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For Class, Nation, Race or God?

A transatlantic history of the Irish working-class movement, 1889-1917

A dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Leah Hunnewell

Trinity College Dublin
Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

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Summary

This thesis is a cultural study of the Irish working-class movement from 1889 to 1917. The aim of this thesis is to explore how transatlantic networks shaped the way the Irish working-class movement crafted its vision of Irish working-class identity. The research takes a transatlantic approach as a means of challenging the exclusivity of the colonial framework that dominates Irish working-class history. These colonial influences are not rejected outright, as significant elements of British imperial history and culture play a crucial role in shaping this study; rather, the purpose is to question other potential influences shaping an Irish imperial outlook, such as those developing from the Atlantic World.

The research takes a thematic approach to working-class identity, focusing on three key strands: national, religious, and racial identity. These themes have been chosen due to their prominence in Irish working-class discourse, their connection to Irish historiography's colonial debate, and their significance to the wider historiography of working-class culture and identity. Each topic is addressed separately as a component of Irish working-class identity. Since, however, identity is by its very nature porous, the thesis will make a point to signal moments of inter-connectedness between each theme in order to demonstrate how Irish working-class leaders used them to construct their vision of a working-class identity. This approach also allows for an exploration of how working-class identity was shaped and re-shaped over the course of the years 1889 to 1917. At varying moments, one aspect may have played a more prominent role than others. This consistent process of renegotiation requires each theme to be analysed separately, but within a greater whole.

Due to the complexity of the Atlantic networks maintained from 1889 to 1917, the opening chapter sets the stage on which the Irish socialist movement takes place. It navigates the transatlantic space in which key socialist networks operated as a means of questioning how Irish working-class leaders developed policies, strategies, and propaganda to advance the working-class movement. Since the socialist movement took many of its ideas from the Atlantic and then applied them to the Irish situation, it is here that some of the differences between labour and socialist schools are explored. The chapter's overall aim is to evaluate how Atlantic influences shaped Irish leaders' interactions with the Irish working classes.
From here, the next chapter considers how working-class leaders used the idea of the nation to construct a working-class identity. The chapter examines both political and cultural nationalist influences on the working-class movement in separate sub-sections. Each gives space to both national and Atlantic developments shaping Irish leaders’ projection of the nation. It incorporates studies of socialism and modernism to raise questions concerning how wider cultural developments impacted how Irish working-class leaders engaged with the idea of the nation and popular nationalism. The chapter concludes by considering the impact of the First World War on this discourse.

The third chapter explores the role religion played in the working-class movement. This chapter opens by questioning how religious leaders engaged with the working-class movement and how working-class leaders engaged with formal religions. It then considers how perceptions of working-class faith impacted the spirituality of the working-class movement. From here, the chapter explores how the faith of Irish working-class leaders shaped their engagement with the working-class movement. Finally, the chapter considers how Irish workers used a spiritual language to communicate grievances and advance their cause.

The last chapter focuses on race and the construction of a racial identity within the working-class movement. The chapter opens by approaching the question of race and othering within the Irish labour movement. It does this by identifying immigrant populations in Ireland, labour conflicts igniting from fears of foreigners, and the limitations of Irish working class inclusivity. From here, the chapter questions how imperial frameworks shaped Irish views of race and attempts to address whether these frameworks had British or wider Atlantic roots. The next section challenges the narrative of Irish whiteness by considering how anti-Semitism impacted the Irish working-class movement. Finally, the chapter questions how Atlantic racial prejudices impacted Irish views of other races, such as Asian workforces.

Overall, the purpose of this thesis is to interrogate how the Atlantic World shaped working-class developments in Ireland. It questions how this relationship impacted the course Irish working-class leaders took and how this course in turn affected the movement’s relationship to the Irish working classes. It will assess whether
this relationship was beneficial or disadvantageous to the Irish working-class movement.
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Abbreviations

AFL  American Federation of Labor
BUTC  Belfast United Trades Council
BSP  British Socialist Party
CRT  Critical Race Theory
DCTU  Dublin Council of Trade Unions
ICA  Irish Citizen Army
ILP  Independent Labour Party (of Great Britain)
IOO  Independent Orange Order
IPP  Irish Parliamentary Party
ISF  Irish Socialist Federation
ISRP  Irish Socialist Republican Party
ITGWU  Irish Transport and General Workers' Union
ITMPTU  International Tailors, Machinists, and Pressers Trade Union
ITUC  Irish Trades Union Congress
IWW  Industrial Workers of the World
IWWU  Irish Women Workers Union
LEA  Labour Electoral Association
LRC  Labour Representational Committee
NUDL  National Union of Dock Labourers
SDF  Social Democratic Federation
SLP  Socialist Labor Party of America
SLPGB  Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain
SPA  Socialist Party of America
SPGB  Socialist Party of Great Britain
SPI  Socialist Party of Ireland
SSS  Socialist Sunday School
TOSI  Textile and Operatives Society
TUC  Trades Union Congress of Great Britain
UDC  Union of Democratic Control
Introduction

Writing in the *Labour Leader*, an organ for the Independent Labour Party, Scottish socialist William Crawford Anderson boasted that the Belfast Socialist Society was making significant headway in establishing a working-class movement in Ireland. He reported that crowds of over 2,000 Irish workers were attending meetings in Dublin and Belfast, assuring British Labour supporters that Ireland would soon join them in the international working-class movement. Amidst his optimistic assertions, however, Anderson signalled a point of caution, admitting that 'in Dublin a few men are endeavouring, without much success, to make certain ideas, mostly imported from America, take root on Irish soil'.¹ These men in Dublin were, according to Anderson, the members of the Socialist Party of Ireland, many of whom would go on to become leaders in Ireland's future Labour Party.² They remained as critical of Anderson and his supporters as he did of them, claiming the Belfast movement was simply 'imported from England' and therefore ill-equipped to reach the Irish working classes.³

These remarks, while deeply connected to questions of nationalism, internationalism, and labour militancy, also offer insight into another facet of the Irish working-class movement – its Atlantic roots. The aim of this thesis is to explore how the Atlantic World shaped the Irish working-class movement from 1889 to 1917. The purpose is to challenge the exclusivity of the colonial framework that dominates Irish working-class history. These colonial influences are not rejected outright, as significant elements of British imperial history and culture play a crucial role in shaping this study.⁴ Rather, the purpose is to explore Atlantic attitudes beyond exclusively British ones. The

¹ *Labour Leader*, 28 September 1906.
² Labour is capitalised when used to describe the Labour Party (Ireland or the UK) or Labour Party politicians. In all other instances it is lower-case and it refers broadly to the labour movement or individuals involved in the labour movement. Similarly, the term "Unionist" in its capital form refers exclusively to members of Unionist organisations, those that support the Union between Ireland and the United Kingdom. In cases where 'unionist' is featured in its lower-case form, it is referring to trade unionists in general. For balance, 'Nationalists' has been treated in the same manner, taking its capital form to refer to individuals in general who support Irish nationalist politics.
³ *Harp*, September 1909.
⁴ Key texts include Catherine Hall (ed.), *Cultures of empire: a reader: colonisers in Britain and the Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (Manchester, 2000); Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (eds), *At home with the Empire: metropolitan culture and the imperial world* (Cambridge, 2006); or John M. Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and popular culture* (Manchester, 1986); and John M. Mackenzie, *Propaganda and empire: the manipulation of British opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester, 1984).
model draws from Atlantic studies that have uncovered a wider Atlantic imperial framework predicated on a shared belief in the superiority of white, masculine and Christian culture. Working-class internationalism offers a window to explore the extent to which these values permeated even some of the most radical circles and, as a result, shaped popular discourses of Irish working-class identity.

Before embarking on this endeavor it is important to establish key parameters and define terms. Throughout this work, the phrase ‘working-class movement’ is used. This is meant to refer broadly to socialist and labour bodies working under the banner of working-class internationalism. The various schools of thought within this broad umbrella will feature throughout the text. The purpose of this study is, however, to place Ireland’s working-class movement within a broader Atlantic paradigm. The project therefore necessitates that certain links be drawn between socialist and labour bodies.

Studying working-class internationalism beyond Ireland’s national borders is a well-established approach within Irish historical circles. Several past works have exposed British, European, and, in later years, crucial Soviet-inspired socialist debates influencing Irish dialogues of working-class internationalism. These influences, where appropriate, are signaled to give the reader a wider understanding of the many international and colonial debates taking place in Ireland. This thesis, however, refrains from fully pursuing this global focus. Instead, the Atlantic World model is used for two key reasons. The first is to offer an alternative argument to studies of Irish involvement at the Second International that use the international framework to counter nationalist narratives. Past studies of Irish working-class radicalism have used European debates, mainly drawn from the Socialist International, to argue that Ireland’s working-class movement was truly internationalist. This position, however, rests on an uncritical assumption that the Second International itself was truly internationalist, a claim that historians have challenged on the grounds of its European or even Atlantic-centric make-up and imperial world view. The dominance of the Atlantic within this international framework was of such significance that it has even been maintained by historians exploring internationalism in the post-war years. The second reason the Atlantic model is employed for more mechanical reasons. While Irish socialists looked to

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5 This debate is further elaborated upon in sub-section of this introduction.
Russia, Germany, and France during this period, they often refrained from traveling or living there. The movement of Ireland’s key socialist leaders remained largely contained within an Atlantic World. As such, their first-hand experiences and intimate contact with socialism abroad were largely drawn from an Atlantic World.

This study is not intended to weigh Atlantic influences against colonial ones. It does not argue that American influences were more or less important than British ones. Rather this thesis argues that by exploring Irish working-class radicalism through an Atlantic prism, a wider dialogue around the ‘colonial mentalities’ or ‘internationalist vision’ driving the working-class movement can be more accurately assessed. The argument is that these influences are not purely British. This framework therefore seeks only to off-set the exclusively British-led dialogue by analyzing these debates on an Atlantic scale, without discounting the important role Britain played in shaping this process.

The timeline for this research loosely follows that of the Second International, which opened in 1889 and began crumbling in 1914 with the outbreak of the First World War. It represented the formal body unifying international socialism. While not all Irish working-class leaders supported the Second International, or even socialism in general, this organisation provides a continual reference point for many of the changes occurring

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7 For evidence of this fact, please see Chapter 1, section 2.
around international working-class mobilisation and politicisation. Many of the distinctions in Irish labour and socialist schools did not emerge until the period of the Second International. Prior to this, it was largely British working-class political parties, socialist societies, and trade unions that dominated Irish working-class politics. As such, the Second International serves as an accessible starting point to integrate Ireland into an Atlantic narrative.

Breaking slightly from the standard chronology of the Second International, however, this thesis extends its timeline to 1917. The purpose of this extension is to address some the critical transformations taking place in Ireland during these years and, most importantly, to capture socialist participation in the 1916 Easter Rising. This period was one of radical Irish cultural formation and transformation. Leaders across the political spectrum sought to build a movement that filled both the political and cultural needs of a transforming Irish society. As such, questions of identity and culture became increasingly important to political discourse, making a cultural study of the working-class movement during the early part of the Irish revolutionary experience an imperative. In consequence of this extended chronology, the thesis will cover the outbreak of the First World War and highlight important developments related to the transforming wartime culture.

Since the research is a cultural study of the working-class movement as a whole, attention is given to both the labour and socialist movements. The intention is not to...
conflate the ideologies or beliefs of individuals connected to either group; rather, this thesis aims to explore the public image created around working-class identity, which both of these groups played an important part in shaping. While distinctions between the ideologies of leaders and wider groups are referenced, these remain secondary in an effort to highlight the shared image of working-class identity created by the working-class movement.

In order to expose not only the role Irish working-class leaders played in this process, but also their position in the wider Atlantic World, the research draws upon material from libraries and archives in Ireland, England, Scotland and the United States. These Atlantic nations have been selected due to their dominance in Irish working-class relations. Both socialist party papers and the collections of English, Scottish, and American socialist and labour groups intimately connected to the Irish working-class movement are incorporated into this research. These papers supplement material from the Irish socialist press and the personal collections of Irish working-class leaders such as William O'Brien, Thomas Foran, Thomas Johnson, Cathal O'Shannon, and Thomas Farren. In addition to these political records, the thesis makes use of the papers of labour and trade union organisations contained in the records of the Irish Trade Union Congress, the British Trade Union Congress, the Dublin Council of Trade Unions, and the Belfast United Trades Council. These sources, which reveal the cultural and political history of the Irish labour movement, are complemented by a quantitative social historical analysis. This information is drawn from statistical findings compiled from British Parliamentary Papers, American Department of Labor Bulletins, and national censuses, and captures the socio-economic transformations that shaped the Irish labour movement. This approach is employed to facilitate a balanced interpretation of the Irish labour movement in a transnational context.

Irish exceptionalism and transnationalism

Irish history in general and Irish working-class history in particular have been dominated by colonial paradigms and an overriding theory of Irish exceptionalism. Much of this perspective has generated from studies focusing on Ireland's revolutionary experience.
This point is not made as an indictment of Irish revolutionary historiography, as these debates have resulted in a deeper interrogation of Ireland's place in the Atlantic
World. The continuation of an unchallenged acceptance of this perspective, however, is problematic, as it presents a significant barrier to connecting Irish history to trends in the Atlantic World and beyond.

It is important to note that Ireland has not been alone in this dilemma; a theory of exceptionalism has also plagued American historiography, sparking fierce criticism in a number of fields, particularly American working-class history, where the lack of a political labour movement has been seen as a national anomaly. Addressing this debate, American historian, Michael Zuckerman, has argued that 'between any two systems and within any set of systems, it is possible to find both differences and similarities. We fetishize the one and forget the other one at our peril.' His critique has been supported by a number of historians who began calling for the dismantling of American exceptionalism. At first, newer approaches encouraged international comparisons in order to assess the American experience against global trends in the hope of finding similarities, or at least a better understanding of differences. A number of academics soon claimed this approach was not sufficient, however, and called for the implementation of transnational studies. Transnationalism became a vehicle to expose the country's interwoven history, drawing out culture beyond the boundaries of the nation, and illuminating global dynamics shaping the American experience.

15 Alvin Jackson reviews exceptionalism and colonial theory in the opening of the Oxford Handbook to Modern Irish History. In the introduction, he refutes the extent to which critics claim Irish historiography has been under theorised as a result of this debate. Alvin Jackson, The Oxford handbook of modern Irish history (Oxford, 2014), pp 11, 15-16.
18 For a review of these developments and works please see Jay Sexton, 'The global view of the United States' in The Historical Review, 48, 1 (March, 2005), pp 261-76.
These developments mirrored the direction British history was also taking. In 1999, as part of an American History Forum, British historian David Armitage declared the time had now come for a history of a 'Greater Britain', one that was shaped by both Atlantic and global influences. At the time of his plea, Armitage indicated some potential barriers to this new direction. Amongst them were historians of the left, who were reluctant to embrace the transnational turn because they were 'suspicious of the paternalist claims made on behalf of the British Empire, yet embarrassed by the part played by the empire in shaping conservative patriotism.' His remarks were in response to past quarrels between historians of the British left who could not decide to what degree they were nationalist or even exceptionalist in their views. In spite of Armitage's note of caution, however, the tide does appear to be turning. Whether as a reaction to the declining student interest in working-class history or as a result of a desire to keep labour history connected to major historiographical trends, historians of the left have recently been more open to change. Marcel van der Linden, James Mcllroy, Ralph Darlington, and Neville Kirk have each taken the lead in advocating for historians of the working classes to embrace transnational and global approaches to working-class history.

In spite of its continuing advance across disciplines and national lines, the transnational turn has not been without its share of critics. Patricia Clavin, an active proponent of transnationalism, explained that the transnational paradigm 'exposes the hidden continuities and connections in time and space, as well as the gaps between them'. While she welcomes these complexities as part of the nuances of historical

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20 David Armitage, 'Greater Britain: a useful category of historical analysis' in American Historical Review, 104 (April, 1999), pp 427-45.
21 Ibid, 429.
22 For an overview of these debates please see David Renton, 'Studying their own nation without insularity? The British Marxist historian reconsidered' in Science and Society, 9, 4 (October 2005), pp 559-79.
23 These concerns were raised in John Mcllroy, 'Waving or drowning? British labour history in troubled waters' in Labor History, 53 (February, 2012), pp 491-511.
24 Marcel van der Linden, Transnational labour history: explorations (Surrey, 2003); John Mcllroy and Richard Croucher, 'The turn to transnational labor history and the study of global trade unionism' in Labor History, 54, 5 (2013), pp 491-511; Ralph Darlington, 'Syndicalism and strikes, leadership and influence: Britain, Ireland, France, Italy, Spain, and the United States' in International Labor and Working-Class History, 83 (2013), pp 37-53, or Neville Kirk, Comrades and cousins: globalization workers and labour movements in Britain, the USA and Australia from the 1880s to 1914 (London, 2003).
reflection, others have not shared her enthusiasm. One major point of contention has been the blurred boundaries between comparative, international, and transnational perspectives.\(^26\) Yet, in order for transnational studies to be effective, these boundaries cannot be seen as static. As Angela McCarthy and Ian Tyrell have both argued, transnational history needs to be comparative to expose these points of connection, while still maintaining the integrity of the national narrative.\(^27\) As a result, this thesis uses both comparative methodology and an internationalist framework, while still relying significantly on Atlantic networks and the exchange of ideas, materials and people across national borders, to capture the transnational influences shaping the Irish working-class movement.\(^28\) Contrary to the claims of transnationalism’s critics, this thesis contends that transnationalism has created a broader understanding of culture and identity. The shift towards global and transnational histories is still in its infancy in Irish historiography. Part of the reason why exceptionalism has made itself a staple in Irish historiography stems from the approach Irish historians initially took in trying to dismantle it. Unlike American and British historians who tackled exceptionalism by looking outward, Irish historians instead used micro-studies, looking deeper into the Irish nation. Identifying the revolutionary period as the major point in which historians anchored Ireland’s case for exceptionalism, anti-exceptionalists began by questioning the revolutionary nature of Ireland’s revolution. David Fitzpatrick, for instance, conducted a case study of Clare to demonstrate how Ireland’s revolutionary experience was neither radical nor exceptional.\(^29\) Rather than spark a dialogue around Ireland’s connection to the wider world, however, Fitzpatrick’s work was instead met with a series of local histories determined to confirm or disprove his theories on the Irish revolution.\(^30\)

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\(^{28}\) Niall Whelehan addresses this point in his essay by drawing distinctions between transnational and comparative history and validated the existence of both. Niall Whelehan, ‘Playing with scales, transnational history and modern Ireland’ in Niall Whelehan (ed.), *Transnational perspectives on modern Irish history* (New York, 2015).


\(^{30}\) For examples please see Fergus Campbell, ‘The social dynamics of nationalist politics in the west of Ireland, 1898-1919’ in *Past & Present*, 182, 1 (2004), pp 175-209; Peter Hart, *The I.R.A. and its enemies:*
The outliers to this inward-looking historical trend were historians of the Irish diaspora, whose objects of study required them to address transnational influences on Irish identity. Within these debates, questions of class have played a central role. Leading Irish-American historians like Kerby Miller, Timothy Meagher, David Brundage and Kevin Kenny have each grappled with the inter-connectedness of national, ethnic and class identities maintained within Irish-American communities. Similar questions of class and nationalism have been at the heart of the historiography of the Irish in Britain. Unfortunately, these studies have been largely compartmentalised into their own sphere within Irish historiography. Among the few historians to try to incorporate these findings into their analyses of Irish history has been David Fitzpatrick, whose focus on the experience of migrant labourers and whose calls to incorporate the transient experience of Irish workers into diaspora historiography can be seen as an extension of his initial attempt to combat Ireland’s historical isolation.

