotherhood is very extensive among the troops, I give but a faint idea of the desire to end this war and commence another.

(*Irish People* 01.02.1864: 84-85)

The *Irish People* also reported on the First Convention of the Fenian Brotherhood, an event which began on the 3 November, 1863, in Chicago, Illinois. Taken as proof of the transatlantic scale and power of the organization, the *Irish People* pointed to the 82 delegates from 12 states who attended, as well as those delegates who were given leave to attend from the Armies of the Cumberland, the Potomac and the Tennessee. The *Irish People* was eager to inform its readers that the Fenian Brotherhood were united with the IRB in their pursuit of Irish independence;

The first general convention of the Fenian Brotherhood was held at Chicago on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of November. There was a very full attendance from all parts of the country, and all of the Brethen were most unanimous and enthusiastic.

(*Irish People* 12.05.1863: 19-20)

The *Irish People* did not reprint or discuss any of the resolutions passed at this first convention, for fear that such information might pass into the wrong hands, but nonetheless reported that it was an important meeting in which the delegates adopted a constitution and streamlined the organization greatly. Although O'Mahony achieved re-election of the Fenian Brotherhood easily, he would now be assisted by an elected council. In addition, every delegate agreed that the affairs of the American wing of the organization would no longer be kept secret, and they reaffirmed their loyalty to the Brotherhood by taking a new oath;

I _____ solemnly pledge my sacred word of honor as a truthful and honest man, that I will labor with earnest zeal for the liberation of Ireland from the yoke of England, and for the establishment of a free and independent government on Irish soil; that I _____ will implicitly obey the commands of my superior officers in

the Fenian Brotherhood; that I will faithfully discharge the duties of my membership, as laid down in the Constitution and By-Laws thereof; that I will do my utmost to promote feelings of love, harmony and kindly forbearance among all Irishmen; and that I will foster, defend and propagate the aforesaid Fenian Brotherhood to the utmost of my power.

(Neidhardt 1975: 12-13)

At the close of the convention, an "Address to the People of Ireland" was issued by the Fenian Brotherhood, an address which was printed in full in the *Irish People* on December 5, 1863, (the newspaper reprinting the address from the columns of the *New York Sunday Mercury*). This address affirmed that the Fenian Brotherhood would use whatever illegal means necessary to achieve Irish independence, denouncing legal and constitutional agitation as mere 'delusions' and promising to return to Ireland following the Civil War to fight for independence;

Here we have soldiers armed and trained (thousands of them trained in the tented field and amid the smoke and thunders of battle) with able and experienced generals to lead them... We are solemnly pledged to labour earnestly and continuously for the regeneration of our beloved Ireland. That pledge, with thy blessing of Providence, we shall redeem. And when the wished for hour will have arrived, we shall be prepared with you to meet the implacable persecutions of our race in battle array, to put an end for ever to the accursed system under which our unhappy people have suffered such cruel tortures –or die like men in the attempt.

(*Irish People* 12.05.1863: 19-20)

On the final day of the Convention, Head Center John O'Mahony addressed the delegates, discussing the strength of the Fenian Brotherhood in the ranks of the Union Army, and the valuable military training that he believed the Fenians were receiving in combat;

The civil war also retarded the development of the Fenian Brotherhood for a considerable time, so many of our comrades having entered the American army from all quarters of the Union. At length we have overcome most of our difficulties. The organisation has come safely through every crisis up to this. It has numerous circles in the army, whose members count by thousands, as well as in the cities and towns of the Union. We no longer need Generals of our own blood to lead us to battle for Ireland, nor veteran soldiers to follow them. We have more of them than we shall ever need.

(*Irish People* 12.12.1863: 36-37)

The American Civil War though, was not only regarded as important by the *Irish People* because of the military experience being gained by Irish and Irish-American troops in the field, but also because it represented proof to the IRB of the scale at which Irish nationalism now existed. Irish nationalists had been defeated repeatedly by the British, but here they were victorious –albeit in the service of the Union army predominantly –but victorious nonetheless. The IRB used the *Irish People* therefore, to imagine an Irish national community existing at a transatlantic scale, and their coverage of the American Civil War is proof that they drew strength from this construction. Buoyed by the enthusiasm generated by the *Irish People's* coverage of Irish valor in the war, the IRB's ranks consequently swelled with men eager for soldiering. What is more, although Irish nationalism was now deterritorialized –it was gaining in strength –and would soon be reterritorialized when these soldiers returned home to free Ireland from British rule. Such soldiers were already evident in Dublin in March 1864 when IRB members, a number of whom wore Union Army uniforms, disrupted a meeting convened at the Rotunda building by the more moderate Irish nationalist A.M. Sullivan.

As the carnage on the battlefields of the war reached unprecedented proportions however, the opinion of the IRB and other Irish nationalists towards it began to change.

Early in the war, both the Union and the Confederacy had realized that the Irish were an important source of manpower, and so had actively recruited in Ireland, primarily through Irish-American clerics. As the war progressed, the Union Army became so desperate for conscripts that it even went so far as to have the American Consul in Ireland, William West, issue free steamship tickets to the United States, if Irishmen were willing to enlist in Dublin.

In March 1864 however, the *Irish People* denounced such recruiting, and in an article entitled "Federal Enlistment" for example, which appeared March 5, the paper implored young Irishmen to halt their emigration to the United States during this troubled period;

It is false to say that Irishmen can most effectively serve their country by going where they can learn the art of war. Too many have gone already. If the six hundred strong young men, who (according to the *Irish Times*), embarked for America during the past week, thought they were acting the part of patriots, they were grievously mistaken. Their passages were paid by an American agent; and, whatever their ultimate lot may be, Ireland is a loser by their desertion of her.

(*Irish People* 03.05.1864: 235)

By the war's end in the Spring of 1865 however, the Fenians had an estimated 50,000 members in the Union Army, while in Ireland the ranks of the IRB had grown to number 50,000 in the shadow that the Civil War had cast over the country (Joyce 1996).

The Chicago Fenian Fair

In addition to becoming increasingly disillusioned with the Civil War because of the massive loss of life amongst Irish recruits, the IRB was also concerned that the war had caused their American funding to slow to a trickle, and that their newspaper venture was

not raising as much money as had been envisioned. The IRB's answer was to use the pages of the *Irish People* to promote a huge Fenian fundraising fair which would take place in Chicago.

Following the success of their first convention in Chicago in 1863, the Fenian Brotherhood had decided to organize a fund-raising fair in the city the following spring. In Ireland the first advertisements for the fair began to appear in the *Irish People* in early 1864, calling on the readership to send items which could be auctioned in Chicago. On February 6, 1864, the following address from the Irish people of Chicago to the people of Ireland appeared in the *Irish People*;

Chicago, Ill, January 1, 1864

You will recall, dear countrypeople, in the years which have rolled away since Ireland's proscribed sons and daughters sought homes in America, that they have never appealed to you for aid. You will recall, also, that during these years piercing cries have reached us from home; cries for *bread* from starving fathers, mothers and children. And has that cry ever been neglected? -Never! Now, we ask you to do us a service, and we are sure that there is not a County in Ireland which will not manifest to us that our *first* call upon their labor and generosity is heeded and acted upon...Upon Easter Monday next, March 28th, 1864, will open in Chicago, Illinois, an Irish National Fair, the proceeds of which are to go home, *to be expended in National uses.*

(*Irish People* 02.06.1864: 172)

The merchandise had been arriving at the offices of the *Irish People*, and each week Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, the manager of the newspaper, described the items he had received. Considering that the IRB were a secret revolutionary society it is interesting that the *Irish People* published the names and addresses of those donating items. Among what can only be described as some of the finest examples of early Irish kitsch, Rossa

received a "Baby's cradle made out of a goose eggshell", a "pistol reportedly used in 1798" and the "root of a crab-tree that grew over the grave of an Irish rebel in Ballytore, County Kildare" (*Irish People* 03.05.1864: 229). R.V. Comerford describes such items as 'ethnic junk', but another historian, Brian Griffin, believes that this appeal for artifacts provides important insights into the mentality of 'advanced nationalists' in the 1860s. For example, Griffin believes that the bric-a-brac collected attests to a cult of dead patriots amongst the Fenians and their supporters. Also interesting, is the role of Irish women in this drive to raise funds for the IRB. Many of the items donated were handmade by women such as brooches, jewelry and lacework. The *Irish People* for instance states explicitly in their appeal that "Any ladies knitting a pair of stockings, hose, and jacket for the Chicago Fair, will receive the special thanks of the Committee" (*Irish People* 02.06.1864: 172).

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, the *Irish People* proudly reported that the Fenians of San Francisco were sending a golden brick to be auctioned at the fair, as well as a number of silver bricks and a donation of one thousand dollars from the Irish Laborers Association (*Irish People* 03.19.1864: 259). At a meeting in the city they spoke of their hope that the money raised might be put to good use:

The proceeds of all which, when made the most of by lotteries, raffling and auctions, will be laid out in purchasing arms and war material for the down trodden Irish people. The Fenian Brotherhood is now an extremely organised semi-military body of Irishmen, with branches all over the United States, Canada, Australia, England and Scotland, with an able directory at their head in New York, and their object is to assist their brethren in Ireland to throw off the British yoke and erect in its stead a republican form of government. Already has this Brotherhood been abused by the British press, which proves that they are feared and are powerful.
(*Irish People* 03.19.1864: 259)

In many ways therefore, as is evident by the donations made by such groups as the Irish Laborers Association, the Fenian Fair also provides an important insight into the interconnectivity of trade unions and Irish nationalists during this period of wartime mobilization (Jentz and Schneirov 1995). In addition, the *Irish People's* coverage of such transnational fundraising was also used as a means by which Irish nationalism could be envisioned as a global, and hence very powerful, operation.

On a rainy Easter Monday, March 28, 1864, the Chicago Fenian Fair began with a parade led by such Irish regiments as the 17th Wisconsin and the 28th Massachusetts Volunteers. They were followed by a number of labor organizations which were inter-ethnic in character, such as the German Turners, and by the Fenian Brotherhood themselves as well as other Irish societies. During the course of the week, various speakers implored the audience to channel their energies into the Union cause, following which the Irish cause would be taken up. Meanwhile, Irish women and members of the Fenian Sisterhood, under the direction of Miss Ellen O'Mahony, played a prominent role in organizing the occasion. In marked contrast to Ireland, where women were expected to play an unofficial supporting role in the nationalist struggle (such as knitting stockings), the Fenian Fair marked Irish-American women's public debut as increasingly important Irish nationalists in their own right. By the week's end they had helped raise \$54,000 (approximately £11,000) for Irish revolutionary activity (Jentz and Schnierov 1995).

James Stephens attended the fair, and before returning to Ireland toured the states of Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky and Missouri giving speeches and helping to organize circles of

the Fenian Brotherhood. In addition, Stephens visited the camps of the Union Armies in an attempt to recruit Irish officers for a future war in Ireland. Writing to O'Mahony in New York on April 28, 1864, Stephens spoke of having collected \$1455 in subscriptions from the town of Peoria, \$505 from the town of Quincy and \$507 from the 90th Illinois (a grand total of approximately £500) (D'Arcy 1971: 41). By the time the Fenian Brotherhood held their second annual convention in January 1865, in Cincinnati, it was attended by 348 delegates representing 273 circles –an increase of 210 circles since the year before. Again the structure of the Fenian Brotherhood followed a continental revolutionary model based on that of the IRB in Ireland, although it is impossible to ascertain the strength of each circle.

The Transatlantic Development of Fenianism

In the Spring of 1865, the Civil War ended and membership of the Fenian Brotherhood soared, as Irish-American veterans in the thousands sought out this social organization with military overtones. In addition, the Fenian Brotherhood was very popular among the Irish-American working-class and in particular among those men who originated from the South and East of Ireland; they having experienced the effects of rapid social change in their youth. These were the areas too where the IRB recruited heavily back in Ireland, among the young displaced laborers, building workers and artisans who had not yet fled to the United States. In comparison, aspiring middle-class Irish Americans avoided the Fenian Brotherhood's extremist brand of revolutionary activity, as did the impoverished masses who had fled the Gaelic speaking west of Ireland

and who could now be found huddled in such insular neighborhoods as Boston's North End and Pittsburgh's Point (Walsh 1985).

For those involved in the Fenian Brotherhood however, mass meetings and lectures were regular events in the calendar, as organizers, recruiters and speakers on the payroll of the organization toured the country. These events were often augmented by bazaars, dances, picnics, and fairs such as that which had been organized in Chicago, as Fenianism increasingly became more of a social pastime. The Fenian Brotherhood also sold bonds during this period to raise money –bonds of various denominations redeemable with interest at the Treasury of the Irish Republic once independence had been achieved. At the close of the Civil War it has been estimated that the membership of the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States totaled close to 50,000, and with each member paying a one dollar initiation fee and weekly dues of ten cents, the revenue of the organization was fairly large (Neidhardt 1975, Walsh 1985). By the close of 1865, it has been estimated that the organization had raised \$228,000. Although these funds were intended for preparing a revolution in Ireland, unfortunately the cost of maintaining such a large social organization in the United States meant that Ireland was not receiving that much of the money (Jenkins 1969).

In Ireland, Fenianism continued to attract converts, especially in urban areas, providing a new social outlet to educated young men seeking to break free of social restraints. The IRB circles often met in pubs, and they learned to drill on moonlit nights in rural areas outside of town. Fenianism in Ireland became an outlet for self-realization, and it is possible that their new-found bravado might have been the result of the increased

proximity of the United States as an immediately accessible refuge. In many respects, Fenianism in Ireland has been described therefore, in terms of acting as an "antechamber to the new world" during this period (Comerford 1998: 114). By joining the IRB, and by growing the obligatory beard (then *de-rigueur* for any self-respecting Irish revolutionary), a generation of young men were hence transformed into a new type of social animal, with one foot planted in the New World and the other in the Old.

Despite its social function, Fenianism nevertheless maintained its thoroughly political and ideological nationalist agenda, and from Dublin as the year 1865 progressed, Stephens continued to send glowing reports to O'Mahony detailing the IRB's membership and calling on the American sister organization to prepare for imminent revolution. Stephens was informing his counterparts that the IRB totaled eighty thousand members who could be ready at twenty-four hours notice, as well as a further 15,000 in the ranks of the British Army, either stationed in Ireland or in England. Historians such as R.V. Comerford however, regard Stephen's figures as a gross exaggeration, possibly designed to entice the Americans to send more money, more officers and more arms and ammunition. At best, Comerford believes that Stephens might have commanded 50,000 IRB members during the year 1865, but they were poorly disciplined and very disorganized, there being no adequate command structure under his dictatorial rule (Comerford 1998).

The IRB's decision to canvass for recruits in the ranks of the British Army had apparently proved very successful, although the results of this venture were never tested. In 1863, an Irish-American veteran of the United States Army had begun to infiltrate the

barracks of British Regiments throughout Ireland and England. He had fought in the Mexican-American War, during which one quarter of all American troops were Irishborn (Kenny 2000: 121). His name was 'Pagan' O'Leary, on account of having renounced his Christian name of Patrick because he believed that St. Patrick had ruined the Irish. Such eccentricity, it was widely speculated at the time, was thought to be the result of his having been hit in the head by a spent musket ball in battle, an injury which had reputedly left an indentation in his forehead. Unfortunately this indentation is not visible in the following photograph of O'Leary, taken by the authorities following his arrest in November, 1864;

Figure 4.1 Patrick 'Pagan' O'Leary. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1866-1872, Description of Fenian Suspects.

The position of Chief Fenian Recruiter in the British Army that he vacated was immediately filled by another Irish American, William F. Roantree. Reputed to carry two revolvers at all times, Roantree was a United States Navy veteran who had served with General Walker in Nicaragua. Neither O'Leary or Roantree were Civil War veterans.

The Fenian Brotherhood in America was now becoming an increasingly large bureaucracy, and they received Stephen's reports with disbelief. In 1865, the Council sent two envoys to Ireland to investigate Stephens' claims, they were Captain Thomas J. Kelly and General F.F. Millen. Both men were Irishborn; Kelly a Civil War veteran having fought with the 10th Ohio, and Millen having served in the Liberal Army of the Republic of Mexico under Juarez, where he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The two men were both paid stipends by the Fenian Brotherhood according to their rank, and were ordered to report back to New York on the state of preparedness in Ireland. This Kelly did, in the form of letters thinly disguised as business reports. In a letter Captain Kelly wrote to O'Mahony for instance on May 31, 1865, he stated that all funds should be made available immediately, so as to "open the factory in the Fall". This, he believed was of paramount importance, since "some of the best workmen might be lost to emigration", and in the meantime he called for more "skilled mechanics" from the United States (Kelly to O'Mahony in D'Arcy: 53). Not only is this further evidence of diasporic involvement in Fenianism, but it is also an interesting example of the relationship between the development of Irish nationalism and the process of globalization. Here Captain Kelly takes advantage of the British and American postal service for revolutionary purposes, while masquerading as a venture capitalist so as to avoid detection.

Seemingly bound by red tape and despite glowing reports from Kelly and Millen, the council continued to send envoys to Ireland in 1865. In addition to Captain Kelly and General Millen, Colonel William G. Halpin was also sent as an envoy, commissioned to

act as the official American representative on the IRB's military council. In the spring of 1865 the Council sent a further two envoys to Ireland to report upon the state of affairs; P.W. Dunne of Peoria, Illinois, and P.J. Meehan, editor of the *Irish-American*.

Furthermore, Meehan was also entrusted to deliver a number of documents to the IRB leadership, including a letter written by O'Mahony and addressed to Stephens, as well as a draft for £500 (approximately \$2400). Both documents contained the address of the New York City headquarters of the Fenian Brotherhood at 22 Dwayne Street. Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, the manager of the *Irish People* happened to accompany the two men to Ireland on their steamship voyage having not only visited family in New York, but also having delivered letters to the Fenian Brotherhood from their envoys in Ireland. Upon arriving in Ireland, O'Donovan Rossa urged Meehan to pass the important papers to a female companion, who would not be searched by the port authorities. Meehan however refused, assuring Rossa that they were all safely fastened with a pin on the inside of his trousers. It was by virtue of this action, that the British authorities came into the possession of documentation that proved beyond doubt the relationship between the Fenian Brotherhood and the IRB; the documents being lost when they slipped out of Meehan's trouser-leg (Devoy, 1929).

The Fenian Brotherhood and the IRB now realized that it was probably only a matter of time before the British authorities acted upon the information they had so fortunately received. In the summer of 1865 O'Mahony continued to send experienced military officers to Ireland, but these demobilized veterans only attracted the suspicion of authorities further as they filled the pubs of Dublin. In addition to those officers sent

officially by the Fenian Brotherhood, many other veterans arrived of their own volition.

In fact, the *Irish-American* newspaper of New York made a thinly disguised comment on the huge number of Irish sailing to Ireland that summer;

The...steamer "Caledonia"...sailed from New York on the 17th ult. [of last month], with 225 passengers, the great majority being Irishmen, returning to their native land, to spend their greenbacks during the hot weather, and probably visit the International Exhibition of the industry of all nations, now being held in Dublin.
(D'Arcy 1971: 72)

The Raid on the *Irish People*

In perhaps the ultimate proof of the important role that the *Irish People* played in the imagining of an Irish nationalist community, and of the power that print capitalism gave to revolutionaries, on the fourteenth of September, 1865, the offices of the *Irish People* newspaper on Parliament Street were raided by the Dublin Metropolitan Police and the newspaper put out of business. For months, detectives belonging to Superintendent Ryan's G Division had been keeping a close eye on the premises, for it was a well known fact that the offices doubly functioned as the nerve center of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB); the *Irish People* being their official newspaper. In the weeks leading up to the raid, Ryan's G-men had noticed an increase in activity at the offices, and in particular had reported seeing a number of smartly dressed gentlemen frequenting the premises; gentlemen sometimes bedecked in the latest American fashion and of a military demeanor. On the inside, Superintendent Ryan had also been receiving alarming reports of some imminent IRB action from Pierce Nagle, a member of the *Irish People* staff who was also an informer on the payroll of the authorities at Dublin Castle.

By the time the British finally acted, it has been estimated that the newspaper had achieved a circulation of eight thousand copies (Senior 1978). Although it had helped greatly to sustain the morale of the Fenian movement, it had however been a loss-making venture, as well as having dangerously exposed the activities of the IRB to the scrutiny of the authorities. The raid, when it came, took the occupants of the premises completely by surprise, and was a great blow to the IRB, the ramifications of which were felt throughout Ireland as well as overseas. Arrested on this fateful day were Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, the manager of the venture, as well as two writers and leading IRB ideologues, John O'Leary and Thomas Clarke Luby. Their new style of Irish revolutionary activity would soon be immortalized and mythologized by Irish nationalists, as the latest chapter of an Irish struggle for autonomy whose genesis could be traced back through the centuries. In fact however, their style of insurrectionary activity owed much to the context of post-Famine Ireland, and the funding they had received from the Irish diaspora in the United States.

James Stephens was not at the offices of the *Irish People* on the night of the raid, but wrote to O'Mahony the next day to inform him of the disaster that had befallen the organization, and of the arrests of a number of prominent IRB members of the military council;

On last night, about nine o'clock, the Office was surrounded by the police, acting on an order of the Privy Council. The office was gutted and ten arrests made.... One member of the Council was amongst those taken. Today several other arrests have been made, three others of the Council amongst the number.

(J. Stephens in D'Arcy: 76)

Stephens lamented the fact that the IRB, in his opinion, was not yet prepared for a revolution and he placed the blame for this not on himself, but on the Fenian Brotherhood in the United States for constantly disbelieving his reports of readiness, and on Meehan, the inexperienced envoy who had let important documents fall into the hands of the authorities;

You will see the enemy is in a rage, and striking like a madman. Like a madman, for, far as I can yet see, he is much in the dark. Still, he is furiously in earnest, and every suspected person is certain of being picked up. Tell our friends that their scepticisms, inquisitions, hesitations, and not any imprudence on our part have brought us to this. Mr. Meehan, especially, is universally blamed here.

(J. Stephens in D'Arcy: 76)

Stephens signs off by informing O'Mahony that should he hear of his arrest, an expeditionary force should set sail for Ireland immediately. In the meantime, Stephens asks O'Mahony to send a messenger to Dublin with funds, and also suggests that the Fenian Brotherhood should appoint an agent to reside in Paris, through whom all future funds could be channeled.

O'Mahony sent Captain Lawrence O'Brien immediately to Dublin via steamship, carrying \$4800 in gold (approximately £1000) (D'Arcy 1971). Stephens had asked O'Mahony to consider John Mitchell for the Paris appointment, but unbeknownst to Stephens, he was languishing in Fortress Monroe, Virginia, accused of being a Confederate sympathizer. One of the original leaders of the Young Ireland movement, Mitchell had been transported to a Van Diemen's land prison in 1848, from which he had escaped. Unable to return to Ireland, he had settled in Tennessee, in the United States,

where he edited the pro-slavery journal, the *Southern Citizen*. In 1856 he had moved to Paris, France, but returned to the United States and to Richmond, Virginia in 1862. His two sons were killed fighting for the Confederacy. During the course of his life, Mitchell repeatedly called for a 'Holy War' to be waged against the British Empire.

The Fenian Brotherhood Splits

The raid on the *Irish People* offices could not have occurred at a worse time for O'Mahony, under pressure as he now was from a group of mid-western members of the Fenian Council. Dissatisfied with his leadership, it was these men who actually called the Fenian Brotherhood to meet at their third convention, to be held in Philadelphia. Six hundred delegates attended the convention in the City of Brotherly Love, testimony to how rapidly the organization had grown. Soon after the Fenian Brotherhood had commenced their first meetings however, in September 1865, Captain James Murphy arrived from Dublin to inform the organization that the IRB was still ready for action but required the immediate assistance of the American Fenians. Murphy, incidentally, was a veteran of the 20th Massachusetts Infantry Volunteers and had been captured in the raid on the *Irish People* offices, only to be released because he was an American citizen. Amazingly however, the Fenian Brotherhood council decided that they had more important business to attend to, that of remodeling the organization on the American congressional system—a move which O'Mahony objected to in this time of war. Consequently, his position as Head Center was abolished and O'Mahony now found

himself elected President, with his powers severely curtailed and facing a hostile fifteen member Fenian Senate and a house of delegates.

The Fenian Brotherhood had now taken a divergent path; it had become more of a social organization than a revolutionary conspiracy. Under the senate leadership of William Randall Roberts, the organizer of this coup, it was decided that the Fenian Brotherhood should cease all involvement with any revolution in Ireland and instead devote all of its energies to organizing a smaller raid closer to home –on British North America. The Fenian Brotherhood had now finally come of age as an Irish-American, rather than an Irish institution. To many of its members, Ireland had now become only a distant memory and they no longer inhabited the inbetween space-time of their youth, or that which their parents had experienced on arrival in the United States. It is interesting to note that such individuals were, like their leader Senator Roberts, largely from the Midwest which lacked the massive urban Irish neighborhoods which still characterized the cities of the north east. In such neighborhoods, time perhaps did not pass as quickly for Irish immigrants, since there were many more organizations such as the Democratic Party and the Catholic Church which traded on the memories of loss and dislocation, and so kept a sense of nationalism preserved for longer. Regardless of the new direction which the Fenian Brotherhood now plotted, there were still Irish Americans however, who were not prepared to forget Ireland quite so readily.

Nonetheless, with its officers already positioned in Ireland and more on the way, and with the IRB woefully short of funds, the Fenian Brotherhood decided instead to establish a grand Capitol Building to match their new found lofty aspirations, and decided upon the

Moffatt mansion near Union Square in New York as the ideal premises. Rented at a cost of \$1000 a month, with eighteen months rent due in advance and a \$6000 security deposit, the new Fenian headquarters was soon lavishly decorated with green and gold upholstery, expensive mahogany furniture and Fenian flags flying proudly from the rooftops. What had increasingly become an American fraternal society now had a gentlemen's club for its members, but O'Mahony was not at all comfortable with such expenditure or the fact that the organization had completely lost sight of its original intentions; namely to liberate Ireland.

Best-Laid Plans Dashed

Meanwhile back in Ireland, many of the American officers sent by the Fenian Brotherhood had become not only demoralized, but also increasingly destitute, since the remittances from New York City had dried up. Because many were armed with revolvers, and had experienced real-life combat, these Irish Americans continued to represent a great threat to the authorities, who instructed the police in such cities as Dublin to be vigilant for individuals wearing felt hats or square-toed boots, fashion considered at the time to be distinctively American. With Stephens and many other IRB members either in hiding or in prison awaiting trial, Colonel William Halpin, the American representative on the IRB military council, reported back to the Fenian Brotherhood in New York on the situation in Ireland. In a letter written on October 6, Halpin informed the organization of the American officers already captured, and urged them to act fast in sending arms, ammunition and reinforcements;

The arrests have added both to the numerical strength and ardor of the people. The blood of the country is up and nothing wanted but the implements of trade. Let not our friends on your side be cowed; everything is working well...For the future in sending persons over, I would recommend that Scotland, Liverpool, Southampton, and such other places...be selected as ports of disembarkation...In addition to the arrest of Captain McCafferty and O'Connell at Queenstown, Colonel Byron was arrested...and Colonel Leonard...Captain McGrath is still in Richmond prison without trial.

(W. Halpin in D'Arcy 1971: 99)

On November 11, Stephens himself was finally tracked down by the authorities and arrested. Immediately the remaining leaders of the IRB held an emergency meeting. These individuals were all transatlantic revolutionaries. Five men attended the meeting; the envoys General F.F. Millen, Captain Thomas J. Kelly and Colonel William G. Halpin, as well as Colonel Michael Kerwin and Colonel Denis F. Burke, both of whom were Civil War veterans, the former having fought with the Thirteenth Pennsylvania Volunteers and the latter with the Eighty-eighth New York Volunteers. At the emergency meeting, General Millen was appointed provisional head of the IRB, and on November 24 they succeeded in rescuing Stephens in dramatic fashion from Richmond jail, a break-out masterminded by Captain Kelly and John Devoy, the organization's new recruiter of British soldiers following the arrest of Roantree. Despite pressure from his Irish-American officers however, Stephens refused to issue the call to fight. It is possible that he was still hoping that Britain might become embroiled in a foreign war, maybe with the United States, but by late 1865 this was looking increasingly unlikely. It might also be the case that Stephens was reluctant to fight since he had virtually no military

experience, and might instead have been more interested in institutionalizing the idea of revolution, through such ventures as the *Irish People* for example (Senior 1978).

In New York, O'Mahony had become so exasperated with the Fenian Brotherhood's abandonment of their Irish-American officers in Ireland, that he had decided to issue more savings bonds in the name of the Irish Republic in a desperate attempt to raise funds to be sent to Ireland. The largely symbolic notes that O'Mahony had issued were cheap to print, and could be sold for a great profit, since they were only redeemable (with interest earned) once an independent Ireland had been secured.

When the new Fenian Senate discovered that O'Mahony had taken this action without first consulting them, on December 2, 1865, they deposed him as President of the Fenian Brotherhood. O'Mahony retaliated by barring all members of the Senate and all supporters of Roberts from the lavish Fenian headquarters at the Moffatt Mansion. The Fenian Brotherhood had now split into two rival factions, and while O'Mahony and his followers desperately continued their attempts to raise funds to be sent to Ireland, the Roberts faction continued to plan their invasion of Canada.