It is, therefore, perhaps unsurprising that historians of the Irish diaspora have been the initiators of the call for the establishment of global and transnational perspectives in Irish history. Many efforts to incorporate this methodology have
already been made by historians of the pre and post-revolutionary periods.\textsuperscript{35} Within the revolutionary period, however, the adoption has been more gradual.\textsuperscript{36} Recently, Roy Foster’s study of revolutionary Ireland used transnationalism as a key paradigm for constructing the culture of the revolutionary generation, uncovering transnational networks that contributed to an Irish radical culture that was both cosmopolitan and nationalist in its outlook.\textsuperscript{37} His work was undoubtedly shaped by some of the histories of Ireland’s middle classes that had already implemented similar transnational perspectives into their studies. Through studies of continental education networks, associational culture and identity, global philanthropic mission work, and metropolitan commodity culture, these histories have shown how the Irish middle classes maintained a cosmopolitan identity that fused Irishness with an international modernist outlook.\textsuperscript{38}

In spite of these advances, there are still reasons to be cautious. Histories that employ comparative perspectives still outnumber those that adopt a transnational approach, and even comparative histories are still too marginal in overall Irish revolutionary discourse.\textsuperscript{39} Even more concerning is the number of these works still making claims for Irish exceptionalism. In his review of four new works of global Irish history, Alvin Jackson warned, ‘it would be grimly ironic if the denouncement of Irish history’s experiment in internationalisation were to be a vindication of its exceptionalist

\begin{enumerate}
\item The focus of the critique here remains on revolutionary Irish history because significant attention has already been played to the Atlantic context on earlier and more modern Irish topics, particularly Fenianism. For some key examples please see Jonathan Gantt, \textit{Irish terrorism in the Atlantic community, 1865-1922} (London, 2010) or Naill Whelehan, \textit{The dynamiters: Irish nationalism and political violence in the wider world, 1867-1900} (Cambridge, 2012).
\item For an example of some works please see Gavin Wilk, \textit{Transatlantic defiance: the Irish militant republican movement in America, 1914-45} (Manchester, 2014); Naill Whelehan, ‘The Irish Revolution, 1912-23’ in Jackson (ed.), \textit{The Oxford handbook of modern Irish history}, pp 621-44; Fearghal McGarry, ‘A land beyond the wave: transnational and comparative perspectives, 1789-1914’ in Whelehan (ed.), \textit{Transnational perspectives on modern Irish history}, pp 165-88; and Ruán O’Donnell (eds), \textit{The impact of the 1916 Rising among the nations} (Dublin, 2008). In the O’Donnell collection, not all essays address wider connections. This contradiction exposes the reluctance of individuals to let go of the national narrative even when it is the over-arching goal of the project.
\item Roy Foster, \textit{Vivid faces: Ireland’s revolutionary generation} (Dublin, 2015).
\item For examples please see, Brian Heffernan, Marta Ramón, Pierre Ranger and Zsuzsanna Zarka (eds), \textit{Life on the fringe? Ireland and Europe, 1800-1922} (Dublin, 2012) or Bill Kissane, ‘Nineteenth century nationalism in Finland and Ireland: a comparative analysis’ in \textit{Nationalism and Ethnic Politics}, 6, 2 (2000), pp 25-42.
\end{enumerate}
impulses." Jackson's ominous note is quite relevant to this study, as exposing the transnational aspects of Ireland's history does not on its own erase the nation's particularism or its unique national experiences. As will be clear throughout, this study acknowledges that there is some truth in Ireland's particularisms, while still rejecting sweeping claims of national exceptionalism.

One unfortunate aspect of these evolving debates is the limited extent to which they have permeated Irish working-class historiography. Instead, the field has largely clung to national and regional perspectives, which over time has fuelled a greater divide between Irish working-class history and the wider field of Irish history. In fact, the most recent issue of the *Oxford handbook of modern Irish history* did not even include a review of developments in class and labour historiography, perhaps indicative of the general outlook of the field. Although, there is an argument to be made that the omission is not out of character with the way Irish working-class studies have been treated throughout the course of their existence. In 1974, Irish labour historian Donal Nevin stated at an Irish history meeting that labour studies were significantly neglected. Until that point, there had been few individual studies focused on labour and the working-class movement. J.J. Lee conceded Nevin's point, but did so by

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42 This point was also raised by American working-class historian John D. French in relation to American labour history. John D. French, 'Another world history is possible: reflections on the translocal, transnational and global' in Finke (ed.), *Workers across the Americas*, p. 4.

43 The note on the omission of the topic was raised by Mary Daly in her review of the collection. Mary Daly, 'Review article: a new approach to Irish History?' in *Irish Historical Studies*, 39, 115 (2015), p. 516.


45 For examples of these earlier works, please see W.P. Ryan, *The Irish labour movement: from the twenties to our own day* (Dublin, 1919); Jesse Dunsmore Clarkson, *Labour and nationalism in Ireland* (New 11
admitting that much of this absence was due to want of practitioners across the field of Irish history in general.

With the foundation of the Irish Labour History Society and the establishment of Saothar in 1975 much changed. Labour history did receive more independent attention, but it soon fell into the trap of focusing exclusively on events in Dublin and Belfast, while ignoring labour developments across the island. In an effort to rectify this, the 1990s and early 2000s saw the emergence of a number of local and regional working-class studies. The draw of 'personality theories' in earlier works also dominated Irish labour history, though this perspective has proven much harder to shake. In his 1995 essay on Irish labour historiography, Emmet O'Connor outlined some of these very concerns. In spite of the set-backs at the time, O'Connor remained optimistic about the future and the potential for change, writing:

One may be cautiously optimistic about the future. Irish labour historiography remains bedevilled by the want of full-time practitioners, without which progress in interpretation will be slow and patchy. On the other hand, the next generation of writing will be novel. These twenty years have deconstructed images of the past distorted by nationalism, and one can hear the chipping away of colonised thinking; at last we are ready to build a more authentic understanding of ourselves.

Yet, in 2010, O'Connor admitted that not much progress had been made, claiming that Irish history students still remained 'doggedly empirical' and guided by a traditional

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York, 1925); Cathal O'Shanon, Fifty years of Liberty Hall: the golden jubilee of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, 1909-1959 (Dublin, 1959); R. M. Fox, James Connolly: the forerunner (Tralee, 1946); R.M. Fox, Jim Larkin: Irish labor leader (New York, 1957); R.M. Fox, History of the Irish Citizen Army (Dublin, 1944); C. Desmond Greaves, The life and times of James Connolly (London, 1972); Joe Deasy, Fiery cross: the story of Jim Larkin (Dublin, 1963); or Alan Carr, The Belfast labour movement, 1885-1893 (Belfast, 1974).

47 This criticism was raised by Marilyn Silverman in the introduction to her work, which was a case study of Irish working-class life in Thomastown County Kilkenny. Marilyn Silverman, An Irish working class: explorations in political economy and hegemony, 1800-1950 (London, 2001), p. 16.
49 For note on ‘personality theories’ please see Dermot Keogh, The rise of the Irish working class (Dublin, 1982), p. 2.
emphasis on documents, leaders, and movements.\textsuperscript{51} Attraction to regional studies has also arguably far outlived its initial value. By and large, publications since O’Connor’s most recent remark have not broken this trend, with numerous individual biographies and local studies developing out of commemorative-inspired publications.\textsuperscript{52} Andy Bielenberg’s 2009 work on the industrial revolution stands out as an exception to this trend, with his empirical analysis of Irish industry aimed at linking Ireland’s economic not only to England, but the wider world.\textsuperscript{53} Nevertheless, Bielenberg’s focus on industrial structures and economic development in contrast to people and society, make it starkly different than this work. This thesis is an attempt to break from empirical methodologies and a focus on localities, regions, and major personalities. As such, it intentionally places greater emphasis on ideas, discourse, and Atlantic influences as a means of offering a fresh perspective on Irish working-class history. The thesis also attempts to move away from the dominant personality theories as being representative of Irish working-class culture and identity. As such, mentions to notable figures like Connolly and Larkin are limited as much as possible to offer a broader picture, while still maintaining the integrity of their importance to the movement.

It must be noted, however, that despite its setbacks there have still been a number of commendable works on the Irish labour movement and Irish working-class history. The best survey of the Irish labour movement remains Emmet O’Connor’s \textit{A labour history of Ireland, 1824-2000}, which was re-released in 2011.\textsuperscript{54} Both the Irish trade union movement and the Irish Labour Party have attracted a number of critical

\textsuperscript{51} Emmet O’Connor and Conor McCabe, ‘Ireland’ in Joan Allen, Alan Campbell and John McIlroy (eds), \textit{Histories of labour: national and international perspectives} (Cardiff, 2010), p. 143.


\textsuperscript{53} Andy Bielenberg, \textit{The impact of the industrial revolution on Irish industry, 1801-1922} (London, 2009).

studies linking working-class struggles to Irish politics and society.\textsuperscript{55} Works by Fintan Lane and Adrian Grant provide an overview of the rise of socialist movements in Ireland.\textsuperscript{56} Both John Boyle and Henry Patterson have used the working-class movement to open a dialogue around working-class identity and nationalism, albeit with conflicting viewpoints on the subject.\textsuperscript{57} Nevertheless, to date, the thoroughness and originality of these arguments remain unsurpassed, with the exception of Martin Maguire’s work on Protestant working-class identity.\textsuperscript{58}

Instances of heightened struggle such as the 1907 Belfast Dock strike and the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout have been used to unmask the competing actors scrambling to renegotiate power structures, in part through the manipulation of identities.\textsuperscript{59} As such, these instances offer a clear vantage point into the wider dynamics shaping both working-class life and the working-class movement. Works by John Gray, Pádraig Yeates, John Newsinger, and Francis Devine are a testament to the importance of social, economic and structural forces in influencing Irish working-class identity.\textsuperscript{60} Nevertheless, confining the discussion of these topics only to moments of industrial unrest has created a sense of discontinuity in the Irish working-class narrative.\textsuperscript{61} By extending its focus to the entire period between 1889 and 1917, this thesis tries to construct a narrative that is continuous, capturing the longer process of working-class

\textsuperscript{55} For examples please see Paul Daly, Ronan O’Brien, and Paul Rouse (eds), \textit{Making the difference? The Irish Labour Party 1912 -2012} (Cork, 2012); Seamus Cody, John O’Dowd, and Peter Rigney, \textit{The Parliament of Labour: 100 Years of the Dublin Council of Trade Unions} (Dublin, 1986); Charles McCarthy, \textit{Trades unions in Ireland, 1894-1960} (Dublin, 1977); Dermot Keogh, \textit{The rise of the Irish working class}; and Donal Nevin (ed.), \textit{Trade union century} (Dublin, 1994).

\textsuperscript{56} Fintan Lane, \textit{The origins of modern socialism} (Cork, 1997) and Adrian Grant, \textit{Irish socialist republicanism, 1909-36} (Dublin, 2012).

\textsuperscript{57} Boyle, \textit{The Irish labour movement in the nineteenth century} and Henry Patterson, \textit{Class conflict, and sectarianism} (Belfast, 1980).


\textsuperscript{59} The Dublin Lockout is most often referred to as the 1913 Dublin Lockout. Since the return-to-work order was not issued until January 1914 and the women connected to the strike remained locked out until April, the date has been amended to include 1914. This has been done to communicate the longevity of the strike and highlight the extended duration of female involvement.

\textsuperscript{60} John Gray, \textit{A city in revolt: James Larkin & the Belfast dock strike of 1907} (Belfast, 2007); Devine, 1913: \textit{A capital in conflict}; Pádraig Yeates, \textit{Lockout: Dublin 1913} (Dublin, 2000); and John Newsinger, \textit{Rebel city: Larkin, Connolly and the Dublin labour movement} (Dublin, 2003).

\textsuperscript{61} A point of exception here should be made for Pádraig’s Yeates work on Dublin, which he opened by emphasising his desire to link to his previous study on the Lockout. Pádraig Yeates, \textit{A city in wartime: Dublin 1914-1918} (Dublin 2011) and Pádraig Yeates, \textit{A city in turmoil: Dublin 1919-1921} (Dublin, 2012).
identity formation that took place during these years. This, of course, does not refute studies that suggest working-class identity existed long before this period; rather, it simply casts a lens on this period in the hopes that similar analyses will consider the periods both before 1889 and after 1917.

**Working-class cultural history**

Writing a transnational cultural history of Ireland could perhaps be interpreted as a rejection of the colonial model, especially given its much contested place in Irish historiography. Historians, particularly of the seventeenth century, have questioned the degree to which Ireland was colonised and in more contemporary studies, historians have raised questions as to the degree to which Irish citizens took part in the British imperial project. For cultural studies, this debate has focused primarily on mentalities. Declan Kiberd, Joe Cleary, and David Lloyd all have analysed the degree to which Irish citizens became and remained products of British colonialism.

The thesis does not entirely reject the influence of British culture, imperial discourse, and the various conflicting allegiances to the British Empire present within the Irish working-class movement, however. Instead, it argues that the presence of transatlantic influences and networks shows that colonial influences alone cannot fully explain the processes occurring. This contention is similar to that put forth by Patrick Maume, who stated that Irish society was shaped both by the ‘remnants of colonialism and Anglo-American culture’. This thesis will interrogate how an Atlantic-imperial framework shaped the Irish working-class movement. It will consider whether in their attempts to liberate Irish identity from the constraints of British imperial influences,

working-class leaders only shifted Irish identity into another non-colonial, but still imperial, framework.

It is important to note that unlike many cultural studies, this thesis does not draw significantly from literary works. While it is certainly true that analysing popular literature is one of the pillars of cultural studies, this thesis instead focuses on socialist propaganda as its core literary base. The framework is firmly focused on socialist party print culture. That is not to say that little can be learned from the groundwork already laid out by literary scholars. The imperial connections that Brannigan and Kiberd have uncovered in the writings of James Joyce and W.B. Yeats can be seen, albeit in different forms, within the pages of the Harp, the Irish Worker and the Belfast Labour Chronicle. The prioritisation of socialist and labour materials is therefore not to neglect the wider debates on literature, post-colonialism, and popular culture, but rather to cast a microscope on the labour and socialist movement. One of the aims of this thesis is to give agency to the working-class movement. While the working-class leaders did not engage in these dialogues in a vacuum, the lack of studies around Irish working-class imperial frameworks warrants a close evaluation of the movement on its own terms.

Furthermore, with cultural studies of Irish middle-class life on the rise, the absence of matching cultural studies of Irish working-class life or working-class movements poses a problem for the field. Because of this, the thesis takes a cultural approach to the working-class movement in an attempt to present the experiences of the working classes as equal to those of their middle-class counterparts. The research is primarily qualitative, aimed at uncovering the relationship between political language, working-class radicalism, and popular culture. Working-class identity is treated as a social construct, which the working-class movement attempted to transform into a progressive force. It is important to note, however, that such cultural approaches to working-class history have been criticised by historians, particularly those on the left. In the 1990s, when the 'cultural turn' began, opponents claimed that by treating class as a social identity, cultural historians threatened to undermine the legitimacy of economic

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66 For similar arguments please see Willibald Steinmetz (ed.), *Political languages in the age of extremes* (Oxford, 2011), pp 3-51.
67 For details on the social construction of class, please see John R. Hall, *Reworking class* (Cornell, 1997), pp 1-37.
The emphasis on discursive approaches to the study of working-class movements and working-class people meant that class identity was no longer seen as a matter of economic status, but as a social identity formed by a number of factors, of which economics was just one. Studies addressing socialism through the broader umbrella of radical cultures and climate also drew criticisms for their lack of distinction between militant and reformist labour schools. This new outlook seemed to problematise class as a category so significantly that many historians simply refused to accept cultural studies had much to offer working-class history.

The prolonged reluctance to embrace cultural history had an impact on the field across the Atlantic. In their edited collection, *Rethinking U.S. labour history*, Donna Haverty-Stacke and Daniel Walkowitz claimed the rejection of cultural studies has had detrimental effects on American working-class history, writing:

there generally has been hostility, if not an outright clash, between cultural and social historians, with the former interested in question of representation and the latter with agency. Most cultural historians have focused on the middle class elites in society and thus have not engaged with working-class history. At the same time, most labor historians have been social historians and have thus rejected what they perceive to be weak materialist moorings of cultural history.

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Their concerns serve as a warning to historians reluctant to broaden the scope of working-class history. In embracing the advice of American historian Howard Zinn, working-class historians should ‘become the critics of culture’ because addressing these issues is the only way to assess the relationship between the working classes and the movement designed to represent their interests.

In the wake of Stuart Hall’s teaching, which merged the teachings of Marx with cultural theory, more historians of the left have softened their opposition. A number have attempted to re-integrate working-class histories into the sphere of cultural history. In England, Ross McKibbin merged the two worlds by studying movements, politics, and culture alongside each other. McKibbin did this in an attempt to expose where Labour politics and working-class culture diverged, thereby offering hope that the category of class was not dead, but instead simply misunderstood. While this thesis remains markedly different in terms of structure, it does share his underlying objectives.

Some critics of cultural history have argued that the field gives too much attention to structure, and neglects how workers themselves contributed to shaping their identities. Others have argued the opposite, and claimed that cultural history is ‘unduly narrow’, asserting that it does not give enough attention to structural forces acting upon working-class identity. This thesis will navigate between these two positions and expose both how the Irish working classes were among the strongest active agents shaping representations of working-class identity, while at the same time

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73 This phrase is taken from Howard Zinn’s now classic critique on American revisionist history. His criticism was focused on popular culture and government’s role in shaping popular opinion. He did not reserve these criticisms exclusively for governments of the left or right and therefore implicated the greater importance in analysing the way in which culture is formed by political, religious, and social structures. Howard Zinn, *The politics of history* (2nd ed., Chicago, 1990), p. 13.


75 Steinmetz (ed.), *Political languages in the age of extremes*; Lex Heerma van Voss and Marcel van der Linden (eds), *Class and other identities: gender, religion, and ethnicity in the writing of European Labour History* (New York, 2002); Rosanne Currarino, “‘The revolution now in progress’: social economics and the labor question’ in *Labor History*, 50 (2009-1), pp 1-17; Katarina Navickas, ‘What happened to class? New histories of labour and collective action in Britain’ in *Social History*, 36, 2 (May 2011), pp 192-204.


77 This point is raised and addressed in Avtar Brah, Mary J. Hickman, and Máirtín Mac an Ghaill (eds), *Thinking identities: ethnicity, racism and culture* (New York, 1999), p. 4.

acknowledging the important role structural forces, such as the state, religious institutions and the popular press, played in shaping this process. The thesis observes what Patrick Joyce has explained as the 'relationships between the social constituencies' and their 'production and reception' of social identities. The working classes could either support or reject the working-class movement's presentation of working-class identity. Their acceptance or rejection in turn influenced the way the working-class movement packaged that identity.

It is important to note that working-class cultural histories tied to questions of politics and the labour movement have come under criticism even from supporters of the cultural turn. For instance, Richard Evans has claimed that political histories and histories of the labour movement neglect the plurality of working-class experience. While Evans' points are valid, this thesis focuses on the labour movement and working-class politics due to its connection to the Irish revolutionary debate. Furthermore, the generally underdeveloped literature on Irish working-class culture requires that each branch of Irish working-class history, both political and social, be explored and expanded. This thesis sets out to expand our knowledge of the cultural history of the Irish working-class movement, all the while acknowledging that, given the current state of research, our knowledge of the cultural history of Irish workers themselves must remain partial.

The research takes a thematic approach to working-class identity, focusing on three key strands: national, religious, and racial identity. These themes have been chosen due to their prominence in Irish working-class discourse, their connection to Irish historiography's colonial debate, and their significance to the wider historiography of working-class culture and identity. Each topic is addressed separately as a component of Irish working-class identity. Since, however, identity is by its very nature

79 Joyce, Visions of the people, p. 341.
80 In her work on the British Labour Party, Laura Beers validates the importance of working-class agency in the packaging of popular socialism in Britain by using it as a key framework to study working-class culture and the working-class movement. Laura Beers, Your Britain: media and the making of the British Labour Party (Cambridge, MA, 2010), pp 6-8.
82 Similar branches of identity have been explored in Keith Robbins, 'Ethnicity, religion, class and gender and the 'Island Story/ies': Great Britain and Ireland' in Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (eds), The contested nation: ethnicity, class, religion and gender in national histories (New York, 2008), pp 231-55.
83 For a general overview of the importance of these topics, please see van Voss and van der Linden (eds), Class and other identities.
porous, the thesis will make a point to signal moments of inter-connectedness between each theme in order to demonstrate how Irish working-class leaders used them to construct their vision of a working-class identity. This approach also allows for an exploration of how working-class identity was shaped and re-shaped over the course of the years 1889 to 1917. At varying moments, one aspect may have played a more prominent role than others. This consistent process of renegotiation requires each theme to be analysed separately, but within a greater whole.

One common branch of cultural studies that is intentionally omitted is gender. Instead, issues of gender and identity are integrated as sub-topics throughout the thesis. In part, this is in response to the masculine culture dominating the Irish working-class movement, which has not received proper attention in Irish historiography. Another reason is that gender histories have not developed to the same degree in Irish historiography as they have in other countries in Europe. This criticism holds true for studies of the Irish Diaspora as well. In recent years, historians of migration and diaspora studies have regularly lamented the lack of works on gender within the field leaving a significant gap in the historiography. Many of the studies that do exist largely address religious, racial, and gender identities in relation to the nation. Studies of women and their connection to the labour movement have instead focused on their contribution to the Irish economy and workforce. The development of these studies

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84 For contemporary discussions on gender in European history please see Ida Bloom, Karen Hagemann, and Catherine Hall (eds), _Gendered nations: nationalisms and gender order in the long nineteenth century_ (Oxford, 2000); Barbara Caine and Glenda Sluga (eds), _Gendering European history_ (London, 2000); Sonya O. Rose, _What is gender history_ (Oxford, 2010).

85 Reasons for this have been attributed to the limited number of full-time employed practitioners in the field of women’s history, Irish history’s focus on the revisionist debate, and ideological opposition to the forcing of women’s history into a social discourse. For these debates, please see Maria Luddy, ‘Gender in Irish history’ in Jackson (eds), _The Oxford handbook of modern Irish history_, pp 193-4; Mary Cullen, _Telling it our way: essays in gender history_ (Dublin, 2013), pp 19-20, 409-11 or Margaret Mac Curtain, _Ariadne’s Thread, Writing women into Irish history_ (Dublin, 2008), pp 48-54.


87 For works covering this period please see Senia Paseta, _Irish nationalist women, 1900-1918_ (Cambridge, 2013); Janice Holmes and Diane Urquhart (eds), _Coming into the light: the work, politics and religion of women in Ulster, 1840-1940_ (Belfast, 1994); Diane Urquhart, ‘Gender, family and sexuality, 1800-2000’ in Liam Kennedy and Philip Ollerenshaw (eds), _Ulster since 1600: politics, economic and society_ (Oxford, 2013); or Mary McAuliffe, ‘Irish histories: gender, women and sexualities’ in Mary McAuliffe, Katherine O’Donell and Leanne Lane (eds), _Palgrave Advances in Irish history_ (Basingstoke, 2009), pp 191-221.

88 For examples of studies covering this time period please see Joanna Bourke, _Husbands to housewifery: women, economic change and housework in Ireland, 1890-1914_ (Oxford, 1993); Theresa Moriarty ‘Work, warfare and wages: industrial controls and Irish trade unionism in the First World War’ in Adrian Gregory and Senia Paseta (eds), _Ireland and the Great War: “a war to unite is all”?_ (Manchester, 2002), pp 73-93; Myrtle Hill, _Women in Ireland: a century of change_ (Belfast, 2003); Mona Hearn, “Life of domestic servants
has largely been as a result of labour's exclusion of women from the working-class dialogue, a process which has contributed to the marginalisation of the female worker from labour history. Although this thesis does not claim to rectify these problems, it partially addresses them by incorporating studies on international labour and imperial national masculinity in order to address how issues of gender relate to the main themes of nationalism, religion, and race.\(^9\)

This thesis has been shaped, in large part, by the reflections of several historians of race and gender on how social hierarchies are created through public discourse.\(^90\) The exclusionary aspects of working-class identity are presented in the light of some of these findings. Throughout each chapter, the structural, social, and individual forces shaping working-class identity are presented to offer some of the contributing factors establishing the boundaries of working-class identity. Nevertheless, this thesis maintains the systemic nature of these perspectives and therefore addresses how they permeated the outlook of radical working-class leaders. The formation of working-class identity resulted in the exclusion of a number of workers, a barrier the working-class movement took an active part in constructing. By analysing the construction of working-class identity through the themes of nationalism, religion, and race it becomes evident that urban masculinity was cultivated as the heart of the process.

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\(^90\) For an overview of these critiques, please see Ruth Roach Pierson, 'Nations: gendered, racialized, and crossed with empire' in Ida Bloom, Haren Hagemann and Catherine Hall (eds), *Gendered nations: nationalism and gender order in the long nineteenth century* (Oxford, 2000), pp 41-61.
Irish working-class nationalism

Irish labour's submission to the 'master narrative' of the nation during the revolutionary period has been repeatedly evoked by historians eager to dismiss the importance of working-class militancy in Irish history. Historians of the left have challenged this perspective by exposing the role working-class consciousness played during and after the revolutionary period. Other historians eager to defend socialist republicanism, Connolly supporters in particular, have sought to contextualise socialist participation in militant nationalist resistance movements as examples of anti-imperialism. Opponents have been quick to dismiss this interpretation, due to the limited embrace of revolutionary socialist republicanism by the working classes. In both cases, however, nationalism has become the issue that working-class historians have had to address.

One of the difficulties in analysing the relationship between working-class identity and nationalism stems from the national parameters that most studies adopt. This is a problem present in the historiography of Irish nationalism more generally. As Richard English noted in his recent essay, the study of Irish nationalism remains largely disconnected from its global context. This practice has emerged in response to the...
prolonged legacy of the revisionist debate in Irish historiography. The debate, which emerged from accusations on both sides that Irish history was being used as a political tool, kept studies focused on events within the island. Opponents of revisionism associated broader connections with British and continental European history to be part of the 'scholarly liberal plot to skew Irish history into an anti-national position'. More recently, the growth of transnational and global history has softened some of these tensions, with historians accepting that broader connections are intended to complement, not replace, national histories.

There is a lot that can be gained from the advance of studies on nationalism, national identity and imperialism abroad. Histories of imperial culture and nationalism have shown that by the late Victorian period, nationalism had become a part of everyday life that was communicated even in non-verbal forms, through activities such as sport, commemorative ceremonies, and theatre. These served as constant reminders of the nation and helped to form national identity. These conclusions have been applied to the Irish national movement, with studies by John Hutchison and D. George Boyce outlining how cultural nationalism was used to construct national identity through an imagined nation. Similarly in a collected edition on visual, print, and material culture, historians of Ireland have exposed how symbols such as the Irish Harp became non-verbal reminders of the quest for Irish nationalism. This thesis will consider whether, the working-class movement also took part in this 'cult of the nation', employing strategies designed to validate the working classes' position within the national narrative. It will also consider whether the nationalist and the working-class movement were mutually reinforcing.

95 For an overview of this debate, please see Alan O'Day and D. George Boyce (eds), The making of modern Irish history: revisionism and the revisionist controversy (New York, 1996); Ciaran Brady (ed.), Interpreting Irish history: the debate on historical revisionism 1938-1994 (Dublin, 1994); or Kevin Whelan, 'The revisionist debate in Ireland' in Boundary, 31, 1 (Spring 2004), pp 179-205.
96 Jackson, The Oxford handbook of modern Irish history, p. 4.
98 MacKenzie, Propaganda and the empire.
101 Emily Cullen, 'From the Comerford Crown to the Repeal the Cap: fusing the Irish symbol with the eastern promise in the nineteenth century' in Ciara Breathnach and Catherine Lawless, Visual, print and material culture in nineteenth-century Ireland (Dublin, 2010), p. 60.
In the area of socialist history, the embrace of cultural studies has sparked new approaches to interrogating how the nation existed in the socialist imagination. Through studies of socialist language and imagery, historians have explained how strands of utopian socialism used national idealism in a similar fashion to fin de siècle writers across the political spectrum. In the wake of these findings, these historians have begun to explain how the nation existed as part of a common revolutionary discourse, enabling it to complement internationalist movements without being imperial, patriotic, and jingoist. This more abstract approach allows for a new perspective on nationalism and the position of national identity within Irish working-class discourse — one that can be shared by Irish working-class Nationalists and Unionists alike. This certainly does not erase the political question, or the sectarian implication of national politics, but it offers an alternative way to understand how nationalism permeated the working-class movement across political lines. As such, this thesis emphasises this aspect to demonstrate how nationalism could generate shared working-class experiences.

The study of Irish national politics is, however, a key part of this process. As Patrick Maume has shown, the previous assumption that political interest waned between the fall of Parnell and the rise of Sinn Féin fails to capture the political transformations taking place in Irish society during this period. Ireland was not just undergoing a cultural revolution, and therefore to discuss the working-class movement solely on these terms would certainly do a disservice to the advances made in the field. As such, the thesis will explore how both national politics and cultural nationalism played a part in shaping the working-class movement’s projection of working-class national identity. Bearing in mind that national identity in Ireland existed both in British

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102 For examples of such works please see Alastair Bonnett, Left in the past: radicalism and the politics of nostalgia (New York, 2010) or Thomas Linehan, Modernism and British Socialism (Basingstoke, 2012).

103 Irish labour histories have focused largely on the sectarian cultures dividing labour communities on the issues of nationalism. For examples, please see Austen Morgan, Labour and partition: the Belfast working class, 1905-23 (London, 1991); Terry Cradden,, Trade unionism, socialism and partition (Belfast, 1993); or Patterson, Class conflict, and sectarianism.

104 The focus on Irish Revivalism laying the foundation for the later political revolution was put forward in works like Declan Kiberd’s Inventing Ireland. Please see, Declan Kiberd, Inventing Ireland (London, 1995), pp 3-4. For the response and defence of politics during this period, please see Patrick Maume, The long gestation.
and Irish forms, the thesis will explore how the movement engaged with each of these identities and navigate how each, at times, took a dominant position.\textsuperscript{105}

The Irish working-class movement could not avoid this transforming political climate. As such, working-class leaders’ projections of working-class identity were shaped by their wider political ambitions, as well as those of their opponents. Not all working-class leaders shared the goal of politicising the working-class movement and even among those who did, not all shared similar political views. These conflicting perspectives, as well as the varied responses of nationalist leaders to the working-class movement, present serious complications in describing the movement’s response to nationalist politics.\textsuperscript{106} Nevertheless, while the political dimension is riddled with conflicting desires and complicating dynamics, it is key to understanding the formation of a working-class national identity.

These questions surrounding nationalism came to a head during the First World War, an event whose importance to the international working-class movement as well as Irish national history cannot be understated. The event splintered socialists internationally, diminished the power of national labour movements and divided Irish nationalist leaders. As such, its impact on the Irish working-class movement is critical to our understanding of the reconfiguration of Irish working-class identity. It was a transformative period, when working-class leaders altered their interactions with nationalists and the Irish working classes. For this reason, it forms a central part of this thesis’s analysis of the relationship between the Irish working-class movement and nationalism.

\textsuperscript{105} For studies exploring the relationship between these identities, please see Gray, \textit{Victoria’s Ireland?} and Eugenio Biagini (ed.), \textit{Citizenship and community: liberals, radicals and collective identities in the British Isles, 1865-1933} (Cambridge, 1996).

Irish working-class history and religious identity

Ever since the pioneering work of E.P. Thompson, the relationship between socialism and religion has been an important topic for historians. By linking nonconformist traditions to English labour radicalism, Thompson suggested the existence of a bridge between religious consciousness and working-class identity at the grassroots level and, in the process, transformed the way in which historians have studied religion and social action. Since then, historians of both religion and labour have analysed the extent to which spiritualism or religious ideology shaped the views of working-class radicals. These studies have crossed denominational and national lines. In Britain, individual biographies of Christian socialist leaders and institutional histories of Christian labour and socialist organisations, such as Labour Churches, Socialist Sunday Schools, and Cinderella Clubs have all been important topics of historical inquiry. Historians Stephen Yeo, Stanley Pierson, and William Greenslade have even used the ethical teachings of leaders like William Morris, John Bruce Glasier, and Margaret MacMillan to categorise socialist spiritualism as a distinct branch of the English radical left.

Drawing inspiration from Thompson's work, American labour historian Herbert Gutman detailed the ways in which Gilded Age Protestantism influenced labour radicalism in the United States in his now classic essay 'Protestantism and the American Labor Movement'. Gutman has, however, acknowledged the difficulty of directly

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applying Thompson’s thesis in an American context. Pointing to the racial dynamics of post-bellum American society, he argued that the relationship between religion and class could be complicated by other factors. African American Protestantism shared certain progressive qualities with radical white working-class Protestantism, but it identified race, not class, as the core agent of oppression. In spite of these differences, Gutman stressed that there was still much to be learned about the effects of American Christian consciousness on the development of the American labour movement. This consideration was important, Gutman stressed, because the internalisation of labour ideology through spiritualism exposed working-class agency, something too often neglected in working-class histories based solely on work and politics. Ultimately, Gutman believed his study to be only the beginning and acknowledged that further investigation needed to be conducted.

Yet, in a 2010 edited collection on the condition of American labour historiography, Elizabeth and Ken Fones-Wolf pointed to the lack of development in this area since Gutman’s original call. They argued that American labour historians have largely ignored the role religion played in shaping working-class consciousness because ‘rather than grapple with the messiness of spiritual convictions, scholars typically reduced religious experience to an explanation of either conservative or radical political action.’ Among the few exceptions, the authors noted, was Nick Salvatore, whose biography of Eugene Debs traced the ways in which Debs’ Christian ethic both fuelled and contradicted his evolving radical socialist outlook. Further works by Dan McKenna and Robert H. Craig looked at the fluid relationship between American socialist movements and Christian ideology by linking radical Christian teaching to

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111 Ibid.
112 Elizabeth Fones-Wolf and Ken Fones-Wolf 'No common creed: white working-class Protestants and the CIO’s Operation Dixie' in Haverty-Stacke and Walkowitz (eds), Rethinking U.S. labor history, pp 111-36.
113 Nick Salvatore, Eugene Debs: citizen and socialist (Urbana, Illinois, 1984). Salvatore’s personal concern with the role in which his own religious consciousness shaped his historical views, perhaps, contributed to an increased attentiveness to this element. Salvatore edited a collection of essays addressing the question of how Catholicism shaped historians’ work. Interestingly enough, the introduction to this work emphasised the oddity of the Catholic experience. There was an increasing number of Catholic historians who felt their religious experience shaped their work, but did not fit into common held narratives on similar religious dialogues. Nick Salvatore, Faith and the historian: Catholic perspectives (Urbana, Illinois, 2007), p. 2. For Salvatore’s personal contribution to the debate, please see, pp 98 -115.
leading socialist and labour organisations in the United States. However, it was Donald Winters' work on the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), America's most influential syndicalist union, that went past language and ideology to examine the practical effects of religion on the American labour movement. Winters argued that the IWW was actually packaged as a 'new religion'.

Similar to these American developments, the cultural turn sparked a broader re-evaluation of how religious transformation affected British society. Unlike Thompson’s study, which covered the early period of industrialisation and the Chartist movement, the focus of these works remained largely on the Edwardian period. The time change was largely in response to the secularisation thesis used by Eric Hobsbawm to characterise the development of modern labour and socialist radicalism. Gareth Stedman Jones, for instance, has argued that Edwardian radicals embraced socialism as both a political and a spiritual movement. Pointing to socialist writing, speeches and ephemeral material, Stedman Jones claimed that religious consciousness was at the core of socialist language. His work was part of a broader edited collection that challenged the grand narrative of secularism in the Atlantic World. However, Gareth Stedman Jones' study refrained from drawing direct connections to the British experience and the Atlantic World, a marked difference from Hobsbawm's international scope.

Recently, the fiftieth anniversaries of both Thompson and Gutman's works have led to a re-interrogation of their methodologies and theses. The spring 2014 issue of Labor: studies in working class history of the Americas honoured Gutman’s work by calling for an expansion of his thesis. Heath Carter, for instance, argued that labour activists were working-class theologians, actively re-interpreting Christianity’s place in

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118 Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Religions and the origins of socialism' in Ira Katznelson and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds), Religion and political imagination (Cambridge, 2010), pp 171-89.
the modern industrial world. Similarly, *Contemporary British History* featured a special issue interrogating Thompson's approach to language, human agency, and exceptionalism. Among these articles was an essay by Michael Kenny that explored the extent to which Englishness shaped Thompson's theory of the making of working-class culture. Kenny argued that Thompson's idiom was a product of the academic climate of the time, which sought to distance British radicalism from emerging Soviet models, and was not intended to argue for English exceptionalism. In all instances, these historiographical developments have reaffirmed the importance of religion in the formation of working-class identities, while they have raised important questions as to the exceptionalism of particular national cases.

This thesis will consider how Ireland's working-class history further contributes to these debates. To date, histories of the Irish labour movement have remained notably removed from the international scholarship on the interrelationship of religion and class. This omission becomes even more apparent when we consider the significant amount of attention given to the relationship between religious and national identities. Much like Gutman's concern with the issue of American religiosity and race, Irish nationalism and religious culture have produced a climate in which historians are reluctant to 'grapple with the messiness' of religious consciousness and its role in the Irish working-class movement.

Irish Presbyterianism, or particularly its Ulster variety, has been the major outlier to this trend, with studies highlighting the strength of Presbyterian radicalism during the mid to late 1800s. While Presbyterian radicalism was often linked to national politics, at its core was an emphasis on Protestant traditions of democracy and liberalism inherently connected to emerging dialogues of social change. However, most histories

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120 Michael Kenny, "A traditional English (not British) country gentlemen of the radical left": understanding the making and unmaking of Edward Thompson's English idiom' in *Contemporary British History*, 28, 4 (December 2014), pp 493-561.
of Ulster Presbyterianism conclude with the gradual death of the movement around 1890. The exception was John Boyle, who attempted to link this earlier tradition to the onset of the First World War by tracing the emergence of the Independent Orange Order (IOO) as a concrete example of Ulster Protestant working-class radicalism. Boyle's conclusions have been refuted, however, by Henry Patterson, who has argued that the prevalence of sectarianism within the IOO discredited any legitimate claims of working-class solidarity within a Protestant dialogue. Recently, in an edited collection in Boyle's honour, Martin Maguire addressed in a debate defending Boyle's perspective, while simultaneously acknowledging Patterson's concerns. This was a re-evaluation if not a resurrection, but it did at least offer potential to ignite further debate.

Patterson's argument carried significant weight within the discipline. For many, the overriding theory of sectarianism undercut any belief that spiritually-inflected working-class discourse stood a chance in Ulster. The tendency therefore was to keep religion and working-class radicalism separate or portray them only as being in conflict. Interestingly, the exact opposite position was put forth by W.W. Knox in his review of religion and the Scottish labour movement during the Edwardian period. Knox argued that the sectarian nature of Scottish society made religious identity such a powerful component of politics that it was impossible to discuss socialism without religion. Knox asserted that underneath the sectarian discourse a working-class imagination was maintained, and that this enabled post-war working-class solidarity to emerge more

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124 Gary Peatling challenges the argument put forth by Peter Gibbon that it was the increasing economic enfranchisement of Ulster Presbyterians that drew them away from liberal class-driven politics asserting that it was sectarian traditions that ultimately caused the break. The two schools agreed, however, that Presbyterian radicalism slowly succumbed to Ulster Conservatism by the late nineteenth century. Another alternative to this debates, which takes into account wider United Kingdom trends, is that by 1848 the alliance between working and liberal upper classes began to fragment with the rise of militant working-class action. Gary Peatling, 'What happened to Presbyterian radicalism? The Ulster Presbyterian liberal press in the late nineteenth century' in Roger Swift and Christine Kinealy (eds), *Politics and power in Victorian Ireland* (Dublin, 2006), pp 155-65. For Peter Gibbon's argument, please see Peter Gibbon, *The origins of Ulster Unionism: the formation of populist Protestant politics and ideology in nineteenth-century Ireland* (Manchester, 1975), pp 67-86. For details on the argument outlining the failure of the radical alliance, please see Biagini and Reid (eds), *Currents of radicalism*, p. 4. Further information can also be found in Graham Greenlee, 'Land, Religion and community in Ulster: the Liberal Party in Ulster 1868-1885' in Biagini (ed.), *Citizenship and community*, pp 253-75; or Alvin Jackson, 'Unionist Protestant Society in Edwardian Ireland' in *The Historical Journal*, 33, 4 (December, 1990), pp 839-66.  
126 Martin Maguire, "Remembering who we are", pp 49-64.  
127 Knox, 'Religion and the Scottish labour movement', p. 611.
visibly across sectarian lines.\(^{128}\) Irish Presbyterianism, however, has yet to be subjected to a similar analysis.