To this end they had appointed Brigadier General Thomas William Sweeny as their new Fenian Secretary of War. Irishborn and a veteran not only of the U.S.-Mexico War (where he had lost his right arm), but also of the Indian Wars in the American West and of the Civil War, Sweeny believed that if his Fenian Army could capture a part of Canada, it could be used to broker a deal for Irish independence with the British. Having been extensively courted by the United States Government, the Fenians believed that they had received the unofficial support of Secretary of State Seward for their Canadian

invasion plans. In addition, Seward had ordered the release of John Mitchell, the Young Irishman and accused Confederate sympathizer, from jail as a measure of good faith. By the time that the schism in the ranks of the Fenian Brotherhood between O'Mahony and Roberts had appeared, Mitchell was already in Paris, having proceeded there immediately from his jail cell in November 1865, to take up his appointment as financial agent of the organization (Comerford 1998). On an annual salary of \$2500, it was Mitchell's job to distribute financial deposits received from the Fenian Brotherhood in New York to the IRB in Ireland.

Following the split in the Fenian Brotherhood, O'Mahony held a convention in early 1866 in New York, at which his supporters denounced the Canadian invasion plans of Roberts and Sweeny, and reinstated O'Mahony Head Center of the organization. Meanwhile back in Ireland, what remained of the IRB leadership had begun to hear rumors of the disintegration of the Fenian Brotherhood, and feared that they had been totally abandoned in their hour of need. Everywhere in Ireland in early 1866, Fenian suspects were being arrested by the British authorities, and a special commission had even been appointed to put IRB men already captured on trial. As a result, Luby, O'Leary and Kickham had been found guilty of "treason felony" by the authorities, and sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude. In an attempt to defend the Fenian movement, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa made an eight hour speech in court, but only succeeded in receiving a life sentence for his audacity. Elsewhere in Ireland, in Dublin and in Cork, IRB members were receiving similar sentences and were being transported to English jails to be put to work immediately.

The Suspension of Habeas Corpus in Ireland

Although the authorities were probably aware of the split that had occurred in the Fenian Brotherhood, they still viewed the Irish in America in early 1866 as a considerable threat to the maintenance of law and order in Ireland. This opinion is attested to in a letter that the commander of the military forces in Ireland, Sir Hugh Rose, wrote to Lord Wodehouse, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on October 2, 1865;

You have omitted from your consideration the important part which the Irish in America play in this movement. The existence of a combination of Irish in large numbers in a foreign country for the purpose of stirring up a rebellion in Ireland is unprecedented.

(H. Rose in Jenkins 1969: 79)

In the early months of 1866, despite the split which had divided the Fenian Brotherhood and the increasingly desperate situation in Ireland, Irish-American officers continued to arrive in Ireland on steamers from New York. In February 1866, the authorities estimated that there were at least 500 such individuals in Ireland, 160 of whom could be found in Dublin alone (Jenkins 1969). The authorities considered these Irish Americans especially to be the core of any future revolution, but did not have any evidence with which to arrest and to imprison them indefinitely. As a result, they resorted to drastic measures in order to be able to round up these individuals en masse. Since normal judicial procedure could not be relied upon, on February 14, 1866, the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Wodehouse, wrote to the British Home Secretary to inform him that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act was the only measure that could avert revolution in Ireland;

I have little hope of pacifying the alarm, which is doing most serious injury to every interest here, without seizing the agents, who are busily employed all over the country, sowing sedition and organising this conspiracy. I have come to the conclusion, after much careful consideration, that the time has arrived when it is indispensable for the safety of the country that the Habeas Corpus Act should be suspended.

(Lord Wodehouse in Jenkins 1969: 86)

February 17 was the fateful day when the British government pushed a bill through Parliament and onto the desk of Queen Victoria that suspended Habeas Corpus in Ireland, thus enabling the authorities to arrest and imprison without trial whomever they wished. Before Parliament even met however, a series of dawn raids by the authorities throughout Ireland netted ninety-eight prisoners, thirty-eight of whom immediately claimed to be American citizens (Jenkins 1969). In Parliament meanwhile, Lord Russell that day attempted to explain why such drastic action had been taken. He described a country that had become flooded with American citizens who had returned to the land of their birth, hell-bent on vengeance;

It may, I think, be true that had it not been for the civil war in America, Ireland would have remained in peace and tranquility at the present time, and the adoption of no extreme measures would have been necessary. But towards the end of the American war the Irish residents in America formed themselves into a vast conspiracy. They collected a large amount of subscriptions, and at one meeting alone it was stated that 1,000,000 dollars were subscribed. Sometimes an invasion of Ireland and at other times an invasion of Canada were threatened. The purpose of this conspiracy was in the first place to overthrow the Queen's authority in Ireland, and in the next place to take possession of the estates of landed proprietors".

(Russell in D'Arcy 1971: 121)

And referring to a "number of strangers", Lord Russell also made mention in his speech to the threat posed by the great number of Irish officers who had arrived from America, stating that;

A great number of these persons who have come from America to Ireland are by origin Irish, but have become citizens of the United States; many of them took part in the late civil war in America...Consequently, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act will enable the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to lay his hands on these men, who are engaged in the same treasonable correspondence as those who have been convicted by law, but who have hitherto evaded apprehension.

(Russell in D'Arcy 1971: 121)

Over the course of the next few weeks, following the suspension of Habeas Corpus, a great number of American citizens were arrested in Ireland, many of whom were Irishborn and had held high ranks in the Union Armies, but who were unable to provide evidence of their naturalization. In addition to the arrest of these Irish-American officers, the IRB was further decimated by the capture of a number of civilians suspected of being members of the organization, and also by the arrests of British soldiers accused of being IRB members. Not only threatened with court-martials and imprisonment, these soldiers faced the possibility of being executed for treason. Among those caught was the Chief Recruiter of Fenians in the British Army, John Devoy, who had taken over the role following the capture of Roantree. Arrested in February 1866, Devoy was just twenty-three years of age, but had already gained military experience with the French Foreign Legion. His picture was taken at the time of his incarceration.

Figure 4.2 John Devoy. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1866-1872, Description of Fenian Suspects.

Upon hearing of the suspension of Habeas Corpus in Ireland, the arrest of Devoy and his other officers, O'Mahony organized a huge rally at Jones Wood in New York on Sunday, March 4, 1866, in an attempt to raise funds to be sent to Ireland. Despite the condemnation of Archbishop McCloskey, who opposed such a revolutionary gathering taking place on the Sabbath, an estimated 100,000 Fenians attended the rally (D'Arcy 1971) at which O'Mahony pleaded for more subscriptions. Also addressing the crowd at Jones Wood, was Captain John McCafferty, who had been arrested following the raid on the *Irish People* offices the previous September. Ohio born, but of Irish parentage, McCafferty was a former Confederate Cavalry Officer who had been one of Morgan's Raiders during the Civil War, and he informed the crowd of the IRB's current predicament in Ireland;

We have now in Ireland an army of three hundred thousand soldiers – an army the best disciplined the world ever knew. All they require is arms and ammunition, and they expect the means from you to purchase them.

(McCafferty in D'Arcy 1971: 125)

It is probably the case that McCafferty had managed to secure his eventual release from prison, following his arrest in September 1865, by proving that he was a native-born American citizen, rather than a naturalized American born in Ireland. This was not the fate of many of the Irish-American officers arrested following the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act in February 1866 however. In the case of those American citizens born in Ireland, a British judge ruled that allegiance to Britain was indefeasible. In other words, because they had returned to the land of their birth, they therefore negated their American citizenship and were thus essentially British. Charles Francis Adams, the American minister in Dublin, believed that the Fenians had hoped to exploit this inter-state gray area to their advantage – either by continuing to operate outside the law, or to save their necks once caught, or to possibly sour relations between the United States and Britain. Nonetheless, Adams was concerned enough with the situation to report back to United States Secretary of State Seward in Washington on February 22, 1866;

One of the gravest difficulties presented to me in this proceeding grows out of the conflicting views of allegiance entertained in the two countries. Here the courts adhere to the old doctrine generally held in Europe, that it is indefeasible. We, on the other hand, maintain, the absolute right of expatriation... They [Fenians] are also astute enough to be capable of contriving means of raising a complication between the two nations out of the questions that may follow from any abuse of the extraordinary powers of repression now resorted to here. This would suit their views exactly.

(Adams in D'Arcy 1971: 123)

In the meantime, the individuals remained imprisoned pending diplomatic, or perhaps revolutionary, maneuvers.

Back in New York however, in the spring of 1866 while O'Mahony and McCafferty were desperately trying to raise funds to be sent to Ireland, General Millen of the Fenian Brotherhood approached the British consulate in New York, and offered to become a spy. Apparently upset that Stephens had ordered him back to the United States, and that he was also no longer being paid at the rank of a General, Millen provided the British authorities with a wealth of information. This included details concerning IRB circles throughout Great Britain, as well as the names and addresses of prominent IRB members who had managed to avoid arrest. In addition, Millen also informed the consulate that Miss O'Leary and Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa made frequent trips between Dublin and Paris, acting as couriers for the IRB. Now on the British payroll, Millen, a most high-profile catch, agreed to return to the IRB in Ireland undercover, while continuing to report back to his handlers. The British had a wealth of spies in the Fenian Brotherhood and in the IRB during this period, and the treachery of such individuals only added to the frustrations frequently encountered by the organization on both sides of the Atlantic.

Fenianism Divided

On May 10, 1866, James Stephens arrived in New York City from Paris, in an attempt to rally the Fenian Brotherhood to his cause. Stephens also accepted the resignation of John O'Mahony, and took charge of those Fenians still committed to an Irish revolution. In the spring of 1866, O'Mahony's Fenian faction had launched their own invasion of Canada, attempting to seize the small island of Campo Bello on the

Maine-New Brunswick border, for Ireland. The raid proved to be a complete fiasco, not only costing \$35,000, but also O'Mahony his job (Neidhart, 1975).

After arriving in the United States in 1866, Stephens ordered an investigation of the finances of the Fenian Brotherhood, in an attempt to expose those who he felt had betrayed Ireland. The investigation revealed what Stephens had suspected; that between 1858 and May 10, 1866, the Fenian Brotherhood had receipts totaling \$453,000, of which \$228,000 had been raised since 1865 alone (D'Arcy 1971: 180). Since November 1865, John Mitchel (the financial agent of the Fenian Brotherhood in Paris) had however, received only \$62,118 (approximately £12,800) to channel to Ireland, according to his last financial statement dated April 7, 1866. As a result, he had consequently quit his position in disgust, and returned to Richmond, Virginia.

While Stephens was searching for financial impropriety, several thousand Fenians belonging to the Roberts-Sweeny faction were amassing along the Canadian border. A separate stream of Irish nationalism was now running its course, and had become completely divorced from Ireland. Heavily armed with surplus weaponry from government arsenals, these Fenians hoped to inflict a symbolic blow in the name of Irish nationalism on the closest British target. On May 31, 1866, the first Fenian army to ever take to the field against British forces did so in Canada, and were victorious in two battles against a local militia before being forced to retreat and regroup. They were promptly all arrested by the American authorities who had supplied the weaponry, but never fully realized that these Irish Americans might just carry out their mission.

Stephens denounced the Canadian invasion, and the killing of vastly outmatched Canadian volunteers by the Fenian Army, as murder. Because of the upcoming congressional elections however, and the importance of the Irish-American vote, the Fenian soldiers imprisoned on their return from Canada were quickly released without charge. In addition, the United States arranged the release of those naturalized Americans imprisoned as suspected Fenians in British jails, on the condition that they be transported back to the United States immediately. Heaping scorn on those Fenians who had lost sight of Ireland, Stephens meanwhile toured the United States and raised almost \$60,000 (approximately £12,400) in the process. Following a rally in New York on October 28, he informed the crowd that his next public appearance would be leading a revolutionary army into battle in Ireland (Comerford 1998).

Stephens promptly disappeared however, and rumors abounded that he must be on his way to Ireland with a Yankee invasion force. In Ireland, the authorities placed gunboats at all the major ports, and increased the number of British soldiers in the country in preparation. Eager to participate in what appeared to be an imminent Rising, a further 800 Irish Americans arrived in County Cork via steamer between 30 October and 16 November, 1866 (O'Broin 1971). Some of these men may well have been the same naturalized Americans whose release from British jails had been recently secured following the intervention of President Johnson.

In December 1866, however, Stephens materialized, not in Ireland leading a Fenian army into battle, but in New York (where he had been lying low) in order to call a meeting of his senior officers. The meeting was attended by Captain Thomas J. Kelly,

Captain John McCafferty, Colonel William G. Halpin, Colonel Massey and a certain General P. Clusaret. The latter was a French mercenary hired by Stephens. He was a veteran of the French army, had fought later in Garibaldi's Italian army, and had then held high rank in the Union army during the American Civil War. Colonel Massey was possibly a Confederate army veteran, but was suspected at the time of being an impostor or possibly a British spy. At the meeting in New York, Stephens informed his senior officers that he was postponing the revolution in Ireland once again. His officers were furious and accused him of cowardice. McCafferty reportedly drew a pistol and attempted to kill Stephens on the spot, only to be restrained by Kelly (D'Arcy 1998).

As a result of the meeting, Stephens was deposed as Head Center of the Fenian Brotherhood, and a few months later Colonel John Gleeson took his place. Irishborn and a Civil War veteran, Gleeson was one of the officers imprisoned in Ireland, but allowed to return to the United States in July, 1866. Although he was not Head Center, Captain Thomas J. Kelly was actually the man who was now really in charge of the movement, and he began to raise funds immediately by selling the steamer used for the Campo Bello expedition (Comerford 1998). Kelly realized that the IRB and his remaining American officers in Ireland and England, required immediate financial assistance. During Stephens' seven month tenure as Head Center of the Fenian Brotherhood, only \$22,500 of \$57,000 raised, had been spent in Ireland (or less than £5000 approximately) (D'Arcy 1971). In December 1866 and January 1867, Kelly therefore dispatched officers such as Colonel Massey to cross the Atlantic with instructions and money. Massey sailed on January 13, with \$2700 in gold (approximately £550) to distribute to beleaguered

American officers, many of whom were now living in a state of destitution having fled to England, which was not subject to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act. (O'Broin 1971).

The American Civil War Exported

In February, 1867, Kelly and his senior officers began to arrive in London, where they joined a small cadre of Fenians, mostly ex-Union officers, who had already begun to lay plans for a revolution. Their particular brand of Irish nationalism had been born on the waves and in their experiences of living outside of Ireland. Nurtured by memories of loss and despair and honed on the battlefield, it was now finally washing home. With little formal education, the majority of these men only knew soldiering. Heavily outnumbered by British forces, they intended to at least make a stand for Irish nationalism, in the hope that the remainder of the Irish diaspora might rally to their cause.

Although the majority of Fenian officers were Irish American, it was two men with no Irish connections who aided Captain Kelly. General Clusaret, a Frenchman, was appointed the new Commander in Chief of the Army of the Republic, and Octave Fariola, a Belgian-Italian mercenary and Civil War veteran, his Chief of Staff. The London Directory however had already hatched a plan, unbeknownst apparently to Kelly and Clusaret, to attack and seize an arsenal of weapons and ammunition held at Chester Castle in England. Captain John McCafferty, recently arrived from New York, soon took charge of this proposed attack. In the words of the day, it was the classic filibuster, and the former Confederate Cavalry Officer McCafferty, was the perfect man to lead it.

During the Civil War, he had reputedly once taken a small force of Morgan's Raiders behind Union lines, captured an ammunition dump, loaded the munitions onto barges, and sailed back down the Mississippi under fire from Federal batteries. Now McCafferty was to attempt a similar operation on British soil, his plan to seize the arsenal at a poorly defended castle, hijack a train to Liverpool and commandeer a boat to Dublin, while destroying telegraphic communications and the railroad tracks along the route (Kineally 1998).

What McCafferty did not realize however, was that there was a traitor in the Fenian ranks; another Civil War veteran by the name of Lieutenant Corydon, who informed the authorities of the proposed attack. On 11 February, when one thousand two hundred Fenians converged on Chester, near to the port city of Liverpool, they found the castle uncharacteristically heavily defended. Many of McCafferty's men were arrested in the vicinity of Chester, but at least three hundred reached Dublin before being arrested while disembarking a steamer from Liverpool (Devoy 1929). McCafferty was also arrested when he arrived in Dublin, but maintained that he was actually a gentleman by the name of William Jackson. Unfortunately for McCafferty, the authorities discovered a ring in the lining of his jacket inscribed "Erin I love thee and thy patriots –presented to John McCafferty, IRB, by the Detroit circle of the Fenian Brotherhood, a token of esteem" (Kee 1972). Had McCafferty's filibuster not been betrayed by a spy however, he may have reached Ireland with 1,200 heavily armed Fenians ready to fight a guerilla war (and the course of history may very well have been different).

Captain Kelly and General Clusaret in the meantime, had been attempting to win the support of English republicans to their cause, before they launched a Rising in Ireland planned for March 5. Over the course of a number of meetings, Sir Charles Bradlaugh aided the Fenian officers in drafting the IRB's manifesto; a proclamation of the Irish Republic which was sent to the *Times* of London newspaper, for publication March 8, 1867. In it, the IRB leadership, which now consisted mainly of Irish Americans, outlined the reasons why they had now returned to fight for Irish independence;

We have suffered centuries of outrage, enforced poverty, and bitter misery. Our rights and liberties have been trampled on by an alien aristocracy, who, treating us as foes, usurped our lands, and drew away from our unfortunate country all material riches. The real owners of the soil were removed to make room for cattle, and driven across the ocean to seek the means of living, and the political rights denied to them at home. While our men of thought and action were condemned to loss of life and liberty. But we never lost the memory and hope of a national existence.

(*The Times* (London), 03.08.1867)

Kelly was also eager to win some support for Irish independence from the British working classes, and the proclamation specified therefore that the IRB's enemy was the aristocracy and not the ordinary British people; they called for universal suffrage, equal rights for all men, as well as the complete separation of church and state;

...we intend no war against the people of England. Our war is against the aristocratic locusts, whether English or Irish, who have eaten the verdure of our fields; against the aristocratic leeches who drain alike our blood and theirs. Republicans of the entire world, our cause is your cause.

(Comerford 1998: 136)

Many of the English republicans, such as Sir Charles Bradlaugh, were also firmly anti-aristocratic in their convictions, and firm believers in the ballot and manhood suffrage, beliefs which had brought upon them the full wrath of the state, at the Hyde Park riots for example in the previous year. Under an international republican tradition, Kelly and other members of the Provisional Government hoped that they could gain support from some of the English.

Although Captain Kelly and General Clusaret continued to prepare for a March 5 Rising in Ireland, they were well aware that the IRB's most opportune moment to strike had already been lost the previous year. Throughout Ireland, British troops were now on a state of high alert, but the American officers realized that they could not return home without a fight, having come this far. Although heavily outnumbered, it was the IRB's basic strategy therefore to initially fight a guerilla war; to avoid direct confrontation when outnumbered by the enemy, to destroy all means of communication and transportation, to seize key intersections and to launch quick attacks on military targets before returning to the safety of the hills. It was Clusaret who devised the ambitious plan to fight such a guerilla war, based on the assumption that the IRB could muster ten thousand troops who would be able to take charge of the country, and in his own words seizing "upon the most important points for embarkation and the principal roads of communication, and operating under the shelter of popular sympathy" (Clusaret in Takagami 1995: 343).

Kelly and Clusaret believed that if they could maintain this strategy for long enough, reinforcements might soon arrive from the United States to take to the field in a more orthodox fashion. As Captain Kelly stated in retrospect, "The most we expected to

accomplish was to hold our ground until we should be recognized as belligerents or until aid would come from America" (Kelly in D'Arcy 1971: 240). Octave Fariola, a Belgian-Italian and ex-Federal Army Colonel in the Civil War, shared Kelly's sentiments. When Clusaret fled to Paris in February, his young Chief of Staff Fariola took charge, his plan being that the IRB should harass the British only in small bands of fifteen to twenty men;

These bands were never to fight regularly against troops or police: on the contrary, they were to avoid all encounters, using their legs whenever met by the enemy to draw it in vain and tire-some marches: they were to resort to ambushes to cut off all isolated or small parties of police or soldiers: to cut the roads, railways, telegraphs, and bridges everywhere and every day, so as to keep the country in a perpetual state of apprehension and insecurity, to disperse whenever hotly pursued, and after every little expedition".

(Fariola in Takagami 1995: 345)

The Rising of the Moon

In late February, the motley collection of officers made their way to Ireland, but unfortunately the IRB was so riddled with spies, that the authorities were already aware of what was about to happen. The American officer Corydon, for instance, provided them with full details of the Rising, as well as the names of seventeen American officers who had arrived in Dublin on a coal schooner from Liverpool. And because of a tip-off, General Massey was arrested on March 4 as he stepped off a train in Ireland. He had been touring IRB circles since February 11, readying them for action, but now found himself incarcerated before the Rising took place (Kee 1972). While being held at Kilmainham jail, Massey that night turned informer, and provided the authorities with detailed information concerning the activities proposed for the next day. Such treachery

was to prove the downfall of the IRB; riddled with spies, it is possible to speculate that some of its members might have been Irish Americans who perhaps cared more for adventure than they did for the cause of Irish independence.

The following night however, March 5, the Rising began in Ireland in a highly improvised manner. On the outskirts of Dublin, over a thousand Fenians in a number of groups attempted to rendezvous on Tallaght Hill, a symbolic site which had also served as a gathering point for the Irish forces during the attempted revolution in 1798 (Takagami 1995). Any rising of the moon was obscured by atrocious weather, while on this Tallaght hillside Colonel Halpin and a small body of men waited, continuously firing signal rockets into the night sky. Under fire from the authorities and without enough arms or ammunition, many Fenians did not manage to rendez-vous with Halpin, and over 200 were captured. On their approach to Tallaght however, one group of Fenians under the command of Captain Patrick Lennon, an Irish-American officer, captured the police barracks at Stepside and at Glencullen, before being forced to disperse. Aware that there had been a serious breakdown in command, from his hiding place in Dublin, Captain Kelly begged the Fenian Brotherhood in New York to send reinforcements, denouncing Stephens incidentally as 'Little Baldy';

Little Baldy has finally given up the ghost and acknowledge that if he came to Ireland the people would be certain to make short work of him. The rascal is in Paris, taking his ease with his wife, while the destiny of Ireland is in the balance... We now begin to realise fully the madness of McCafferty's attack on Chester... It is war to the knife. Only send us the knife.

(Kelly 03.13.1867 in Keneally 1998: 478)

Elsewhere in Ireland, bands of Fenians, some of them led by Irish-American officers, amassed in Cork, Limerick and Tipperary, to attack targets such as police and coastguard stations. In Drogheda, one thousand Fenians were dispersed by the police. In Cork, where Colonel Fariola had been arrested before the Rising began, two thousand Fenians under the command of captain Michael O'Brien, a Civil War veteran, captured a police barracks at Ballyknockane, cut telegraph wires and tore up railroad tracks. Within a few days however, many of these groups had been hunted down by Flying Columns of British Soldiers. In less than one week after it had begun, the authorities believed that the worst of the Rising was over, although they did still fear a revival of Irish nationalist struggle in the future. In the following extract, the Under Secretary of Ireland, Sir Thomas Larcom, expresses such British concerns in a letter to the Chief Secretary, Lord Naas, describing Irish nationalism as one would a noxious weed;

We hold Fenianism by the throat as you would a burglar, but the moment you relax, up it springs as strong as ever. The root is in America and the manure is the discontent of a million and a half of people, mourning and brooding over a grievance – expatriation... One does not now see how it is to end, or what means to use, we cannot go on throttling for ever. We can only go on trying to win away more and more from the malcontents and raise antagonism to it in contentment at home. But it is a long process, and a painful prospect.

(Lord Naas 03.09.1867 in O'Broin 1971: 165)

On March 15, Kelly refused to accept that the Rising had been a disastrous failure and wrote to his countrymen in America once more; denouncing Fenian factionalism and wealthy Irish Americans who he believed had abandoned them in their hour of need, he desperately called for an invasion force to be sent;

...Fit out your privateers...I say, don't mind what the newspapers say... We took the field on a little more than a thousand pounds. If those scurvy Irish millionaires had done half their duty we would now be recognized as belligerents... When the word of the present extensive business reaches you, there should certainly be immense work to be done. A landing in Sligo at the present time would be of infinite service. That section has been reserved for just such an event, and if Fortune should only guide your ships in that direction it would just suit our purposes.

(Kelly 03.15. 1867 in D'Arcy 1971: 243)

A Fenian privateer was immediately outfitted, and it sailed from New York on April 13, loaded with 5,000 modern rifles and 1,500,000 rounds of ammunition, accompanied by thirty-two American officers. Under the command of General Nagle and named the *Jackmel Packet*, the schooner was re-christened *Erin's Hope* en route. It arrived in Ireland on May 25, but the only Fenian officer able to greet the ship was Colonel Ricard O'Sullivan Burke, a former Chilean Cavalry officer who informed the Americans that the Rising had failed. Twenty-eight of the American officers disembarked near Waterford, but were all arrested fairly quickly.

Since the late 1840s, Ireland, personified as the Shan Van Vocht (poor old woman) had imagined the day when it's Famine refugees would return from America to avenge their dead. Since the 1850s, the Irish in America had promised Ireland that they would do just this, but in 1867 the long promised Fenian fleet materialized as just one ship, arriving two months too late;

There are ships upon the sea
 Says the Shan Van Vocht,
 There are good ships on the sea
 Says the Shan Van Vocht,
 Oh! They're sailing o'er the sea,
 From a land where all are free,
 With a freight that's dear to me,
 Says the Shan Van Vocht.

They are coming from the West
 Says the Shan Van Vocht,
 And the flag we love the best
 Says the Shan Van Vocht,
 Waves proudly in the blast,
 And they've nailed it to the mast,
 For threat'ning comes at last,
 Says the Shan Van Vocht.

(New York Citizen, 12.22.1855)

Conclusion

Born of frustration, Fenianism was a product of the failed Young Ireland revolution of 1848, a republican identity which emerged in New York City forged out of the experiences of the Irish diaspora. Although the United States would continue to loom large in Fenian consciousness, this new brand of nationalism also responded to developments in Irish society and later attracted many Irishmen who had never left Ireland. Following the shock of the Great Famine, Irish society, particularly in the south and east of the country, had begun to experience rapid social change in the late 1850s and early 1860s. Such regions as Munster and Leinster were soon characterized by greater economic integration, higher levels of urbanization as well as a huge growth in the numbers of middle class. Lacking any means of social advancement however, save for

emigration, large numbers of lower middle-class men seeking self-fulfillment hence turned to Fenianism to address their frustration with Irish society under British rule.

In addition to being a political movement however, Fenianism also provided these young men with a social outlet, and proved popular because it tapped into prevalent Victorian ideals concerning manhood and the value of honor, respectability and dying a soldier's death for one's country (Joyce 1997). Perhaps however, it proved to be too much the social pastime, judging by their state of preparedness when it came to fighting, and the numbers who failed to turn out for the real revolution.

In contrast to other periods of Irish nationalism it is evident that Fenianism also drew upon the very close proximity which then existed between Ireland and the United States, the two countries closely linked by emigration and history. Fenianism was born out of these interconnections; a type of nationalism sparked by displacement and instability which spread like wildfire outside of Ireland, feeding on diasporic loss and anger. That such a nationalism could exist, reveals the fact there can never be only one narrative of nationalism, territorially contained and following an orderly historical progression. Instead, as I have illustrated and contrary to the dominant viewpoint, Irish nationalism was a fluid narrative which developed in a much more chaotic fashion, a highly mobile construct which could be reactivated overseas to interpret the global (and one's fate) from many different perspectives, from many different localities. In time, it splintered into yet further nationalisms; different streams reflective of different contexts, experiences and also perhaps of greater distance from Ireland, in both time and space. Although triggered

by deterritorialization however, one stream of this particular nationalism was eventually reterritorialized in the form of the 1867 Rising in Ireland, led by Irish Americans.

Crucial to the transnational development of this particular brand of nationalism which became known collectively as Fenianism, were the movements of political actors who were able to exploit the increasing global interconnectedness to the advantage of Irish nationalism. In some cases they were individuals who had been born in Ireland; men such as Captain Thomas Kelly who would traverse the Atlantic Ocean on a number of occasions to organize an Irish revolution. In other cases, these were men such as Captain John McCafferty, committed Irish nationalists born in the United States but who were willing to exploit the cracks between states; using their American nationality to gain early release from British prisons so that they could return to the fight. Finally these transnational political actors also even included dead men, such as Terrence Bellew MacManus, whose funeral brought Dublin to a standstill. Never was the hybrid nature of this Fenian identity more on display, or the legacy of Young Ireland more worshipped, than at the funeral of Terrence Bellew MacManus. His coffin bedecked with both American and Fenian Irish nationalist flags, MacManus became a major transnational political actor *posthumously*. For the Irish-American Fenian entourage, some of whom had traveled from as far afield as San Francisco, and whose idea it had been to repatriate MacManus in death, it proved to be a momentous public relations coup.