In addition to histories of Ulster Presbyterianism, recent calls to uncover the lost voices of the Southern Church of Ireland have generated more attention for this religious group, although primarily for its upper and middle-class members.\(^{129}\) Figures like Irish Citizen Army medical officer, Dr Kathleen Lynn, are held up as examples of how Church of Ireland members of the middle classes could partake in radical working-class politics.\(^{130}\) The commemorative period, for its part, has done a lot to highlight the lost voices of individuals not directly connected to the labour movement. Studies on men like Trinity College Chaplain R. M. Gwynn have broadened historical understandings on the roles religious figures played.\(^{131}\) These histories, however, often erect a malleable barrier between charity and radicalism by removing ulterior motives for middle-class involvement in working-class movements. While many biographers are quick to point out that Seán O’Casey came from the often neglected Dublin Church of Ireland working-class community, O’Casey’s literary fame and leading role in the movement make his experience seem all the more unique.\(^{132}\) Martin Maguire’s essay on Dublin’s Protestant working-class community stands alone in seeking to reincorporate the city’s Protestant working-class population into this wider narrative.\(^{133}\)

Instead, there is an overriding sense of religious homogeneity dominating approaches to Southern Ireland’s working-class population. Ireland seemingly becomes a nation exclusively of Irish Catholic workers, with the Irish Catholic Church represented largely as an institutional force exerting control on workers’ identities.\(^ {134}\) As a result,

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\(^{130}\) Kathleen Lynn made a point in her witness statement that she was the daughter of a clergyman, perhaps indicating a link between her politics and religious identity. Kathleen Lynn, 4 March 1950 (B.M.H., WS 357, F. 166 4), p.1. For further reading on Kathleen Lynn, please see Margaret O hOgartaigh, *Kathleen Lynn: Irishwoman, patriot, doctor* (Dublin, 2006).

\(^{131}\) On 19 September 2013, the Whitechurch Parish held a seminar to commemorate Gwynn’s role in the Dublin 1913 Lockout. ‘Church of Ireland press releases; Whitechurch seminar commemorates R.M. Gwynn and 1913 Lockout,’ 21 September 2013.


\(^{133}\) Martin Maguire, ‘The organisation and activism of Dublin’s Protestant working class’, pp 65-87.

\(^{134}\) For examples please see Paul Maguire, ‘The Lord and Labour: Irish clerical attitudes to the workers question, 1903-1920’ in *Studio Hibernica*, 37 (2011), pp 195-210; Diarmaid Ferriter, ‘No good Catholic can
neither the Irish Catholic Church nor the faith of the Irish working classes receive favourable treatment in working-class histories. While Irish historians have refused to surrender to the belief that nationalism and working-class radicalism can live symbiotically, Catholicism and working-class radicalism have not evoked the same passion. Instead, there has been an implicit acceptance among Irish labour historians of positions like the one put forth by Tom Inglis in his Marxist assertion that Irish Catholicism was as ‘an opiate to the masses’ whose ‘moral monopoly’ stifled class consciousness.\textsuperscript{135}

Biographers of James Connolly have broken slightly from this trend. They have used Connolly’s writing to show how religious identity and socialist ideology could serve as complementary forces.\textsuperscript{136} However, they draw a distinct line between the ideal and the actual experiences of the Irish working-class movement. The exception to this position is John Newsinger, who uses Connolly as proof that the Irish working-class movement never lost its religious zeal. In contrast to the position taken by Stedman Jones, Newsinger refrains from using Ireland as a case study to challenge Hobsbawm’s secularisation thesis. Instead, he simply argues that ‘Ireland was an exception to the rule.’\textsuperscript{137} Thus, the Irish experience is once again categorised as different due to religion.

Attempting to offer a counter-narrative to the depiction of the church as a smothering institutional force, Emmett Larkin, and more recently Thomas Morrissey, have both detailed ways in which sections of the Catholic Church supported working-class movements in varying capacities.\textsuperscript{138} However, Larkin weighed this against the

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\textsuperscript{135} Tom Inglis, \textit{Moral monopoly: the rise and fall of the Catholic Church in modern Ireland} (Dublin, 1998), p. 76.


\textsuperscript{137} Hobsbawm did make an exception to his thesis for both Roman Catholicism and the Irish, claiming Catholics were an abnormally religious group and Irish clung to religion longer as part of a badge of pride for their minority status. Hobsbawm had Irish in Britain in mind when he made these exceptions. Newsinger differs in his dealing with Irish in Ireland. However, his conclusion is the same; the Irish are still just an exception. Newsinger, ‘As Catholic as the Pope’, p. 7 and Hobsbawm, \textit{Primitive rebels}, p. 126.

\textsuperscript{138} Emmet Larkin, ‘Socialism and Catholicism in Ireland’ in \textit{An Irish Quarterly Review}, 74, 293 (Spring, 1985), pp 66-92 and Thomas Morrissey, SJ., \textit{William J. Walsh: Archbishop of Dublin, 1841-1921} (Dublin, 2000). Additionally, Don O’Leary mentions the growth of social teaching amongst some sympathetic Catholic priests during this period, particularly out of the Maynooth Union. However, O’Leary states that
overall position maintained by the church hierarchy that was opposed to extreme forms of socialism and working-class radicalism, whereas Morrissey emphasised the progressive aspects of Social Catholicism while minimising the doctrine’s anti-socialist foundation.

We can see, therefore, that the full extent of the relationships between religion and the Irish working-class movement remain largely underexplored. This thesis will address this imbalance, and examine how religious identity was used as a component of working-class identity. It does not seek to negate the conflicting positions of religious leaders, rather it addresses these aspects as one part of the process. It considers how religious leaders and the religious beliefs of labour leaders shaped their perspectives on working-class radicalism and explores how the working classes used religious language and symbols to communicate their own grievances. In addressing these questions, the thesis will expose the importance of the religious dimension of the Irish working-class movement.

Irish history and the Irish race

The emergence of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in the 1980s called into question the dominance of class-based narratives that often inaccurately incorporated the experiences of non-white and white workers under one universal umbrella. A number of CRT studies have pointed to the masculine white narrative shaping labour and working-class histories, accusing them of ignoring race. Supporters of CRT instead have argued that while class and race often intersected, race still remained a distinct category of analysis and at times proved to be the overriding form of oppression.

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this campaign did not receive broad support amongst church officials until after the revolutionary period. Don O’Leary, Vocationalism and Social Catholicism in twentieth century Ireland (Dublin, 2000), pp 23-5.

139 Critical Race Theory originally developed out of legal studies in the early eighties in which race was used as the primary factor to assess criminal and judicial reports. The aim was to uncover systemic racism within official branches of government. However, the logic soon expanded into theory groups in a variety of disciplines within the social sciences. For further information of the development of CRT, please see Mike Cole, Critical Race Theory and education: a Marxist response (New York, 2009).

140 Cole, Critical Race Theory and education; Richard T. Patterson ‘Marx, race, and the political problem of identity’ in Andrew Valls (eds), Race and racism in modern philosophy (New York, 2005); or Charles W. Mills, From class to race: essays in white Marxism and black radicalism (New York, 2003).
For the most part, Irish historians have refrained from engaging in this debate, asserting, as Cian McMahon more recently argued, that nation and not race was the most significant force in the Irish narrative within and outside of Ireland. Nevertheless, the work of Nini Rodgers, which attempts to situate Ireland within a Black Atlantic narrative, shows that some were at least willing to engage in the paradigm.

Outside of Ireland, CRT had many critics. Marxist historians in particular have refuted CRT studies, airing concerns that separating studies of race from class shifts attention away from what they see as the root of oppression: capitalism. They welcomed social histories that incorporate historically omitted groups into class-based studies, while greeting works that explore the role racism has played in dividing working-class movements with more scepticism. Many felt airing labour’s ‘dirty laundry’ in this way exposed divisions in working-class solidarity, thus challenging the premise that economic forces alone could bring the working classes together.

One particularly important aspect of this debate was the development of ‘whiteness studies.’ This area of research has sought to deconstruct the universal notion of ‘white privilege’ by focusing on groups, such as the Irish and Jews, whose white identity did not necessarily provide them with the same degree of cultural capital as other more privileged white groups. This approach was presented as a way to re-establish the importance of class within racial studies. It linked racial performativity to external conditions, subject to change based on time, place, and space – a thesis validated by sociological studies. David R. Roediger’s *The wages of whiteness* was one of the pioneering works in this field. By exposing the myopia of ‘white identity’ he

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142 Rodgers’ work focuses on Irish connections to the slavery and anti-slavery debates developing from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. While her brief introduction, refrains from linking her work to CRT studies, the thesis certainly aligns with some of the aims of CRT studies. Nini Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery, and anti-slavery: 1612-1865* (Basingstoke, 2007).
143 Mills, *From class to race*, p. 127.
144 The phrase ‘dirty laundry’ comes from a conversation Roediger had with another historian about the reception of the work. Roediger used the conversation to open the preface to the third edition of his work. David R. Roediger, *The wages of whiteness: race and the making of the American working class: revised edition* (New York, 2007), p. x.
146 Roediger, *The wages of whiteness*. 34
contended that race could not be discussed without class, any more than class could be contextualised without race.

Unlike CRT studies, the Irish have dominated the 'whiteness' debate. In his work, Roediger used Irish Americans as a group whose historically ambiguous white identity at times linked their racial experiences to those of Black Americans. He placed particular emphasis on antebellum North America, where Irish and Black workers competed for unskilled labouring employment. Both groups suffered racism and the impact of society pushing them outside of a white narrative. Compelling and well-documented cases of black workers complaining of being wrongfully treated like Irishmen have duly served to expose the perplexing and interwoven narratives of Irish whiteness, blackness, and American racism.

In addressing these issues, Noel Ignatiev has taken Roediger's findings even further, claiming that Irish Americans were 'bleached' and further equating this process to the group's acquiescence to American capitalist culture. Blurring the lines of race even further, Ignatiev claimed the embrace of whiteness by the Irish caused them to 'cease being green.' The implication was that if the Irish had not experienced social elevation and integration into American society then they would never have become white. This position, however, is problematic, especially given that Ignatiev's intent was more than just asserting the dominance of class over race; his aim was to challenge the very notion of racism by declaring that race was a construct of the capitalist imagination. Ignatiev was in essence attempting to use the experiences of Irish Americans to swing the pendulum away from CRT.

Ignatiev's depiction of the Irish as a group outside the boundaries of whiteness certainly appealed to Irish historians who were quick to link Irish racial experiences to those of other non-white groups. Recently, works by Margaret Brehony have applied this perspective to the experiences of Irish workers in a wider global context, demonstrating how Irish workers abroad could be used as a tool to promote whiteness

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147 Ibid, 133.
148 Noel Ignatiev, How the Irish became white (London, 1995), 'white to green' p. 3 and 'bleaching' p. 31.
149 Ibid, p. 205.
150 Lauren Onkey, Blackness and transatlantic Irish identity: Celtic soul brothers (London, 2010).
abroad, while simultaneously being refused a white identity at home.\textsuperscript{151} Similarly, George Bornstein used this reshaping; of Irish whiteness to link Irish racial identity to Jewish populations, another group pushed to the margins of whiteness.\textsuperscript{152}

Whiteness studies have not received the same degree of attention in British history as they have in the United States.\textsuperscript{153} The studies that have been completed on the interrelationship of race, class, and labour movements have largely focused on tensions between white British populations and the arrival of Black and Asian workforces from parts of the Empire.\textsuperscript{154} One prominent British historian of race relations, Kenneth Lunn, has argued that this binary view of race has been corrosive to the field because it ignores the external factors impacting race.\textsuperscript{155} Similarly, in 2010, Neville Kirk called on British labour historians to, 'take a leaf out of US labour history's book by paying far more attention to historical constructions of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' and their interplay with class, gender, nation, and empire.'\textsuperscript{156} Many, like Bronwen Walter and Mary Hickman, have already begun this process, integrating American dialogues into their studies of Irish racial identity in England.\textsuperscript{157} Both have argued that, unlike in American historiography, where Irish assimilation is used as an example of the expanding boundaries of white identity, boundaries of English whiteness did not change to admit the Irish.

The debate around anti-Irish racism in general is certainly not new. Numerous studies on anti-Irish racism both in the United States and England have further supported the notion that British and American visions of whiteness did not include the Irish.\textsuperscript{158} Capturing the significance of its influence, this conclusion has even been applied

\textsuperscript{151} Margaret Brehony, 'Free labour and the whitening of the nation: Irish migrants in colonial Cuba' in Soother, 38 (2013), pp 7-18 and Margaret Brehony, 'Neither white nor free: Irish railroad workers in the troubled colony of Cuba, 1835-1837' in Maebh Ni Fhuarthain and David Doyle (eds), Ordinary Irish life (Dublin, 2013), pp 146-68.

\textsuperscript{152} George Bornstein, The colors Zion: Blacks, Jews and the Irish from 1845-1945 (Cambridge, MA, 2011).

\textsuperscript{153} John Solomos, Race and racism in Britain ([3rd ed.], New York, 2003), p. 23.

\textsuperscript{154} For key examples of these works, please see, Laura Tabili, "We ask for Justice" workers and racial difference in late Imperial Britain (Ithaca, New York, 1994) and Paul Gilroy, There ain't no black in the Union ack: the cultural politics of race and nation (London, 2002).


\textsuperscript{156} Kirk 'Challenge, crisis, and renewal?', p. 174.

\textsuperscript{157} Bronwen Walter, Outsiders inside: whiteness, place, and Irish women (London, 2001).

to Irish Protestant communities abroad, a group whose identity is more commonly linked with Irish imperial identities. Nevertheless, the claim that Irish exclusion from British identity was a result of racism, however, has been disputed. Roy Foster, Stephen Howe and Sheridan Gilley have argued that distinctions made between the Irish Celt and the British Saxon were in fact grounded in cultural differences, not racial ones. They associated the process of racialising the Irish, with the wider imperial discourses of the time, which conflated cultural differences to racial ones. Gilley’s series of edited collections, which have given space to both Hickman and Walter, have been particularly aimed at complicating universal narratives of Irish experiences in Britain. Nevertheless, developments in whiteness studies have changed how these historians study the Irish in Britain and Irish racial identity more generally.

The growing popularity of whiteness studies has ignited significant backlash from historians claiming the focus on whiteness has confused the meanings of race. Opponents have cited concerns, including the delegitimisation of racism, the promotion of narratives of racial division over inter-racial class solidarity, the omission of gender dimensions, and the undermining of white privilege. After numerous calls for the re-interrogation of the concept, the journal of *International Labor and Working Class History* gave a platform to the debate in a 2001 issue. The strongest criticism came from American labour historian, Eric Arnesen, whose multi-fronted attack revisited the Irish experience. Arnesen argued that historians falsely assumed that the Irish were not...
white, or at least not conscious of their whiteness, prior to their arrival in the United States. He attributed this logic to historical manipulation, claiming: 'the Irish became white because historians, not their contemporaries, first made them “nonwhite” before making them “white” again.'\(^{165}\) While Arensen’s arguments received numerous responses for his ‘dismissive tone’, most accepted that whiteness needed to be re-interrogated.\(^{166}\)

Many of these studies of Irish racial identity were, however, focused largely beyond the nation’s borders.\(^{167}\) In his work, Bruce Nelson has shifted the focus back to racial consciousness within Ireland.\(^{168}\) His study of the nationalist movement tied racial consciousness to the construction of Irish national identity. Despite the notable advances made by Nelson, Irish socialist and labour leaders remained outside his inquiry. Nelson justified the omission through an assertion that radical labour leaders and socialists like James Larkin and James Connolly were internationalists who were beyond the ‘insular’ racial views of Irish nationalism.\(^{169}\) Nelson has not been alone in making this claim, with Joseph Lennon forming the same conclusion in his review of Connolly’s writings.\(^{170}\)

As this thesis will argue, this idealised depiction of these leaders fails to expose the contribution working-class leaders made to the making of the Irish race. While past studies of race and identity in Ireland have focused on nationalist movements and popular literature, this chapter will remain focused on the labour and socialist movement.\(^{171}\) It will explore how a dialogue of race helped form working-class identity. It will consider whether Irish working-class racial identity was, at times, presented as

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\(^{165}\) Arensen, ‘Whiteness and historians’ imagination’, p. 21.


distinct from other forms of Irishness and whether this identity allowed for the exclusion of individuals sharing similar ethnic backgrounds. It will discuss moments of racial inclusion, but also the prominent, and more common, moments when the Irish working-class movement excluded others on the basis of race. This is not intended as an indictment of the working-class movement or its leadership. As Laura Tabili noted in her study of race in Britain, the purpose of ‘assessing racial discourse and holding historical actors accountable is not to become racial critics but to understand how power structures can be manipulated to create racial difference regardless of race.’ This thesis acknowledges that racial discourse and consciousness were systemic and permeated society at all levels, including the working-class movement. In addressing these questions, the thesis aims to explore whether an Atlantic-imperial framework shaped perceptions of the racial identity of the Irish working-class, and how this complicates, complements or supersedes British imperial frameworks.

Organisation

While this thesis has been structured thematically, each of the three chosen topics – nation, religion, and race – influences the other. Due to the complexity of the Atlantic networks maintained from 1889 to 1917, the opening chapter sets the stage on which the Irish socialist movement takes place. It navigates the transatlantic space in which key socialist networks operated as a means of questioning how Irish working-class leaders developed policies, strategies, and propaganda to advance the working-class movement. Since the socialist movement took many of its ideas from the Atlantic and then applied them to the Irish situation, it is here that some of the differences between labour and socialist schools are explored. The chapter’s overall aim is to evaluate how Atlantic influences shaped Irish leaders’ interactions with the Irish working classes.

From here, the next chapter will consider how working-class leaders used the idea of the nation to construct a working-class identity. The chapter examines both political and cultural nationalist influences on the working-class movement in separate

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172 Tabili, *We ask for justice*, p. 181.
sub-sections. Each will give space to both national and Atlantic developments shaping Irish leaders’ projection of the nation. From here, it incorporates studies of socialism and modernism to raise questions concerning how wider cultural developments impacted how Irish working-class leaders engaged with the idea of the nation and popular nationalism. The chapter concludes by considering the impact of the First World War on this discourse.

The third chapter explores the role religion played in the working-class movement. This chapter opens by questioning how religious leaders engaged with the working-class movement and how working-class leaders engaged with formal religions. It then considers how perceptions of working-class faith impacted the spirituality of the working-class movement. From here, the chapter explores how the faith of Irish working-class leaders shaped their engagement with the working-class movement. Finally, the chapter considers how Irish workers used a spiritual language to communicate grievances and advance their cause.

The last chapter focuses on the construction of a racial identity within the working-class movement. The chapter opens by approaching the question of race and othering within the Irish labour movement. It does this by identifying immigrant populations in Ireland, labour conflicts igniting from fears of foreigners, and the limitations of Irish working-class inclusivity. From here, the chapter questions how imperial frameworks shaped Irish views of race and attempts to address whether these frameworks had British or wider Atlantic roots. The next section challenges the narrative of Irish whiteness by considering how anti-Semitism impacted the Irish working-class movement. Finally, the chapter questions how Atlantic racial prejudices impacted Irish views of other races, such as Asian workforces.

Overall, the purpose of this thesis is to interrogate how the Atlantic World shaped working-class developments in Ireland. It questions how this relationship impacted the course Irish working-class leaders took and how this course in turn affected the movement’s relationship to the Irish working classes. It will assess whether this relationship was beneficial or disadvantageous to the Irish working-class movement. It will explore the many facets impacting the construction of Irish working-class identity that also affected this process.
Introduction

In recent years, the field of labour history has been redefined by the 'transnational turn'. The advantages of this approach for working-class studies and labour history are significant, given that most working-class movements operated through a series of networks that transcended national boundaries. These networks often existed under the banner of internationalism, but the mechanics that held them together were indeed transnational.1

Despite the strength of this historiographical shift, few have reflected on how internationalism, as an ideal, was shaped by transnationalism, as a process. The ideal and the process were not always complementary. Transnationalism exposes the problems of the unilateral vision shaping working-class internationalism. The exchange of ideas and materials across national lines could and often did lead to a gap between the ideal image of working-class identity and the realities of national working-class experiences. These instances expose one of the greatest paradoxes of transnationalism. As Patricia Clavin noted, 'transnational ties can dissolve some national barriers while simultaneously strengthening or creating others'.2 The study of the Irish working-class movement from 1889 to 1917 offers a clear example of how transnational networks enforced barriers between working-class leaders and the national audiences they were attempting to address.

In order to fully understand the problem, it is important to highlight the limitations of working-class internationalism. Structurally, working-class leaders

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1 In his work on international organisations and the global community, Akira Iriye accredits early internationalist bodies of the Second International Era as being among the feature non-state actors engaging in transnational cooperation. Akira Iriye, Global Community: the role of international organizations in the making of the contemporary world (Berkley, 2002), pp ix and 12.

operated within the confines of the nation-state. State laws, regulations, and political
structures limited their ability to spread working-class radicalism beyond the nation. As
a way to move beyond these limitations, socialists appealed to a sense of cultural
internationalism. Martin Geyer described this process by stating:

Socialists attempted to internationalise culture by appealing to common threads of European cultural concerns. While modifications are made to establish connections to master narratives already in place, the underlying premise of such policies was an attempt to internationalise the working class.  

Geyer's description of these modifications captures part of the process taking place. Socialist leaders had to negotiate working-class internationalism within national spheres. National regulations and laws were compounded with cultural distinctions, language barriers, and general differences of opinion on what socialist internationalism should look like.

While such tangible barriers to working-class internationalism are clear, of equal, if not greater importance, are the less readily identified self-imposed limitations. The reality of working-class internationalism was that it was not an indiscriminately inclusive movement. Restrictions on who the movement appealed to developed largely from the attitudes of many of its leaders. Some historians have examined this process and highlighted how, for instance, socialist internationalism was primarily white and masculine. Following these studies, this chapter proposes to deepen our understanding of socialist internationalism's self-imposed limitations through an analysis of the Irish working-class movement.

It is the contention of this chapter that the study that transnationalism offers further insight into these abstract self-imposed restrictions. The transnational networks in which Irish socialist and labour leaders often operated limited their vision of working-class internationalism. To them working-class identity was urban-focused and restricted to the Atlantic World. This image led working-class radicals down a course of action that

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3 Geyer and Paulmann (eds), The mechanics of internationalism, p. 23.
focused on the urban working classes and borrowed from nations with more advanced labour movements. Ireland's largely agrarian-based economy, significant migrant workforce, and large emigrant population meant that Atlantic-oriented strategies and visions did not fit the Irish situation.

It was for these reasons that socialists were largely unable to tap into the popular consciousness of the Irish working classes. Emmet O'Connor drew this conclusion in his study of the early years of the Irish trade union movement, where he argued that trade union leadership remained tied to British strategies and policies in dealing with Irish labour questions. O'Connor argued that this 'bizarre self-denial' or 'mental colonisation' was the primary reason for the stifled development of Irish labour radicalism during its early years.\(^5\) Certainly, the consistent return to imperial cultural manifestations of masculinity, nationalism, and white identity throughout this thesis, will serve to validate O'Connor's assertion. The only problem with the exclusivity of this framework is that it neglects influences beyond Britain. American influences, for example, were a key part to the movement's development and therefore have a role to play in this debate. In fact, the American brand was used as a way to advertise and validate working-class radicalism in Ireland, which carried appeal largely for its seemingly non-colonial, or more importantly, non-English roots.

This added American influence, however, did not mean moving beyond an imperial consciousness. The chapter will consider whether, the international working-class movement was itself tied to an imperial apparatus that was largely driven by Anglo-American imperial culture. Exploring the working-class movement through a transnational lens, therefore, does not promise to liberate Ireland from its imperial burdens. Within this wider framework, however, we can understand the extent of the self-imposed limitations of both Ireland's labour movement and its more radical socialist branch. It allows us to see beyond the British Isles and into the wider Atlantic World and to answer questions concerning how Irish working-class leaders crafted working-class identity and how much the Irish working classes agreed with their vision.

Leaders

The experiences of two Irish labour leaders—Cornelius Lehane and Patrick Tobin—are representative of the operation of Ireland’s radical transnational networks. Lehane, a Cork ISRP organiser, left Ireland in 1901 to settle in London’s Finsbury Park, where he was later joined by fellow former party member Patrick Tobin. The two lived together and were active in the Finsbury Park branch of the Socialist Democratic Federation (SDF). Taking a leadership role in the SDF breakaway, the Socialist Party of Great Britain (SPGB), Lehane became the general secretary of the new party and editor of its paper, the *Socialist Standard*. Tobin left London for Spain, before settling in France, where he joined the revolutionary-Marxist Guesdist. Lehane returned to Ireland briefly in 1914, for a celebration with his old Irish socialist comrades, including his former English contact and Ireland’s newest socialist radical, James Larkin, before departing to the United States. In America, Lehane threw himself into the Socialist Party of America (SPA) and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) until his arrest along with other leading IWW members for seditious wartime activity.

Lehane and Tobin’s stories were not uncommon. Emigration helped define the Irish socialist movement, not unlike the Irish population as a whole, which saw an estimated 1,042,610 emigrate from 1889 to 1917. This experience of emigration had an important impact on the way radical circles operated. Irish socialists developed a vision of Irish internationalism largely through their own transnational experiences. Since these leaders played the greatest role shaping working-class dialogues around identity and internationalism, it is essential to understand how these transnational networks shaped their conception of the Irish working-class movement. In order to capture the importance of these leaders’ transnational networks for the movement, several case studies have been selected for focus.

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6 Cornelius Lehane to Henry Patrick Hogan, 24 January 1905 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/2).
7 Ibid, 5 and 6 February 1904.
Although some like Tobin ended up in continental Europe and others, like George Brennan, made their way to Australia, most of Ireland’s socialists moved between Atlantic urban centres. Considering the ISRP had such a small membership base or, as De Leon famously quipped, ‘more syllables than party members’, a good number of former ISRP members ended up resettling in New York. Two of the Lyng brothers, Thomas O’Brien, James Mulray and James Connolly were all in the greater New York area by late 1906. Despite their varying levels of commitment to the cause, they continued to communicate with their former Dublin contacts. Thomas O’Brien even wrote back home to his brother William joking about Connolly and John Lyng’s interest in American politics, claiming that not much had changed since their departure from Ireland.

Socialist networks served a variety of purposes to both individuals connected to the movement and their parties. These systems were maintained and expanded largely through connections already in place. When sending party members abroad, national leaders could look to those who had already left to welcome them, secure in the knowledge that the common plight of the working-class contributed to an increased willingness to help the cause. This type of networking was described in Fred Bower’s autobiography both through his own movements and his helping of others. While in Liverpool, Bower recalled Larkin sending over an ITGWU worker who needed help settling abroad after facing legal action for his involvement in the Dublin strike. Bower recalled not only hosting the man in Liverpool, but also aiding him in his continued journey by reaching out to other contacts in the movement. Similarly, Larkin’s 1914-5 American tour was constructed using Connolly’s American contacts, which explains why Larkin immediately integrated into the SPA instead of the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), the party with which Irish socialism was previously aligned. This process is important as it reaffirmed the belief of Irish socialists that the Irish working classes were part of a wider Atlantic urban community.

10 George Brennan to James Connolly, 8 November 1913 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,939/3).
13 Ibid, 12 February 1906.
For those abroad who maintained involvement in the movement, socialism was both a mechanism of integration into the host nation and a direct link to party politics at home. This symbiotic relationship increased the importance of immigrant party members within both their home and adoptive parties. Socialists living abroad were used as contacts for foreign funding and, arguably the most important role, as brokers of literature exchanges. Given lack of funds, donations of foreign literature became an implicit obligation of socialists living abroad. Thomas O’Brien wrote from London promising his brother William O’Brien the most recent copies Justice, the SDF paper, as soon as he went to a meeting. Lehane sent initial issues of the Socialist Standard to Henry Patrick Hogan in Cork. James Connolly, facing hard times after his departure to the United States, even made a request to send American pamphlets in lieu of money for his membership fee to the ISRP. The fact that this type of exchange was common practice could partly explain the Workers’ Republic’s original financial difficulties. The paper was exchanged with over 25 different socialist newspapers from over seven different countries, all of which were conducted in place of collecting subscriptions. The party’s expansive socialist library did not compensate for the lack of domestic subscribers. The ISRP had the international perspective, but not the national audience.

The political dimension of these relationships can easily be overstated. Socialist party members remained in contact for a variety of reasons and politics was just one. Often these relationships were maintained just out of friendship or a longing for home. After entering the Brixton SDF, Albert Luckhussen wrote back to E.W. Stewart yearning to return to Dublin citing both the jingoistic atmosphere engulfing Britain at the time of the Boer War as well as jokingly adding his fear of ‘losing his beautiful Irish brogue’. Luckhussen’s whimsical remarks reflect both his friendship with Stewart and his desire

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Cornelius Lehane to Henry Patrick Hogan, 24 January 1905 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/2).

James Connolly to Michael Rafferty, undated c.1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,914).

Exchanges of the Workers’ Republic for foreign titles included: 1) American based: The People (New York), Social Democrat (Chicago), The Workers Call (Chicago), Losin (Minneapolis), Haverhill Social Democrat (Haverhill, Massachusetts), The Hibernian (Boston), Socialist Union (Seattle), Socialist Temple (Chicago), Missouri Socialist (St. Louis); 2) English based: Reynolds Newspaper (London), Justice (London), Independent Labour Party News (London); 3) Scottish based: Labour Leader (Glasgow) 4) French based: La Voix Républicaine (Paris), Le Petit Noi (Paris); 5) Australian based: The Brisbane Worker (Sydney), The Socialist League (Sydney); 6) German based: Vorworts (Berlin); 7) Canadian based: Citizen and Country (Toronto). Account books of ISRP, undated (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674/2:3).

Albert Luckhussen to E.W. Stewart, 19 December 1899 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674(2)/1).
to return to his previous residence. The small circles in which these individuals operated often sparked intimate, life-long friendships that could blur the lines between ideological party links and purposeful international socialist relationships. It was a combination of the personal, familial and ideological that welded them together.

Nonetheless, Irish socialism did benefit significantly from the international press network, due largely to the movement’s emigrant community. When the Workers’ Republic collapsed in Dublin and ISRP was without a paper to provide to its American subscribers, the SPGB agreed to fulfil obligations through their own paper the Socialist Standard. This agreement was possible only because Lehane was now a member of the SPGB’s Finsbury Park branch. In fact, the SPGB paid dearly for this promise since the SPI’s continued financial distress meant it was unable to cover the costs of its subscriptions and the SPGB was forced to fulfil the obligation. Lehane’s role as editor of the Socialist Standard limited what could have been a significant rift between the two parties. In spite of the default, the SPI was able to maintain a relationship with the SPGB and this relationship later allowed James Connolly to call on former SPGB member Neil Maclean, to help with the printing of a later Irish socialist paper, the Worker.

Connections were not always utilised for positive motives. It was also common practice to appeal to international connections during factional disputes within national organisations. When rifts broke out between parties, rebuttals were often printed in international socialist organs. Sometimes these were politically motivated. Usually a paper’s willingness to engage depended on personal connections maintained through these transnational networks. James Connolly’s feud with De Leon, the American SLP leader, can be found in the pages of the American SLP paper, the People, and the Scottish SLP paper, the Socialist, mainly because Connolly’s former Edinburgh contact, James Matheson, agreed to print Connolly’s rebuttal when the People would not. These practices did cause problems between socialist parties internationally and domestically. After the Socialist printed the Connolly article, a London reader wrote in

20 Executive Minute Book of the Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain, 14 June 1903 (B.L., Socialist Party of Great Britain Papers, MS 52,602).
21 The SPI offers to close the debt in 1906 with a final one-time payment, but the SPGB refused to accept. Ibid, 9 January 1904, 18 September 1904, 15 March 1905, 8 April 1906.
22 James Matheson to James Connolly, 16 May 1905 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,906/1). For the Connolly article, please see The Socialist, June 1904. For the De Leon article, please see the Daily People, 22 June 1901. Further details on the nature of this dispute can be found in chapter two.
complaining that the article was nothing more than 'a round about the tube through which to squirt at the SLP of the USA.'\textsuperscript{23} Another reader complained about the fact that a Scottish paper contained too much American material.\textsuperscript{24} Despite Connolly's assurances that this debate was purely ideological, Matheson expressed fears that his support of Connolly's action could have ramifications on his party.\textsuperscript{25} Nevertheless, caught between party ideology and loyalty to his old friend and comrade, Matheson was willing to face the potential consequences of his action.

Obstacles stemming long-term transnational relationships such as these were not the only issues parties faced. As American historian Shelton Stormquist has argued, even short-term exchanges contributed a transnational dimension to national working-class movements. Focusing on the practice of international exchanges, Stormquist argued that the international mobility of socialist speakers shaped their understanding of working-class internationalism.\textsuperscript{26} While these tours were reserved for the socialist elite, they added a transnational dimension on an individual level that impacted the way leaders chose to communicate working-class internationalism.

This perspective did not always translate well into a national context. For example, while visiting France, Bill Haywood, a leader of the American IWW, received an invitation from the British paper, the \textit{Daily Herald}, to travel to London to speak on behalf of Jim Larkin in the wake of Larkin's arrest in Dublin. The French Confederation of Labour provided Haywood with a cheque to cover the journey.\textsuperscript{27} After Larkin's release, Haywood travelled with him to Dublin to speak by his side. Haywood greeted Irish audiences by proclaiming he was there through the power of internationalism and that the 'American rebels' were with Irish workers. Captain Jack White of the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) took to the stage immediately following to assert that he was not a rebel, but a man who was committed to protecting the working classes.\textsuperscript{28} White clearly did not want the ICA to be seen as 'rebels', especially since many in the Irish public viewed

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\textsuperscript{23} G. Geis to the editor of \textit{The Socialist} (James Matheson), undated (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,907).
\textsuperscript{24} Matheson to Connolly, 7 June 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,906).
\textsuperscript{25} For Connolly assuring nature of responses would be political, please see, Connolly to Matheson, 6 May 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,906). For Matheson expressing fears for ramifications of the party, please see, Matheson to Connolly, 16 April 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,906).
\textsuperscript{26} Shelton Stormquist, 'Rethinking working-class politics in comparative-transnational contexts' in Haverty-Stacke and Walkowitz (eds), \textit{Rethinking U.S. labor history}, p. 86.
\textsuperscript{27} William Haywood, \textit{The autobiography of Big Bill Haywood} (New York, 1929), pp 272-3.
\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Irish Independent}, 1 December 1913.
\end{flushright}
Haywood’s ‘rebels’ as extremists, particularly in the aftermath of his high-profile American murder trial. White’s caution captured the problematic aspects of these transnational outlooks. Sometimes seeing beyond national boundaries was problematic for national opinions and popular attitudes. Interestingly enough, White was later charged for his own seditious speech when he called for Welsh miners to strike in sympathy with Dublin rebels as a means of preventing the execution of James Connolly. The wife of Scottish radical James Maclean attempted to use White’s remarks as justification for a reduction in her husband’s sentence, claiming White’s ‘renegade’ behaviour was far worse than that of her socialist husband. Working-class militancy and radicalism were certainly relative in spite of international solidarity.

Asserting that these tours produced or enhanced a transnational understanding of internationalism undercuts the national objectives that supported them. Speaking engagements were often designed with national objectives in mind. When American Federation of Labor (AFL) leader Samuel Gompers reported on his 1909 visit to Ireland, he opened by pointing out that he was happy to be there because about 30 per cent of the two million members in his organisation were Irish. The remark was a way for Gompers to validate his ability to speak to an Irish working-class audience with a sense of authority, but it also revealed a level of self-interest underlining his embrace of international networks. Irish leaders were just as guilty of this. The ITUC regularly maintained fraternal exchanges with the Scottish TUC. However, the exchanges served little practical purpose to the Congress. Instead, their value came from post-TUC speeches in which foreign delegates primarily appealed to the diaspora for labour votes to support their host.

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29 Haywood and his fellow Western Miner’s Federation leaders stood trial for the murder of a former Idaho governor after the admitted assassin claimed the murder was ordered by the union’s leadership. While the Western Miner’s Federation was cleared of all charges, the press coverage of the event sensationalised the image of Haywood and his colleagues. Terms such as ‘murder gang’, ‘assassins’, and ‘Idaho chapter of horrors’ were all used to describe the Western Miner’s Federation branch and its leadership in the Irish press. Examples of Haywood’s recent trial coverage in the Irish press can be found in the *Irish Independent*, 20 March 1906; 10 May 1907; 12 May 1907; 7 June 1907; 10 June 1907; 12 June 1907, *Sunday Independent*, 9 June 1907 or *Irish Times*, 8 June 1907; 11 June 1907; 19 June 1907; or 22 June 1907.

30 Letters from A. McLean asking for a reduction in her husband’s sentence, 1 December 1916 (N.A.S., Home Secretary Files, HH16/123, Case of John McLean, Folder 5/No. 26385/15).

31 *American Federationist*, September 1909.
However, for all their limitations, these tours could sometimes further develop transnational links. James Fearon, Newry native and Glasgow socialist, teamed up with James Larkin during his 1905 Glasgow tour, following Larkin to Ireland as a recruitment agent for the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL). Fearon organised a sympathetic strike amongst Newry dock workers during the 1907 Belfast dock strike and later faced arrest alongside Larkin in connection with the Cork ITGWU scandal. Similarly, Peter Rowman claimed that Thomas Kennedy became involved in the Irish labour movement after working with Larkin in Scotland. Thomas Kennedy then came to Ireland in 1911 when Larkin gave him a position as an organiser for the ITGWU. In this regard, the ability of these tours to foster individual connections cannot be understated. The connections fostered abroad directly shaped the course of the Irish movement.

While instances discussed thus far have been examples of short-term obstacles, the consistent return to these networks could be detrimental in the long-term as well. Perhaps their most important collective contribution was the inflated sense of socialist success that Irish leaders developed from operating in circles where socialism had a greater impact on national politics. In Ireland, these connections led to a belief that solutions to working-class problems were to be found in Atlantic World.

This process partly explains how Irish socialists crafted a vision of the mechanics of the Irish working-class movement. Ultimately, their continued exchanges with predominately urban-based radical circles shaped their debates on socialist action, methods of labour organisation, and models for working-class propaganda. As we shall see, these urban influences differed considerably from the reality of Ireland’s predominately rural economic society. Yet, it was this image that fostered the false reality to which many Irish labour leaders clung. They remained focused on the modern urban industrial world even in the face of the obvious fact that Ireland was not yet part of this world.