Also of immense importance to the transnational development of nationalism during this period, was the money raised in the United States which flowed to Ireland. This circuit of revolutionary capital was of course made possible only by the immense risks

taken by women such as Miss O'Leary and Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa, who smuggled Fenian funds from Paris to Dublin with only their petticoats for protection. It is surprising however, that Fenianism suffered from a lack of financial funding, when one considers the amount of money raised in the United States for the very purpose of armed insurrection in Ireland. The Fenian Fair in Chicago alone, raised \$54,000 and in the period 1858-1866 overall, the Fenian Brotherhood raised a total of \$453,000. Without American money though, James Stephens would certainly have found it very difficult to recruit in Ireland, and he certainly would not have been able to launch and sustain the *Irish People*, which proved to be vitally important to Fenianism. The fact remains however, that the Fenian soldiers who fought in Canada in 1866 were much better armed than those who fought in Ireland in 1867, and of over \$200,000 raised in the period 1865-1866, less than a third of this amount was channeled to Ireland via the Fenian Brotherhood treasurer in Paris, John Mitchell.

Finally, it was also the imagining of a transatlantic Irish nation which contributed to the growth of Fenianism during this period. Here, print capitalism, in the form of the *Irish People* proved crucial to the success of the movement, and by employing the medium of print the Fenians harnessed scale as a weapon of the dispossessed. In the imagining of a transatlantic Ireland, and in the extensive coverage of Irish valor on foreign battlefields, Fenianism drew thousands to its banner in Ireland.

By examining the crucial role played by transnational political actors, in tracing the transatlantic circuits of capital and by uncovering the imagining of a transatlantic Irish nation during this period, it is possible to catch a glimpse therefore of the many

complicated interconnections between globalization and the development of nationalism.

While the rank and file may only have dreamed of a life in the United States, in comparison the leaders of Fenianism were truly international citizens. Their Irish nationalism had been formulated gazing upon Ireland from afar, and Ireland would benefit greatly from their sacrifice as well as their interstitiality.

CHAPTER 5

A VOICE FROM THE TOMB: THE RESURRECTION OF IRISH NATIONALISM

The world is large, when its weary leagues two loving
 hearts divide;
But the world is small, when your enemy is loose on the
 other side.

("Distance" John Boyle O'Reilly)

Introduction

John Boyle O'Reilly penned these words some years after he was arrested and imprisoned as a Fenian during the 1867 Rising. Later an Irish-American newspaper editor and poet of some renown, his poem "Distance" reflects the sense of loss felt by the Irish diaspora during this period, but also the sense of immense possibilities for Irish nationalism.

This is a new chapter in the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism, and in it I will detail what happened in the aftermath of defeat. Contrary to the dominant nationalist narrative, it is a story of Irish nationalism developing extra-territorially and of political actors taking yet further advantage of improved global communications. Again, I will reveal a complex narrative therefore, marked by historical geographies previous ignored or downplayed in the story of how Irish nationalism developed; alternative historical

geographies which contradict a nationalism commonly assumed to be spatially fixed and linearly arranged.

In the aftermath of a failed revolution I will illuminate a rising tide of sympathy for Fenianism, sympathy which was transformed into political action by Irish nationalists who capitalized on the manner in which prisoners were treated at the hands of the British. In order to chart how Irish nationalism continued to develop transatlantically during this period, this chapter will then proceed to follow Irish nationalism overseas to the United States once more, to analyze the manner in which it was reactivated by a new generation of political exiles during the 1870s. In examining the role played by a new organization by the name of Clan na Gael, I will argue that Irish nationalism became a truly global phenomenon during this period. To do this, I will focus in particular on Clan na Gael's expedition to rescue imprisoned Fenians from Australia as an example of a key intervention made by the Irish diaspora in the development of Irish nationalism. In addition, I will conclude this chapter with a further analysis of the integral role that newspapers continued to play in the imagining of an Irish nationalist community –now envisioned at not just a transatlantic, but at a truly global scale.

Fenianism on Trial and on the Run

Captain Kelly and another Irish-American officer, Captain Timothy Deasy, were eventually apprehended in Manchester, England, on 11 September, 1867. Betrayed by their American accents they were held on suspicion of loitering with intent to commit a crime, until the informer Corydon could be brought to the city to identify them. Captain

Kelly was in Manchester having organized a secret IRB convention, which had taken place on 17 August. During the summer, William Randolph Roberts had visited Paris, and had made a number of overtures to IRB members in an attempt to win them over to his faction. At a meeting in Paris on July 4, Roberts had promised the IRB military and financial aid, before returning to the United States in the belief that he had secured control over the weakened organization (Rafferty 1999). In Manchester however, Kelly reasserted his authority while denouncing men such as Roberts whom he believed had abandoned Fenianism in its hour of need. As a result of this meeting, it was decided that a new organization be founded in the United States, with which the IRB would cooperate solely in future. Its name was Clan na Gael.

Having been identified by Corydon (who was providing expert testimony at a number of special commissions being held to convict Fenians in late 1867), Kelly and Deasy were led from the courthouse to a waiting Black Maria, a horse-drawn prison van. It was September 18, and whether Captains Kelly and Deasy were aware of it or not, Colonel Ricard O'Sullivan Burke, had been informed of their capture and had organized a rescue attempt. As the Black Maria passed through the city streets of Manchester on its way to Bellevue jail, it was ambushed by thirty well-armed Fenians. Under fire, the police escort dispersed quickly, but a policeman in the van refused to surrender and hand out the keys. As a result, a shot was fired into the van which killed the policeman instantly. It had taken only a few minutes, but Kelly and Deasy were now free; spirited away into the relative safety of Manchester's Irish neighborhoods before eventually returning safely to the United States (Kee 1972, Comerford 1998).

In the aftermath of the rescue however, a number of the Fenian ambush party were apprehended, while that night in Manchester, the police and army raided Irish neighborhoods searching for the two men. The following day, the *Times* of London described the rescue as an outrage 'characteristic of Irish-Americans', stating that such 'audacious practices of American rowdyism' be treated severely (*The Times* 09.19.1867). In the same edition, the *Times* also stated that a substantial reward had been offered by the government for information leading to their recapture, and provided the following descriptions of the escaped men;

1st. Colonel Thomas J. Kelly, age 30, height 5ft. 6in., hair (cropped close), whiskers, and beard brown, eyes hazel, flat nose (large nostrils), stout build, one tooth deficient next to double one on right top side, scar over right temple, small scar inside of right arm, large scar on inside of belly from an ulcerated wound; dress –brown mixture suit, coat (with pockets at sides), deerstalker hat.

2d. Captain Timothy Deasy, age 29, height 5ft. 10in., complexion swarthy, eyes hazel, hair and moustache dark brown, whiskers shaved off, proportionate make, long face, sickly appearance, speaks with a strong American accent; dress –dark pea jacket, dark gray trousers, deerstalker hat.

(*The Times*, London 09.18.1867)

It is, I believe indicative however, of the crucial yet forgotten role that the Irish diaspora played in the development of Irish nationalism, that at this juncture the three most wanted Irish nationalists in Great Britain consisted of two escapees with American accents, and an IRB leader who was an ex-officer in the Chilean cavalry.

Martyrdom in Manchester

At the subsequent trial, the principal eye-witness testimonies were provided by a number of convicts who had been riding in the prison van alongside Kelly and Deasy. In the circumstances, by positively identifying the suspected Fenian rescuers, these prisoners had a lot to gain. With inadequate time to prepare a defense, five Irishborn men were quickly found guilty of the murder of the policeman and sentenced to death. They were Phillip Allen, Michael Larkin, Thomas Maguire and two American officers, Michael O'Brien and Edward O'Meagher Condon. In a dramatic speech from the dock, Condon professed his innocence and claimed not to have fired the fatal shot, concluding his statement with the words "God Save Ireland!"; words which would soon become a rallying call for Irish nationalists and the title of a popular song. Following the verdicts, a number of protests were held throughout Great Britain, a reflection of the rising tide of sympathy amongst the British public for the Fenianism, particularly amongst the working class and the Irish. On November 18 for example, a reported 25,000 people attended a rally at Clerkenwell Green, London, to call for a halt to the executions since they had been based upon such dubious testimony and evidence. In addition, a number of leading British radicals, as well as the International Working Men's Association, appealed to the Home Secretary for clemency. Under pressure, the Government decided to pardon Maguire, who had professed his innocence throughout the trial (Curtis 1994, Rafferty 1999).

Meanwhile in the United States, Secretary of State Seward sent a telegram to the American Ambassador in London, Charles Francis Adams, ordering him to intervene on

behalf of O'Brien and Condon, who had both fought for the Union in the Civil War, and were naturalized American citizens. In New York City, such newspapers as the *Irish Citizen* rallied Irish Americans to the cause of their compatriots imprisoned in Ireland, stating that;

Whenever men of Irish race are to be found, in Old World or New –as members of this great Republic, or as colonists in British possessions, there is one thought, one longing aspiration very near their hearts –it is to aid their oppressed kindred at home and to free the fair and fertile Island of their fathers from the wasting plague of British domination –to repeal the Conquest, and rear up again the Irish Nation upon its own soil.

(*Irish Citizen*, 11.19.1867: 4)

On the eve of the scheduled execution date, Adams managed to win a reprieve for Condon, whose sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life, but he was unable to save the other American, O'Brien, from the gallows.

On the morning of November 23, Allen, Larkin and O'Brien were led from their prison cells to a scaffold which had been constructed high on the walls of Salford jail in Manchester. Below the doomed men, a crowd of two thousand spectators had gathered to observe the gruesome spectacle. Worried that the Fenians might stage another spectacular rescue, the authorities had positioned five hundred soldiers to protect the scaffold, and employed two thousand police constables to control the crowd. Close by, the 72nd Highland Regiment and a squadron of the 8th Hussars waited on stand-by (Quinliven & Rose 1982). With hoods placed over their heads, and nooses around their necks, the three men dropped to their fate in unison. Allen died instantly, his neck broken, but in the case of O'Brien and Larkin, the hangman had misjudged and they both

survived the drop. Larkin had to be finished off by the executioner himself, but the American officer O'Brien was protected by a priest, and struggled for almost an hour before dying.

Not since the Young Irelander, Robert Emmet, had an Irishman been executed for political action, and like Emmet, the Manchester Martyrs (as they became known) were instantly mythologized. Throughout Great Britain, a number of mock funerals were held, a reflection of the widespread sympathy for Fenianism that the executions had stirred in the British and Irish public. Following the executions, Frederick Engels wrote to his colleague Karl Marx, damning the British Government's actions in Manchester. The two men were influential leaders of the International Workingman's Association, and spent most of their time in the north of England. Frederick Engels was in fact married to an Irishwoman, Mary Burns, and both he and Karl Marx maintained a great interest in the plight of the Irish people during this period. On November 24 he wrote to Karl Marx;

Dear Moor,

So yesterday morning the Tories, by the hand of Mr. Colcraft [the executioner], accomplished the final act of separation between England and Ireland. The *only thing* that the Fenians still lacked were martyrs. They have been provided with these by Derby and G. Hardy. Only the execution of the three has made the liberation of Kelly and Deasy the heroic deed as which it will now be sung to every Irish babe in the cradle in Ireland, England and America. The Irish women will do that just as well as the Polish women.

To my knowledge, the only time that anybody has been executed for a similar matter in a civilised country was the case of John Brown at Harpers Ferry. The Fenians could not have wished for a better precedent. The Southerners had at least the decency to treat J. Brown as a *rebel*, whereas here everything is being done to transform a political attempt into a common crime.

(Engels to Marx, 11.24.1867 in Marx & Engels 1972: 145)

In defeat, Fenianism was now growing in strength; the imprisonment, trials, executions and dramatic escapes of its leadership capturing the attention of the public and evoking widespread sympathy. Meanwhile in Ireland, for months after the failed Rising, a number of Irish-American soldiers had not only managed to evade capture, but were still fighting. During the months of November and December 1867 for example, an American officer by the name of William Mackey Lomasney had staged a number of daring arms and ammunition raids in County Cork, on behalf of the IRB. Nicknamed the 'Little Captain', Lomasney was a Civil War veteran, whose family hailed from County Cork. This style of guerilla warfare, waged by small groups of men armed with revolvers, was a completely new Irish nationalist strategy introduced to the country by Irish Americans such as Lomasney. Such a distinctive style of brazen urban warfare had also been evident in Dublin until late 1867, when the authorities eventually arrested the members of a 'shooting circle' established by Captain Kelly before his arrest and subsequent escape (Comerford, 1998). This group of well-armed Fenians had targeted informers and detectives, and were led by an Irish-American officer and Civil War veteran, Patrick Lennon, who killed a policeman before eventually being arrested. Described by the authorities as a desperado and assassin, the Crime Branch compiled the following report on this Fenian suspect;

Name:	Patrick J. Lennon	
Occupation:	formerly a cork cutter	
Residence:	Born in Dublin	
Description	1868	1872
Height	5ft.9in	5ft.8in
Age	24	30 or 32
Make	ordinary	rather slight
Hair	dark brown	dark brown
Eyes	brown	sunken brown
Complexion	fresh	pale
Visage		rather long
Whiskers		none
Beard		none
Marks (if any)	on left side—originally a D—but changed as in red ink.	

Observations

Convicted of Treason Felony, Dublin 1868, pardoned in general amnesty in 1870. The foregoing description in black is as supplied from Kilmainham Gaol in '68—that in red by the Report of Chief Comisn D in P. 5 Mar 72—who adds that Lennon has the aspect of a person affected with consumption—is rather stooped—having served in the Cavalry, drags the leg and limps on the sword-side.

Figure 5.1 Patrick Lennon. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1866-1872, Description of Fenian Suspects.

During this period the British establishment became extremely alarmed at the threat posed to law and order by such Irish Americans as Lomasney and Lennon, who had returned to Ireland not only with a vengeance and a hatred of the British, but also with firsthand knowledge of modern warfare. As the *Times* newspaper reported, on November 5, 1867;

If there be one class of Fenian conspirators rather than another which deserves no mercy at the hands of the Government, it is the class of American filibusters who have long infected Dublin and are beginning to infect our own great cities.

(*The Times* London, 11.06.1867)

By late 1867 however, many of the American officers who had arrived in the previous years had either been killed, had fled or were being held in British jails. In December 1867, Colonel Ricard O'Sullivan Burke, just thirty years of age and in charge of the IRB, was finally apprehended. Two months later, on February 7, 1868, the authorities also arrested William Mackey Lomasney, but not before he had killed one policeman before being overpowered.

Fenian Fever

Any public sympathy for Fenianism was dealt a severe blow however, when, on December 13, 1867, an explosion at Clerkenwell prison in London killed fifteen innocent people and injured over one hundred more. In an attempt to break Colonel Ricard O'Sullivan Burke out of jail, too much dynamite had been used to blow up a prison wall. As a result, the subsequent explosion not only destroyed the wall, but also greatly damaged a number of houses in the working-class London neighborhood in which the prison was located. Coupled with the fact that a policeman had been killed previously in Manchester during the escape of Kelly and Deasy, public sympathy for Fenianism in Great Britain now began to wane significantly, while the political climate grew increasingly hostile towards Fenianism and all things Irish. Ever concerned with workers' rights, in a letter written to Frederick Engels, Karl Marx laments the fact that the British government will use this outrage to divide the British working class by nationality;

Dear Fred,

The last exploit of the Fenians in Clerkenwell was a very stupid thing. The London masses, who have shown great sympathy for Ireland, will be made wild by it and driven into the arms of the government party. One cannot expect the London proletarians to allow themselves to be blown up in honour of the Fenian emissaries. There is always a kind of fatality about such secret, melodramatic sort of conspiracy.
(Marx to Engels 12.14.1867 in Marx & Engels 1970: 149)

The Clerkenwell explosion was particularly damaging to the case of an Irishborn American officer by the name of John Warren, who had arrived on the *Erin's Hope* only to be arrested and charged with treason felony. In the months prior to the Clerkenwell explosion, the fate of Warren had become something of a cause célèbre to American Fenians in the United States, and a source of embarrassment to President Johnson's administration. Warren was Irishborn, but a naturalized American citizen jailed in Ireland under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act. Hoping to avoid a prison term, Warren had written letters which he hoped would draw public attention to his plight, letters which were smuggled out of his cell to appear in the press. In these letters, Warren claimed that his only crime had been to express American principles in America, since he had been arrested immediately upon his disembarking *Erin's Hope* in Ireland. It was Warren's hope to cause a diplomatic debacle, and with presidential elections looming in the United States and the Irish-American vote to be won, he expected the United States government to jump to his defense (Jenkins, 1969).

Unfortunately for Warren however, Adams, the American Ambassador, found the strategy distinctly distasteful. Adams sympathized with the British, and realized that if released, the United States government would be unable to provide any guarantees that

Warren would not return to Ireland to cause further mischief. On October 25, 1867, Warren's trial began in Dublin, but he immediately invoked an ancient British law to demand that he be tried by a jury of whom half were American citizens like himself. In response to this tactic however, the judge restated the doctrine of indefeasible allegiance to assert that Warren was a British citizen and not an American citizen, since he had been born in Ireland. Under international law at this time, one's citizenship depended upon one's place of birth, and only those individuals actually born in America therefore, could claim to be American citizens. In the years 1865 and 1866, this had proved to be a contentious issue in relations between the United States and Great Britain, and now Warren hoped to re-ignite this dispute in the name of Fenianism.

It proved to be quite a predicament for the United States government, but Adams was reluctant to become embroiled in the controversy on the side of Fenianism. Back in the United States however, a number of politicians seized upon the issue in an attempt to woo the Irish-American vote in the upcoming 1868 elections. The issue remained unresolved however, largely because impeachment proceedings began against President Johnson in February, 1868, and the British government were unwilling to hold any discussions with an administration that might soon be replaced. Despite American objections therefore, Warren was sentenced to fifteen years penal servitude (Devoy 1929).

On May 26, 1868, the British authorities executed another young alleged Fenian by the name of Michael Barrett. Arrested one month after the Clerkenwell explosion, he was found guilty of this crime, despite the testimony of witnesses who supported his claim that he was innocent and had been home in Glasgow at the time. In a letter written

to the Home Secretary on the first of May, 1868, the atmosphere of hatred in which Barrett's trial took place was even expressed by Queen Victoria herself, when she stated that "these Fenians should be lynch-lawed and on the spot" (Queen Victoria in Curtis 1994: 78). Although Barrett became the last man to be publicly executed in Great Britain, he was not the last martyr to the cause of Irish nationalism.

The extent to which the diaspora were involved in Irish nationalism during this period is often downplayed in a dominant nationalist narrative, because such involvement contradicts the notion of a territorially fixed nationalist identity. Today, it remains largely taken for granted that states are the only given containers of national identity, but as the example of the development of Irish nationalism illustrates, such thinking is seriously flawed. In Fenianism for example, we bear witness to diasporic nationalist tactics which sought to exploit the fact that the space and time from which they had emerged, was considered contradictory to the dominant logic that nationalist identity can only exist in its corresponding state, a logic then enshrined in British law. In their willingness to trade upon their interstitiality, and to use their status as naturalized Americans to mitigate any British judgment of their actions, such Fenians as Warren were able to exploit the cracks between states to further the development of Irish nationalism. Unfortunately such a strategy was not always successful; the United States were unhappy that the British differentiated between native born and naturalized Americans in such a manner, but were unwilling to side with the Fenian cause for fear of souring diplomatic relations between the two countries. As a result, naturalized

Americans such as O'Brien went to the gallows, while many more languished in jail cells.

The Amnesty Campaign

Following the British general election of 1868 however, which was won by the Liberal candidate, William Gladstone, and the election of General Grant President of the United States, the two new administrations signed a treaty whereby Britain agreed to stop differentiating between native-born and naturalized American citizens, so long as the United States could be held accountable for their actions overseas (Jenkins 1969). Still, a great number of Fenian prisoners remained detained at Her Majesty's pleasure, and there still existed some sympathy for these men, particularly in Ireland and in the United States.

To lobby on behalf of those Fenians still imprisoned, an Amnesty Association was founded in Dublin by John Nolan, an IRB member, in late 1868. Previously, two of the most vocal campaigners on behalf of the prisoners had been two of their wives, Mary O'Donovan Rossa and Kathleen Clarke Luby. On February 16, 1869, a mass meeting was also held at the Cooper Institute in New York City, to highlight the plight of the Fenian prisoners, especially the American officers (Jenkins 1969). For some Fenian prisoners however, it perhaps was already too late. On October 12, 1867, a ship named the *Hougemont* had sailed down the River Thames bound for Western Australia with sixty-three Irish political prisoners shackled on board. They included a number of British

soldier Fenians, destined for a life of hard labor and branded with the letter 'D' above their hearts as proof of their desertion (Rosen, 1979).

On February 22, 1869, in an attempt to quell the rising tide of support for the release of the Fenian prisoners, Gladstone announced the imminent release of forty-nine Fenian convicts. These individuals had been carefully chosen however, and were either Irish Americans held in British jails or Irishmen who had already been transported and imprisoned in Australia. Gladstone was thus assured that there would be no triumphant return to Ireland for any of these penniless souls for quite a while.

Under the leadership of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the socialist International Workingman's Association had strongly supported the Amnesty Campaign. In a letter written to Engels at this time, Marx criticized Gladstone's amnesty and his discriminatory treatment of Irish and British Fenians compared to their American comrades;

The Irish amnesty is the lousiest of its kind ever. *D'abord*, most of the amnestied had almost served the term after which all penal servitude men are given tickets of leave. And secondly, the chief ringleaders were kept in gaol "because" Fenianism is of "American" origin, and hence the more criminal. That is why such Yankee-Irishman as Costello are released while the Anglo-Irish are kept under lock and key...If ever a mountain gave birth to a mouse, it is this ministry of all talents, and indeed in every respect.

(Marx to Engels 03.01.1869 in Marx & Engels 1972)

It was Karl Marx and Frederick Engels' hope to advance the cause of the working classes by attacking Great Britain where it was weakest, on the question of Ireland. Marx stated that "[a]ny nation that oppresses another forges its own chains" and Fenian success in Ireland he hoped, might trigger a workers' revolt in England (Marx & Engels 1972: 163).

To this end, a number of Fenians joined the International Workingman's Association but on the whole Irish nationalists remained wary of socialism at this juncture, anxious to attain Irish independence above all else (Comerford 1998: 185).

A handful of the Fenians released in 1869 by Gladstone however, were liberated from British jails much closer to home, and were thus able to return to Ireland immediately. Once home, they began to reorganize the IRB and to form a new Supreme Council. They included James F.X. O'Brien, an individual who was representative of a younger and more ambitious group of Fenians, who now commanded the movement in the absence of older leaders. Of lower class background, but well educated in the national schools introduced to Ireland by the British Government, such men looked to Fenianism as an avenue of social advancement. As Comerford points out, they differed significantly from previous Fenian leaders in their desire to see their goals attained by whatever means necessary;

The older set were mainly men who had passed up material opportunities for the sake of political visions; the younger men were using politics to create opportunities that would not otherwise come their way: they lacked the dreamy quality and were endowed instead with strong pragmatic instincts.

(Comerford, 1998: 167)

During 1869, the Amnesty Association, led by its secretary, John Nolan and its president, Isaac Butt (MP), campaigned tirelessly for the release of the remaining Fenian prisoners. Crucial to their strategy was to highlight the alleged mistreatment of these men while held in custody, and to use the press to rally supporters to their cause. Jenny Marx, the eldest daughter of Karl Marx, was particularly active in this campaign and

wrote a number of articles on the subject in the *Marseillaise*, a republican newspaper published in Paris. In addition, the Amnesty Association organized a series of rallies; attracting thirty thousand protestors in Limerick, two hundred thousand in Dublin and two hundred thousand in London (Curtis 1994). Public sympathy for the Fenian cause was now building again, following the clumsy bombing at Clerkenwell which had destroyed any earlier momentum. The Amnesty Association now sought to capture this sympathy and to harness it to their own objectives, their priority being the immediate release of Fenians prisoners, although their fate was fast becoming symbolic of a wider Irish nationalist discontent with British rule (Rafferty 1999).

The Amnesty Association focussed upon the plight of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa in particular, as an example of the harsh treatment dealt to Fenian prisoners treated like regular convicts. Rossa's allegations against the increasingly bureaucratic prison system, were that he had spent a large portion of his sentence in solitary confinement in a dark cell, on a diet which consisted only of bread and water. During one thirty-five day stretch, Rossa also claimed that his hands had remained handcuffed behind his back, and he had subsequently been forced to eat and drink like a dog. His plight was detailed by such campaigners as Jenny Marx in the foreign press, and these sensational allegations soon proved deeply embarrassing to the British Government, which eventually established a Parliamentary Commission to investigate the treatment of Fenians in British jails. The British refused to treat Irish nationalists any differently from common criminals, and in a period of just two years since the failed Rising, seven Fenians had died in jail, a further four had committed suicide and four more had gone insane. The

Parliamentary Commission subsequently confirmed a number of the allegations of harsh treatment, and recommended that a separate unit be established to house political prisoners –if the Fenians be so classified (Quinliven & Rose 1982, Rafferty 1999).

Gladstone had won the general election in late 1868 on the promise that he would remedy the Irish situation, and in mid-1869 the Protestant Church of Ireland was disestablished in his Irish Church Act. Although it was largely a symbolic gesture, Gladstone hoped that his policy might placate the Irish Catholic masses and so undermine Fenianism. The fact that a British Prime Minister now appeared to be genuinely interested in Irish affairs was a revelation to many Irish people, and the Irish nationalist John Devoy for one, attributed this British change of heart to the success of the Fenian physical-force movement;

While the deaths among the English civilians was regrettable, and though the immediate purpose of this dynamite operation failed of accomplishment, the Clerkenwell incident, coming so soon after the daring rescue at Manchester, scared the Government and people of England and had good results later.

(Devoy 1929: 250)

In December, 1870, Gladstone finally yielded to pressure and agreed to release a number of the remaining Fenian prisoners. The news was jubilantly reported in such Irish nationalist newspapers as the *Irish World*. Published in Brooklyn, New York, and edited by Patrick Ford, the newspaper published Gladstone's letter to Parliament in full in which the Prime Minister detailed the reasons for his decision, and outlined what conditions were attached to the release of the prisoners;

Gentlemen: I have to inform you that Her Majesty's Government have carefully considered the case of the convicts now undergoing their sentences for treason and treason-felony, and that they have recommended to the Crown the exercise towards them of the royal clemency, so far as it is compatible with the assured maintenance of tranquility and order in the country. They will, therefore, be discharged upon the condition of not remaining in, nor returning to, the United Kingdom.

(Irish World, 01.14.1871)

The *Irish World* also reported on the response of the British and Irish press to the announcement. The *Irishman* for example described the amnesty as a sham, claiming in fact that it amounted to a new sentence of exile. The British newspaper, the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the other hand, lambasted the Gladstone administration and described the administration of justice in Great Britain as a 'mockery and a sham'. The *Irish World* also reported that United States Secretary of State had provided first class passage for the released prisoners on the Cunard steamship, the *Cuba* (*Irish World*, 01.14.1871).

The Amnesty Campaign had succeeded in its objectives, but in victory had created a new generation of exiles. Many of the Fenians released from British jails were already familiar with the United States however, having been born there, grown up there or maybe having visited the country on occasion. None of them however, would be allowed to return to Ireland, at least not for the duration of their original sentence. Although these men traveled to the United States without any possessions, like previous generations of Irish diaspora they did carry with them a deep commitment to Irish nationalism, and one which did not disappear as soon as they reached their destination. Although they could expect a warm welcome in the United States, in defeat these men had learnt some hard lessons, and would be wary in future of Irish-American promises. Fully aware that any future Irish nationalist endeavor should not suffer the same fate as the Fenian

Brotherhood, a number of these exiles devoted their lives to a new, more shadowy Irish nationalist organization, Clan na Gael. Here they enlarged Irish nationalist operations to a truly global level.

The Revival of Irish Nationalism in the United States

On January 19, 1871, the *Cuba* arrived in New York City, and soon after landing the five released Fenian prisoners who had been aboard posed for a picture. They are, from left to right: John Devoy, Charles Underwood O'Connell, Henry Mulleda, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa and John McClure;

Figure 5.2 The
"Cuba Five".
Source: Devoy (1929)

Devoy was twenty-eight years of age, he had served in the French Foreign Legion and had been a prominent Fenian recruiter among the ranks of the British army until his arrest in February, 1866. O'Donovan Rossa was thirty-nine years of age and had been

the business manager of the *Irish People*, by 1871 his prison sufferings had become legendary. Prior to his arrest in 1865, he had visited New York City on a number of occasions, either to visit family or as an IRB envoy. The third released Fenian who arrived aboard the *Cuba* was Captain John McClure, he was twenty-four years of age. A native born American citizen and Civil War veteran, McClure had been arrested in 1867 having participated in a raid on a County Cork Coast Guard station during which a fellow American officer had been killed. Henry Mulleda was thirty years of age and arrived in New York aboard the *Cuba* in a state of ill-health, a result of his prison treatment since his arrest in 1867. Completing the 'Cuba Five', as they became known, was Charles Underwood O'Connell, an American Civil war veteran who had been arrested disembarking a steamship in 1865, in the possession of letters which Stephens had entrusted to him.

Waiting on the quayside to welcome the Cuba Five were a number of New York Irish dignitaries sympathetic to their cause. On behalf of Tammany Hall and the O'Mahony wing of the Fenian Brotherhood, the exiles were greeted by Richard O'Gorman, a former Young Irelander and now a New York Superior Court Judge. Also in attendance to welcome the exiles was General Millen, on behalf of the Roberts faction of the Fenian Brotherhood. In their attempts to each claim the 'Cuba Five' as their own and on behalf of their respective parties, squabbling soon ensued on the quayside. It was a display however, which only strengthened the resolve of men such as John Devoy, to attempt to unite these factional rifts in American Fenianism. By 1871, both wings of the Fenian Brotherhood were near bankruptcy, and the name 'Fenian' had become synonymous with

a number of failed attempts to invade Canada and a disastrous attempt at a Rising in Ireland.

One week later, the 'Cuba Five' were joined by a number of other Fenian exiles who arrived in New York City aboard the Cunard steamship, the *Russia*. They included Thomas Francis Burke, a naturalized American and Civil War veteran of the Confederate army who had become a prominent Fenian orator in New York City following the war. He had been arrested in 1867, and was now thirty years of age. Also on board was Edward Pilsworth St.Clair who had been arrested with Devoy in 1866, and who had previously served with Garribaldi in Sicily and Naples. Among those who accompanied these men on board the *Russia* were Patrick Lennon, Denis Dowling Mulcahy (sub-editor of the *Irish People*), and William Francis Roantree, the 'pistol-packing' United States Navy veteran who had returned to Ireland in 1861 to help organize the IRB.

Lodged in the Metropolitan Hotel on Broadway, and awarded \$15,000 by Tammany Hall to cover their expenses, the exiled Fenian prisoners were entertained and gave speeches at various functions for a number of weeks (D'Arcy 1971). On February 4, 1871, however, Devoy wrote a letter to an old friend named John Boyle O'Reilly in Boston, in which he expressed the exiles doubts' concerning their hosts, as well as his own wish to form a new organization that might unite the Fenian factions. It is quite possible that Devoy had actually originally recruited O'Reilly to Fenianism. He was a British soldier Fenian who had been arrested and transported to Western Australia aboard the *Hougemont* in 1871, but who had subsequently escaped and made his way to Boston

where he had secured a job as a journalist for the *Pilot* newspaper. In his letter to O'Reilly, Devoy stated that;

Our aim will be to create an Irish party in this country, whose actions in American politics will have for its sole object the interests of Ireland. We will also hold aloof from all the different sections of Fenians. I may tell you that most of us are sick of the very issue of Fenianism, though as resolved as ever to work for the attainment of Irish independence"

(Devoy in D'Arcy 1971: 372)

In May, 1872, the exiles' new organization held its first convention, at which it drafted a constitution and formed directories and committees. Named the 'Irish Confederation', Devoy was the driving force behind it, in his free time from being a journalist for the *New York Herald*. Meanwhile the British Government were still following Devoy's activities, obtaining the following photograph of him in these early years in the United States in which he sports a new beard;

Figure 5.3 An older John Devoy. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1866-1872, Description of Fenian Suspects.

In time however, the exiles who had arrived together soon drifted apart in America, and coupled with continued factional infighting the Irish Confederation hence collapsed in the spring of 1873. In the meantime however, John Devoy had already joined Clan na Gael, the secretive Irish-American organization devoted to the cause of Irish independence founded in 1867 by Jerome Collins on the request of Captain Kelly.

Clan na Gael had been one of the many Irish-American organizations which had lavishly welcomed the exiles to New York City in 1871. News of the public reception held in their honor appeared in the press not only in the United States, but also around the world; in Ireland, Great Britain and even in Australia –Irish nationalists ever eager to demonstrate that they were a global force to be reckoned with. Still languishing in a British prison in Western Australia were a number of Fenians who had once been in the British Army, but once caught had been transported to the other side of the world aboard the *Hougemont*. The amnesty of 1871 had only been granted to civilian Fenians, and therefore these individuals still remained imprisoned. Upon reading of the Clan na Gael reception in honor of his former colleagues in a newspaper smuggled into his jail cell, Martin Hogan, formerly of the 5th Dragoon Guards, wrote a desperate letter to the New York Fenian, Peter Curran. Curran had spoken at the reception for the exiled Fenians, and had once owned a Dublin pub frequented by the IRB in the 1860s. Upon receiving Hogan's letter, Curran passed it on to Devoy. In it, Hogan urged his former comrades not to forget the fate of those still imprisoned, the letter beginning;

Perth, Western Australia,
May 20th, 1871

My dear Friend:

In order that you may recollect who it is that addresses you, you will remember on the night of January 17th, 1866, some of 5th Dragoon Guards being in the old house on Clare Lane with John Devoy and Captain McCafferty. I am one of that unfortunate band and am now under sentence of life penal servitude in one of the darkest corners of the earth, and as far as we learn from any small news that chances to reach us, we appear to be forgotten, with no prospect before us but to be left in hopeless slavery to the tender mercies of the Norman wolf.

(Hogan in Devoy, 1929: 252)

Hogan's was the first of a number of letters which both John Devoy and John Boyle O'Reilly received over the years, beginning 1871. Exasperated at the fate of his comrades, Devoy lobbied influential members of Clan na Gael extensively in the hope of gaining financial support for a rescue operation. Reflecting back on this period, Devoy himself later stated that;

Most of the evidence upon which the soldiers were convicted related meetings with me, and I therefore felt that I, more than any man then living, ought to do my utmost for these Fenian soldiers. But at that time nothing could be done except in the way of influencing opinion in the Clan-na-Gael in favor of some plan to effect their release, and most men considered the task of releasing the prisoners impossible of accomplishment.

(Devoy 1929: 252-253)

In 1873, having failed to win the endorsement of Clan na Gael for a rescue attempt, Devoy received yet another letter from one of the Fenian military prisoners, this time far more disturbing in content. Years of terrible prison conditions and heavy labor under the intense Australian sun had apparently begun to take their toll. In this 1873 letter written by James Wilson to John Devoy, Wilson reported that his friend, Patrick Keating, had

already died and that they had all become ravaged by disease. Wilson now begged Devoy to organize a rescue mission, before it was too late.

In 1874, Devoy returned to a Clan na Gael convention to plead with the organization once more to offer their assistance. Before an audience of sixty-one delegates, representing five thousand members, he read excerpts from Wilson's desperate letter in which he stated;

Now, dear friend, remember that this is a voice from the tomb...Think that we have been nearly nine years in this living tomb since our first arrest, and that it is impossible for mind and body to withstand the continual strain that is upon them.
(Wilson to Devoy in Keneally 1998: 545)

The letter became known as the 'Voice from the Tomb', and following further lobbying by Devoy and other Fenian exiles, the Clan na Gael Supreme Council voted in favor of undertaking the rescue mission.

Clan na Gael and the *Catalpa* Expedition

An 'Australia Prisoners Rescue Committee' was hurriedly established to organize the operation and to raise funds to finance it, since Clan na Gael were reluctant to have any of their own resources spent on activity outside of Ireland. The Clan na Gael resolution authorizing the project was printed, and sent to all eighty-six branches of Clan na Gael, and to its five thousand strong membership, much to Devoy's consternation. At this time, Devoy was employed as night editor of the *New York Herald*, but was now given the day-job of taking charge of the Committee and organizing the rescue attempt. He was

unofficially assisted by John Boyle O'Reilly, who was not a Clan na Gael member but who knew details concerning Western Australia, having escaped from prison there himself. In December 1874, O'Reilly advised Devoy for instance, that "the way to do your work clean, sure and well is *by a New Bedford Whaler*...Above all things you should keep your *means of proceeding* a secret. The crowd may know [what] you are doing; but they ought not to know – not half a dozen men should know – *how it was to be done*" (O'Reilly to Devoy in O'Brien & Ryan 1948: 86).

The Committee decided therefore to buy a sailing vessel, the *Catalpa*, which was docked in Boston, for \$5550. The ship had originally been built as a whaler, and it was decided to convert it back to these original specifics. It was hoped that rescuing the prisoners in a whaling vessel might not only help to avoid suspicion, but that the trip might also pay for itself if some whales could be caught en-route. The outfitting of the *Catalpa* was supervised by Captain George S. Anthony, who had been hired to captain the vessel on this perilous voyage. Captain Anthony was a native of Nantucket who was neither a Fenian nor an Irish-American. On April 27, 1875, it was announced that the *Catalpa* was ready to sail. It had cost \$17,000 to outfit the vessel for the voyage ahead, but only Captain Anthony on board knew of the real mission (Rosen 1979). His crew was quite a multinational one, consisting of a number of Americans (including some African Americans), some sailors from St. Helena and the Cape Verde islands, as well as a number of 'Malays' (Rosen 1979). Accompanying Captain Anthony was Denis Duggan, a Clan na Gael representative who joined the crew, and the only Irishman aboard. Recollecting the day that the *Catalpa* set sail, John Devoy stated;

She looked splendid with every sail set, a clear sky overhead and a calm sea beneath, and the scene of parting was one we shall not soon forget...[We] went out in a yacht, got on board and remained there till she was well out, giving three hearty cheers, with the usual 'tiger', for the barque and her crew. Not a man but ourselves had the least suspicion of her mission, and she is well on her way now.

(Devoy in O'Brien & Ryan 1948: 105)

Sent ahead of the *Catalpa* to Australia to prepare the groundwork for the rescue was John Breslin, a Fenian who had helped to rescue James Stephens from jail in Ireland in 1865. Having traveled to California, Breslin met with Clan na Gael members on the West Coast who had provided a large amount of funds for the operation. On September 13, 1875, Breslin and another Fenian by the name of Thomas Desmond, sailed from San Francisco, travelling separately and under assumed names. On October 15, 1875, the two men arrived in Sydney to rendezvous with a number of Fenians in the city, some of whom were Irishmen who had been freed under the 1871 amnesty (Devoy 1929). During this stage of the Clan na Gael rescue operation, the IRB in Australia and New Zealand raised funds which were to prove essential (Devoy 1929).

From Sydney, Desmond made his way to Perth, where he secured employment so as to avoid suspicion. Breslin meanwhile, traveled to the town of Fremantle, where the prison was located, in order to make initial contact with the Fenian military prisoners, some of whom had been entrusted to work in gangs outside the prison walls. Breslin posed as an American millionaire by the name of James Collins, and scattered legal documents about his hotel room detailing his supposedly vast business empire. As a prospective investor, in December he was even given a tour of the Fremantle prison by

the superintendent (Rosen, 1979). Meanwhile, the *Catalpa*, having caught three whales off the Azores and unloaded the oil at the port of Faial, was now bound for Tenerife, off the coast of Africa. They had also hired some new crew during their brief stay in the Azores, following a number of desertions (Rosen 1979). At this stage of the trip, Captain Anthony decided to inform his first mate of their real purpose, and of who had financed their voyage. On March 28, 1876, almost one year after having left New Bedford in the United States, the *Catalpa* reached the port of Bunberry, close to the town of Fremantle, where Captain Anthony subsequently met with Breslin.

In order to have enough time to ready the prisoners for their rescue and to wait until a British gunboat, the *Conflict* had left port, Easter Monday, April 17, 1876, was chosen as the date when the operation would take place. Easter Monday was also the day of a regatta to be held in the city of Perth, which Desmond and Breslin hoped would draw many British officials from their posts. When this Monday morning arrived, the prisoners managed to abscond from their regular work-duties to gather at a pre-arranged location on the edge of town. There were six Irishmen in all; the first was Thomas Darragh who was forty-two years of age, and a decorated British army veteran who had served in Africa and China before being arrested in Ireland in 1865. The second man was James Wilson who was forty years of age, and a veteran of the Bombay Artillery and the 5th Dragoon Guards. He had served in India and Syria, and had been arrested in Ireland in 1866, having deserted his regiment. The third man rescued was Martin Hogan who was forty-three years of age and also a former member of the 5th Dragoon Guards. He had deserted with Wilson, and the two had been arrested together. The fourth man

waiting at the roadside this fateful morning was Robert Cranston. He was thirty-four years of age and had served with the 61st British Infantry before his arrest in 1866. The fifth man was Martin Harrington, also a veteran of the 61st British Infantry he had fought in the Punjab Campaign and had helped put down the Indian Mutiny before his arrest in 1866. And finally there was Thomas Hassett, a veteran of the Irish Papal Brigade and the British infantry before his arrest in 1866. He had escaped from prison in Western Australia only to be eventually recaptured and sent back to jail in leg-irons (Devoy in O'Brien and Ryan 1948).

Each riding a horse and trap, Desmond and Breslin picked the prisoners up that Monday morning and provided them with jackets to hide their sun-burnt and emaciated bodies. Meanwhile, two members of the IRB who had sailed from England to aid the rescue, John Walsh and Denis McCarthy, cut the telegraph wires which would have alerted the *Conflict* as to the escape. On Rockingham beach, ten miles away, Captain Anthony and a few restless crewmen (still unaware of their mission) waited in a small boat, the *Catalpa* lying thirty miles off-shore so as to avoid suspicion. Once the prisoners reached the beach, accompanied by Desmond and Breslin, they helped to push the boat out into the surf to begin the return journey to the *Catalpa*. Breslin described the scenes in his report to Clan na Gael as follows;

At half-past 10 A.M. we made the beach and got aboard the whale boat. The men had been instructed to stow themselves in the smallest possible space, so as not to interfere with those at the oars, and in a few minutes all was ready and the word was given, 'Shove off, men; shove off'...Now fairly afloat the word was: 'Out oars and pull for your lives! Pull as if you were pulling after a whale!' The boat's crew was somewhat disconcerted and scared at the sudden appearance of so many strangers

armed with rifles and revolvers, and pulled badly at first, but the voice of the steersman rallied them, and cries: 'Come down Mopsa; come down, you big Louis, Pull Toby, pull. Give them stroke Mr. Silvee. What do you say men? Come down all together. Pull away, my men, pull away', soon warmed them to their work and they fell into stroke and pulled well.

(Breslin in Devoy 1929: 257)

The crew rowed all day April 17 and all night, and did not reach the *Catalpa* until three o'clock in the afternoon the next day, April 18. Once the small boat had been winched up the side of the whaler and stowed, Captain Anthony raised the American flag and started sailing away from the coast. Chasing the *Catalpa* however, was the *Georgette*, a fast and heavily armed British steamship which pulled alongside the *Catalpa* on the morning of April 19. The *Georgette* fired a shot across the *Catalpa*'s stern, and its Captain demanded that the *Catalpa* give up the prisoners immediately, otherwise it would be fired upon and boarded. In his report of the incident to Clan na Gael, Breslin stated that in response,

Captain Anthony shouted a reply pointing to his flag. That's the American flag; I am on the high seas; my flag protects me; if you fire on this ship you fire on the American flag.

(Breslin in Devoy 1929: 259)

While Captain Anthony informed the authorities aboard the *Georgette* that he had no escaped convicts on board, below deck the Fenian escapees armed themselves in preparation of being boarded. In response to Captain Anthony's protestations however, the *Georgette* decided not to fire on the *Catalpa*, and instead turned back to port (Rosen 1979).

The British government in London heard news of the rescue on June 6, and there soon followed brief details in the British and American press. That summer in the United States a number of celebrations were organized, while in Dublin a procession of thousands burned an effigy of Benjamin Disraeli, the British Prime Minister. On July 10, the *Catalpa* crossed the equator into the North Atlantic bound for New York City; the ex-prisoners on board in poor health and becoming increasingly restless. On August 18, 1876, the *Catalpa* arrived in New York City and the six men sprung from captivity warmly welcomed by Clan na Gael. Also honored was Captain Anthony, John Breslin and Thomas Desmond who had successfully completed a very difficult mission; their daring consequently immortalized in song;

She was a Yankee Whale ship and commander
 Called the Catalpa by name,
 Came out to Western Australia
 And stole six of our convicts away.

So come all you screw warders and jailers,
 Remember Perth regatta day;
 Take care of the rest of your Fenians
 Or the Yankees will take them away!

(The Ballad of the *Catalpa* in Rosen 1979: 73)

The Irish World and the Skirmishing Fund

The Catalpa rescue is illustrative of the fact that Irish nationalism was now truly global in scale. Planned, funded and completed by Irish nationalists based in New York City and San Francisco, this mission also involved members of the IRB who traveled to Australia from Great Britain, as well as Irish nationalists in Australia who provided

assistance to the rescue party. The Catalpa rescue is therefore a phenomenal example of just how extra-territorial Irish nationalism had become by the mid-1870s. Irish nationalists had inflicted another blow on the British, this time not in Canada but in Australia. This particular event has not previously been considered an important incident in the development of Irish nationalism because it did not take place in Ireland, but I believe it was important nonetheless. Again, the news of this significant nationalist victory over the British was jubilantly reported in the Irish nationalist press, particularly in the United States in such newspapers as the *Irish World*. Widely available by mail in many parts of the world as the following advertisement details, the *Irish World* played an important role in the imagining of a vast Irish nationalist global community;

THE IRISH WORLD IN EUROPE

The Paper of Greatest Circulation Among the Irish Race All Over the World.

THE PROPRIETOR, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE the increased circulation of the *Irish World* in Europe, makes the following arrangements:

1. Persons in any part of Great Britain and Ireland can have the *Irish World* mailed to their address from New York for Ten Shillings (British) per annum by sending a Post-office order from any Postmaster in England, Scotland, and Ireland, drawn upon the General Post-Office, London, in favor of PATRICK FORD. This order, when it arrives in New York, will answer the purpose. No less sum than Five Shillings (six months' subscription) should be sent.
2. Persons resident in other parts of Europe will be supplied direct for the sum of Fifteen Francs per annum in Bank of France 5-Franc notes, quoted under ordinary registered letter to the proprietor, New York.
3. Persons resident in the East Indies, Australia, and other British colonies, may forward Bankers or Post-office orders, payable in London, for Twelve Shillings (British) per annum to secure the *Irish World* for one year. All subscriptions invariably in advance.
4. Correspondence from men of the Irish race, wherever scattered, if conveying facts of interest to our people, will be welcomed and published.

PATRICK FORD,
Irish World Office, 5 Barclay Street, N. Y.

Figure 5.4 *Irish World* –
Advertisement (01.14.1871: 1)

Published in Brooklyn, New York, the *Irish World* was edited by Patrick Ford, who had fled the Great Famine in his native County Galway as a child, to travel to Boston with his parents. As a young man he had found employment in various printing-houses and on September 10, 1870, had launched his own newspaper, the *Irish World*, of which he would remain editor-in-chief until his death in 1911. During the 1870s and 1880s, the newspaper became *the* most widely read Irish-American newspaper in the country and around the globe; its editor and proprietor becoming an incredibly influential figure of Irish nationalism in the United States, and the paper's masthead proudly portraying the symbolic link between the United States and Ireland;

Figure 5.5 *Irish World*—Masthead (01.14.1871)

From its offices in Brooklyn, New York, Newark and Jersey City, the *Irish World* had declared in its original statement of intentions that;

We come to our own race. All Irishmen, and all Irishmen's sons, the world over, are parts of one mighty whole. Perhaps there is no other people on the face of the earth whose identity is more clearly marked and defined".

(Irish World 01.28.1871: 4)

Incredibly important to Irish communities across the United States, Ford's *Irish World* not only carried articles on the activities of various Irish-American societies but also helped to breach the divide that separated readers from their homeland; each week printing local news from various Irish counties. In fact, Patrick Ford was an individual who realized the enormous power of the newspaper as a medium to shape public opinion and to forge a community of people across vast distances, in an editorial stating that;

Look around about you now – what do you behold? Newspapers. The world is changed. A mighty revolution has been wrought in the mode of educating the people. And this Revolution has been affected by the Printing Press...It speaks to a million men, hundreds and thousands of miles apart, almost simultaneously... Without a Press no people in modern times can ever hope to command the attentive ear of the world.
(*Irish World* 12.23.1876: 4)

Although the *Irish World* was nationalist in opinion, it represented a different brand of nationalism than the *Boston Pilot* for example, a more moderate Catholic publication edited by John Boyle O'Reilly. The *Irish World* in fact was explicitly critical of the Catholic Church, and neither did it subscribe to Clan na Gael's purist revolutionary thinking, instead owing far more to the personality of its editor, Patrick Ford. Each week, in addition to serializing Aladin, the Arabian Nights or Robinson Crusoe for example, the newspaper also serialized an Irish nationalist past; each week revealing another episode in the nationalist story that was Ireland. To this end, the *Irish World* made wonderful use of political cartoons and artwork; emotive imagery which it used to convey its nationalist message, such as this rendering of the ancient Irish victory at the Battle of Clontarf;

Figure 5.6 *Irish World* –Battle of Clontarf (05.11.1872: 1)

The *Irish World* also devoted its pages however, to articles on Irish-American history as well as Irish history, and as a result, played a key role in the imagining of an Irish community that was not solely confined to the island of Ireland. Instead of limiting the paper's scope to just Irish nationalist affairs in the Old World, it was Patrick Ford's intention to also focus on Irish troubles in the New World, as he stated in an editorial;

...while we keep Ireland constantly in sight, the Irish Question is not the only question with which this *Irish World* is concerned. We have to deal with the American Question. Ireland is our fatherland; but America is our land... We are not transient residents in this country. We are not simply visitors – mere lookers-on. *This is our home.* It is to be the home of our children, and of our children's children,

for ages to come. *We men of the Irish race are part and parcel of the great American People. Remember this! We must, then, Americanize ourselves.*

(Irish World 12.23.1876: 4)

In order to 'Americanize' themselves, Patrick Ford believed that Irish Americans must, above all else, first unionize themselves. In the midst of an industrial depression which gripped the United States for most of the 1870s, the *Irish World* therefore was a tireless campaigner for worker's rights, labor reform, trade-unionism and third parties. It breached the divide between the Old World and the New by damning all monopolies – be they land monopolies held by a British aristocracy in Ireland, or industrial monopolies held by robber barons in the United States. Eventually, in December 1878, Patrick Ford went so far as to change the name of his newspaper to the *Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*.

Because he considered Clan na Gael too exclusive and moderate an organization, the firebrand Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa was not involved with the *Catalpa* rescue mission. Nonetheless, the ex-IRB member was planning insurrectionary activity of his own and wrote to the *Irish World* seeking the newspaper's support for a new idea. In publishing O'Donovan Rossa's letter in March 1876, Patrick Ford now endorsed a far more radical Irish nationalist position than he ever had before. In Rossa's letter to the newspaper, he expressed his frustration and that of others, with revolutionary societies which took no action. Instead he proposed a new venture which might produce immediate results, and in his letter he quoted a correspondent who had written to him to express similar sentiments;

...every man must go to work in his own locality, and amongst his own acquaintance: there must be a man-to-man canvass for the collection of funds to keep skirmishing and keep striking England, year after year, while the Revolutionary organizations are preparing for the heavier work...

(Rossa in the *Irish World* 03.04.1876: 6)

O'Donovan Rossa proposed that a 'Skirmishing Fund' be launched to finance attacks on targets in Great Britain, and that the *Irish World* should support the effort by devoting a column each week to the venture. In its March 4, 1876, issue, the newspaper now fully endorsed Rossa's proposal, which it believed would "enable a few intrepid spirits to strike a blow at England, year after year, or oftener, as might seem advisable" (*Irish World* 03.04.1876).

As 1876 progressed, the *Irish World* subsequently published details of the remittances that had been made to the Skirmishing Fund, of which O'Donovan Rossa was secretary and James Clancy, treasurer. The columns detailed the amounts that had been received from groups throughout the United States, and listed the names of individual subscribers, often alongside their Irish county of origin. By the end of the year, the Skirmishing Fund had raised \$21,062.57 (approximately £4300) from numerous small contributions such as the one O'Donovan Rossa received from Colorado in September, 1876;

Denver and E.G. Railroad. -Enclosed find \$50 for the S.F. collected by Martan Foudy from a few Irish exiles, whose strong arms are opening a pathway for civilization through the Rocky Mountains. While enjoying the freedom and breathing the pure air of Colorado's health-giving climate, they do not forget the enslaved condition of Ireland. They send their note, hoping it will aid in striking a blow that will break her chains and open a pathway to the freedom of our native land.

(*Irish World* 09.23.1876: 6)

Contributions to the Skirmishing Fund reveal not only the geographic, but also the social diversity of the Irish-American population in the late 1870s. As the historian Victor Walsh points out in his analysis of Irish nationalism in the city of Pittsburgh during the Gilded Age, Skirmishing Fund donations came mainly from a certain type of Irish immigrant. Long characterized as the archetypal Irish immigrant, the poor famine refugee who had fled the West of Ireland in fact shunned Irish nationalism in the United States. Gaelic speaking and carrying no conception of Ireland a nation with them across the Atlantic, these provincial peoples instead maintained ties to their ancestral townlands in Ireland. In Pittsburgh, according to Walsh, they could be found crowded into such districts as the 'Point', which remained Gaelic speaking and impoverished for the remainder of the nineteenth century.

In comparison, Skirmishing Fund contributors had left a very different Ireland, originating overwhelmingly from County Cork – the same county as O'Donovan Rossa. They had left a rapidly modernizing society in the 1850s and 1860s, and they carried with them a much better developed sense of Irish nationalism. In Pittsburgh they could be found congregated in such neighborhoods as 'Woods Run' where they worked in the iron industry; the mills, in essence, acting as 'cultural crucibles' –remolding any lingering parochial loyalties into nationalist sympathies (Walsh 1981). In this process, the Skirmishing Fund proved to be an ideal outlet.

Although more middle class Irish Americans remained aloof from the extreme revolutionary ideals expressed by the Skirmishing Fund, just as they had from the Fenian Brotherhood, the Fund nonetheless received a wealth of subscriptions each week from

Irish-American working classes. The *Irish World's* brand of Irish nationalism translated the emigrant's plight in the New World as being partly the result of their plight in the old, and hence only by freeing their homeland from its chains could they ever hope to advance in the United States. In the task of attaining this goal, the publication of Skirmishing Fund donations could be found in the *Irish World* alongside articles on Irish nationalism, as well as pictures which portrayed Ireland's fate;

Figure 5.7 *Irish World* – Exodus (03.10.1877:1)

In addition, the newspaper also published details of subscriptions made to a 'Rescued Prisoners Fund', of which John Devoy was chairman and Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, secretary. According to the final accounts of this fund, it contributed to the initial

expenses of the six ex-prisoners who had arrived on the *Catalpa*; subsequently awarding these men a sum totaling almost two thousand dollars each (*Irish World* 06.30.1877: 6).

It was not long before the explosive material contained in the *Irish World* caught the attention of a number of newspapers in Ireland and Great Britain, who objected to the 'Skirmishing Fund' and also to the reports of the newspaper's London-based European correspondent, known only as 'Trans-Atlantic'. The *Irish World* gleefully published details of the consternation caused by their newspaper across the Atlantic, in the hope that it would not only increase circulation of the newspaper, but also perhaps add to the war-chest of the Skirmishing Fund. On October 14, 1876, it published this report from 'Trans-Atlantic' himself;

Already the landlords of Ireland are panic-stricken, several thousand copies of the *Irish World* find their way into Ireland every week. It has become the oracle of the "bruised and broken-hearted Irish". The swelling Skirmishing Fund of O'Donovan Rossa is now the skeleton in each landlord's closet. The letters of "Trans-Atlantic" are being published in fly-sheets by the Irish clubs. That especially on the "American Skirmishers" has alarmed the landlords and their wives and daughters all over Ireland. No landlord knows when his hour will come, and those heartless rascals who hitherto defied God and the devil, are brought to book by the *Irish World* and Rossa's men.

(*Irish World* 10.14.1876)

In 1877, the *Irish World* was available by mail in many parts of the world. In Great Britain or Ireland, a yearly subscription could be purchased for ten shillings, while in Europe the newspaper could be received weekly for fifteen francs per annum. Elsewhere, in the East Indies for example, or in the British Colonies or Australia, the *Irish World* could be delivered weekly for twelve shillings.

On February 2, 1877, O'Donovan Rossa became the Head Center of the Fenian Brotherhood, following the resignation of John O'Mahony, who cited ill-health and his desire to return to Ireland. Just a few days later however, on February 6, 1877, O'Mahony died in conditions which revealed that he had been living in poverty for a number of years. By this period, the Fenian Brotherhood had become a largely penniless organization and only a shadow of its former self; Clan na Gael having stolen the limelight to become the new voice of Irish nationalism in the United States.

Following the death of O'Mahony, Clan na Gael granted his final wish, and helped to pay for his remains to be returned to Ireland for burial. The event was used to rally Irish nationalism and on March 24, 1867, 'Trans-Atlantic' reported in the *Irish World* on the scene in Cork City as thousands thronged the streets to catch a glimpse of the funeral procession; O'Mahony's hearse decorated with the flags of the United States 69th Regiment, the Stars and Stripes and that of the Irish nation. The following day, his remains were moved to Dublin to lie in state in the Mechanics Institute, following another lengthy procession;

The evening was bright moonlight, and by half-past seven the groups and crowds gathered: the lighting of torches began: soon a forest of burning branches was waving. The procession "fell in" at last. Eight bands distributed through them threw out strains of slow, melancholy music. The hearse drawn by four horses. From six to eight thousand men marched in close military line and measured paces. They were all clean, respectable, and most orderly workingmen—not a rough, not a drunken person amongst them.