While the individual experiences of socialist leaders could impact movements, some individual experiences were also shaped by the movements themselves. To return to Lehane, while he did break from the SSDF and individually established links between

33 Peter Rowan, ‘Introduction to Thomas Kennedy Collection’, undated (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS 33,718).
the ISRP and the SPGB, it could be argued that his original decision to join the SDF as a
dissenting member was pre-determined by his socialist education within the ISRP. SDF
Finsbury Park member J. Friedberg’s letter to Connolly anticipated that Lehane’s arrival
would further the impossibilist cause in the branch, indicating that Lehane’s Irish
socialist experience would play a critical role in shaping his English one.\textsuperscript{34} This indicates
that individual actors were parts of wider movements and that these movements, as
much as the individual actors, directly impacted the experience of Irish socialism.

The Movements

Between the years 1889 and 1917, Atlantic socialism was highly prone to factionalism,
resulting in a complex web of national and international networks. In Ireland, where
sectarianism was a significant aspect of Irish working-class culture, it is perhaps
unsurprising that such factionalism prevailed even in the nation’s relatively small
socialist movement. As table 1.1 demonstrates, Irish socialist factionalism did not result
in isolation, as each group held a position within the Atlantic socialist world. The table
captures the schisms and mergers that occurred within each national party throughout
this period and also gives an indication of the general schools in which these groups
operated. Sharing an ideological school did not necessarily mean sharing a direct party
affiliation; some of these parties were more autonomous than others. Nevertheless, the
purpose of the table is to illustrate some of these splits and links and to simplify an
otherwise complicated network of radical political groups. This table only reflects
socialist bodies that were politicised. It does not include socialist clubs, working-class
societies, trade unions or labour councils, which remained connected to the political
movement in varying and complex ways throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries.

\textsuperscript{34} J. Friedberg to James Connolly, 24 January 1902 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,946).

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Table 1.1: National factionalism and transnational unity: Irish socialism in the Atlantic World, 1889-1916

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ireland</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>ISU – Irish Socialist Union</td>
<td>SDF – Social Democratic Federation</td>
<td>SDF – Social Democratic Federation</td>
<td>SLP – American Socialist Labor Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>ILPI – Independent Labour Party of Ireland</td>
<td>BSS – Belfast Socialist Society</td>
<td>BSP – British Socialist Party</td>
<td>Revolutionary /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td></td>
<td>BSP – British Socialist Party</td>
<td>NSP – National Socialist Party</td>
<td>imposibilists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Please note this table only represents socialist political parties and does not include socialist societies or clubs including Fabian or Clarion Clubs. Societies of this nature are only listed when these groups developed into a formal socialist party.
These networks were further complicated by their blurring of the political and personal spheres. These circles were small and often personal quarrels could often prove as damaging as clashing socialist perspectives and sectarian inspired differences. In 1904, for instance, Cornelius Lehane broke with the SDF, because of a series of personal insults delivered by other members. He was particularly incensed by a female party member who, he claimed, personally attacked him because ‘he declined to have sexual relations with her’.

Whether ideological or personal these splits played an important role in establishing and maintaining the direction of national socialist movements. They also offer a wider frame in which to understand Ireland’s position within the Atlantic World.

In 1889, when the Second International opened, there were already significant tensions plaguing the American, Scottish, and English movements. In England, the leading Marxist Party, the SDF attempted to challenge working-class allegiances to the Liberal Party by crafting a clear working-class platform. However, the Marxist movement had suffered a significant rift in 1885 when leading socialist intellectuals including William Morris, Edward Aveling, Eleanor Marx, and Walter Crane broke away from the SDF, citing problems with the party’s leader Henry Hyndman. These breakaways formed a new party, the Socialist League, and began producing a separate socialist newspaper, *Commonweal*. By 1890, rifts had in turn emerged within the Socialist League, which eventually fell into the control of anarcho-socialists, leading to a further split. However, rather than returning to the SDF, a number of branches remained independent and refused to re-affiliate to their original party. The result was that England’s attempt to craft a separate political voice for the working classes was from the beginning split into a number of conflicting directions.

Scottish working-class politics suffered from similar factional splits, though from a slightly different starting point. While the English-led Socialist League and SDF

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57 Cornelius Lehane to Henry Patrick Hogan, 5 and 6 February 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/3).
58 Reactions of Socialist League members to the decision to split can be found in the minute books of the Hammersmith Socialist Society. This branch was one of the branches that remained independent after it disaffiliated with the Socialist League. For a direct reference to this decision please see, ‘The Hammersmith Socialist Society Minutes’ 23 November 1890 (B.L., Hammersmith Society papers, MS 45,893).
maintained a number of branches in Scotland, the main impetus for the Scottish break came from a Scottish Liberal Party crisis. The Liberal Party’s continued focus on Irish home rule created tension amongst Scottish working-class leaders, who argued that this focus neglected the interests of Scottish labour. Scottish labour leaders decided to politicise labour without taking an outright socialist platform. This decision placed them in an unstable position between the Liberal Party and the SDF. To the dismay of the SDF, the Scottish Socialist Federation, an Edinburgh branch supposedly loyal to their party, endorsed the plan. The result in 1891 was the establishment of the Scottish Labour Party, and in 1893, the creation of the larger British movement, the Independent Labour Party (ILP). While the ILP initially remained a strictly labour-based non-socialist party, its continued growth in Scotland and Northern England made it the face of labour-led socialism in both nations, which of course offered another political avenue for working-class supporters to take.

In the United States, the growth of urban militancy resulted in the emergence of a distinct brand of revolutionary socialism emerging in American cities. This growth resulted from a combination of disillusionment incurred after the failed coalition of the Left during William Jennings Bryan’s 1896 presidential campaign, the suppression of anarchism in the wake of the Haymarket Affair, and urban alienation under populist-led politics. After a failed attempt to seize control of the American trade union movement through the AFL, the leading American revolutionary socialist party, the SLP, decided to promote syndicalism, which required the organisation of workers across trades for a general strike. The creation of the separate SLP union, the Socialist Trade and Labour Alliance, however, caused tensions within the party. Despite objections from SLP members who believed forcing workers into a separate union would fracture the working-class movement, the SLP went ahead with the strategy. Morris Hillquit, a leading New York SLP member, broke from the party in 1898 over the issue. In 1901, Hillquit’s supporters merged with the SDP to form the SPA. The SPA shifted increasingly towards evolutionary socialism in contrast to the SLP’s focus on Marxist-inspired politics.

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38 The executions of the Haymarket anarchists largely moved the movement underground where anarchosocialists operated largely within revolutionary socialist circles during these early years. For further reading on this period and the rise of revolutionary socialism in America, please see Paul Buhle, Marxism in the United States: a history of the American left (3rd ed., New York, 2013), pp 9-57.
and syndicalism. The SPA shift resulted in some of the nation's leading labour
organisers, such as Eugene Debs, joining the new movement. The SLP's hard-line
revolutionary platform garnered more attention in international circles, but its political
success failed to match that of the SPA. Internationally, however, English speaking
socialists began to see the SLP's leader, Daniel De Leon, as a leading Marxist intellectual.
This attention distorted the international perception of which American socialist party
was really making the most headway on the ground. Regardless, the American workers
were no shorter than their European counterparts in socialist options.

Second International debates further splintered Atlantic socialist movements
when the question of evolutionary or revolutionary socialist tactics climaxed at the 1900
Paris Convention. French socialist Alexandre Millerand's decision to accept a ministerial
position in the French government during the height of the Dreyfus Affair split
revisionist and revolutionary schools. Karl Kautsky issued a compromise decree that
sanctioned Millerand's action. Not all attendees supported the measure. Among the
notable dissenters was American SLP leader, Daniel De Leon. British SDF leader Henry
Hyndman's support of the resolution led to many SDF radicals turning to De Leon for
ideological leadership. Hyndman's strongest challenges again came largely from
Scotland, particularly from Edinburgh, where the new path of the Scottish Socialist
Federation had resulted in an increase in the militancy of some of the movements'
former members. Among these Scottish militants, or impossibilists as they would
come to be known, was future Irish socialist leader, James Connolly. His education
through these revolutionary Scottish socialist circles brought the debate to Irish shores.

Connolly's case suggests that Irish factions shared ideologies with similar groups
in the United Kingdom and the United States. Despite the appearances of division, they
saw themselves as part of a network of Atlantic working-class radicals looking to ignite a
working-class movement within their nation. While they may have differed from their

40 Nicholas Salvatore, Eugene Debs: citizen and socialist (Urbana, 1982).
41 Supporters of the compromise were nicknamed 'possibilists' for their belief that socialists could work
within capitalist governments to achieve palliative measures toward socialism. Opponents were called
'impossibilists' for their belief that reformism compromised the nature of revolutionary socialism. Articles
detailing each side of the debate as argued through Atlantic socialist circles can be found in the Daily
People, 16 July 1901. For the Irish position, please see Justice, 25 May 1901 or The Workers' Republic,
April 1903.
42 For an account of the connections between revolutionary Scottish circles and the American SLP, please
fellow national working-class comrades on political tactics, labour strategies, or socialist visions, they rarely felt isolated due to this position within these wider networks.

Plotting the course: Irish trade unionism, new unionism and socialism, 1889-1905

Unlike its counterparts in England, Scotland and America, Irish socialism was not developed enough by the 1890s to suffer from significant factional disputes. There were a number of SDF and Socialist League branches throughout the country, but they remained small and fleeting.\(^{43}\) Fabianism had the most effectiveness and staying power within Irish socialism during these early years. The Fabian societies were scattered throughout most major urban centres including Cork, Derry, Belfast and Dublin.\(^ {44}\) As in England, they attracted a small number of middle-class intellectuals, whose socialist views could vary, but often remained focused on evolutionary socialist aims.\(^{45}\) The Fabian focus on evolutionary socialism remained problematic for Irish members looking to turn the group into anything more than an impotent think-tank because Ireland's labour movement remained underdeveloped.

In 1889, Irish trade unionism was still clinging to older craft union models. 'New unionism', which sought to bring unskilled labourers into the trade union movement, had not developed as significantly in Ireland as it had in other countries. The American Knights of Labor and the English NUDL made some headway in Irish cities, but an Irish equivalent failed to develop.\(^ {46}\) According to the Board of Trade records, in 1892 only 6,856 Irish workers were affiliated to a \textit{bona fide} Irish trade union.\(^ {47}\) Most of these unions were based in Belfast and Dublin, with the exception of the House Painters, who had branches in Drogheda, Londonderry and Sligo, and the Bakers, who had branches in Clonmel and Kilkenny. While more Irish workers belonged to British unions and were

\(^{43}\) Lane, \textit{The origins of modern Irish socialism}, pp 90-6, 109, and 132-6.

\(^{44}\) For evidence of Fabian Societies in each of these cities, please see \textit{The Irish Examiner}, 10 August 1889 and \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 3 September 1903.

\(^{45}\) For further reading on the history of Fabian Societies, please see George Bernard Shaw, \textit{The Fabian Society: its early history} (London, 1892) and A.M. McBriar, \textit{Fabian socialism and English politics, 1884-1918} (Cambridge, 1966).

\(^{46}\) For a case study addressing the effect of these unions in Ireland, please see Shane McAteer, 'The 'new unionism' in Derry, 1889-1892: a demonstration in its inclusiveness in nature' in \textit{Saothar}, 16 (1991), pp 11-22.

\(^{47}\) \textit{Board of Trade (Statistics of Trade Unions) Labour Department Sixth Annual report by the Chief labour correspondent on trade unions (1892) with statistical tables [C.7436], H.C., 1894, pp 122-3.}
therefore calculated as part of their totals, the lack of independent Irish branches still highlights the underdeveloped state of the movement.

In spite of these apparent obstacles, Irish labour was making some headway, particularly in the area of politicisation. As Table 1.2 demonstrates, local trades councils began to develop from the mid-1890s, particularly in urban areas.

Table 1.2: Local advances in Irish trade unionism: local trades councils, 1889-1917

| Year | 1889 | 1890 | 1891 | 1892 | 1893 | 1894 | 1895 | 1896 | 1897 | 1898 | 1899 | 1900 | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 | 1906 | 1907 | 1908 | 1909 | 1910 | 1911 | 1912 | 1913 | 1914 | 1915 | 1916 | 1917 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Athlone |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Belfast |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Clonmel |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Cork |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Dublin |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Dundalk |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Drogheda |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Galway |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Kilkenny |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Limerick |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Londonderry |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Newry |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| N.Tipperary |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Queenstown |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Sligo |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Tralee |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Waterford |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

* The ITUC begins in 1894
** This table only reflects evidence from councils found in the following reports and listed newspapers

- **Sent a delegation to the ITUC**
- **Has a trades council, but did not attend the ITUC**

Sources: ITUC Reports 1894-1917 (N.A.I., Digital Collections), The Board of Trade Reports, Freeman's Journal, Irish Independent, Dundalk Democrat, and Connacht Tribune

While these councils remained largely focused on artisans' concerns, they nonetheless created a forum for labour in the public domain. This development at least increased labour's significance in the political realm on a local level.

There were also developments on the national level. On 4 May 1889, Irish labour leaders launched the Irish Federated Trades Congress. The event was far from visionary and ultimately proved short-lived, with the Congress collapsing in 1892. Representatives clung to traditional craft union concerns, pointing to 'the increasing pauperisation of the artisan, 'rather than attempting to mobilise Ireland's largely unorganised, unskilled
workforce. However, their desires for national autonomy and concern for the artisan reflected the two-pronged threat many traditional Irish labour leaders feared - outside challengers and increased unskilled militancy. To some, 'new unionism' appeared to be a product of both. Despite these conservative tendencies, the Irish Federated Trades Congress did make some progress. It exemplified a distancing of Irish objectives from those of England common to both Unionist and Nationalist labour circles. Delegates from Belfast, Dublin, Cork, Clonmel, Derry, Waterford, and Limerick came together to discuss ways Ireland could independently advance labour objectives on a national scale. This may have been a step backwards in addressing the needs of labouring people, but it was a step toward consolidating a power structure for labour on the island.

Labour leaders of both Unionist and Nationalist persuasions were willing to follow such a course of action due to the joint frustration they felt at their limited influence within the British Trade Union Congress (TUC). Irish representation to the TUC had steadily increased from 1889 to 1892 with Irish delegates rising from one to nine. In 1893, the TUC decided to hold its annual Congress in Belfast and 32 Irish delegates were able to take part. The Irish press described the event as the meeting of the new 'Parliament of Labour of the Three Kingdoms', with the Belfast United Trades Council (BUTC) president, Samuel Monro, serving as president of the event. It seemed that Ireland was finally getting the recognition from the United Kingdom that many labour leaders felt the nation deserved. These sentiments were short lived. Instead of moving forward after the 1893 TUC meeting, Ireland actually regressed. At the 1894 Norwich TUC, the number of Irish delegates decreased to seven and the Dublin Council of Trades Unions (DCTU) reported a loss of 2,000 affiliated members. The following year the DCTU did not send any delegates to the annual Congress in Cardiff.

A growing awareness that the difficulties causing this decrease were not a TUC priority caused frustration amongst Irish labour leaders and forced them to further question their significance to the British movement. In 1894, the BUTC even passed a resolution condemning the Parliamentary Committee of the TUC for not properly accommodating Ireland's minority status. The BUTC insisted that one member of the

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48 The meeting took place at Angel Street Hotel in Dublin. *Brotherhood*, May 1889.
49 *Irish Times*, 5 September 1893.
Parliamentary Committee should be an Irish delegate because neglecting to make such an accommodation equated to the TUC ‘attempting to oust Ireland from representation’.\(^{51}\) Irish representatives cited concerns about the location of the TUC’s annual meetings, the cost of attendance, and differing objectives of English and Irish labour movements among their grievances. In 1894, a compromise was reached when the TUC gave its blessing for Irish leaders to launch the Irish Trades Union Congress (ITUC) on the understanding that the ITUC would ‘supplement, not supplant’ the British body.\(^{52}\)

Dermot Keogh’s description of the ‘winds of change’ encapsulates these events. While the Irish labour movement was moving forward, its break from Britain meant its course was fraught with uncertainty and instability.\(^{53}\) By 1902, the ITUC represented only 70,000 workers, an average that remained steady until 1910. It would not grow significantly until 1917 when numbers jumped to 100,000. Even taking into consideration its smaller size, the number of delegates it sent to its annual congress fell far short of the numbers attending the congresses of its former affiliate, as evidenced by table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Uncertain growth: numbers of delegates at the annual Irish and British Trade Union Congresses, 1894-1917

![Graph showing numbers of delegates at the annual Irish and British Trade Union Congresses, 1894-1917]

*There was no ITUC Congress held in 1915.

Sources: ITUC and TUC Reports.

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\(^{51}\) Belfast United Trades Council Minutes, 13 December 1894 (L.H.L., Belfast United Trades Council papers, Box 1 Book 6).


\(^{53}\) Ibid.
Although the ITUC experienced uncertain growth, it offered, in the beginning at least, a prospect of real change, as delegates from outside the traditional power-bases of Dublin and Belfast could exercise a certain amount of influence. As the organisation continued to develop, however, the dominance of Dublin and Belfast increased. Essentially, Belfast and Dublin became guilty of the centralising tendencies that they accused the TUC of doing in 1894. The shared urban perspective of the Irish and British congresses resulted in the tendency of each to place urban reform first, in spite of national differences between the national economies. Nonetheless, even if the break from the TUC was a temporary set-back, as the close of the nineteenth century approached, Irish labour’s new, independent course offered some hope that the national trade union movement could advance.

Rather than chart an independent course, however, Irish leaders instead relied on past British approaches to Irish questions. If nineteenth-century British unions caused British labour values to be ‘superimposed on mainly Protestant membership in Ulster’, then the ITUC continued this process across the rest of the island. ITUC leaders like William Liddell (Parliamentary Committee member 1901), E.L. Richardson (Secretary 1894-1909), Hugh McManus (Chairmen 1901 and Parliamentary Committee member 1902-04), and John Simmons (Parliamentary Committee member 1901) were among the many Irish delegates who first served in the TUC. They maintained friendships and relationships with British leaders and understood the British movement to be much like a parent to the Irish one. While in the ITUC, they remained largely in a British world.

These developments sparked the interest of socialists who began reaching out to the Irish trade union movement. Irish Fabians had decided to focus on advancing Ireland’s national trade union movement, hoping that this would result in the advance of working-class politics. The Cork Fabian Society worked directly with the Cork United Trades Council to educate workers on the need for organisation and socialism. Co-sponsored and co-funded lectures brought some of England and Scotland’s leading socialist intellectuals, such as John Bruce Glasier and S.D. Shallard, to the city. The tone of these talks remained moderate, focusing on industrial concerns and palliative

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54 Emmet O'Connor and Trevor Parkhill (eds), Loyalism and labour in Belfast: the diary of Robert McElborough (Cork, 2002), p. 3.
55 Irish Examiner, 12 February 1900 and 12 January 1901.
objectives for the working classes. As such, they were criticised by Cork’s revolutionary socialist circles. James Connolly even wrote into *Justice* detailing Glasier’s tour by complaining about its Fabian character. Bruce Glaiser, however, defended the strategy. He appealed privately in a letter to Cornelius Lehane to ask that the ISRP restrain their attacks. He cited the need for the Irish moderate working-class movement to gain support before true revolutionary socialism could flourish.

In Dublin, Fabian leader Adolphus Shields sought to build a similar bridge between socialism to the city’s labour movement. Shields used the momentum from the 1890 Grand Canal strike to recruit unskilled workers into the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers, an English-based ‘new unionist’ society, led by Will Thorne and supported by leading British socialists including Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling. The hope was that the union could serve as a pathway to reaching the nation’s unskilled workforce, with the ultimate aim of bringing them into the working-class movement. By 1890, the Dublin branch of the union claimed 740 members. The city’s success led to the Second Annual Conference of United Kingdom affiliates being held in Dublin at the Ancient Concert Hall. Marx, Thorne, and Pete Curran attended and afterwards spoke to Irish workers at a massive Labour Day celebration in the Phoenix Park. Curran even managed to set up a separate Belfast branch that claimed a membership of 950, which he represented at the 1891 British TUC. This increased labour action led to the establishment of two short-lived labour papers in Dublin, the *Irish Labour Advocate* and the *Irish Worker*. For a city seemingly far behind Belfast in working-class politisation and consciousness, these advances offered a new level of optimism for Dublin’s role in Ireland’s working class.