(*Irish World* 03.24.1877: 5)

Like the Young Irelander MacManus before him, who had also made this final transatlantic trip home in a coffin, O'Mahony was buried in Glasnevin cemetery in

Dublin with full military honors, despite the condemnation of Cardinal Cullen and the Irish Catholic hierarchy.

In the Spring of 1877, following O'Donovan Rossa's promotion to Head Center of the Fenian Brotherhood, he was ousted from his position as secretary of the Skirmishing Fund, and forced to accept John Devoy and a number of other Clan na Gael members as fellow trustees of the fund. On April 21, 1877, the *Irish World* reassured its readership however, that the money raised by the Skirmishing Fund would still be used as originally intended, despite the changes in the trusteeship;

Aim, then, not at a single English life. Strike at that which England regards as more sacred than life –“property”. Strike at England's *pocket*, we say. Strike! Strike! Strike!

(*Irish World* 04.21.1877)

The following year, 1878, the Skirmishing Fund was renamed the “National Fund” by the new trustees, who questioned “the prudence of continually calling public attention to it”

(*Irish World* 03.23.1878: 6). By the close of 1878, the fund had raised a total of \$74,907.58 (approximately £15,400); the trustees now promising the readership of the *Irish World* that the money would be spent on the latest technology so as to inflict considerable damage on Great Britain;

This is the age of Dynamite and Torpedoes –agencies with which Nature has come forward to aid the weak, the poor, and the enslaved. *Cheap Warfare!* Let this be the motto. War against England with the smallest number of men and the least possible expense.

(*Irish World* 06.23.1877)

Conclusion

In the aftermath of defeat, when the last Irish-American guerilla leader had been finally captured, support for Irish nationalism increased because of public sympathy for the manner in which the Fenians were subsequently treated by their captors. This sympathy was transformed into political action by the Amnesty Campaign which succeeded in not only securing the release of the captured Fenians, but also in forcing the British government to recognize them as political prisoners, thus legitimizing the Irish nationalist struggle.

In the United States, diasporic Irish nationalism benefited greatly from the arrival into exile of such men as John Devoy. In the 1870s, under the direction of such individuals, Irish nationalism became a truly global phenomenon. This is perhaps best evidenced in the Catalpa expedition, which reveals the complex interconnections between nationalism and globalization. Here, a number of transnational political actors traveled to Australia from both the United States and Britain, taking advantage of improved communications such as the railroad, the steamship and the telegraph, to strike a blow against the colonizer where it was least expected. Although devout Irish nationalists, the rescue party were willing to trade on their interstitiality; posing as American millionaires to gain access to the prison, and escaping under the protection of the stars and stripes.

Also during this period, it is important to recognize the increasingly important role that the Irish nationalist press played in mobilizing support and in forging a truly global Irish nationalist community. Benedict Anderson discusses the role that print capitalism plays in the imagining of community and in the construction of a national trajectory;

emerging out of a selective reading of the past, and projected into an imagined future (Anderson 1991). In its coverage of an Irish nationalist lecture delivered in New York in 1877, the *Irish World* utilized the front page to imagine that future Irish nation. The newspaper's vision is of a globalized Ireland; a populous, vigorous and enthusiastic nation utilizing the latest communication technologies, which has become "[t]he road of passage and of union between the two hemispheres, and the centre of the world...";

Figure 5.8 *Irish World*—A Vision of Ireland's Future (03.24.1877: 1)

The power to fix scale can be a weapon in the hands of such individuals as Patrick Ford, and the pages of the *Irish World* offer an excellent example of how Irish nationalism was imagined as being transnational: in the writings of 'transatlantic' for example, in the newspaper's coverage of the Catalpa rescue or in the publishing of letters from Skirmishing Fund contributors around the world. At a time when expressing any such nationalist opinion was illegal in Ireland, the *Irish World* became a crucial source of Irish nationalist news since it was available by mail and widely read. In addition, the newspaper raised large amounts of capital for Irish revolutionary purposes, but although Skirmishing Fund contributors would see their donations put to use in Ireland by Clan na Gael, they would have to wait longer in order to witness O'Donovan Rossa unleashing his wrath.

CHAPTER 6

THE 'NEW DEPARTURE' AND THE IRISH LAND WAR

All this force and fraud will fail, Mr. Gladstone. You are now, unlike the past, dealing with two Irelands. The Greater Ireland is on this side of the Atlantic. This is the base of operations. We in America furnish the sinews of war. We in America render moral aid.

(Patrick Ford 1881: 14)

Introduction

The late 1870s and early 1880s is a period in which the Irish diaspora in the United States renewed their commitment to Irish nationalism in Ireland. It is a period, I will argue, which represents the culmination of the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism and the peak of diasporic involvement. During this period, I will detail a number of creative interventions made by Irish nationalists in the United States to the development of Irish nationalism, which were to prove critical in shaping its future course. The most important of these interventions I will argue, was Clan na Gael's 'New Departure'; an attempt made to unite many different streams of Irish nationalism under one banner. In addition, this is an era in which the involvement of the Irish nationalist press in the development of Irish nationalism also reached a crescendo. By tracing the engagement of the *Irish World* and *United Ireland* in the conflict, I will not only reveal the crucial role such newspapers played in raising massive amounts of capital to bankroll

Irish nationalist ventures, but also the manner in which the press constructed a transnational Ireland during this period.

A Dalliance with Constitutionalism

Empowered by the marvelous success of the Catalpa rescue mission, which proved that Irish nationalism was now a force to be reckoned with at a global scale, Clan na Gael, under the leadership of John Devoy and Dr. William Carroll, began to consolidate their power over all Irish revolutionary activities. During 1875, Clan na Gael had already proposed a 'compact of agreement' between their organization and the IRB, by which Irish nationalists in the United States would provide financial assistance to the Irish nationalists in Ireland. The agreement was ratified, but Clan na Gael had insisted that the IRB provide full accounting of how all money was to be spent. In the spring of 1876, while waiting for the Catalpa to arrive in the United States, Clan na Gael now sent an envoy to Ireland, Denis Dowling Mulcahy, to pressure the IRB further into reforming their organization. Concerned that the IRB had become side-tracked by policies not befitting revolutionaries, Devoy and Carroll intended to pressure the IRB into divorcing itself from politics and any public electioneering that they might have become involved with.

The Ireland of 1876 was a different place to what many members of Clan na Gael may have remembered, the Fenians amongst them such as Devoy having not seen their homeland since being incarcerated at the time of the Rising. By 1876, the Irish people could now vote for a political party which it was hoped might secure greater autonomy

for the country; a constitutional avenue which had not existed in the Ireland that Clan na Gael remembered. Six years previous, in April 1870, Isaac Butt had founded the Home Government Association, whose goal was to achieve some measure of autonomy for Ireland while the country remained subject to the British crown. Ironically, it had grown out of the Fenian's failure and the success of the Amnesty Campaign in gaining their freedom, a campaign which had united a range of different streams of Irish nationalism.

Though the Rising had been a spectacular failure, resulting in martyrdom and imprisonment, Fenianism had proven victorious. Widespread revulsion and anger had swept Ireland following the execution of Fenian prisoners in England, whom many considered innocent. Ireland suddenly realized that it had just witnessed another glorious revolution in the tradition of Irish nationalism. The Catholic hierarchy had damned Fenianism for its anti-clericalism, Irish businessmen and farmers feared their property might be nationalized under the Fenian's socialist agenda, but in the wake of the Rising many people in Ireland realized that their fears had been misplaced.

During the Rising, the Fenians had shown the utmost respect for private property and following the executions of Allen, Larkin, O'Brien and Barrett, many Irish priests endorsed these men as martyrs. Sir Isaac Butt helped to direct this popularization of Fenianism into the Amnesty Campaign, and later into his Home Government and Home Rule Associations, in the process forging an alliance between two traditions of Irish nationalism; that of constitutionalism and of physical force (Jackson 1999). From the dock, young Michael Barrett had professed his innocence with regard to the Clerkenwell explosion, but before his execution had reaffirmed his love for Ireland, saying; "If I could

in any way remove the miseries or redress the grievances of that land by the sacrifice of my own life I would willingly, nay, gladly, do so" (Barrett in Curtis 1994: 77).

Individuals such as Sir Isaac Butt would assure that he had not died in vain.

Dissatisfied with the Irish Church Act and Land Act, which many considered to be solely token gestures on behalf of Gladstone's Liberal Party, Butt's Home Government Association appealed to all persuasions, from conservative Protestants to Catholic constitutionalists to Fenians, the latter of whom saw no conflict of interests in their pursuit of conventional political activity while continuing to plan eventual armed rebellion. In 1874, what became known as the Home Rule movement, or Irish Parliamentary Party, achieved a series of notable victories during the General Election, winning 60 out of 103 Irish seats in the British Houses of Parliament.

In 1876 however, these Irish Parliamentarians, greatly outnumbered as they were in the House of Commons, failed for a second time in their attempt to force the British to consider granting some measure of greater autonomy, or Home Rule, to Ireland. As a result, those Fenians involved with Home Rule came under increasing pressure from the IRB to disassociate themselves with this fruitless venture. The IRB itself had now become increasingly accountable to their new wealthy benefactor, Clan na Gael, and the Irish Americans also considered the Home Rule movement to be a distraction and a drain on funds. In August 1876, the measure to which the IRB would remain accountable to diasporic nationalists was increased, when Clan na Gael decided to formally consolidate the Irish revolutionary movement at a convention in Philadelphia. Here it was decided to form a revolutionary directory of seven members to direct Irish nationalism on a global

level; three of whom would be nominated by Clan na Gael, three nominated by the IRB, and one nominated by the Irish nationalists of Australia and New Zealand (Moody 1981). Irish nationalism had now become a truly global operation.

Among those of a more advanced nationalist persuasion who had joined the cause of Home Rule, were a number of members of the IRB Supreme Council such as John O'Connor Power (M.P.) and Joseph Biggar (M.P.). Taking a pragmatic stance, these men and others like them had decided that the Home Rule movement presented Irish nationalists with a chance to advance the cause of Irish independence while still remaining true to revolutionary principles.

Figure 6.1 John O'Connor Power.
Photograph from the National Archives,
Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1871-
1880, Description of Fenian Suspects.

These men would surely have pointed to the third clause of the IRB Constitution to justify their actions, which had been revised in March 1873 to read that;

The IRB shall await the decision of the Irish nation as expressed by a majority of the Irish people as to the fit hour of inaugurating a war against England, and shall, pending such an emergency, lend its support to every movement calculated to advance the cause of Irish independence consistently with the preservation of its own integrity.

(Curtis 1994: 86)

In August 1876 however, intransigence defeated pragmatism, and the Supreme Council of the IRB decided that their organization should terminate its dalliance with Home Rule, a decision which might have been motivated as much by personal jealousies as by any quest for revolutionary purity (Comerford 1998). No matter the intention, in March 1877 four members of the IRB Supreme Council were either expelled, or forced to resign for refusing to part company with the Home Rule movement. They were Joseph Biggar, John O'Connor Power, John Barry, and Patrick Egan. In addition, the IRB had now distanced itself also, from a greater number of its rank and file, who had also found the cause of Home Rule to be an enticing prospect. The IRB was left now under the control of Joseph Kickham, who was deaf and almost totally blind, and a resolution drafted which stated that;

...the countenance which we have hitherto shown to the Home Rule movement be from this date, and is hereby, withdrawn, as three years' experience of the working of the movement has proved to us that the revolutionary principles which we profess can be better served by our organization existing on its own basis pure and simple, and we hereby request that all members of our organization whom may have any connection with the Home Rule movement will definitely withdraw from it their active co-operation within six months from this date.

(Curtis 1994: 87)

Home Rule and the Rise of Parnell

The Home Rule Movement remained greatly popular among an increasing number of the Irish people who had grown tired of revolutionary posturing, and who obviously shared the opinion of such men as Biggar and O'Connor Power that any action taken on behalf of Irish independence was better than no action at all. In their pursuit of Irish

independence by what ever means available, these individuals had also happened upon a young Home Rule M.P. from Meath, who they believed might possibly greatly advance their cause.

His name was Charles Stuart Parnell, an Anglo-Irish Protestant landowner who had been elected to the House of Commons in 1875 at the age of twenty eight. Since this date he had greatly impressed a number of Irish parliamentarians for his tenacity in the House of Commons pursuing such causes as the release of all Irish political prisoners, as well as fair rents and fixity of tenure for Irish farmers. In addition, he had ingratiated himself to those of a more advanced nationalist persuasion in the Home Rule movement on a number of occasions. On June 30, 1876, for example, Parnell had risen in the House of Commons to protest, after a government spokesman had described as murderers those Fenians hung at Manchester. On this occasion, Parnell stated that, "I wish to say publicly and directly as I can that I do not believe, and never shall believe, that any murder was committed at Manchester" (Curtis 1994: 88).

During the course of 1876, Parnell also shared the stage on a number of occasions with IRB members. On July 4, 1876, for example, he and Patrick Egan, a Fenian and owner of a successful bakery business, spoke to a large crowd in Dublin before an enormous American flag, in order to adopt an address of congratulations from the Irish people to the American people on the centenary of their independence. In their oratory, a number of parallels were drawn between the American past and the Irish future by Egan and by Parnell, whose mother incidentally, was American. If the British authorities had not already opened a file on Parnell, they would certainly have done so in 1876; their

photograph of Parnell as a 'Fenian Suspect' possibly being intercepted by them in the mail;

Figure 6.2 Charles Stuart Parnell.
Photograph from the National Archives,
Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1871-
1880, Description of Fenian Suspects.

In September 1876, Parnell and O'Connor Power traveled to the United States together to deliver their centennial address to President Grant. In Washington however, after much confusion, President Grant and the United States administration refused to publicly accept their address, for fear of damaging an improving relationship with Great Britain. In addition, Clan na Gael remained aloof of these two parliamentarians, whom they considered an endangerment to the cause of Irish nationalism.

Parnell nonetheless returned to Ireland greatly respected by the Irish people for the attempt, and on his arrival in Liverpool delivered a speech which particularly justified the support which he had received from a Fenian element. It now appeared that the cause of Home Rule had something for everybody;

We have been told that we have lowered the national flag, that the Home Rule cause is not the cause of "Ireland a nation" and that we would degrade our country into the position of a province. There is no reason why Ireland under Home Rule will not be a nation in every sense and for every purpose that it is right that she should be a nation.
(Parnell in Kee 1993: 126)

Parnell was an ambitious man, and a politician who hoped that Home Rule could deliver the many promises it had made to the Irish people. Home Rulers however were a disparate bunch, ranging from those of a more advanced nationalist persuasion who believed it to be a stepping stone on the road to independence, to those who would never consider terminating Ireland's links with the crown. As a rising star of the Home Rule movement, the young Charles Stuart Parnell proved himself to be a master of maintaining the flexibility of this amorphous concept, always careful to walk the tightrope as the movement gained momentum.

During 1877, Parnell and a small group of Home Rule Members of Parliament decided to make their presence felt in the House of Commons, by mounting a campaign of obstruction designed to destroy the process of British government legislation. Time after time in the House, Parnell and other Home Rulers of advanced nationalist opinion, rose to their feet to attach amendments and adjournments to legislation, as well as registering their opposition to as many government bills as possible. Combined with lengthy speeches, their obstructionist tactics caused uproar in the House of Commons and greatly infuriated Isaac Butt, the leader of the Home Rule movement, who was now accused of losing control of his own party. Parnell's campaign reached a crescendo in their opposition to the South Africa Bill, during which a small group of Irish Members of Parliament forced the House of Commons to sit continuously in debate for 45 hours.

Amidst this madness however, there was also method. Parnell and his allies, such as Biggar, continued to campaign on behalf of Fenians still imprisoned by calling for amendments to be made to a Prisons Bill, in order that Irish 'political' prisoners should no longer be classified and treated as common criminals. On August 4, 1877, Parnell and his small cadre of renegade Home Rulers achieved a notable victory when the Chief Secretary accepted a total of eight new clauses which they had proposed, into a reformed Prisons Bill. Meanwhile Parnell and other obstructionists, throughout their campaign, continued to shuttle between London and Dublin, a twenty-four hour round-trip, in order to attend rallies which publicized and justified their actions to the Irish public. During the month of August, Parnell was also elected president of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, which had a more Fenian and working-class composition than its Irish counterpart. Sir Isaac Butt remained the official leader of the Irish parliamentarians, but he now faced increasing pressure to retain this position.

During the summer of 1877, Parnell and Biggar also found time to visit Paris where they met with John O'Leary, an old exiled Fenian who still held some sway with the IRB in Ireland, an organization which was fast being made obsolete by the pace of events in the country. In Paris however, Parnell also met an American journalist and envoy of Clan na Gael by the name of J.J. O'Kelly (Kee 1972). Irishborn but raised in London, O'Kelly was an old friend of John Devoy who had also joined the French Foreign Legion and had fought in Mexico in the 1860s.

Figure 6.3 J.J. O'Kelly. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1871-1880, Description of Fenian Suspects.

Although he had been in London in 1867, he had refused to take part in the ill-prepared Rising and later emigrated to the United States where he secured a job as a journalist at the *New York Herald* in the 1870s (Devoy 1929). Parnell was eager to court Clan na Gael, realizing that he needed Irish-American financial support at the very least, in order to further the cause of Home Rule for Ireland.

In pursuit of this goal, Parnell made a great impression on J.J. O'Kelly who, having now spent some time outside of the United States, soon became a convert to the cause of constitutional agitation. The position adopted by O'Kelly was now at variance with the organization he claimed to represent. On August 5, 1877, O'Kelly wrote to John Devoy from his base in London, to express his support for Parnell;

While in Paris I called on our friend John (O'Leary), but found he had left his hotel and no one knew whether he had flown. I had a long chat with Parnell and Biggar, the former is a man of promise, I think he ought *to be supported*. He has the idea I held at the starting of the Home Rule organization – that is the creation of a political

link between the conservative and radical nationalists. I suppose the lunatics will be content with nothing less than the moon – and they will never get it. The effect of Parnell's attitude has been simply tremendous and if he were supported by twenty or thirty instead of seven he could render extremely important services. He has many of the qualities of leadership – and time will give him more. He is cool – extremely so and resolute. With the right kind of support behind him and a band of *real* nationalists in the House of Commons he would so remould Irish public opinion as to clear away many of the stumbling blocks in the way of progressive action.

(O'Kelly to Devoy in O'Brien and Ryan
1948: 267-268)

O'Kelly remained in London and on August 21 wrote a second letter to Devoy in which he urged the Clan na Gael leader to meet properly with the young Parnell on his next visit to the United States;

The day parliament broke up, I had a long chat with Parnell. He is a good fellow, but I am not sure he knows exactly where he is going. However, he is the best of the Parliamentary lot. He intends going to America in November and I would advise you to see him and have a long talk over affairs.

(O'Kelly to Devoy in O'Brien and
Ryan 1948: 269)

In America meanwhile, Clan na Gael stayed true to their revolutionary principles, remaining aloof of parliamentary agitation and instead focussing on planning for another eventual armed rebellion – a policy which had become sadly outdated by the pace of events in Ireland. To this end, they had already spoken to the Russian Ambassador in Washington in 1876 in the hope of exploiting Balkan difficulties between Britain and Russia, but had been treated with incredulity – the Russian Ambassador Shiskin pointing to the Home Rule movement as the true face of Irish nationalism (Moody 1981).

In late 1877 however, Dr. William Carroll, an Irishborn Philadelphian who shared the leadership of Clan na Gael with John Devoy, visited O'Kelly in London to further their plans for armed rebellion. Travelling at the expense of the Skirmishing Fund, wrestled from the grip of O'Donovan Rossa by Clan na Gael and renamed the National Fund, the two men soon embarked for Spain. In Madrid they met with the Spanish Premier and Leader of the Conservative Party, Canovas del Castillo. Here they offered to capture Gibraltar from the British with a small force of Irish revolutionaries before handing the rock over to Spanish control. Again Clan na Gael were rebuffed, the Spanish refusing to be drawn into a war with Britain on behalf of the Irish (Moody 1981). Clan na Gael were fast running out of military options, and J.J. O'Kelly for one, like many other Fenians in Ireland was fast becoming disillusioned with the orthodox and intransigent IRB strategy which had apparently lost touch with reality in the homeland.

Fenianism had triggered a groundswell of public support for Irish nationalism, but exiled Fenians knew nothing of such developments, and so remained chained to revolutionary dogma. In Charles Stuart Parnell however, and in the cause of Home Rule, a number of IRB members in Ireland recognized a more popular Irish nationalist champion and hence a possible pathway to independence. Clan na Gael envoys sent to Ireland to ascertain military preparedness of the IRB, were soon intoxicated by the sense of immense nationalist possibility that Home Rule then offered Ireland. While Irish Americans fruitlessly approached British enemy after British enemy to beg for assistance, such a devotion to armed insurrection was fast being made obsolete by the pace of events in Ireland. In the late 1870s, climate change would instigate yet a further twist to the

course that Irish nationalism was now taking, a course which Irish Americans were fast losing track of.

Michael Davitt and the Land Question

On December 19, 1877, Michael Davitt, a young Fenian, was released from a British prison, following a long campaign by the Home Rule party on his behalf.

Figure 6.4 Michael Davitt. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1871-1880, Description of Fenian Suspects.

Born in County Mayo at the height of the Irish famine, Davitt had fled with his parents to the North of England as a child. At the age of nine he had lost his right arm in the machinery of a cotton mill where he was employed. As a teenager Davitt had joined the IRB and later escaped capture in the abortive 1867 raid on Chester Castle, organized by Captain McCafferty. In 1870 however, Davitt was finally apprehended and accused of dealing arms for the IRB. Testimony was provided once more by Corydon the informer,

and Davitt spent the next seven years performing hard labor for Her Majesty's prison service.

Following his release, Davitt immediately traveled to London to thank Sir Isaac Butt, Charles Stuart Parnell, and a number of other Home Rulers who had campaigned for his release. He was also immediately elected to the Supreme Council of the IRB as the representative for the North of England. In January 1878, Davitt traveled to Dublin with three other recently released Fenians who were ex-British soldiers arrested at the time of the Rising. In Dublin, Patrick Egan had organized a jubilant reception, and the four men were paraded through the streets in a triumphant procession before a crowd of thousands. The next morning, one of the released men, Sergeant McCarthy, collapsed and died as a result of his poor health following years of harsh prison treatment (Moody 1981).

While in Dublin, Michael Davitt met Dr. William Carroll, who had returned from Spain to visit Ireland in order to assess the mood of the country in his capacity as an influential Clan na Gael figure. Incidentally, Carroll also met Charles Stuart Parnell in Dublin during the month of January 1878. Like J.J. O'Kelly before him, Carroll was also quickly converted to the cause of Home Rule, having now spent a number of months outside the United States and having met the dazzling young M.P. in the flesh. Ever the politician, Parnell quite probably assured Carroll in private that he favored the eventual complete independence of Ireland, and Carroll duly pledged Clan na Gael support in return (Kee 1993).

From Dublin, Davitt then traveled to the county of his birth, Mayo, for the first time since he had fled the devastation caused by the famine in his youth. In 1878, Mayo was

still a very poor county; the famine having wiped out four-fifths of all small agricultural holdings, and the population that remained was still dependent upon the potato crop, which was once again failing. A wet summer the previous year, 1877, had ruined the Irish harvest and 1878 was now wet again. In addition, British agriculture was being severely undercut by cheap beef from North America. Improvements in transatlantic shipping and refrigeration techniques had introduced beef from Texas, Mexico and Canada, severely affecting Irish agriculture, eighty percent of which was involved in the cattle trade (Kee 1993).

In County Mayo, Davitt joined a number of Fenians such as Matthew Harris who had begun to organize meetings of tenants to protest the process of rack-renting, and to call for a halt to the number of evictions taking place for non-payment of rent in the current economic circumstances. At the very least, these grass-roots movements were calling for the three Fs which Butt had campaigned for years before; namely fixity of tenure, freedom of sale and fair rents. As the year 1878 progressed, the situation among Irish tenants in the west became ever more desperate, faced with starvation and eviction from the landlords. On April 2, 1878, Lord Leitrim, a notorious County Donegal landlord, was killed in a blaze of gunfire along with his driver. Lord Leitrim had evicted many of his tenants and had fast become a symbol of uncaring British rule in Ireland. As the situation in Ireland worsened, Davitt sailed for New York aboard the *Brittannic*. Steamships had replaced sailing ships during the 1850s, but this White Star liner powered by both steam and sail then held the speed record for the County Cork–New York route; frequently making the trip in less than eight days.

Eight days was probably still enough time between worlds however, for Davitt to reflect on the situation he had left behind in Ireland, and of the momentous task he now faced in the United States. Since fleeing Ireland as a child, he had spent his entire adult life pursuing the cause of Irish independence by whatever means necessary and had spent seven years in prison, devoid of any contact with the outside world, in return for his convictions. Now sailing to America, he was once again in the company of his countrymen, crammed into steerage and bound for America having been evicted from their homes. Michael Davitt knew that if Irish nationalism was going to succeed in Ireland where previously it had failed, it must answer the land question in order to gain the support of the hundreds of thousands of impoverished small farmers who inhabited the west of Ireland. In County Mayo, moderate Fenians such as Mathew Harris had already realized this fact, and Davitt had spent time briefly in their company organizing tenants to resist payments of unfair rents. The IRB meanwhile refused to become involved in any political action on behalf of tenants, arguing that such constitutional behavior would only further legitimate British bureaucracy and hence the occupation of Ireland. As Davitt himself stated, with regards the IRB; "[a]ny such action spelled moral force, and moral force stood for conciliation, compromise, and surrender" (Davitt 1970: 118).

Davitt realized therefore, that although many Irish people harbored nationalist sentiment, most were unwilling to join a secret society such as the IRB, or to take up arms against one of the most powerful nations in the world. It was unrealistic to expect poor farmers, struggling to keep their families alive and paying grossly inflated rents, to

fight on behalf of a secret society that appeared to care nothing for their woes. Likewise by 1878, the Home Rule movement also seemed to care little for the poor farmer. Led by Isaac Butt it had seemingly become an overly cautious and conservative Westminster club. Charles Stuart Parnell and a number of moderate Fenians had provided some hope for the future, but what could be achieved by years of obstruction? Sailing aboard the *Britannic*, Davitt realized that if a new brand of Irish nationalism could embrace the land question, the goal of Irish independence would become of paramount importance to the majority of the Irish population. As he later stated; "what was wanted was to link the land or social question to that of Home Rule, by making the ownership of the soil the basis of the fight for self government" (Davitt 1970: 121).

In the United States, Davitt hoped to gain support for this new brand of Irish nationalism which encompassed the land question and which attacked landlordism in Ireland. In particular, he hoped to tap into and to harness the bitter memories of millions of Irish who had been driven from their homes by landlords, and who had witnessed terrible scenes of mass starvation, as well as disease-ridden ships and lives of hardship across the Atlantic. In fact, as he stated in retrospect, Davitt had great faith in America and in Irish Americans;

The Irish in the United States were steadily climbing upward socially and politically. They were being inoculated with practical ideas and schooled in democratic thought and action...These experiences and advantages reacted upon opinion in Ireland, through the increasing number of visitors, letters, and newspapers crossing the Atlantic, and in this manner cultivated the growth of more practical thought and purpose in our political movements at home.

(Davitt 1970: 116)

Having already met Dr William Carroll and J.J. O'Kelly, Clan na Gael had agreed to organize Davitt's visit to the United States. As the *Britannic* sailed into New York Harbor, Michael Davitt knew that their assistance would prove crucial.

In New York City, O'Kelly introduced Davitt to John Devoy, the exiled Fenian and Clan na Gael leader. Together, Devoy and Davitt traveled to Philadelphia to commence preparations for a lecture tour of the United States which Clan na Gael had organized. In addition, Davitt visited his family in Philadelphia during early September 1878. While Davitt was imprisoned his father had died, and his mother and sisters had consequently emigrated once more; from Northern England to join relatives in the United States. On September 16, 1878, Michael Davitt spoke at the Concert Hall in Philadelphia. It was the first night of a lengthy lecture tour which Clan na Gael hoped would rejuvenate the cause of Irish nationalism in the United States, and which Davitt hoped would attract interest and financial support to his new venture.

Although not an accomplished orator by any means, Davitt spoke at length of his horrendous prison experience and of British rule in Ireland, while damning the Catholic hierarchy for taking a pro-British political position (Moody 1981). The image of the young Fenian, somewhat emaciated and with only one arm for his troubles, was a moving one to many in the crowd who contributed to his cause heartily. From Philadelphia, Davitt traveled to Boston, where he met John Boyle O'Reilly, Fenian escapee, editor of the *Pilot* and a moderately successful poet. From Boston, Davitt traveled to Lawrence, Massachusetts on September 18, and from there onto New Britain, Connecticut, on

September 21. In each town he delivered a lecture, and met local Clan na Gael representatives.