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56 *Justice*, 31 March 1900.
57 Cornelius Lehane to James Connolly, 6 March 1900 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/1).
58 The National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers was organised by SDF leader Will Thorne and Ben Tillet in an attempt to promote ‘new unionism’ in the United Kingdom. For more information on Irish branches, please see the ‘Irish Trade and Labour Yearbook, 1912’ (N.U.I.G., Shields Family papers, T13 Box 6). The Grand Canal Dispute broke out in April 1890 over wage demands for canal drivers. For more information, please see the *Freeman’s Journal*, 19 April 1890; 26 April 1890; 30 April 1890.
59 *Freeman’s Journal*, 28 July 1890.
60 *Irish Times*, 18 May 1891.
However, much of Dublin working-class leaders’ optimism was tied to the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers, which ultimately proved a failure. In one of the union’s great scandals, a union agent, William Fitzpatrick raised £12 in collections but failed to turn over the money to the branch. After a court case, Fitzpatrick never paid and later absconded.\(^6\) Both Shields and fellow organiser, Michael Canty, left the union after the funds were nearly decimated from the pressures of the scandal and the costs of the city’s coal strike.\(^6\) After both the Dublin and Belfast branches of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers fell, many hopes of igniting a national working-class movement crashed with them. By 1902, the union sent its last delegate, from Cork, to the ITUC, but never again made headway in the country.\(^5\)

Belfast’s movement proved more resilient, but this was largely due to the city’s industrial development, which surpassed Dublin and the rest of the country. By 1891, 42.2 per cent of Belfast’s labour force belonged to the manufacturing sector in contrast to the national average of 10.5 per cent.\(^6\) The composition of the BUTC reflected these conditions. The number of affiliated members grew considerably from 110 in 1890 to 1,200 in 1891 and measured even further to 4,500 in 1893.\(^7\) Average weekly attendance at BUTC meetings jumped from 23 in 1889 to 69 in 1894, making the organisation the most significant regular voice of labour in the country.\(^8\) Even across the Atlantic, where Ireland was generally seen as being a rural society, the socialist press depicted Belfast as the quintessential industrial city defined by its unending power looms and textile factories available to exploit Irish workers.\(^9\)

The city’s early growth resulted in a trades council run by a more traditional leadership. One of its guiding lights, Samuel Monro, steered the council on a path of

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\(^6\) Irish Times, 11 September 1890.
\(^7\) O’Connor, A labour history of Ireland, p. 55.
\(^8\) In 1891, Michael Canty took over leadership of the union, but was forced to resign in 1892 taking a position in the Dublin Corporation Labourers Union. ITUC delegate lists, 1890-1902, (N.A.I., Irish Trade Union Congress Records, P3212).
\(^11\) BUTC Minutes 1889 and 1893 (L.H.L., Belfast United Trades Council, Box 1 Books 4 and 5).
\(^12\) Industrial Worker, 25 April 1914.
Christian respectability. He ensured that the BUTC mission was to elevate the culture of the working-class and raise them into the framework of labour's noble campaign. The position certainly made the council appealing to moderates, but it was not universally upheld by all BUTC members. Radicals within the BUTC hoped to lead the body down a more progressive course. Figures like Alexander Bowman and William Walker wanted to give the body a clear political objective by aligning it with the British ILP. Outside the BUTC as well, more progressive trade unionists, like Michael McKeown, worked to advance new unionism in the Belfast and throughout urban areas in Ireland, hoping that the movement would add pressure to the BUTC to embrace more progressive labour demands.

The BUTC focused on unionising Belfast's female workforce, which, due to the linen industry, was one of the city's fastest growing working populations. After a failed attempt to recruit women into the Women's Trade Union and Provident League, the BUTC sponsored Thomas Lord of the Textile Operatives Society (TOSI) in Lancashire to launch a branch of the union in the city. The establishment of the TOSI led to Mary Galway's long career as a union organiser and leading female labour personality. By 1901, TOSI claimed 1,200 female members, all of whom were Belfast-based.

Outside the trade union movement, socialism in Ulster also received a boost. American radical land reformer Henry George's 1885 tour prompted the embrace of progressivism by a number of future Belfast labour leaders, like Alexander Bowman and Richard McGee. These men had taken George's radical advice on land nationalisation and had begun to apply it to an urban context. In September 1889, another advocate of Henry George, Reverend John Bruce Wallace, followed suit. He shifted his focus from the rural poverty in Donegal to the urban working-classes of Belfast. He moved his headquarters of his Christian socialist paper, Brotherhood, from Limavady, Londonderry,

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70 For further information on Samuel Monro, please see Francis Devine, 'Hearing the children weeping': Samuel Monro, President of the Belfast Trade Union Council and British Trade Union Congress' in Saothar, 39 (2014), pp 5-19.
72 Michael McKeown served as an NUDL organiser and handed labour disputes in Derry, Belfast, Sligo, Dundalk and Waterford. For evidence of such activities, please see the Irish Labour Advocate, 14 February 1891 or O'Connor, A labour history of Ireland, p. 53.
73 Ibid, 24 January 1894.
75 Carr, The Belfast labour movement, p. 5.
to Belfast city and began publishing on the advances of English socialism and labour across Ireland. Wallace attempted to expand the content and readership of the paper to all of Ireland, changing the paper’s title to the *Weekly Star* in June 1890. The paper regularly advertised the Atlantic socialist press encouraging followers to read *Justice*, and American SLP news, the *Workmen’s Advocate*. Wallace, along with Hugh Hyndman and William Knox, successfully launched the Belfast Radical Association, a group dominated by Presbyterian radicals that would eventually evolve into the city’s first ILP branch. However, Wallace’s departure from Belfast to London in 1891 to take a role as the position as minister of the Southgate Street Church led to the demise of the paper and the end of a formal Christian Socialist organ in Ireland.

While these labour leaders were using their progressive outlooks to promote socialism, leaders within the BUTC were working to ensure the body remained connected to the ILP. Even before the formal launch of the ILP in 1893, Belfast leadership kept British ILP supporters abreast of events taking place in the city. Belfast’s ILP launch was an important moment for the city and the party as it affirmed the importance of both Belfast and the ILP within United Kingdom politics. The launch lived up to its goal, attracting an audience of 3,000 in Belfast Crown Chambers. The launch was an opportune time to utilise the top names in socialism. Edward Aveling, Pete Curran, Ben Tillet, and Kier Hardie all spoke at the event. After the commencement, William Knox and William Walker maintained weekly ILP propaganda, though not without a great deal of heckling and sectarian attacks instigated by evangelical opposition to their open-air meetings. Walker was not successful in using his influence in the BUTC to get the council to back the ILP, but he did continue to push the council in more progressive directions.

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76 *Brotherhood*, 14 September 1889.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid, 21 December 1889.
79 John Bruce Wallace and his congregation later played a central role in the ILP anti-war movement in London. For further information on the establishment of Wallace’s Southgate Brotherhood Church, please see Linehan, *Modernism and British socialism*, pp 68-70.
80 For examples of articles on Belfast’s labour development in the English independent labour press, please see *The Workman’s Times*, 21 May 1892; 26 May 1892 or 5 June 1892.
81 *Belfast News Letter*, 4 September 1893.
82 Ibid.
Dublin socialist leaders, now back at the drawing board after the failures of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers, decided the city needed education before agitation. The city’s main socialist body, the Dublin Socialist Society, operated under the wider banner of the Irish Socialist Union, but the organisation remained largely restricted to the city itself. Additionally, the party had no formal paper or clear party affiliation. Instead, they advertised in Justice and attempted to circulate both it and the ILP’s Labour Leader around the city. At Shields’ behest, the Dublin Socialist Society sent an invitation to Connolly to take a position as a full-time socialist propagandist for the city. Connolly’s arrival was soon marked by the 1896 establishment of the ISRP, a party that took the impossibilist line and therefore its lead largely from the American SLP model. Connolly’s Scottish connection proved to be ideologically and financially beneficial to the city’s new socialist movement. Keir Hardie provided the ISRP with a £25 loan that enabled it to set up its paper, the Workers’ Republic. By 1897, the party established additional regional branches outside of Dublin in Cork and Waterford.

It was slightly ironic that ILP money was used to shift Dublin socialism further away from the trade union movement and deeper into the schools of revolutionary socialist theory. The ISRP replaced the emphasis on labour and evolutionary socialism with revolutionary socialist tactics, addressing issues of imperialism and socialist impossiblism. This was not what Shields and other Dublin Socialist Society members anticipated and it explains why Shields slowly pulled away from the party after Connolly’s arrival. Dublin’s new course now focused on educating the Dublin workforce on militant socialism whether they were ready for it or not. The ISRP used the groundwork laid in progressive areas like Cork to preach a similar hard-line. However, the ISRP openly opposed moderate Fabian socialism, rather than meeting it in the middle. Contrary to David Lynch’s assertion that the ISRP became the nation’s leading educational body for socialism in Ireland, it in fact undermined some of country’s educational advances by crafting an exclusionary dialogue around reformism in a country that did not have a strong enough labour movement to handle hard-line

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84 Notes of Irish Socialist Republican Party, undated c. 1894 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,953).
86 Keir Hardie to James Connolly, 17 August 1898 (N. L. S., Keir Hardie papers, DEP 176 Box 1).
87 ISRP untitled notes, 25 April 1897 and undated c. 1896 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,953).
factionalism. Its complete disregard for the condition of Irish workers meant that the ISRP reached more of the Irish working classes through its legacy than it ever did in its lifetime.

After Connolly’s departure for Ireland, Scottish socialism continued to shift further away from the SDF and deeper into revolutionary socialist theory. In the wake of the Millerand debate, the SDF originally moved to silence impossibilists by restricting their access to the SDF paper, Justice. In turn, Scottish impossibilists went to the American SLP paper, the People, to air their grievances. This transnational complaint system went on until the group was able to launch its own paper, the Socialist, in 1902. The dispute increased circulation of the American socialist press in both Scotland and Ireland during these years. Hoping to give added momentum to the impossibilist opposition within the SDF, Connolly tried to broker a pan-Celtic link with Scottish radicals, linking the ISRP to the new Scottish movement.

Back in England, the SDF responded to the challenge by expelling leading impossibilists in April 1903 at the party’s London Convention. Scottish circles established a new party, the Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain (SLPGB) named directly after its American parent. Tensions in the SDF caused further English-based sections to splinter and establish a new Socialist Party of Great Britain (SPGB), an organisation intended to unite impossibilist schools throughout the United Kingdom. However, the party failed in this aim, largely because it came after the Scottish branch. Its decision to remain separate, according to Lehane, was due to its desire not to be ‘the rump end of a Scotch dog.’ Instead, it remained cordially independent from SLPGB, launching its own paper, the Socialist Standard, in September 1904.

The rise of impossibilism in Scotland and England mirrored the slow death of the movement in Dublin. In Cork, labour struggles and significant attacks from local clergy caused the local ISRP branch to collapse, while financial mismanagement eventually led to the party’s inability to continue production of the Workers’ Republic. When Cornelius

88 Lynch, Radicals in modern Ireland, pp 3-4.
89 Series of Letters from James Connolly to Alexander Anderson, 9 October 1901, 10 February 1902, undated c. 1902, 14 April 1902 (T.C.D., 1916 collection, James Connolly papers, MS 1174/2, 6, 7 and 9).
90 The Socialist, May 1903.
91 Cornelius Lehane to Henry Patrick Hogan, 5 and 6 February 1905 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/2).
92 Socialist Standard, September 1904.
Lehane announced that he would be leaving for London due to financial distress caused by his work in the movement, Connolly called Lehane a deserter, a remark that sparked fury amongst remaining Cork socialists, who stood by Lehane's sacrifice.93

Connolly had embarked on an American SLP-sponsored tour from 1902-3 and returned to find that the Dublin ISRP branch was also in shambles. The party was in significant financial distress, which Connolly blamed on the mismanagement of the bar maintained in the club rooms, another assertion that ignited fury amongst ISRP members.94 Desperate for funds, the party explored various options to keep afloat. In the Spring of 1903, Connolly went to Scotland and suggested forming a federation with the Scottish SLP, claiming such a plan would 'avoid the dangers of amalgamation, keep the Irish character of the movement free, and at the same time derive additional financial strength.'95 It was too little, too late, however. When the party voted to sell its printing press to pay the deficit, Connolly resigned in protest claiming that ending publication of the *Workers' Republic* would be a failure to honour American contributions to the paper that he collected in good faith. To his dismay, the party accepted his resignation.96 Disillusioned and unemployed, he decided to move to America and join the American SLP.97

Changing tactics and unifying schools, 1903-1910

Dublin socialists temporarily splintered into two parties over the fiasco with one holding onto the ISRP's name and the other taking the American lead and forming a new Socialist Labour Party of Ireland.98 After only a short while both parties were struggling to survive. Unification between the two groups came only after a complete change in

93 Cornelius Lehane to James Connolly, 14 February 1902 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/1); Patrick Tobin to James Connolly, 4 December 1901 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,701/1); and R. Cody Guhr to Patrick Tobin, December 1901 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,701/1).
95 James Connolly to Thomas Brady, 1 May 1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,935).
96 Connolly attempted to reapply to the party, but was denied readmission until he made a formal apology. James Connolly to E.W. Stewart, February 1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,915/1); James Connolly to William O'Brien, February 1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,908); and James Connolly to E.W. Stewart, 3 April 1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,915/1).
98 Socialist Labour Party of Ireland Declaration of Principles (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674 (6)).
the ISRP's former revolutionary principles. Instead of the hard-line impossibilist stand, the party voted to support reformist measures. At the unification meeting in 1904, the newly created Socialist Party of Ireland (SPI) resolved:

We are in a country which is only in the early stages of capitalist development. And we recognise that our Party to obtain the confidence of the Irish Proletariat, must be a reflection of material conditions prevailing here. We reserve the right to act in what manner we conceive to be the best suited to bring the attainment of our goals through the Irish working class to the goal of our hopes 'the Socialist Republic'.

The softer language of 'leading' captured the more evolutionary outlook of the party. The SPI remained affiliated with the American SLP and the SPGB, but its actions better reflected possibilist schools. The literature the party supplied, however, still came largely from American impossibilist quarters, which made the message and the strategy somewhat contradictory, but given the party's lack of subscriptions, the library's stock seemed to be the least of their concerns. The period was marked by a more cooperative socialist strategy that weighted the realities of working-class culture against socialist goals. The party was attempting to meet the working-classes where they existed, rather than preaching down to them.

In America, Connolly also grew increasingly disillusioned with his impossibilist beliefs. Connolly's split loyalties between Irish-Americanism and socialism led to a row with SLP leader, Daniel De Leon. The feud eventually led to an SLP attempt to expel Connolly from the party. Finding solace in focusing on socialist propaganda for Irish Americans, Connolly connected with former ISRP members John Lyng and John Mulray in New York. They, along with Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Patrick Quinlan, and M.P. Cody, launched an Irish Socialist Federation (ISF), which sought to both 'develop a spirit of...'

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99 Copy of the Resolution Passage at the meeting of the SLP, 2 July 1904 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,674 (3)5).
100 This strikethrough was featured on the actual document and is maintained to capture this change in opinion.
101 'Report on conference between representatives of the ISRP and SLP on Henry Street', 28 February 1904 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,674/2:2).
102 Letters on the ISRP and ISLP Amalgamation, 4 March 1904 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 13,915).
103 Party attendance in 1905 was at an all-time low. Notes on the Socialist Party of Ireland, October-December 1905 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,683).
revolutionary working-class consciousness amongst the Irish working-class in America' and 'spread knowledge of, and help sustain, the socialist movement in Ireland.'\textsuperscript{104}

The ISF began printing its own paper, the \textit{Harp}, in January 1908. The paper was published by J.E.C. Donnelly, another former London-based ISRP member now living in New York.\textsuperscript{105} Through the efforts of Bernard McMahon and Mary O'Reilly, the group soon developed a small sub-section in Chicago by September 1908.\textsuperscript{106} The \textit{Harp} was the first newspaper of its type. It connected the importance of working-class oppression to an Irish emigrant audience by exposing the power of economic oppression to transcend national borders. The title page article, ‘Harp Strings’, written by Connolly, warned that the Irishman who moved to America was ‘only changing the location of his slavery.’\textsuperscript{107} It was a novel concept and a clear example of socialist propaganda reflecting the actual Irish working-class experiences. The paper had its flaws, but usually these developed when American-based writers deviated from socialism and ventured in to the realm of advanced nationalism in Ireland.\textsuperscript{108}

Connolly urged the SPI to circulate the \textit{Harp} in Dublin. Having faith in the Irish-American brand, Connolly boasted, ‘you will see an American paper in Ireland will sell.’\textsuperscript{109} Focusing on the area where Irish-Americans had made most gains, the American labour movement, the paper sought to bridge labour agitation with socialist theory.\textsuperscript{110} The change shifted the ISF further away from the SLP and into closer contact with the American SPA, whose strategy reflected this course.\textsuperscript{111} The ISF claimed that the SPA was simply doing a better job at ‘opening the ears of Irish workingmen’, but historians have argued the shift was more personal and resulted directly from Connolly’s hostility toward De Leon.\textsuperscript{112} Regardless, the ISF took a new approach to the socialist question,

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{104}{James Connolly to the Socialist Party of Ireland, undated, 1907 (N.L.I., William O’Brien Papers, MS 13,940(1).}
\footnote{105}{\textit{Harp}, January 1908 and letters from J.R.C. Donnelly to James Connolly, undated, c.1908 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,916).}
\footnote{106}{For evidence of these meetings, please see the \textit{Harp}, September 1908 and October 1908.}
\footnote{107}{\textit{Harp}, February 1908.}
\footnote{108}{For further references to these issues, please see the chapter two.}
\footnote{109}{James Connolly to the Socialist Party of Ireland, 3 October 1907 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,940/3).}
\footnote{110}{For details on the role of the AFL in institutionalising an Irish-American labour identity, please see Kerby Miller, \textit{Emigrants and Exile: Ireland and Irish exodus to North America} (Oxford, 1985), p. 524.}
\footnote{111}{\textit{Harp}, 1908-1909.}
\footnote{112}{James A. Stevenson, ‘Clashing personalities: James Connolly and Daniel De Leon, 1896-1909’ in \textit{Éire-Ireland} (Fall, 1990), pp 19-36.}
\end{footnotesize}
one that was marked by compromise and a willingness to tap into the gains made by labour movements.

The shift also reflected a growth in Atlantic support for syndicalism, taking off in both the United States and England. In 1905, at a Chicago meeting, the Western Miners' Federation along with the SLP and SPA came together to launch the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The IWW, or the Wobblies as they were nicknamed, maintained an average of 40,000 active members, consisting of both migrant farm labourers and unskilled industrial workers. The IWW's cultural and political significance far outweighed the union's membership, with Wobbly songs, poems, and prayers becoming part of the language of the new American labour movement. The IWW's two papers, the *Industrial Worker* and *Solidarity*, became the agents for promoting the new radical labour agenda.