On September 23, Davitt spoke at the Cooper Institute in New York City. The lecture was important not for the content of Davitt's speech, but for the resolutions which John Devoy proposed following Davitt's departure from the podium. The first resolution was to simply assert Ireland's right to national independence. The second resolution however blamed landlordism for Irish emigration, and asserted that the land of Ireland should belong only to the people of Ireland, once Irish independence had been secured. This represented the first occasion when the doctrine of 'land for the people' was publicly aired. The historian, T.W. Moody believes that although Davitt had participated in the drafting of these two resolutions at a meeting of Clan na Gael before the lecture, he had been reticent in declaring this doctrine in public –especially in the guise of state-ownership of the land (Moody 1981). The Cooper Institute meeting however, marks an important juncture in Davitt's first American odyssey during which, in the presence of Devoy, his thinking began to crystallize around the land question (Kee 1993).

Following this meeting, Davitt visited his family once more before returning to New York to lecture at the New Park Theatre in Brooklyn, New York, on October 13, before an audience that included such luminaries as Patrick Ford, the editor of the *Irish World* newspaper, whose support was crucial to Davitt's cause. In this speech, Davitt stated his belief that the Home Rule party did not do justice to the Irish people, but that Fenians were partly to blame also for their non-involvement. He believed that a new national policy was required, and advocated Fenian participation in constitutional activity, if

parliamentary candidates first pledged themselves to a number of principles. His speech was a great success, particularly after Devoy had risen to give a rare public performance expanding on many of Davitt's themes, including the nationalization of the land, a topic close to Patrick Ford's heart.

From New York City, Davitt continued his lecture tour, visiting Buffalo, Chicago and St. Louis. By the time he reached Missouri however, the exhausting schedule had begun to take its toll. Demoralized in Hannibal, Missouri, on October 26, Davitt wrote to Devoy;

I "lectured" in Sedalia the other night to an audience, the total receipts at the door from which reached 14.50 (fourteen dollars fifty cents). I will be detained here until tomorrow to perform the same feat. If this isn't doing the devil a penance for "spouting" I don't know what is. The *private* meetings are more satisfactory, but my patience and health are taxed considerably by want of proper arrangements".

(Davitt to Devoy 10.26.1878 in O'Brien and Ryan 1948: 363)

After having spent many years in jail, Davitt was clearly unprepared to tour the United States at length, although he was aware that Irish-American support would be crucial to achieving his goal of nationalizing the land question in Ireland. Although a member of the IRB, and a Fenian who had been imprisoned in his youth, Davitt nonetheless represented a new breed of Irish revolutionary. Like an increasing number of Irish nationalists in Ireland, he had no military experience and did not regard armed insurrection as the only means by which Ireland's independence might eventually be achieved.

Both Davitt and Parnell are considered important figures in the dominant narrative of the development of Irish nationalism, but because this narrative remains so unproblematically rooted in the soil of Ireland, their transnationality and that of many other important nationalists over time, is consequently downplayed or ignored. This, I believe, is a failing, since not only was Parnell half-American, but Davitt was a Famine refugee who had spent most of his life in England. Davitt's nationalism was forged outside of Ireland, and hence I believe such distance enabled Davitt, as it had done many other members of the Irish diaspora, to gain a certain clarity of perspective which might not have been possible had such individuals remained on the island. It is significant therefore, that when Davitt first publicly addressed the land question as a Fenian, he did so not in Ireland but in New York City and in Brooklyn.

Clan na Gael's New Departure

Meanwhile back in Dublin, the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain re-elected Charles Stuart Parnell president at their convention. Sir Isaac Butt remained the leader of the Home Rule party, but with a general election imminent, the more working class and Fenian elements of the party in Britain had reaffirmed their faith in Parnell, much to the consternation of Butt. When the news of Parnell's re-election reached New York City however, Devoy erroneously jumped to the conclusion that Parnell had finally split from Sir Isaac Butt. Consequently Devoy, rather hastily, contacted a number of Clan na Gael members to decide what course of action they should take in light of this development.

As a recent convert to the cause of Home Rule and to a nationalist policy which Davitt had indicated might also solve the land question, Devoy decided to send a telegram to Ireland on behalf of Clan na Gael. The telegram was addressed to Joseph Kickham, chief executive of the Supreme Council of the IRB, and it listed a number of conditions by which Clan na Gael, and ideally the IRB, should support the Home Rule Party under the leadership of Parnell. The telegram read as follows;

Show following to Kickham, and if approved present to Charles Parnell and friends:

Nationalists here will support you on the following conditions:

- (1) abandonment of federal demand (and) substitution (of) general declaration in favour of self-government;
- (2) vigorous agitation of land question on basis of peasant proprietary, while accepting concessions tending to abolish arbitrary eviction;
- (3) exclusion of all sectarian issues from platform;
- (4) (Irish) members to vote together on all imperial and home questions, adopt aggressive policy and energetically resist all coercive legislation;
- (5) advocacy of all struggling nationalities in British Empire and elsewhere.

(Moody 1981: 250)

In addition to sending this message to the IRB in Ireland, Devoy also made the very public move of sending it to the *New York Herald*, which immediately published it in an article entitled 'An Irish New Departure'. What the New Departure telegram stated, was that Clan na Gael had placed their faith in a new path of land agitation, under the guidance of Charles Stuart Parnell and other Irish Members of Parliament, a path which they hoped would lead to an independent Ireland (Moody 1981: 251).

Michael Davitt was not consulted by John Devoy, and read of the New Departure telegram instead, in the newspaper while returning to New York from Minneapolis. Clan

na Gael's change of policy was not a surprise to him, as he had already been instrumental in its development, having advocated such an approach at his lectures and at Clan na Gael meetings. What Davitt disagreed with however, was the very public manner in which Devoy had offered the support of a revolutionary organization to an Irish M.P., without having first gained the approval of the IRB. Davitt was furious because he feared that the New Departure telegram may be construed as an offer of a formal alliance between Fenians and Home Rulers when in actual fact, it should have been clearly styled as a working relationship whose complexities could be arranged behind the scenes. As Davitt stated in reference to the New Departure telegram;

No meeting of the Clan-na-Gael executive had authorized the making of such an offer on behalf of the American revolutionary organization. Apart from this, it was a most imprudent proceeding, amounting as it did to an open proposal, through the public press, for an alliance between men avowedly revolutionist (three of them trustees of the "skirmishing" fund at the time) and the leader of a constitutional party in the British House of Commons.

(Davitt 1970: 126)

Parnell made no public comment concerning the telegram, for to do so would have seriously compromised his position as a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons. The policy outlined by Clan na Gael was one to which he had already subscribed, at least privately in the company of envoys such as O'Kelly, and to have Irish-American support he knew would prove crucial. Joseph Kickham however, was more vocal in responding to the New Departure telegram, refusing to endorse it and rebuking Clan na Gael publicly in the *Irishman* newspaper, published in Dublin.

In November 1878 however, Parnell did take to the podium with a number of neo-Fenians to address the plight of the Irish rural poor; a very public gesture which expressed his and Clan na Gael's desire, to forge a pan-nationalist front against the colonizer. As mentioned, Irish farmers in 1878 had once again witnessed a very wet year which had disastrous effects on the harvest. To many Irish poor, the imminent threat of eviction and starvation were of far greater consequence than the ideological maneuverings of secret revolutionary societies, and their hypothetical debates concerning peasant proprietorship in a future independent Ireland.

Instead, the Irish rural poor required immediate assistance, and on November 2, 1878, Parnell joined his Home Rule colleague John O'Connor Power (M.P.) and neo-Fenian Mathew Harris at a tenant right meeting in County Mayo which drew a crowd of three thousand people. From the podium, Harris declared that it was "the duty of every Irishman to use his best endeavors to protect and save the tenant farmers in Ireland from being forced from their homes by landlords who demand excessive rents or attempt to lessen their numbers by capricious evictions" (Kee 1993: 174). The crowd commended such agitation on their behalf so much closer to home than Westminster, and greatly cheered Charles Stuart Parnell as he rose to speak following Harris. In his speech, Parnell now firmly aligned the cause of impoverished tenants to the cause of Irish nationalism, declaring that "energy inside and outside the House of Commons was necessary to solve the land question" (Kee 1993: 174). Parnell had now begun to take a very public path away from the remainder of the Home Rule Party led by Sir Isaac Butt.

On December 8 at the Mechanics' Hall in Boston, Massachusetts, Davitt delivered the final lecture of his United States tour in which he called on Irish nationalists around the world to support the Irish tenantry in their time of need. He also called for a 'common public platform' to be established, an elaboration of his and Devoy's comments made in Brooklyn, in which he outlined a number of conditions which he believed would facilitate a compromise between Home Rulers and Fenians (Moody 1981: 200). The IRB however, under the leadership of Joseph Kickham, had refused to endorse Clan na Gael's New Departure. Both Davitt and Devoy knew that their support was critical to its success, and so a meeting of the Supreme Council of the IRB was scheduled. The meeting would take place in January 1879 in Paris, so as to facilitate Devoy's attendance since he was unable to return to Ireland while the duration of his original prison sentence remained in effect.

On December 11, 1878, John Devoy sailed out of New York harbor aboard the French liner 'Canada', bound for LeHavre, France. While aboard he wrote a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, a Dublin newspaper, in which he explained further the position of compromise which Clan na Gael now advocated. In this letter, Devoy elaborated upon his opinion that Home Rulers needed to more strongly voice their belief in an independent Ireland, and that the IRB needed to admit that constitutional agitation was a valid means by which to achieve eventual independence. In addition, Devoy argued that the land question should now be put at the top of the nationalist agenda. Obviously having spoken to Davitt, Devoy also made it clear that it was not an alliance being advocated, but instead only "the adoption of a broad and comprehensive public policy

which nationalists and men of more moderate views could alike support without sacrifice of principle" (Devoy in Moody 1981: 266).

In Paris, Devoy mailed the letter to the editor of the *Freeman's Journal* where it was printed, with an accompanying editorial on December 27, 1878. Following Kickham's dismissal of the New Departure in the pro-IRB newspaper, the *Irishman*, Clan na Gael knew that winning the public relations battle would prove crucial and Devoy hoped this latest letter might explain his position with more clarity. Davitt followed Devoy across the Atlantic aboard the White Star liner, the *Baltic*, having visited his mother and sisters a final time, arriving in Ireland on December 23. The ship was buffeted by atrocious weather conditions for the length of the voyage in what was to be a stormy finale to a rather successful trip made by Michael Davitt.

At a small hotel in the Latin Quarter of Paris on January 19, 1879, the Supreme Council of the IRB convened to discuss the state of their organization and also to hear arguments for and against Clan na Gael's proposed New Departure. In attendance were the seven elected members of the Supreme Council; one member representing each of Ireland's four provinces, one member representing Scotland, one member for the South of England and one member for the North of England. In addition there were four co-opted members, as well as John Devoy who represented Clan na Gael. Michael Davitt incidentally was the representative for the North of England. The sessions were held in strictly private conditions and a fair amount of routine Fenian business was also discussed, involving the size of the organization, the discipline and morale of its membership. Devoy in fact was granted permission to tour the organization in Great

Britain and Ireland subsequent to the meeting, in order to report back to Clan na Gael. Although his prison sentence did not expire until February 10, 1882, Devoy obviously thought this mission important enough to risk arrest for breaking the conditions of his amnesty.

On the question of the New Departure however, neither Davitt, Devoy or Mathew Harris, who was also in attendance, could convince the Supreme Council to endorse their proposal to forge a common public platform which would facilitate greater cooperation between Fenians and Parliamentarians. Devoy for one, believed that their intransigence owed much to the fact that most members in attendance had never seen the New Departure telegram, but had only read about it in the newspaper. The coverage of the New Departure telegram had taken place in the *Irishman* under the guidance of Richard Piggott, editor and proprietor, and before the IRB leaders had even arrived in Paris therefore, Devoy believed they had already discounted his proposal based solely upon Piggott's unflattering caricature of it (Devoy 1929). The *Irishman* was a pro-IRB paper, but Devoy and others had been dismayed at what they considered to be a misrepresentation of their telegram by Piggott, whom they considered a scurrilous, unscrupulous and mischievous individual. Although Kickham and other members of the Supreme Council were in favor of agrarian agitation they refused to endorse IRB involvement in such a campaign.

Many of the sessions were conducted in a tense and uneasy manner, owing much to the fact that Kickham was deaf and almost totally blind, thus requiring rudimentary sign language translation which gave rise to frequent misunderstandings and

miscommunication. Davitt, Devoy and Harris however, did succeed in gaining a concession from the IRB which permitted individual Fenians to become involved in parliamentary elections in Ireland, so long as they did not actually become Members of Parliament themselves. The IRB decided that this concession might enable their members to gain control of local public bodies, and although it was not an endorsement of the New Departure, Davitt, Devoy and Harris hoped it might be an advancement in that direction. In addition, all members reached a unanimous agreement that a new nationalist newspaper which would express IRB opinion, was urgently required. Davitt was subsequently authorized to discuss the launching of this publication, possibly through a buy-out of Richard Piggott using Clan na Gael funds.

Although a number of Fenians in Ireland, without IRB approval, had already become involved in grassroots campaigns for land reform, and although Parnell had begun to endorse such agitation as a Home Ruler, the New Departure telegram nonetheless still represents a very public endorsement of such developments by a revolutionary organization. The telegram has however, been described by historians such as Kee (1993), as Clan na Gael simply coming to terms with events in Ireland, but I believe instead that it actually represents the first mapping of a new terrain on which the battle for Irish independence was to be fought. Additionally, the telegram also legitimized the actions of those Fenians who had already begun to work under the rubric that Clan na Gael now advocated, and provided them with the impetus perhaps, to forge a more coherent national strategy.

The West Awake!

Following the meeting, Davitt returned to England while Devoy remained in Paris. Fluent in French following his years in the French Foreign Legion, and now in control of a powerful Irish-American organization, Devoy began to make arrangements to procure weaponry that could be forwarded to the IRB in Ireland and England. Meanwhile in England, Davitt delivered a lecture in Manchester on February 2, entitled 'Impressions of Transatlantic Ireland' in which he discussed the scale at which Irish nationalism now existed and the power that this gave the Irish people. From Manchester, Davitt returned to his native County Mayo where, following two successive disastrous harvests, evictions of small farmers by landlords for non-payment of rent, had increased dramatically.

On behalf of small farmers, a grass-roots tenant-right campaign was continuing in its attempts to rally support and draw attention to their plight. Organized by neo-Fenians such as James Daly, editor of the *Connaught Telegraph*, as well as some non-Fenians, the movement now also attracted Michael Davitt who believed that any such agitation on behalf of small farmers would be in the interests of Irish nationalism. Despite failing to gain official IRB endorsement for his New Departure plans in Paris, Davitt probably hoped that agitation on behalf of impoverished western tenants could be converted into a more comprehensive assault on that bastion of British dominance, landlordism itself. Although tenant-right agitators now called only for a reduction in rents, Davitt knew that some already shared his belief in a total social revolution, and in Irish soil for the Irish people.

In addition, Davitt also facilitated a meeting between Parnell and Devoy, which took place in Boulogne, France, in March 1879. It was to be the first of a number of congenial meetings between the two men during the course of the year, during which Devoy and Parnell forged a common understanding (Kee 1993). Although Devoy might have been disappointed that Parnell would not publicly endorse the New Departure, Parnell now reassured Devoy that he was not adverse to such thinking, and that he too was a nationalist who also dreamed of an independent Ireland someday. Parnell needed Irish-American help, and such talk reassured Devoy that Parnell should be supported.

Meanwhile, Devoy continued his undercover tour of IRB divisions throughout England and Ireland, gauging their state of military preparedness and continuing to make arrangements for the import of arms and ammunition. Although Clan na Gael now supported constitutional agitation, they still advocated insurrection and believed that weaponry and training would also someday be needed to defeat British forces in Ireland. To this end they not only expressed sympathy with the plight of other peoples colonized by the British, but also considered actively supporting such peoples if possible. For example, on March 10, 1879, J.J. O'Kelly wrote a letter to Michael Davitt which advocated Irish revolutionary support for the Zulus, who were then at war with the British in South Africa;

...one million cartridges placed in the hands of the Zulus would help the Irish cause more than an equivalent amount of arms landed in Ireland...If the war can be protracted in South Africa the result may possibly be felt in India, especially as, in my opinion, the Afghan campaign is likely to be a protracted one. In helping the Zulus we help the Afghans, and we help ourselves by promoting the long wished for "opportunity".

(O'Kelly to Davitt 03.10.1879 in O'Brien & Ryan, 1948: 410)

Such letters are an important testimony to the limits to which some Irish revolutionaries were then willing to go, in order to achieve Ireland's independence. They also illuminate the much broader global context in which the fate of Ireland was now being situated by these transnational political actors.

In County Mayo, Michael Davitt and other neo-Fenians also worked to make the 'Irish Question' a global question, through rhetorical comparisons in their promotion of such Land League demonstrations as that which took place in Irishtown during April 1879, their poster campaign proudly announcing;

**THE WEST AWAKE!!
GREAT TENANT RIGHT MEETING IN IRISHTOWN**

From the China towers of Pekin to the round towers of Ireland, from the cabins of Connemara to the kraals of Kaffirland, from the wattled homes of the isles of Polynesia to the wigwams of North America the cry is: 'Down with invaders! Down with tyrants!' Every man to have his own land – every man to have his own home.
(Curtis 1994, 94)

On Sunday, April 20, thousands of farmers from Counties Mayo, Galway and Roscommon converged on Irishtown, to attend a rally at which a number of prominent speakers were expected to address the crowd. Although Davitt did not take to the podium himself, possibly for fear of re-imprisonment, he did draft a number of the resolutions which were endorsed by all in attendance. These resolutions asserted the organizers' belief that landlordism was morally repugnant and that within the letter of the law, they would strive to alleviate the plight of impoverished western farmers and thus achieve greater rights for all Irish people (Moody 1981). By the summer of 1879, such talk was

no longer limited to County Mayo, as increasingly desperate tenant farmers throughout Ireland grew ever more supportive of the call for land reform, and perhaps the abolition of landlordism itself.

Charles Stuart Parnell meanwhile continued his hectic schedule of shuttling back and forth between the House of Commons at Westminster, and a series of demonstrations at which he spoke in Ireland. On May 5, 1879, Sir Isaac Butt, President of the Home Rule Party, had died following a period of ill health. Although this destabilized one faction of the Home Rule Party, it made no difference to Parnell who continued to build upon his popular reputation for audacious behavior in the House of Commons. As the historian Robert Kee has pointed out, Parnell's behavior demonstrated his "talent for combining obstruction of Commons business with constructive humanitarian thought" (Kee 1993: 190). An example of such behavior can be found in his objecting to the war against the Zulus in Natal, describing it as "unjust and fatiguing" and damning the British military for recruiting the poor sons of Irish farmers to fight in such campaigns on behalf of the empire (Kee 1993: 186).

The Founding of the Land League

The need to forge a more coherent national land agitation strategy was becoming painfully evident as the summer of 1879 progressed in Ireland. Poor weather had ruined yet another harvest and the threat of large-scale evictions for non-payment of rent now loomed in many areas of the country, as well as the specter of another famine. At a series of demonstrations, Michael Davitt and Charles Stuart Parnell joined a host of other

individuals to give voice to a range of concerns, including the demand for fair rents, an end to evictions, the possible buy-out of landlords, Home Rule and Irish independence.

Increasingly, the demonstrations drew upon the strong Catholic faith of the impoverished tenantry, often taking place in small towns after mass on a Sunday. In this manner, an increasing number of priests became involved with the plight of their parishioners, despite the objections from some in the Catholic hierarchy who remained wary of the growing call for agricultural reform. Their suspicion was that this land reform movement was being orchestrated by members of a secret society, and that the increasingly militaristic manner in which the demonstrations were being organized, betrayed secret Fenian involvement (Kee 1993). Although this was partly the case, the movement had in fact attained a momentum of its own, and had attracted a much greater breadth of Irish society than Fenians could ever have hoped for. In the increasing convergence of the call for land reform and the call for Irish independence, neo-Fenian involvement from individuals such as Michael Davitt was however, clearly evident.

On August 16, 1879, Michael Davitt and James Daly took the initiative towards achieving greater organization for the land reform movement by forming the National Land League of Mayo. Its principal target continued to be the landlords, their unfair rents and their policy of evicting tenants in this period of extreme agricultural depression. John Devoy had left Ireland, possibly in July, but Michael Davitt was eager to keep the Clan na Gael leader abreast of such fast-paced developments. It was clearly Davitt's intention to secure Irish-American financial support for the cause of land reform, and to also possibly alleviate his own financial predicament. As is evident from this letter,

although Davitt had just helped to establish the National Land League of Mayo, he was also concerned with spreading the gospel of land reform throughout Ireland. To this end, Davitt realized he would need substantial financial support, and therefore also asked Devoy whether another United States lecture tour could be arranged;

I expect to carry our platform into County Clare, Parnell and O'Sullivan are to go in for small proprietary at the Limerick meeting on 31st. The Northern meetings have all adopted the cry and I think it will now fix itself in the country. If I see this secured 'twixt now and October I have been thinking of another spouting tour in America. I *might* get our wealthy do-nothing Irish-Americans to assist this New Land Movement, and I *might* do a little for myself. You are aware that I have borne my own expenses so far in this Western war against landlordism... If I could raise a hundred or two by a winter's hard work and return in the spring I could secure myself. I think for the future. Would you write me your opinion of such a project and speak to O'Kelly, the Dr. and O'Reilly on the matter?

(Davitt to Devoy 08.23.1879 in
O'Brien & Reilly, 1948: 454)

In reply, Davitt received a contribution of two thousand dollars from John Devoy on behalf of Clan na Gael, forwarded in several installments and put to use by Michael Davitt quite possibly to improve his own personal financial situation, as well as that of the National Land League of Mayo (O'Brien and Reilly 1948: 452). The start-up funding had come from the war-chest of the National Fund under the control of Clan na Gael, but had originally been donated to Rossa's Skirmishing Fund for the expressed purpose of warfare. Davitt would later be forced to defend himself against charges of conspiracy leveled by the New York press, which accused him and Devoy of conspiring to improperly allocate such money for the purpose of parliamentary agitation. He was to

plead his innocence by describing the donation as an unsolicited personal gift from a friend (Davitt 1970: 169).

On October 21, 1879, Davitt, Parnell and a number of other land agitators established a national platform for their campaign, by founding the Irish National Land League. The new organization would be based upon the same principles as the National Land League of Mayo, and would incorporate such proto-organizations to continue to rally the Irish people to the cause of impoverished tenant farmers. Elected president of this new Land League, Parnell was supported by six executives; three of whom were neo-Fenians (Davitt, Egan and Brennan) as well as two Home Rulers (Biggar and W.H. Sullivan). In addition, the Central Tenants' Defense Association, which had also been involved in the campaign for land reform, agreed to be incorporated, and its secretary A.J. Kettle given the seventh executive seat on the new Land League. There now existed a political movement far stronger than Home Rule, and in the hope of attracting Irish-American financial support the Land League agreed never to use such future funding for parliamentary purposes, or to buy out the hated landlords (Kee 1993).

Following this momentous occasion, the very next day Michael Davitt wrote to a number of his associates in the United States to call for their support of the new Land League, and to possibly arrange a lecture tour by which Parnell could raise Irish-American consciousness of the new situation in Ireland and also attract donations. On October 22, 1879, he wrote to J.J. O'Kelly;

What we want is money – money – money. Without it this movement must fail – with it success is almost certain. We have a grand opportunity *now* and it will not be my fault if every advantage is not taken of it to further the cause.

(Davitt to O'Kelly 10.22.1879 in O'Brien & Reilly 1948: 457)

In addition, Davitt also wrote a letter to John Boyle O'Reilly whose acquaintance he had made in Boston. Although not a Clan na Gael member, as editor of the *Boston Pilot* O'Reilly commanded a great deal of respect from a broad spectrum of Irish Americans;

Permanent committees should be established in all such cities for the purpose of raising funds to aid us in our work this side. The wealthy Irish-American class who hold aloof from *other* National work could I think be got to move in *this* one to free the land of Ireland from Landlord grasp. *Influential* Committees should therefore be started, and the heads of political parties should not be ignored. What we want is *money* for without it the present spirit of our people cannot be kept up. Wonders have already been accomplished by individual exertions, but without speedy assistance the Land movement will either fall into the *dishonest* hands or collapse. From the personnel of the executive elected yesterday to guide this movement you will see that earnest and *good* work can be relied upon – if assistance be forthcoming. Mr. Parnell will reach New York by end of November.

Hoping every assistance will be given to Mr. Parnell and *that nothing will be done to compromise him*.

I remain,
Yours ever sincerely
Michael Davitt.

(Davitt to O'Reilly 10.22.1879 in O'Brien & Reilly 1948: 455-6)

A few days later, on November 1, 1879, Davitt also wrote to John Devoy to thank him for the installments of money which he had received from the National Fund. It is interesting to note that in these letters, Davitt refers to himself as 'Mr. Kyle', addresses Devoy as 'Charlotte' and describes the National Fund as 'Jacobs & Co.'. In this manner,

revolutionary activity becomes disguised as a transnational business venture, and Fenians masquerade as venture capitalists so as to avoid detection should such mail be intercepted by the British authorities. On November 1, 1879 for example, Davitt wrote;

One of your letters contained a draft for £103 8s. 4d. for Mrs. Kyle. She is deeply sensible of the confidence placed in her by Mr. Jacobs and trusts she will testify her obligations in a manner satisfying to him...I never expected that Jacobs would offer a penny to the old lady and his gift was certainly a surprise.

(Davitt to Devoy 11.01.1879 in
O'Brien & Reilly 1948: 460)

The situation in Ireland worsened as the year progressed, but the activity of the Land League gave many impoverished tenants hope that they might not be evicted or starve to death without a fight. At demonstration after demonstration, Parnell and others called on small farmers to assert their solidarity, to resist payment of unfair rents and to draw strength from a history of resistance to British rule. As president of the Land League, Parnell continued to receive support from a broad spectrum of Irish political opinion, and for this reason his speeches remained carefully crafted affairs, open to interpretation in whatever manner the crowd saw fit. At a meeting in Wexford for instance, Parnell was clearly appealing to a more radical nationalist element when he stated that;

We stand under the shadow of a hill where your ancestors made far greater and sterner sacrifices than you are called upon to make to-day. Let it not then be said by your children that you were degenerate sons of great sires, but let the people of Wexford –to-day inheriting the glorious traditions of the past, keep alive the spirit of revolution, of courage and of determination that is the imperishable heritage of all Irishmen, that you possess and that you will show in this great and coming struggle.

(Parnell in Kee 1993: 206)

Towards the close of 1879, the work of the Land League began to pay dividends. This was most evident in County Mayo, where so-called 'agrarian outrages' aimed at intimidating landlords increased, while the number of evictions decreased. Regardless of espousing passive resistance to landlordism, at least in public, Davitt was briefly imprisoned in late 1879 for making speeches in County Mayo interpreted by the authorities as 'seditious' (Kee 1993: 211). Meanwhile Parnell continued to tour in his capacity as president of the Land League, and on December 21 he sailed for the United States in the hope of also rallying Irish Americans to the new banner.

Clan na Gael's New Departure Telegram had provided a number of Fenians in Ireland with the ideological support of a revolutionary organization to continue their involvement with the campaign for Land Reform. By also funding Davitt, to enable him to consolidate the Land Reform movement under one national banner, Clan na Gael also provided crucial financial support. Irish nationalism developed transatlantically out of these such flows of revolutionary of revolutionary ideology and capital, in which Irish nationalists harnessed improvements in global communications for their own purposes. Such support may have emanated from outside the shores of the island of Ireland, but nonetheless the financial backing of Mrs. Kyle by Jacobs and Co., as discussed by Mr. Kyle and Charlotte, should not be ignored.

Parnell's American Tour

Parnell arrived in New York on January 2, 1880, aboard the Cunard steamship *Scythia*. He was accompanied by John Dillon, and before disembarking granted an

interview to a *New York Herald* journalist in which he outlined his goals for the visit. During the interview Parnell talked of the imminent threat of famine in Ireland and of the desperate circumstances in which many small farmers now found themselves. As ever, Parnell was careful to walk the middle ground, so as to continue to attract the greatest amount of support possible for the Land League from the various streams of Irish nationalism involved. Such careful positioning can be clearly observed in the following statement made by Parnell in this interview, in which he asserted that a true revolutionary movement should "partake of both a constitutional and illegal character...It should be both an open and a secret organization, using the constitution for its own purposes but also taking advantage of its secret combination" (Hazel 1980: 9).

While Parnell was in the United States, Clan na Gael was pursuing just such an approach, with or without Parnell's knowledge it is impossible to determine. J.J. O'Kelly had sailed from New York in December and had begun to make arrangements to buy arms and ammunition, and to import them into Ireland on behalf of Clan na Gael. The weaponry was to be purchased using National Fund money, and it was their intention to arm the west of Ireland, so as to take advantage of agrarian agitation. On February 11, 1880, O'Kelly wrote to Devoy from Paris to inform him of developments. It is clearly evident that Michael Davitt was also complicit in this insurrectionary activity, being referred to here once more as 'Kyle';

Since my arrival the supply of material has been resumed, and, if the facilities were properly availed of, it could be extended at least ten-fold. The famine districts in the west of Ireland offer the best field just now for our activity...Give my best thanks to Jacobs & Co. for their flattering proof of confidence. I would suggest to them to

telegraph me a credit for seven thousand dollars with which to purchase 500 – short at two pounds sterling and 1000 long old pattern at about 5 or 6 shillings. These I propose to distribute *gratis* in 3 or 4 districts in the West where action may become necessary in May next. Kyle says the people will use them and one event of that nature would settle one important question. This is not to be understood as suggesting anything like general action which would be madness. One good lesson would do the work.

(O'Kelly to Devoy 02.11.1880 in O'Brien & Reilly 1948: 489-490)

In the United States, Parnell received a rapturous welcome at every city and town he visited to deliver a lecture. Instead of solely soliciting donations to the Land League, he had also established a National Land League Famine Relief Fund. While in the United States, he had become aware of a number of charitable organizations which were collecting donations for Irish famine relief, but he had remained skeptical of how such money might be used.

Taking charge of the Irish National Famine Land League Relief Fund were two of Parnell's sisters, Fanny and Anna Parnell. Already active in Irish nationalist circles, the two women took charge of the new venture. Born in Ireland like their brother, the sisters had been raised as part of the Anglo-Irish landlord class, but following the death of their father their upbringing changed at the hands of their American mother. Never fully integrated into aristocratic culture by virtue of their dual nationality, the girls had also been entrusted with a greater degree of freedom and had received a better education than many other young women of the Victorian age (Côté 1991). Their mother was also a Fenian sympathizer and had sheltered Irish-American officers at their home in Dublin during 1865, while Fanny had written patriotic poetry for the *Irish People* before it was

raided. During the late 1860s they had lived in Paris, and had been involved in the Ladies Branch of the American International Sanitary Committee, an organization that provided ambulance services during the Franco-Prussian War.

During his tour of the United States, Parnell visited Washington D.C. and addressed the House of Representatives. The tour became an ever more hectic affair however, possibly due to poor management and scheduling on Dillon's part, and also due to the two men's apparent unwillingness to reply to any correspondence. In New York, Fanny and Anna Parnell struggled to differentiate between donations received for the two different funds, while also attempting to account for money received by the *Irish World*, the *Pilot*, the Land League headquarters in Dublin and by a number of banks. On February 27, 1880, Timothy Healy joined the Parnell tour to help improve organization, but both Fanny and Anna believed that the damage caused by their brother's poor correspondence skills had already cost the Land League dearly (Côté 1991).

In March 1880 however, Parnell received an urgent telegram calling him home to Ireland as Parliament had been dissolved and a General Election was imminent. In New York City, before departing aboard the steamer, *Baltic*, he helped found the American Land League at a hastily convened conference, to continue the hard work he had begun (Côté 1991). A virtual unknown, James McCaffrey, was elected president; his only qualification according to Michael Davitt, being that "he was supposed to be the handsomest man in New England" (Davitt in Foner 1978:10). Parnell left America having visited 62 cities and having traveled 16,000 miles in just two months (Hazel 1980).

In retrospect, Michael Davitt estimated that Parnell had raised \$242,000 (approximately £50,000) during this tour, most of which was spent relatively quickly alleviating distress and buying new seed potatoes in the west of Ireland. Davitt did believe that the trip had been an immense political success, stating in his own words that, "active sympathy for its objects was awakened throughout America, and all the bitter memories of landlord oppression and insolence were revived in the hearts of our exiled people" (Davitt 1971: 210). In the United States, Parnell had successfully reopened a lot of old wounds therefore, in the hope that Ireland's emigrants might once more come to the aid of their homeland. In the process he had been tagged the 'uncrowned King of Ireland'; the hopes of this transatlantic nation now resting upon his shoulders.

Hold the Harvest!

Upon disembarking the *Baltic* at Queenstown, County Cork on March 21, 1880, Parnell was met by an IRB delegation which delivered an address to him stating that they would not be aiding him in the upcoming General Election. Such revolutionary posturing was of no concern to Parnell however, since a number of key Fenians had already been enticed by the cause of Home Rule and by the Land League. Parnell's prime concern now, was to help secure as many seats as possible in Westminster for his comrades, in the hope that this might shift the balance in the Home Rule Party in his favor. While electioneering in County Roscommon, Parnell met one such nationalist who was standing for election as a Home Rule candidate. This gentleman was none other than J.J. O'Kelly, who obviously wished to combine his secret gun-running operation with constitutional

agitation, regardless of the consequences he might face from Clan na Gael or the IRB. Elsewhere in Ireland, Parnell also helped such colleagues as John Dillon and Timothy Healy, who had both accompanied him on his United States tour, to win seats as Home Rule candidates.

Following the election at a meeting in Dublin on May 17, 1880, Parnell was elected Chairman of the Home Rule Party, replacing the moderate William Shaw (M.P.) (Kee 1993). Meanwhile in the Houses of Commons at Westminster, Gladstone had swept Disraeli from power. Parnell and other Home Rulers hoped that this new Liberal government might once again apply themselves to Ireland's problems as they had previously done the last time they were in office. Upon taking their seats in the Houses of Parliament however, the divisions within the Home Rule Party were clearly evident; Parnell and his supporters joining the Conservatives to sit in opposition to Gladstone, while William Shaw and his moderates sat on the Liberal side of the House. Back in Ireland meanwhile, the situation was growing ever more desperate by the day as evictions and 'agrarian outrages' aimed at landlords both increased dramatically. In order to help remedy the situation, Parnell and his supporters introduced a Bill which, if passed, would provide compensation to tenants evicted during this period of economic crisis. The 'Compensation for Disturbance Bill' was passed by the House of Commons only to be thrown out by the House of Lords.

Without British action in Ireland, the Land League grew rapidly, becoming increasingly nationalist and revolutionary in character. The summer of 1880 had witnessed an improved harvest, but landlords now demanded rent plus arrears. The

number of evictions for nonpayment increased dramatically as a result. Quoting a ballad by Fanny Parnell, the Land League called on tenants to 'Hold the Harvest!', and to pay landlords only what was affordable. The ballad was suitably patriotic and invoked memories of the Great Famine itself;

Three hundred years your crops have sprung, by murdered corpses fed;
Your butchered sires, your famished sires, for ghostly compost spread;
Their bones have fertilised your fields, their blood has fallen like rain;
They died that you might eat and live. God! have they died in vain?

(Fanny Parnell, 'Hold the Harvest!' in Curtis 1994: 98)

On August 11, 1880, a British gunboat in Cork Harbor was stormed by Fenians who seized forty cases of rifles and ammunition (Curtis 1994: 98). In other parts of Ireland, action taken against landlords ranged from threatening letters to physical attacks on the landlord, his property or livestock. In addition, following what were considered unfair evictions, a landlord would also be socially ostracized; tenants refusing to work for him and shopkeepers ignoring him. It was a technique which the Land League approved of, and it was put to good use against a certain Captain Charles Boycott, a County Mayo landlord, during the month of September 1880. Elsewhere though, landlords were shot and killed, and the situation began to spiral out of control.

Across the Atlantic meanwhile, Michael Davitt was helping to organize the American Land League which Parnell had so hastily established before his departure. Recently demoted from the IRB Supreme Council as a renegade, Davitt had sailed to New York City on May 9, 1880, aboard the *Gallia*, which was crowded with Irish men, women and

children fleeing the country. Davitt knew that the flow of American funds was crucial to maintaining the Land League in Ireland, to fight for the tenants in the courts and to provide for those evicted in order to stem the flow of emigration. In the task of raising much-needed funds in the United States, Davitt was accompanied by Anna and Fanny Parnell. Having gained Davitt's approval, in August 1880 Fanny Parnell wrote a letter to the editor of the *Irish World*, Patrick Ford, in which she proposed that a Ladies Land League be founded in New York City. Fanny Parnell had the support of Patrick Ford's sister, Ellen, and called on women to bring their "women's attributes of compassion and enthusiasm" to this moral crusade (Côté 1991: 135). On October 15, a New York branch of the Ladies Irish National Land League was duly formed. Delia Parnell, the matriarch of this dynasty and an American by birth, was elected President, but behind the scenes the organization was controlled by its Vice-Presidents, Ellen Ford and Fanny Parnell.

By the time Michael Davitt returned to New York City from another lecturing tour, the Ladies Land League had organized a huge meeting to take place at the Cooper Union on November 9, 1880, at which he was scheduled to be the principal speaker. At this meeting Davitt delivered much the same speech as that he had voiced coast to coast in the months previous, from San Francisco to Boston. Dismissing newspaper reports, which had claimed that the Land League had incited violence, as mere sensationalism, he nonetheless denounced any agrarian outrages that had occurred as damaging to the Land League's principles of passive resistance (Moody 1981: 432). The women raised over one thousand dollars that evening, and the following day Davitt sailed from New York aboard the Cunard liner, *SS Batavic*, bound for Ireland.

Upon arriving in Ireland on November 20, 1880, Davitt discovered that the British government had taken action against the Land League, charging Parnell and thirteen other prominent members of the organization with criminal conspiracy to financially ruin landlords and to incite riotous behavior. In Dublin, Davitt immediately took charge of the Land League's efforts to better organize and intensify its campaign. Consequently, on November 30, a new Land League constitution was drafted which centralized control of the fast-growing organization in the hands of an annually elected executive committee. By the close of 1880 the Land League had established branches throughout Ireland and could boast a membership of at least 200,000 in Ireland, as well as an income of £100 per day from these members. The Land League used this money either defending tenants threatened with eviction in the courts, or helping already evicted tenants and their families (Moody 1981: 439).

The Land War Intensifies

The Land League now operated as virtually an alternative form of government, and even established their own courts to settle disputes between tenants. Davitt however, at least in public, was still concerned that an increase in violent incidents directed at landlords might be damaging the League's image. In a letter written to John Devoy for instance, he stated that;

I am necessitated, therefore, to take a conservative stand in order to stave off coercion...These damned petty little outrages...play the devil with us on outside opinion.

(Davitt to Devoy in Moody
1981: 440)

Those “damned petty little outrages” however, won the Land League enormous support amongst Irish Americans, whose donations were to prove crucial in maintaining the organization’s activities in Ireland. This was especially the case by the month of December 1880, by which time the authorities had begun to suppress Land League meetings in Ireland. Nevertheless, Davitt continued to tour the country to rally support, and in so doing began to publicly express a more ambivalent position with regard the legality of the Land league and its future. On January 16, 1882, for instance, Davitt spoke at Kilbrin in County Cork to state his belief that the Land League should continue to abide by the law for as long as possible, until at least the laws were changed. To help strengthen the resolve of tenants threatened with eviction, he mentioned the possibility that an Irish-American invasion force might one day arrive;

If your patience becomes exhausted by government brutality...the world will hold England, and not you, responsible if the wolfdog of Irish vengeance bounds over the Atlantic at the very heart of that power from which it is now held back by the influence of the league...

(Moody 1981: 449)

In preparing for the state trial of its most senior officers, the Land League spared no expense, for it was not just Parnell and his associates in the dock, but the Land League itself, accused of being a ‘dangerous and conspiratorial organization’ (Kee 1993: 309). Although the Crown’s prosecution team was led by none other than the Attorney General, the jury was unable to reach a verdict as to whether the Land League was an illegal

organization, or not. The trial ended January 26, 1881, and the Land League had won a temporary reprieve.

While defending themselves at the Four Courts in Dublin, a number of the accused Land League conspirators had also found time to continue their duties as Home Rule Members of Parliament; attending not only the opening of parliament at Westminster on January 6, but also subsequent sessions. In order to delay legislation which would have introduced a Coercion Bill to suspend habeas corpus in Ireland, the Home Rulers resorted once more to obstructionist tactics, albeit in far greater numbers than ever before (Kee 1993: 314). Knowing they were fighting a lost cause however, and that the leadership of the Land League might soon all be imprisoned without trial under this hostile measure, Davitt suggested that they make alternative arrangements. Having experienced first-hand, the wonderful management, organization and fund-raising abilities of the Ladies Land League in New York, Davitt suggested that a similar Ladies Land League be founded in Ireland, and that it should act as a provisional central committee under the leadership of Anna Parnell should the male Land Leaguers be arrested. With only Patrick Egan's support, Davitt persuaded the executive to accept his suggestion, and it was thus agreed that a Ladies Land League be established forthwith.

Davitt had acted just in time, for on February 2, 1881, he became the first member of the Land League executive to be arrested, not under the Coercion Bill but due to his 'ticket of leave' regarding his original sentence, being revoked. Davitt was transported to an English prison under heavy guard; the British police on a state of high alert following a recent bomb attack by O'Donovan Rossa's men, who had begun skirmishing. In the

House of Commons, the government refused to discuss their reasons for imprisoning Davitt, despite demands from Parnell and others who were finally escorted from the chamber for ignoring the speaker.

Immediately the Land League executive called a meeting to take place in Paris on February 13, 1881. Already in Paris was Patrick Egan who, as Land League treasurer had successfully moved all essential Land League files to the French capital.

Figure 6.5 Patrick Egan. Photograph from the National Archives, Dublin, Ireland. Irish Crimes Records 1871-1880, Description of Fenian Suspects.

In Paris, financial contributions could continue to flow freely from the United States, and the Land League could meet without the interference of British authorities. As Davitt later explained; Paris was chosen “to safeguard the funds of the organization and to enable the leaders to have the freedom and secrecy of cable communications from France with the leaders in America, pending a decision as to new plans” (Davitt 1970: 305).

Outraged at the British State’s handling of the Land League, in the United States a dozen state legislators condemned their action, while the number of Land League

branches multiplied. According to Davitt, within ten days of the Coercion Bill going into effect, the *Irish World* in fact forwarded \$25,000 (approximately £5160) in donations to Egan in Paris, by cable (Davitt 1970: 309). From their base in the United States, Clan na Gael also maintained their flow of weaponry into Ireland, as this letter written by John Devoy to a Clan na Gael colleague on March 6, 1881, testifies to;

Every scrap of paper had been placed in safety in Paris and preparations made to fill vacancies in case of arrest. The tools [arms] had been kept moving in at a better rate than formerly and the week before Osbournes writing 160 had got in. They were going to stop short for a while to see how Coercion would affect them and then to resume. I see that no arms have been seized.

(Devoy in O'Brien & Reilly 1948: 56)

Playing a crucial role in the receiving of arms and ammunition from the United States and their being smuggled into Ireland, William Mackey Lomasney (the 'Little Captain') was also in Paris during this period, and on the pay-role of Clan na Gael.

The *Irish World* and the Land League

Compared to the Fenian Brotherhood which had numbered approximately 45,000 members during its heyday following the Civil War, and Clan na Gael which reached its peak in the late 1870s with 10,000 members, the American Land League was 500,000 strong by September 1881, its members organized into 1500 branches (Walsh 1983: 256). As in Ireland, the reason for its immense popularity was that it attracted every ilk of Irish nationalist, be they working-class readers of the *Irish World*, middle-class Catholic readers of the *Boston Pilot*, Clan na Gael supporters, or Democrats in Tammany Hall. In

New York City, ground zero for an emergent Irish-American middle class, Parnell's cause represented a respectable avenue of Irish nationalism. The city's first Irish Catholic Mayor, William R. Grace had been elected in 1880, while in Tammany Hall, 'Boss' Tweed's successor, 'Honest' John Kelly, actively endorsed the Land League through the Democratic Party's newspaper, the *New York Star*, which sold 100,000 copies daily (Foner 1978). Ever eager to keep his finger on the pulse of Irish America, Kelly even established a 'Tammany Hall Irish Relief Fund' to support the Land League.

Although the American Land League remained under the control of more conservative, middle-class elements however, Irish America was still overwhelmingly working class during this period in time and the organization relied heavily upon their support. In this regard, the *Irish World* continued to be their voice and in New York City the offices of its editor, Patrick Ford, were regularly frequented not only by Irish nationalists but also labor leaders such as Samuel Gompers. In the early 1880s, the *Irish World* had a circulation of 35,000 copies, and through the 'Spread the Light Fund' endeavored to send a further 1,000 free copies to Ireland each week (Foner 1978). In fact, the *Irish World* was to have such an influence on Ireland that the British Government eventually banned it. During the Land War, for thousands of people in Ireland, the *Irish World* was the only means of learning about local Irish nationalist issues pertaining to their struggle. As the prominent Irish nationalist William O'Brien then stated; "There was scarcely a cabin in the West to which some relative did not dispatch a weekly copy of the *Irish World*...It was as if some vast Irish-American invasion was

Like Michael Davitt, Patrick Ford's idea of 'Liberty and Democracy' continued to be based upon the principle of 'the land for the people'. He attacked land monopoly as the 'prime evil' not only in Ireland but also in America, and he strove to illuminate global social problems affecting all Irish workers no matter where in the world they toiled.

Parnell Changes Course

Following their Paris meeting, the Home Rule Members of Parliament returned to Westminster to continue their fight against the Coercion Bill. At the same time as Prime Minister Gladstone was preparing this extreme measure however, he was also preparing a conciliatory Land Bill which he hoped would split the Home Rule Party and undermine support for the Land League. While conceding the 'three Fs' (fixity of tenure, freedom of sale and fair rents), it ignored the plight of the most impoverished tenants and refused to entertain either the Land League's call for peasant proprietorship or the end of landlordism. As a result, it was denounced by Davitt and by the more radical Home Rulers, who instead called for a 'no rent' campaign which would cripple the country. At a Land League National Convention held in Dublin on April 21 and 22, 1881, however, Parnell and other Home Rulers dashed their hopes of imminent revolution by deciding to accept Gladstone's Land Bill, albeit with a number of amendments and an analysis of some test cases.

The Land League had now surrendered many of its most cherished principles, but ever eager to continue to maintain the unity of the organization and of the Home Rule

Party, as well as the flow of American financial support, Parnell nonetheless made a series of public appearances at which he expressed his reservations and hesitation regarding the Land Bill. By May 1, 1881, the *Irish World* had so far remitted a total of \$100,000 (approximately £20,600) to the cause from Land League branches in the United States. The summer of 1881 in Ireland was characterized by an increasing number of arrests and evictions by the government, and a rise in levels of violence and boycotting organized by the Land League. In County Limerick on one occasion for example, a force of 5,000 repelled an attack by 200 police officers attempting to evict a tenant (Davitt 1970: 319).

Meanwhile, the Ladies Land League grew rapidly, by July 8, 420 branches had been established throughout Ireland to provide relief to over 3,000 evicted tenants as well as aiding those tenants imprisoned without trial. Anna Parnell toured the country delivering speeches supporting the continued agitation and visiting impoverished tenants. The women however, were becoming increasingly ostracized by male members of the Land League, and were soon to be damned by the Irish Catholic hierarchy itself. On March 12, 1881, a pastoral letter written by none other than the Archbishop of Dublin was read out in all churches of his diocese, in which he condemned the Ladies Land League for their immodesty in becoming involved in public affairs, likening them to prostitutes for their troubles;

The modesty of her daughters was the ancient glory of Ireland. Ireland shone out brightly by the chastity of her daughters...like Mary their place was the seclusion of the home. If charity drew them out of doors, their work was done with speed, their voices were not heard in the world's thoroughfare...But all this was to be laid aside

and the daughters of our Catholic people, be they matrons or virgins, are called forth...to take their stand in the noisy arena of public life...Do not tolerate in your soddities the woman who so far disavow her birthright of modesty as to parade herself before the public gaze...

(Curtis 1994: 170)

With Ireland in a state of siege, the women continued their charitable work despite such damnation and even established a Children's Land League to instruct Irish youth of their Irish history, long ignored in National Schools run by the British State.

A 'Greater Ireland' United

Throughout the summer of 1881, Charles Stuart Parnell also continued to tour the country to attend a number of Land League demonstrations. Keen to defend himself against allegations that he had capitulated too soon by approving Gladstone's Land Act, he denounced the act in a series of public speeches designed to placate his more radical colleagues as well as to keep the flow of Irish-American money moving. To further consolidate his position as the Land League President and Home Rule Party leader, Parnell also decided to establish a pro-Land League newspaper over which he would have control. Edited by William O'Brien, a devout Parnellite, the first issue of *United Ireland* appeared August 13, 1881, following the buy-out of Richard Piggott with Clan na Gael funds. It reported on news relating to the Land League and its many branches, Irish affairs in general, as well as printing Irish historical essays from a nationalist perspective. In addition it detailed the activities of Land League branches in the United States, in a column entitled 'Transatlantic Ireland'.

At this time, the American Land League and Ladies Land League had called for a convention of all Irish societies to be held in Chicago to promote the cause of Irish independence and to support Parnell's position (Côté 1991: 197). In anticipation of the Convention, *United Ireland* educated its readership of the views of the Irish Americans involved;

The delegates agree in stating that they do not represent the dynamite idea, but are willing to use even that against the actual army of occupation in Ireland. The account adds that the delegates declare that none of the English Royal family have been singled out for destruction.

(*United Ireland*, 08.13.1881)

While reporting on such radical thinking that existed among Irish Americans, in an attempt to rally its readership, *United Ireland* also reported on a statement recently made by the firebrand Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, whose men had begun bombing targets in England. Here Rossa threatens to turn his campaign on Irish landlords;

IRISH LANDLORDS – We have a few words to say to you. It has come to our knowledge that the Irish people, who are gone with a vengeance, are being organised to save the remnant of the race now in Ireland from the further exercise of your vengeance, and we tell you that they are not going to allow you to carry on your work of destruction with impunity. It has been determined upon the scattered Clan-na-Gael to give you warning that henceforward a record will be kept of every landlord who exercises the power of eviction in Ireland, and for every such death sentence executed on a tenant a death sentence will be recorded by the Irish race against the murderer's house, and the Irish race all the world over will give encouragement to the avenging angel.

(*United Ireland*, 08.13.1881)

Nine days after this first issue of *United Ireland* appeared, Gladstone's Land Act was passed and although it failed to meet many of the Land League's expectations, Parnell nonetheless hoped it might somewhat empower tenants in their battles with landlords. In fact, the Land League hoped to soon bring a number of test cases before the act, to gauge how much it had empowered tenants in their demands for fair rent. Throughout Ireland however, the prisons were fast filling up with 'suspects' imprisoned without trial under the Coercion Bill. In Westminster, Parnell denounced the Coercion Bill, and called for the immediate release of many of his Land League and Home Rule colleagues held in Kilmainham jail in Dublin (Kee 1993: 370).

On September 10, 1881, *United Ireland* continued its coverage of Land League and Ladies Land League activities at branches throughout Ireland, as well as in the United States through its 'Transatlantic Ireland' column. The newspaper also reported that the number of Land League branches in the United States was still multiplying, and that subscriptions totaling \$34,300 (approximately £7100) had been collected in the last quarter, to support Ireland's tenants. Ever eager to highlight the massive support that Irish Americans were then providing the Land League, the newspaper regularly carried cartoons depicting their role on its front page. In the following example, an Irish-American ship with its sails inscribed 'Coming Back With A Vengeance', 'Chicago Convention' and '250,000 dollars' is shown attacking a ship marked 'Landlordism'. In the waters below, a barrel of gun-powder marked 'JR' (for Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa) floats ominously;

Figure 6.7 *United Ireland* –Coming Back with a Vengeance (12.10.1881: 1)

Proud that Irish nationalism had become such a global concern, on September 10, 1881, *United Ireland* quoted John Boyle O'Reilly who, in his Boston Newspaper, the *Pilot*, had recently called on Irish Americans to 'boycott' all English goods;

And here, too, the Irish-American millions can give powerful aid – more potent even than their subscriptions to the Land League. Let English manufacturers and goods be boycotted everywhere...

(*United Ireland*, 09.10.1881: 6)

The newspaper also reported that since the last meeting of the Irish National Land League a fortnight previously, \$6252 in donations had been received (approximately £1289), of which \$5044 (approximately £1040) had arrived from Patrick Egan in Paris on behalf of the Land League in America. As well as receiving funds from the United States, £100 had been received from the Irish of Gympie, Queensland, Australia and £50 received from the *Tablet* (New Zealand), on behalf of the Dunedin Irish.

On September 15, 1881, the Irish National Land League was forced to hold its convention in the exercise yard of Kilmainham jail, at which Parnell denounced the Land Bill for its failure to resolve the plight of the impoverished tenant (Key 1993: 378). Parnell also condemned the Coercion Bill and called once more for the abolition of landlordism, while *United Ireland* of that week detailed a further \$6494 (approximately £1339) in donations received by the Land League. Again, the bulk of this amount had been contributed by Patrick Egan on behalf of the American Land League (\$5800 or approximately £1200); the money forwarded to him in Paris from the *Irish World* newspaper which had collected it (*United Ireland*, 09.17.1881). That week the 'Transatlantic Ireland' column provided full details of the Land League's fundraising activities in the United States, including for instance a massive picnic held in Essex, Massachusetts, which attracted 5,000 people. The following week, in its September 24 issue, *United Ireland* reported on a pro-Land League speech which John Devoy had made at a demonstration in Buffalo on August 29;

This movement has enlisted the sympathies of our countrymen on this side of the Atlantic to a greater extent than ever before. They have poured out their money like water and their hearts have stirred in a manner there was no mistaking.

(*United Ireland*, 09.24.1881)

On October 1, 1881, *United Ireland* reported on that week's meeting of the Irish National Land League in Dublin, at which a total of \$4900 (approximately £1021) was acknowledged to have been received accompanying various letters from Land League branches around the world. The following letter for instance, was received from as far away as Australia;

St. Patrick's Hall, Melbourne, Aug. 1881.
Patrick Egan, Esq., Hon. Treasurer,
Irish National Land League,

DEAR SIR- Enclosed please find draft for £500 (five hundred pounds), second installment from Land League in Victoria. This remittance includes £100 from the gold-diggers of Temora, New South Wales, and £80 from Albury, New South Wales. Mr. Walsh continues as popular as ever and is untiring in his efforts in the cause and it is chiefly owing to his exertions that we are enabled to remit so soon again. He attends all meetings held to express sympathy with the Land League, and is received everywhere with favour. Hoping the struggle so well begun, and so nobly carried on, will end in complete success, I am, dear sir, on behalf of the committee, yours very truly,

Thomas Fogerty, President

(*United Ireland*, 10.01.1881: 2)

Much of the business conducted at these weekly meetings was spent reviewing requests for financial relief received from various Land League branches, and allocating funding at the board's discretion. In the previous weekly meeting for instance, as reported in *United Ireland* on October 1, 1881, a total of £5 was allocated to a branch in

the town of Cranagh, which had asked for relief to aid an evicted tenant by the name of Michael Kirk and his family of six. His was just one of twenty-six cases which received a total of £115 at this weekly meeting. This week's edition of *United Ireland* also contained a column entitled 'From Greater Ireland', in which a letter received from a Land League branch in New York City was reprinted. The letter advocated not only the boycotting of English goods, but also the establishment of a national library of Irish history, their belief being that, "such historical facts would serve to fire the spirit of the rising generation, as also historical tales of the bravery of the men of kindred and struggling nationalities who attained their freedom" (*United Ireland*, 10.01.1881: 6).

That autumn, Parnell continued his policy of sometimes denouncing the Land Act at public demonstrations, while sometimes asking his audience to await the Land League's testing of it. His repeated denunciations however, soon attracted the attention of the British State and on October 13, 1881, Parnell and five other Land Leaguers were arrested and imprisoned in Kilmainham jail under the Coercion Bill. In fact, Parnell might have actually been relieved to become incapacitated in such a heroic fashion at this juncture, for the Land League was poorly organized and their morale incredibly low (Kee 1993: 392). A cartoon was immediately printed on the front page of the next edition of *United Ireland* depicting his fate, as well as the continued support of two women, one symbolizing Irish determination and the other, Irish-American sympathy and continued support;

Figure 6.8 *United Ireland* –Parnell Incarcerated (11.12.1881: 1)

In the weeks following Parnell's incarceration, individuals such as J.J. O'Kelly and the editor of *United Ireland*, William O'Brien, were also imprisoned. Within the organization, opinion now shifted in favor of calling a general rent strike, a move which would arouse support in the United States. On October 18, a manifesto was issued from Kilmainham jail therefore, which called on tenants to "pay no rent under any circumstances to their landlords until the government relinquishes the existing system of terrorism and restores the constitutional rights of the people" (Côté 1991: 200).

A Treacherous End to the Affair

With the Land League hit hard by the Coercion Bill, it is doubtful whether the imprisoned signatories of the 'No Rent Manifesto' really believed that it could work. The Ladies Land League however, had not been suppressed yet, and led by Anna Parnell it now took charge of Land League duties; publicizing the 'No Rent Manifesto', providing relief to evicted tenants, organizing resistance to evictions and providing food and legal costs to prisoners. According to the *Irish World's* correspondent in Ireland at the time, the American economist Henry George, the Ladies Land League was much more efficient than the Land League itself had ever been (Kee 1993: 396). Although the women did their best however, the effects of the government's Coercion Bill were being felt throughout the country. *United Ireland* continued to provide full reports of the arrests taking place in the provinces, such as this account of an incident which had taken place in a small town in County Cork;

Miss Hodnett, of Ballydehob, daughter of a man who was arrested under the Coercion Act, was arrested by the police this morning for persistently exhibiting in her shop window the "no rent" manifesto, and refusing when ordered by the police to do so, to remove it. She was removed to Bantry Petty Sessions, and ordered to give bail for her good behaviour, herself in £50 and two securities of £25 each. Her release from custody was the signal of general rejoicing. At Skibbereen it was thought she was arrested under the Coercion Act, and in anticipation of her arrival crowds assembled to give her a reception.

(*United Ireland*, 10.29.1881: 3)

Without William O'Brien, who was imprisoned without trial, the Ladies Land League also took the job of editing, writing and printing *United Ireland* themselves. They continued to use the paper as Parnell had intended; to rally support for the Land League

and to provide some measure of solidarity and support for the 'No Rent Manifesto'. Not all tenants were interested in this manifesto however, and in less than a week after it was issued, a total of 1322 applications for fair rent had been received by the land court in Dublin, by tenants eager to test the workings of the new Land Bill for themselves (Kee 193: 406). For those small farmers in no position to take their case to court however, the Ladies Land League provided transportation for evicted tenants from their homes, and also arranged for pre-fabricated wooden huts to be quickly built to house such families.

By constantly reporting on the activities of the Land League in the United States, *United Ireland* under the editorship now of the Ladies Land League, provided tenants with the proof that they were not alone. For example, on November 5, the newspaper published extracts of a speech made by T.P. O'Connor (M.P.), then touring of the United States to raise money for the Land League;

The field is in Ireland, but the men and the women and the greater part of the money are here. The land League fight is not a fight with an individual. It is not a fight with 5,250,000 people. It is a fight with the whole Irish race –20,000,000 of them; and the simple proposition of the Government is that by putting some twelve leaders in prison they are going to destroy an interest which burns in the hearts of 20,000,000 men and women scattered all over the world! We are fighting not merely for the land, but for the race to which we belong...the people of Ireland, like you, are the sons and daughters of the celtic race; that in their veins runs the same blood, and that *Ireland is the Cradle of our Race*, and that as the cradle of the race is so the race will be now and in the future. Let us, then, stick firmly by this union we have created. Let us keep together the scattered children of the Gael.

(*United Ireland*, 11.05.1881: 2)

Over the course of December, *United Ireland* continued to acknowledge donations received from the United States totaling thousands of pounds each week. The women of

the Ladies Land League however, were being harassed and intimidated by the authorities increasingly during this period. According to a report for instance, by the Attorney General issued during December 1881;

...the operations of the Land League are effectively carried on through the agency of women calling themselves 'Ladies' who unsex themselves as much as the Petroleuses of Paris. They go through the country distributing the No-Rent Manifesto, attend execution of legal processes (evictions) and incite the tenants to pay no rent, promising them that if they stick to the cause they will build them a wooden house on adjacent friendly land and will make a weekly allowance to what are termed 'evicted tenants' as if objects of charity and not parties to a combination against all rents. The Head Body in Dublin appears to superintend the organization and their directions are carried out by the local branches.

(Côté 1991: 207)

Instead of imprisoning the members of the Ladies Land League under the Coercion Act and thus attract attention, instead the British State discovered an ancient legal statute designed to rid the streets of prostitutes, or "persons not of good fame" (Côté 1991).

Consequently, members were imprisoned and charged in this fashion, and the Ladies Land League was eventually declared an illegal organization on December 16, 1881.

On December 17 however, *United Ireland* carried the following cartoon on its front page, depicting the Ladies Land League resisting the Chief Secretary of Ireland's efforts to intimidate it;

Figure 6.9 *United Ireland* –“Ladies Land League” (12.17.1881: 1)

The offices of *United Ireland* were finally raided in December also, but members of the Ladies Land League succeeded in removing undiscovered plates following the raid, which they smuggled out of Ireland to London, where the December 31 issue was printed. This issue provided full details of Ireland now under a state of siege, as well as coverage of the Chicago Convention, T.M. Healy’s tour and the activities of the Land League throughout the United States. The following week, *United Ireland* was once again printed from a secret location in London, to be smuggled back into Ireland; this week the Land League fund acknowledging \$32,400 (approximately £6695) received in

donations. Fearing arrest however, the courageous women soon relocated to Paris from where they published the January 28 issue, explaining to their readership that there might be some delay in these issues reaching Ireland. The week of February 11, the Land League Fund acknowledged \$104,700 (approximately £21,617) received in donations, again mostly from United States sources, but by this period in time the Land League was becoming a lost cause.

By March 1882, Charles Stuart Parnell had become convinced that the 'No Rent Manifesto' had failed, despite the valiant and tireless work performed by the Ladies Land League. In April 1882 therefore, he entered into negotiations with Gladstone in which he pledged to call off all agrarian agitation in return for a settlement of the arrears question facing tenants, and an alliance between his Irish Parliamentary Party and Gladstone's Liberals. The Ladies Land League, then performing all the hard work, were not even consulted. The agreement between Parnell and Gladstone became known as the Kilmainham Treaty, and on May 2, 1882, Parnell and his colleagues walked out of Kilmainham Jail; conservatism had beaten radicalism.

Just four days later however, on the evening of May 6, 1882, while walking through Phoenix Park on their way to a dinner engagement, the new Chief Secretary of Ireland, Lord Cavendish, and his under secretary, Thomas Burke, were brutally murdered. The two men were stabbed to death with surgical knives at dusk, by a group of men who called themselves the Irish National Invincibles. Although a number of landlords and their agents had been killed in the course of the Land War, this was Ireland's first political assassination and it shocked the country. The assassins escaped in a horse-

drawn cab, but were eventually captured a year later, when it would emerge that the shadowy organization to which they belonged did have links with the Land League (Kee 1993). The attack greatly discredited the cause of Irish nationalism, but the Kilmainham Treaty went ahead nonetheless, and Parnell used the Phoenix Park assassinations as a means by which to chart a more moderate course for Irish nationalism.

Parnell had not foreseen how well the Ladies Land League would continue to run the campaign in his absence, and instead of finding the Land League to be in a shambles when he emerged from jail (as he perhaps had hoped), in fact he found it operating better than ever. The women had done their job too well, much to Parnell's consternation. Parnell of course, had only reluctantly agreed to Davitt and Egan's proposition that the women be allowed to continue the fight, and now he decided to cut their funding. As a result, his sister Anna Parnell considered her brother to be a turncoat who had abandoned the Irish tenantry still being evicted in their thousands, as well as a traitor to Irish nationalists who had hoped that the land agitation might continue to evolve into a fight for independence. She believed that the male members of the Land League, such as her brother, had scuttled the cause of the Land League from the safety of their prison cells, and that they had used the woman as a "perpetual petticoat screen behind which they could shelter, not from the government, but from the people" (Anna Parnell in Curtis 1994: 113). She dissolved the Ladies Land League in disgust, left the country, and never spoke to her brother again.

On October 17, 1882, at a conference in Dublin, Parnell established the Irish National League to replace the now defunct Land League. While the new conservative

organization did still campaign for agrarian reform, it now did so from the floor of the House of Commons. Its prime goal however was to support the Irish Parliamentary Party in its renewed pursuit of Home Rule, and in this noble cause it was decided that no women be allowed to join. In the words of Michael Davitt, clearly bitter and speaking in retrospect, the outcome of this conference was the “complete eclipse by a purely parliamentary substitute, of what had been a semi-revolutionary organization. It was, in a sense, the overthrow of a movement and the enthronement of a man...” (Davitt 1970: 377). Davitt chose not to jeopardize the cause of Home Rule by objecting, and instead set aside his hopes for the nationalization of the land in order to support Parnell. Patrick Egan however, refused to be a part of the new venture, and resigned as treasurer of the Land League.

In a letter to Parnell, Egan accounted for funds the Land League had received during the course of his three-year tenure as Land League treasurer in Paris. The funds amounted to \$1,187,400 (approximately £244,820), the bulk of which had been contributed by the *Irish World* on behalf of its readership, and which Egan had consequently forwarded to the Land League in Ireland. According to the Consumer Price Index and adjusted to account for inflation, this sum would amount to the equivalent of almost 21 million dollars today;

Since I undertook the position in October, 1879, there has passed through my hands in all a sum of £244,820, made up as follows:

	£	s.	d.
Relief Fund	59,178	14	3
Land League Fund to February 3, 1881	30,825	0	7
Defence Fund, per Land League	6,563	8	5
Defence Fund, per <i>Freeman's Journal</i>	14,514	0	0
Received since my arrival in Paris, February 3, 1881, 3,280,168 francs, at 25.25	128,907	0	0
Amount coupons on investments, 65.396 francs, at 25.25	2,582	0	0
Profit realized on sale of 91,000 dols. U.S. Four-per- Cent. Bonds	1,250	0	0
TOTAL	£244,820	3	3

Of this sum about £50,000 (I have not the exact figures at the moment as the books are in Dublin) was disbursed in the relief of distress in 1879 and 1880, as per accounts already published; over £15,000 was spent on the state trials of December, 1880, and January, 1881. Nearly £148,000 has been expended through the general League and the Ladies' Land League in support of evicted tenants, providing wooden houses, law costs, sheriffs' sales, defending against ejectments, various local law proceedings, and upon the general expenses of organization, and I have now on hand £31,900 to turn over to whoever shall be duly authorized to take charge of it.

(Egan to Parnell 10.14.1882 in Davitt 1971: 373)

The formation of the Irish National League marked the end of any significant Irish-American mass mobilization to aid Irish nationalism in Ireland. In the United States, the Irish-American middle class, fearing that the American Land League might soon be taken over by radicals such as Ford or consumed by more advanced nationalists such as Devoy, lost interest in the organization. They need not have worried, for both groups also soon abandoned the Land League to pursue their own interests; the radicals concentrating on expanding trade-unions in the United States, the more advanced nationalists re-focussing on preparing another Irish revolution. Without the political and economic support of the Irish-American middle class, nor of the Democratic Party or the Church, the American

Land League as the historian Victor Walsh points out, "died a quick, anti-climactic death" (Walsh 1985: 263).

As a result of the fiasco, Clan na Gael reverted back to more trusted revolutionary techniques, in 1883 deciding to compete with O'Donovan Rossa in the bombing of Great Britain. In early 1881, while the Land War raged, a team of O'Donovan Rossa's men had actually carried out four bomb attacks on British soil, resulting in the death of a child, many injuries and extensive property damage to various targets (Curtis 1994). Clan na Gael considered Rossa to be a crackpot however; his bombing campaign poorly organized, prone to failure and an embarrassment to any self-respecting Irish revolutionary. In 1883, following three further bombings by Rossa's men, Clan na Gael therefore entered the fray themselves, under the guidance of the 'Little Captain', William Mackey Lomasney who had been freed in the 1871 amnesty.

Partly in response to the renewed dynamite campaign, in late 1883 the British government finally tired of the *Irish World* and decided to ban it, authorizing officials to intercept it in the mail and to seize it at all ports. Finally, in what would prove to be the last directly organized action taken by Irish Americans on Irish or British soil, Clan na Gael bombed a number of economic targets in London in 1883. Their most successful explosion in fact rocked the headquarters of the special police unit responsible for the fight against terrorism, and destroyed a wealth of documentation relating to Fenianism in the process. On December 13, 1883, however, the 'Little Captain', his brother and another Fenian were killed instantly when the bomb they were handling exploded prematurely underneath London Bridge. The bombing campaign was widely condemned

not only in Great Britain, but also in Ireland, which was fast changing and no longer in need of assistance from Irish Americans such as the 'Little Captain', who appeared to have been caught in a fold in time.

Conclusion

By pledging Clan na Gael's support to the cause of Home Rule and agrarian reform, its architect, John Devoy, had hoped that the situation in Ireland might be exploited to rally the Irish to the cause of national independence. To this end, even while publicly endorsing non-violent action such as the boycott, Michael Davitt and J.J. O'Kelly continued to receive arms and ammunition from Clan na Gael to distribute. Although Charles Stuart Parnell sought the support of radicals, he remained nonetheless committed to his more moderate brand of Irish nationalism. Michael Davitt however, while visiting family in Pennsylvania and lecturing before large working-class audiences, soon realized that all Irish workers shared common concerns, whether they toiled in the fields of Ireland or in the steel mills of the United States. Finding a powerful ally in Patrick Ford, who shared his concerns, Davitt realized that agrarian radicalism in Ireland could be exploited to achieve not only nationalist, but also more social goals.

In the same manner as Irish nationalism had introduced thousands of working-class Irish Americans to labor and social reform issues, in turn the Land League introduced the Irish in Ireland to those same beliefs. Unfortunately for Davitt, the growing middle class in Ireland would prove to be as wary of them as the Irish-American middle class had been in the United States. Following the imprisonment of Davitt and Parnell however, Anna

Parnell did attempt to implement some social programs, and in fact the Ladies Land League operated as a *de facto* government in Ireland; providing food, clothing, shelter and legal expenses to thousands of evicted western tenants. In the process, Anna Parnell also managed to briefly overturn the highly masculinized politics of Irish nationalism, before suffering the wrath of her brother who labeled her a radical.

The Land War had however, briefly united the three streams of Irish nationalism; revolutionary republicanism, constitutional nationalism and social/agrarian reform, but in the end it was won only by middle-class men under the leadership of Parnell. Without the New Departure however, in which Devoy had defied revolutionary dogma in an attempt to mobilize a broader cross section of Irish nationalist support, none of it would have been possible. It therefore should be considered yet another important diasporic intervention in the development of Irish nationalism, the impact of which is often under-acknowledged by scholars who take for granted a narrative territorially contained in the Irish nation state.

In utilizing the telegraph to relay such messages and to channel funds to Ireland, Irish nationalists also quite clearly took advantage of improved global communication technologies to forge alliances across vast spatial distances. This is also evident in the use of steamships by transnational political actors, who were able to attend meetings and rallies on both sides of the Atlantic. It is also evident in the use of the printing press to produce leaflets advertising rallies, and of course to publish newspapers. During this period, the Irish nationalist press not only played a crucial financial role in collecting thousands of dollars to be channeled to Ireland, but also an important ideological role in

the construction of a transatlantic Ireland. This was a period therefore, when Irish nationalists attempted to transcend scale in order to situate the 'Irish question' as part of a global colonial question; one which also involved the plight of subjugated native peoples in China, South Africa and North America. Meanwhile, in such newspapers as *United Ireland*, its pages detailed Land League activities around the world in such columns as 'Transatlantic Ireland' and 'Notes from a Greater Ireland', in an attempt to utilize scale as a political weapon with which to energize the Irish people. With such global support, how could Irish nationalism possibly fail?

Postscript

By the early 1880s, Parnell's long-term relationship with the wife of one of his Home Rule colleagues had emerged into the public realm, and the sensational details destroyed his reputation and seriously damaged the cause of Home Rule before his untimely death in 1891. Following the Land War, Irish-American support of Irish nationalist endeavors in Ireland remained an important factor, but it never reached the crescendo of public support that had emerged in the early 1880s. In nationalist histories of Ireland however, the 1890s is often regarded as the beginning of a much more important period of development, to the detriment of earlier decades—quite possibly because nationalism became much more of a home grown affair in these later years.

Nationalism did gain momentum in Ireland during this turn-of-the-century period however, which witnessed the emergence of cultural nationalism under the poetic leadership of W.B. Yeats, and a nationalist revival of the Irish national language under

the tutelage of Douglas Hyde. Constitutional nationalism had taken a downturn with Parnell's fall from grace and his subsequent death, but it too was re-ignited by John Redmond in the late 1890s with the formation of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Like his predecessor Parnell, Redmond again sought the support of the Irish-American middle class, forming the United Irish League of America in 1901 which, though successful, never attracted the volume of support which the Land League had previously.

Fenianism, Clan na Gael and the Land League had all rallied different groups of Irish Americans to the cause of Irish nationalism, but as the century drew to a close, Irish Americans increasingly turned their attention to more immediate concerns closer to home. As a result of a huge meeting to endorse Parnell's 'No Rent Manifesto' in January 1882 for example, which had attracted over twelve thousand union representatives to the Cooper Union building in New York City, the city's Central Labor Union was formed. After their hopes for social reform in Ireland were stymied by Parnell, the Irish-American working class in New York City instead channeled their energies into attaining labor reform in the United States. In 1886, Davitt's friend and ally, Henry George, ran for Mayor of New York City on a United Labor Party ticket, backed by none other than Patrick Ford. In round two with the middle class, this time represented not by Parnell but by Tammany Hall and the Catholic hierarchy, the Irish-American working class were once again defeated. Although the Democratic candidate endorsed by Tammany Hall prevailed, Henry George nevertheless did beat a young Republican by the name of Theodore Roosevelt into third place.

By the turn of the century, although Irish Americans such as Terrence Powderly could be found leading working-class movements, the Irish were increasingly employed in the more skilled trades; their old menial labor jobs now being performed by the ever increasing numbers of new immigrants arriving from southern and eastern Europe. John Devoy meanwhile kept Clan na Gael alive; still devoted to revolutionary republicanism and to the physical force tradition of nationalism it was however, only a shadow of its former self. When Ireland's long awaited opportunity finally arose however, in 1916, John Devoy (after fifty years of preparation) was ready.

With British troops suffering tremendous losses in the trenches of World War One, and Ireland lying relatively undefended, Clan na Gael acted as the middleman between the IRB and the German government, to successfully deliver arms and ammunition into the hands of Irish nationalists. Though the Easter Rising of 1916 was, in essence, another suicide mission in the tradition of the 1867 Rising, the small body of revolutionaries hoped that their martyrdom might provide the catalyst for a much broader revolution. Their proclamation of independence declared that Ireland was "supported by her exiled children in America", and among the key men and women who took part, many had either lived in or had visited the United States. In fact, the American passports belonging to a number of these revolutionaries were once again the only thing which prevented them from being executed, unlike a number of their unfortunate comrades. One such individual who escaped the firing squads was none other than Eamon de Valera. Born in New York City and the son of Irish and Spanish immigrants, he would later become the first leader of an independent Irish state.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Today we inhabit a globalizing world marked by the increasing interconnectedness of peoples and places, an era of deterritorialization defined by intricate flows of capital, goods and people. The pace of change is driven by new communication technologies which threaten to unravel the very nation states we inhabit, yet amidst such rapid change, nationalism is experiencing a resurgence.

This scenario of global interdependence however, as I have illustrated, is nothing new. In the mid to late nineteenth century, Irish nationalism also developed amidst a similar increase in the pulse of globalization. In fact, Irish nationalism is proof that in capable hands, it is possible to harness new communication technologies such as the telegraph and the steamship, to forge national identities out of this global web of interrelations. As Eric Hobsbawm has pointed out, nationalism is a product of the modern era, and of increased social dislocation caused by such processes as industrialization and urbanization. Such social dislocation need not only occur however, as is commonly assumed, within nation states –to trigger an increase in the nation-building process therein. Instead, as I have shown with the example of Irish nationalism, the Irish people were globally displaced before an Irish nation state ever existed and yet,

as a result, Irish nationalism consequently experienced a revival both inside and outside of what would later become the territory of the Irish nation state. It represents a failing therefore, to continue to theorize the development of nationalisms as being solely, and unproblematically contained within their respective nation states. Such an approach fails to problematize the underlying nationalist territorial agenda which is formulated out of, but also in relation to, other places and other identities.

Following a period of massive upheaval caused by the Great Famine, Irish nationalism was transformed by the fact that it now developed transatlantically, in a single complex Irish world which spanned the Atlantic ocean. During this period, Irish nationalism proved to be a highly mobile construct; able to be unpacked, erected and reoriented overseas as a result of upheaval. Such history is proof that Irish nationalism was not solely rooted in Ireland, despite what self-conscious nationalists have commonly informed us, but instead constantly evolved in the circulations, flows and relationships between the globally dispersed Irish nation. The Irish nation was a process therefore, of constantly imagining community –not only in time, but also in space –and of articulating the local from a global perspective and vice versa, wherever in the world the Irish diaspora could be found.

To understand how Irish nationalism developed in such a manner, I focussed on an underacknowledged period which I broke up into three chapters, each representing a moment and revolutionary step in the unfolding transatlantic drama that was Irish nationalism in the mid to late nineteenth century. The first chapter dealt with the reactivation of nationalism in the guise of Fenianism in the United States, born of the

Great Famine and of the massive upheaval of the Irish to the New World, and with the attempt to transfer this stream of nationalism intact back to Ireland. Unfortunately it splintered and broke apart in transit; Fenian regiments deciding that they would rather attack Canada than risk an Irish revolution, but not before a small blow was inflicted on the colonizer in the form of the 1867 Rising. The second chapter focussed on how Irish nationalism benefited greatly from Fenian defeat, and the manner in which Clan na Gael harnessed global communications to enlarge Irish nationalism's theatre of operations. In addition, this second chapter also analyzed the increasing importance of the Irish nationalist press, not only in fundraising but also in the imagining of a global Irish nationalist community. The third chapter finally analyzed what I argued was the culmination of this transatlantic development of Irish nationalism, in which a transatlantic nation rallied in support of the Land War. Crucial here was the unification of a number of different streams of Irish nationalism, a unification made possible by a creative intervention made by the Irish diaspora, in the form of the New Departure Telegram. Again during this period, I also focussed on the manner in which Irish nationalists harnessed advancements made in global communication technologies, to build transatlantic circuits of revolutionary capital which were to prove essential to the nationalist cause.

Dimensions of Irish Nationalism

Although it has been my intention to illustrate that there is no one narrative of Irish nationalism as it developed transatlantically, but instead many different streams (which

were not necessarily all flowing in the same direction at any one moment), I focussed on three principal dimensions; the role played by transnational political actors, the formation of circuits of revolutionary capital, and the imagining of a transatlantic Irish nation. With regard the role played by political actors it is important to realize that among those most actively involved, the fact that many of these individuals had traveled outside of Ireland, is not usually considered to be of much relevance in nationalist histories. As I have argued previously, I believe that this is a result of the territorial imperative implicit in most histories of the development of Irish nationalism, and in theories of nationalism more generally, which refuse to consider extra-territorial influences for fear of undermining the supposedly natural bond between a nation and its territory. This is a failing, because, as I have shown, their varied experience of exile and international consciousness proved to be of immense worth in the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism.

In the post-Famine period the majority of the transnational political actors involved with Irish nationalism were soldiers, but over time they could be found employed in the newspaper business, in Irish nationalist societies or in the political realm. It is possible therefore, to chart the changing character of the transnational political actor involved in Irish nationalism. Chapter three focussed on the twenty year time span from the age of the Great Famine itself and the Young Ireland Rising of 1848, through to the Fenian Rising of 1867, during which a physical force tradition dominated. Driven by a romantic notion of rebellion, Fenianism attracted those who had gained their military experience in

foreign armies; fighting for the Mexicans, the Chileans, the French, the Italians or perhaps even for the British in North Africa or India.

Overwhelmingly however, as illustrated in chapter three, Fenianism benefited most from the military training received by Irish-American officers who had fought in the American Civil War. Although heavily outnumbered, such individuals introduced a style of guerilla warfare to Ireland during 1867. Betrayed by fellow Irish Americans however, in jail some of these officers managed to exploit their interstitial status as Americans or naturalized Americans to gain early release, thus exploiting the cracks they inhabited between the American and British states for the benefit of Irish nationalism.

Also in chapter three, I illuminated the manner in which the IRB were funded by the Fenian Brotherhood. This would take place for example, through a lecture tour of Fenian Brotherhood circles in the United States such as those conducted by James Stephens, which would also serve as a fundraiser. Initially, such funds would be smuggled into Ireland directly via an envoy such as Joseph Denieffe, who would disembark a transatlantic steamer in Ireland. As British security increased at Irish ports during the 1860s however, the Fenian Brotherhood placed a treasurer, John Mitchell, in Paris through whom funds could be channeled to Ireland with less risk of interception. This would be achieved by using female couriers such as Miss O'Leary and Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa. Additionally in chapter three, I also provided evidence of the Fenian Brotherhood's funding of the *Irish People*. This newspaper I argued played a crucial role in the imagining of a transatlantic Irish national community, through its coverage of Irish involvement in the American Civil War for example, or of the fundraising activities of

the Irish nationalists overseas. Considering the huge sums of money raised by the Fenian Brotherhood which I provided evidence of, the 1867 Rising was nonetheless a poorly funded affair, fought by Irish-American officers with their own revolvers whose first task was to attempt to seize arsenals so as to arm their troops.

During the 1870s, the physical force tradition of Irish nationalism was maintained by Clan na Gael which, under the leadership of John Devoy, reestablished contacts with the IRB to smuggle arms, ammunition and money into Ireland. The fact that Irish nationalism had now become a global, rather than just a transatlantic operation however, is best illustrated by the audacious *Catalpa* rescue of 1876. Like the MacManus funeral, this was also an Irish-American publicity stunt *par excellence*, and the fact that Clan na Gael sent men ahead to Australia via railroad and steamship to prepare the groundwork for the escape, and that Fenians from Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand were also involved, really illustrates the global scale at which Irish nationalism could then operate. In addition, in posing as American millionaires and in the raising of the Stars and Stripes to avoid capture, we once again witness transnational political actors exploiting their interstitial status in order to avoid capture in their pursuit of Irish independence.

The dramatic rescue was publicized in the *Irish World* as a victory over the British empire, and such a victory was worth its weight in gold –especially in symbolic terms. In such newspapers, Irish nationalists attempted to deterritorialize and globalize Irish nationalism so as to attain the upper hand against the colonizer. This was evident not only in their coverage of the *Catalpa* rescue, but also in the weekly reports from the newspaper's Irish nationalist affairs correspondent in London, 'Transatlantic', and in the

publication of letters which had accompanied Skirmishing Fund donations, all of which contributed to the imagining of a global Irish nation.

As chapter six showed, Clan na Gael's New Departure survived only four years, before it collapsed under the weight of its own lofty expectations, but not before it had unified a number of different streams of Irish nationalism through its pledging of support to the cause of Home Rule and agrarian reform. In what might perhaps be the best evidence of the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism however, Devoy actually reformulated the New Departure while aboard a steamship travelling from New York City to Paris. In addition, in chapter six I also provided evidence of the funding that Davitt received from the National Fund to found the Land League, while also communicating with O'Kelly to arm the west of Ireland with Clan na Gael purchased weaponry.

During this period, the transatlantic flow of revolutionary capital was also reestablished through Paris, where Patrick Egan acted as middleman and treasurer. I detailed how massive amounts of capital were donated to the *Irish World* for example, before being telegraphed to Paris and smuggled into Ireland, to be distributed by the Land League to tenants in need of assistance. In this regard, I argued that the role played by the Irish nationalist press was crucial to the transatlantic development of Irish nationalism. In addition, I examined how the American-funded Land League newspaper, *United Ireland*, worked to imagine an Irish community existing at a transatlantic scale. In weekly columns such as 'Transatlantic Ireland' and 'From Greater Ireland', the

newspaper published details of how the Land War was being supported by the Irish community around the world, so as to further the goals of Irish independence in Ireland.

Conclusion

Marginality exists in both space and time, but it is here that the supposedly natural territorial packaging of national identity is called into question. New York City in the second half of the nineteenth century was one such marginal space-time for the Irish, who were forced to confront their nationality and to renegotiate it in new contexts.

Individuals such as Devoy occupied such margins and interstices, but they managed to mobilize the consciousness that this dislocated state endowed them with, to intervene creatively in the development of Irish nationalism. Although this state of existence could, I believe, be more widely employed to analyze Irish-American society in general during this period, my own analysis instead remained focussed solely upon illuminating the impact that a number of highly mobile transnational political actors had on Irish nationalism. Their experiences of the world turned some into pragmatists, but transformed a far greater number into fanatics.

It is a result of nationalism's territorial imperative however, that Irish nationalism in the United States during this period, has been analyzed overwhelmingly in terms of the supposed assimilation of Irish Americans into American society. Such an approach, as I have illustrated, obscures the complex relationship which existed between Irish nationalists in the United States and those in Ireland. For example, John Devoy remained Irish in the United States, and it would be wrong to assume or take for granted his

nationalism as being a part of a greater narrative of assimilation in the New World. As transnational political actors, such individuals were far more mobile and worldly than the average Irish American, who might never have left the American town in which they settled, following their calamitous arrival from Ireland.

As this dissertation has shown therefore, over the course of the mid to late nineteenth century, there existed many different narratives of Irish nationalism, some of which had been forged overseas, some in Ireland and others out of the relationships between Ireland and its diasporic population. It is essential therefore, that theories of nationalism begin to problematize the spatial framing in which the subject matter is dealt with. Retroactively applying a state-centric spatial logic to trace the development of any nationalism, fails to acknowledge the complexity of this truly modern artifact. In particular, it fails to capture the role that diasporic populations often play in the forging of nationalism, and fails to question whether nationalism's spatial logic itself—the desire for rootedness and stability—might actually reveal the influence of diasporic longing in its fashioning.

In this dissertation, I have shown how Irish nationalism was the product of deterritorialization and how it emerged out of a range of historical geographies now considered contradictory to a taken for granted, state-sanctioned, national narrative. In the same manner therefore, as nationalism's temporal logic has been called into question, the compartmentalized logic of national space also requires further analysis. In the second half of the nineteenth century, before an Irish nation state ever existed, an Irish nation was envisioned spatially at a transatlantic scale, in the form of a 'Greater Ireland'. Out of this multiplicity there developed transnationally, an Irish nationalism which was to

eventually attain the independent Irish nation-state so longed for by the Irish people, around the globe. Irish nationalism was a product of global interconnections, and it is essential today that the Irish people embrace this multiplicity, so as to forge a more tolerant and progressive Ireland for future generations.

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