The ISF gave its full support to the IWW. The *Harp* featured numerous articles dedicated to getting readers to join the union. ISF members, Patrick Quinlan and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, even gained international notoriety as Irish-American organisers for the IWW after being arrested in disputes in Trenton, New Jersey and Spokane, Washington. The American SPA paper, *Appeal to Reason*, even compared Quinlan's arrest to James Larkin's arrest in 1913. Writing to his long-time confidant and SLPGB member, James Matheson, Connolly asserted that 'the IWW has brought about a revolution in Socialist America-the proletarian has at last come into his own in “his”

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113 In 1908, after a dispute over the direction of the IWW, De Leon and the SLP delegates were expelled and eventually they established a rival union called the Workers' International Industrial Union, but this body failed to gain the attention or support of the IWW. Patrick Renshaw, *The Wobblies: the story of syndicalism in the United States* (Garden City: New York, 1967), p. 103.
114 The figure of 40,000 is taken from Darlington, whose estimate was among the lowest, with the highest numbers being reported at 100,000 between 1905 and 1911. Many IWW members were itinerant workers, mainly migrant farm labourers and unskilled industrial workers. Financial obligations to the union were difficult to maintain and many members' status remained unstable over the course of the union's existence. Renshaw used this to conclude that members reached up to 1 million from 1905 to 1915. Darlington, 'Syndicalism and Strikes, Leadership and influence', p. 41. For estimates of 100,000, please see Renshaw, *The Wobblies*, p. 22.
115 Winters, *The Soul of the Wobblies*.
117 For such examples please see the *Harp*, January 1908, September 1909, and October 1909.
118 For Elizabeth Gurley Flynn arrest, please see 'Story of my arrest in Spokane' (T.A.M., Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Reel 2) for Patrick Quinlan please see *Appeal to Reason*, 26 July 1913, 9 August 1913 and 20 September 1913.
119 *Appeal to Reason*, 29 November 1913.
movement. The IWW provided new hope to Irish-American socialists, who sought to turn Irish-American labourism into Irish-American socialism. With the ISF moving away from socialist impossibilism and into schools endorsing new unionist strategy, Irish-American socialist leaders moved one step closer to the Irish-American working classes.

The shift in America mirrored the evolution of the movement back in Ireland. The divided socialist schools were each moving closer to endorsing new unionism as Ireland’s primary working-class course. Belfast, which followed the path of evolutionarily labourism, was progressing along more advanced lines. The 1884 Representation of the People Act increased the Irish electorate to four times its previous size and leaders across party lines were now eager to rally the working-class behind their message. Workers suddenly became the untapped vote in the new political system. The shift in language to include the workingman opened a new place for Irish labour in Irish politics. The further passage of the Local Government Act in 1898 meant that labour could begin politicising the cause on the ground the hopes of igniting working-class voting. That year the BUTC was able to secure six municipal victories for candidates it endorsed. In 1903, the BUTC even debated implementing a policy similar to the British Labour Representational Committee (LRC) that would require all LRC endorsed candidates to submit a pre-approved labour platform. While the BUTC decided against this course of action due to the still developing state of the movement, the debate highlighted how far Belfast had come. In October 1904, the council launched its own paper, the Belfast Labour Chronicle, to help with campaigns. William Walker served as the paper’s chief editor. Under Walker’s guidance the paper pushed labour closer towards the ILP’s brand of socialism and the BUTC further towards a course of labour-led socialist action.

The BUTC received the added outside benefit of working-class protest emanating from the Independent Orange Order (IOO). The long-running Conservative-Unionist government, which had been in place since 1895, created tension among working-class
Orange Lodge members who felt their Unionist identity was not addressing their working-class grievances. This discontent drove the success of Belfast Protestant Association member, Thomas Sloan’s 1902 South Belfast parliamentary campaign in which he ran as an Orange workingman on an Independent Unionist party ticket. Sloan’s working-class grievances with the conservative policies of Ulster Unionism drew him closer to the city’s labour circles. Sloan’s campaign caused a split in the Grand Orange Lodge with members seeing the working-class threat as a challenge to Unionist hegemony. Sloan was expelled from the Grand Lodge and he, Lindsay Crawford, and his followers launched the IOO in response. The working-class character of the IOO led to a progressive labour programme, albeit with a strong anti-clerical core. Nevertheless, the IOO’s working-class focus increased the language of Unionism and working-class identity while allowing for each to exist symbiotically without the appearance of Catholic nationalist sympathies. The predominately Protestant BUTC hoped to tap into this developing working-class climate in order to bring Unionism closer to labour and, for ILP supporters, to bring Belfast’s labouring working-classes closer to socialism.

The extent of the BUTC’s successes can be seen in William Walker’s 1905 and 1906 parliamentary electoral campaigns. Unemployment in the city’s key trades continued to grow with 10 per cent of shipbuilders and 7.9 per cent of engineers out of work in 1905. These conditions, along with the recent developments with Sloan, convinced labour leaders it was the right time to act. Walker contested and lost the North Belfast seat to the Unionist candidate, Sir Daniel Dixon, by only 477 votes in 1905. The following year, he closed the gap even further, polling 4,616 votes to Dixon’s 4,907. Historians have attributed Walker’s loss to his decision to publicly endorse the Belfast Protestant Associations’ platform, but it is arguable that part of his success was due to these outside developments. Even with the loss, the campaign was a significant step. Scottish ILP propagandist W.C. Anderson toured the city in 1906, reporting back to the Labour Leader that crowds upwards of 2,000 were turning out to hear party speeches on the Custom House Steps each Sunday. IOO leaders, particularly Lindsay Crawford, augmented this campaign with Unionist-packaged messages

125 Peter Murray, ‘Radical was forward or sectarian cul-de-sac? Lindsay Crawford and Independent Orangeism reassessed’ in Saothar, 27 (2002), pp 31-42.
126 Patterson, Class conflict and sectarianism, p. 54.
128 O’Connor, A labour history of Ireland, p. 71.
endorsing labour and the ILP. Crawford’s editorship of the *Ulster Guardian* enabled ILP leaders like H.R. Stockholm to report weekly in ‘Labour News’ about the ILP’s progress in the city.\(^{129}\) With the British Labour Party holding their annual conference in Belfast in January 1907, it again appeared to be the dawning of a new age of labour for the city.

Much like the TUC in 1893, the British Labour Party Conference led to a campaign of increased labour action throughout Belfast. British unions also hoped to capitalise on the new climate. In January, the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL) sent their agent, James Larkin, to enlist Belfast workers in the union.\(^{130}\) At first, he enjoyed notable success. He was able to recruit BUTC members, Michael McKeown and Alex Boyd, into the union and make significant headway into getting Catholic and Protestant Dockers to unify under one union banner.\(^{131}\) However, the climate soon changed after NUDL workers used the moment to engage in a strike on the docks.

The arrival of replacement workers from Liverpool caused tension among strikers, and sometimes resulted in sectarian violence. These pressures drained Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) resources to such an extent that the officers also soon declared a strike. The RIC strike only increased violence throughout the city. Larkin was even arrested after punching a Liverpool man who was brandishing a knife during one of the protests. Larkin’s arrest, the continued financial strain of the strike on the NUDL, and the reports of escalating violence led to the NUDL’s decision to act with or without Larkin to bring about a close to the dispute.

Comparisons of Larkin’s arrival to Ulster and the labour movement during this period to the Titanic are indicative of the position Belfast labour had achieved.\(^{132}\) Larkin had ‘worked a miracle’, but the city’s moment of working-class unity beyond sectarianism suffered a tragic defeat.\(^{133}\) In the aftermath of the strike, the number of

\(^{129}\) For examples, please see the *Ulster Guardian*, 12 January 1907; 16 March 1907; and 6 April 1907.


\(^{131}\) O’Connor, *James Larkin*, p. 10.


unions affiliated to the BUTC dropped from 63 in 1907 to 40 in 1910 and 32 in 1913.\textsuperscript{134} The newly formed middle-class Citizen's Association managed to win every seat labour had contested in the 1907 municipal elections.\textsuperscript{135} Socialism suffered a similar fate. The ILP continued to canvass in the aftermath of the strike, but the optimism of many leaders dwindled.

The rise of the ITGWU, 1909-1914

Belfast's loss became Dublin's victory, at least temporarily. After Larkin left Belfast, he continued recruitment for the NUDL, achieving success in the two Irish cities where the cause of labour had advanced the most: Dublin and Cork. In 1909, the Dublin Coal Master's strike began. James Sexton returned to Ireland again to settle the strike, bemoaning that 'Larkin would order a strike as casually as he would ask for his bacon for breakfast.'\textsuperscript{136} Sexton officially stripped Larking of his duties. However, when another strike broke out in Cork later that year, Larkin found himself unable to officially support Cork workers, but unable to turn his back on their actions.

To Larkin's advantage, the climate in Dublin and Cork had been changing with respect to both socialism and independent labour. The SPI's educational focus created a friendlier atmosphere that helped to increase attendance at the party's weekly lecture series. The topics ranged from sex equality to science and its relation to socialism and were sometimes delivered by figures from outside the movement, such as Margaret Cousins and Professor David Houston.\textsuperscript{137} Such activities helped to soften the image of the once hard-line party. Some of the party's more Fabian-style socialists, like Francis Sheehy Skeffington, began to slowly return.\textsuperscript{138} The broad canvass approach even led to goodwill ambassadors reaching out to other revolutionary movements like Sinn Féin and the Irish Women's Suffrage Association. John Dowling of Queenstown and D.C.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{134} O'Connor, '1907: A titanic year for Belfast labour', p. 14.
\textsuperscript{135} Gray, \textit{A city in revolt}, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{136} As cited in Fox, \textit{Jim Larkin: Irish Labour leader}, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{137} Socialist Party of Ireland list of lectures, 1910 (N.L.I., Sheehy-Skeffington papers, MS 40,480/1).
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
O'Leary of Cork City even managed to revive the socialist movement there, establishing several SPI branches.\textsuperscript{139}

In spite of the more compromising tone, a number of socialists felt that the political course was not leading to success. There was a general feeling that working-class consciousness was increasing throughout Ireland, but that this was happening in the field of labour as opposed to socialism. By 1908, many SPI members were also serving in the DCTU. This was a significant change from the earlier period when the organisation was run largely by labour friendly nationalists. The new leadership tried to push labour along a course of advanced Irish labour politics. Their focus was on building the movement from within, with members moving away from international connections. This can be seen in the Labour Day Committee's decision to begin discouraging the use of non-Irish presenters, wishing to craft a more Irish brand for the movement.\textsuperscript{140} The DCTU also launched its own organ entitled the \textit{Dublin Trade and Labour Journal}, which focused on national labour aims.

The Dublin Coal Masters' dispute brought these two forces together. Dublin socialists approached Larkin with the idea of establishing a separate national general workers union, an idea Larkin initially rejected.\textsuperscript{141} However, now in need of funds, Larkin was willing to follow the new course. After affiliating Cork workers with the new Irish union, the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU), Larkin used the money raised in Dublin to cover the cost of the Cork strike. The action was challenged in court and Larkin lost. Both he and his NUDL partner, James Fearon, were imprisoned. James Sexton even returned to Ireland to serve as a witness for the prosecution. The case played out in the nationalist press as evidence of British imperial rule over the Irish labour movement. Larkin, the Liverpool man who arrived in Ireland as a British union organiser, had unwittingly become a nationalist working-class martyr.

\textsuperscript{139} Minute Book of the Socialist Party of Ireland, 26 November 1910 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 16,270).
\textsuperscript{140} Notes from Labour Day Committee Meeting, 7 March 1909 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 13,952).
\textsuperscript{141} C. Desmond Greaves, \textit{The Irish Transport and General Workers Union: the formative years} (Dublin, 1982), p. 20.
Following his arrest, a well-organised and persistent release campaign made the claim that Larkin's prosecution was an international 'capitalist conspiracy'. The implication that Sexton acted as an agent in the oppression of the voice of labour served as added motivation for English and Scottish radicals eager to intervene on Larkin's behalf because they were opposed to Sexton and the leadership of the NUDL. In fact, of the nine major donors to Larkin's Defence Committee listed on the pro-Larkin pamphlet 'Labour War in Ireland', four were from Glasgow and one was from Liverpool. While some of this support undoubtedly came from Fearon's connection to Glasgow, the alliance also represented the internal factions present within Scottish and English labour schools. Nevertheless, the campaign gave Larkin the notoriety he needed to secure a reduced sentence. More importantly, ITGWU membership more than doubled from 1909 to 1910 largely due to Larkin's new fame. Believing the event marked a new opportunity for Irish socialism, William O'Brien began working towards bringing Connolly back to Ireland. Connolly transferred publication of the Harp to Dublin and placed it temporarily under the editorship of Larkin. However, within five months, Larkin managed to kill the paper with libel actions. Dublin again went without a socialist organ until the launch of the Irish Worker in May 1911.

Despite the Harp's demise, a more compromising Connolly took a position as an organiser for the Belfast branch of the ITGWU, though only after airing significant reservations about the decision. Connolly at first stated 'he would not dream of allowing Larkin to get him a job in the Transport Union and make him the target for all malcontents and reactionaries who hate Larkin but fear his influence, and so would wreck their petty spite upon the paid official that proceeded upon them from abroad.' In spite of this claim, Connolly's desire to return to Ireland overrode his apprehensions about Larkin. With few other options, he took the position.

143 Ibid.
144 Board of Trade Report on Trade Unions 1908-1910 with comparative statistics for 1901-1910 [Cd 6109], H.C. 1512-1913, XLVII.655, p. 43.
145 Harp, January 1910.
146 Irish Worker, 27 May 1911.
147 Minute Bosk of the Socialist Party of Ireland, 15 Oct 1910 (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson papers, MS 16,270).
148 There were plans to have Connolly take a position as an SPI organiser in Belfast. However, the party was unable to raise enough funds to keep his salary as a full-time organiser. Socialist Party of Ireland Belfast organiser fund papers, 25 May 1911 and 2 June 1911 (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson papers, MS 17,105).
Edward Lynch of Cork asked him if he would resurrect the previous positions of the ISRP, Connolly responded by complaining about the practices of socialist parties that tie themselves to international organisations. He asserted:

> there are some people in Great Britain who have saturated themselves with American Socialist and Industrial literature to such an extent that their conception of revolutionary work is to copy in Great Britain whatever happens in the American Socialist world. So if there is a split in America there should be a split in Great Britain, and the names taken by the factions in America should be adopted in Great Britain...American programs, phrases, and parties are no more applicable to Ireland than the program, phrases and parties of Ireland are applicable to Timbuctoo.\(^{149}\)

The remark was rooted in self-critique. His tone matched the inward looking position that socialist leaders were now looking to promote.

Dublin trade union circles were similarly now moving further away from international connections and towards more national concerns. Syndicalism had recently been developing under the formal guidance of Tom Mann. His launching of the paper, the *Industrial Syndicalist*, was a new beginning for trade union militancy among the unskilled workforce, something Larkin claimed the NUDL was not doing enough to protect. Mann pointed to the American IWW as being one of its inspirations, suggesting that co-operation could be possible.\(^{150}\) Both James and his brother Peter Larkin attended Manchester First Conference on Industrial Syndicalism organised by Mann, as delegates for Ireland and Liverpool respectively.\(^{151}\) By this point, Larkin was confident in Ireland's ability to move ahead on its own course. No longer willing to advocate for solidarity with the English movement, Larkin slowly pulled away from the venture despite assurances that this connection would be different.

Connolly, the former IWW member, did not push any harder to link Ireland to developments in Britain. Instead he proceeded to Belfast, where his presence, as he predicted, was not welcomed in all labour circles. Sections of the BUTC had been active in the failed attempt to block the ITGWU's entry into the ITUC in 1909.\(^{152}\) After losing, they now faced the ITGWU entering their own local council. On the political front in 1910, more nationalist-driven sections of the Belfast Socialist Society had worked with

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\(^{149}\) James Connolly to Edward Lynch, undated (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, M.S. 13,940/2).

\(^{150}\) *Industrial Syndicalist*, 6 December 1910.

\(^{151}\) Ibid.

Connolly to establish a branch of the SPI in the city. Adding to the already tense environment, in 1911, a section of unorganised linen workers approached Connolly to support them in their strike. Connolly agreed to help. With Delia Larkin having already organised the ITGWU’s female counterpart, the Irish Women Workers’ Union (IWWU) in Dublin, Mary Galway feared that Belfast would be next. Galway and her supporters felt the advances were part of a greater coup underway from Dublin’s radical circle. She used Connolly’s action to bring charges against him in the BUTC claiming he was trying to sabotage TOSI and undermine her role as the city’s female labour organiser. Connolly responded to the accusation with a gendered insult, accusing Galway of ‘raising a tantrum in a teacup’. In spite of the slight, the BUTC was not able to act on the complaint. Instead the council vote split, which epitomised the deepening schism developing between the two schools - those who welcomed the entry of the ITGWU into the city and those who did not.

Adding to the pressure dividing the two labour movements was the campaign progressing in Dublin to politicise labour. In January 1911, leading members of the DCTU began the process of resurrecting the Dublin Labour Representational Committee (LRC). This move occurred after James Connolly published an article in the Harp entitled, ‘Labour and Politics in Ireland,’ outlining the history of the failed Labour Electoral Association (LEA) and the need for a new movement. The 1911 Dublin LRC

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154 For further reading on Delia Larkin or the Irish Women Worker’s Union, please see Mary Jones, These obstreperous tassies: a history of the Irish Women Workers Union (Dublin, 1988), pp 1-24 or James Curry, ‘Delia Larkin: “More harm to the Big Fellow than any of the employers”?’ in Saothar, 36 (2011), pp 19-25.
155 BUTC Minutes, 21 October 1911 (L.H.L., Belfast United Trades Council minutes, Box 3 Book 2).
156 Ibid. Austen Morgan has suggested that evidence from Connolly’s writing reveals that he viewed women as inferior to men in both body and mind. Austen Morgan, James Connolly: a political biography (Manchester, 1988), p. 55.
158 The Labour Electoral Association functioned much like the British Labour Representation Committee. It developed directly out of the Local Government Act (1898) and aimed to endorse labour friendly candidates in municipal elections. For evidence of the launch of the LEA, please see the Workers’ Republic, 8 October 1898. For debates between trades union leaders over the effectiveness of the LEA and its potential resurrection, please see the DCTU minutes featured in the Dublin Trade and Labour Journal, 18 June 1909. Connolly develops these issues later in Labor in Ireland, which focuses on the previous failures of the LEA being vested in the widespread embrace of ‘socialist knowledge’ amongst the working class and the refusal of endorsed candidates to follow a unified working class policy. He signalled out E.W. Stewart, who ran as an ISRP candidate, as being the one man fully committed to the cause of labour. Connolly’s conclusion is that 1899 was different from 1910 in that now there was a ‘strong socialist movement.’ Please see, the Harp, April 1910.
insisted that LRC-endorsed candidates run strictly under the banner of Labour. By 1912, the group had changed its name to the Dublin Labour Party and was seeking to make greater connections with the ITUC with the objective of turning the campaign into a wider national initiative.

With the Third Home Rule Bill dominating political concerns, the initiative forced questions upon Belfast leaders they were not yet ready to face. Labour leaders had been debating preparatory action for labour's place in the new home rule government, mainly advocating for an Irish Labour Party. On Easter Monday 1912, the Belfast branches of SPI, along with their Dublin and Cork affiliates, decided to transform into an Independent Labour Party, a name that blurred the lines of its connection to the Belfast party that had been in place since 1893. The Belfast branches of the new ILP began holding demonstrations for Irish home rule in the city. The equation of ILP agitation to home rule politics undermined the Unionist working-class support bases and threatened the balance between Unionism and socialism that Belfast leaders had fostered under the banner of the ILP. Former Belfast ILP leaders like William Walker advocated a wait-and-see approach to the home rule question that allowed them to maintain allegiances to the British Labour Party until the Home Rule Bill took effect. Walker even debated Connolly on the issue in a series of articles featured in the Glasgow-based ILP organ, *Forward*. However, the inherent contradiction in Walker's position – advocating for a party that supported Irish home rule in England, while simultaneously rejecting the platform in Ireland – made it unpopular. When the ITUC voted to create a separate Irish Labour Party in 1912, Belfast's labour leaders who represented largely Unionist working classes, faced an impossible choice: remain in a nationalist body or withdraw. Many, including Walker, pulled away, allowing for Belfast's more progressive nationalist labour leaders, like Thomas Johnson and David R.

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160 Ibid.
161 *Irish Worker*, 20 April 1912.
162 Documents from the Independent Labour Party of Belfast, 1908-12 (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson papers, MS 17,107).
163 News clippings from Connolly and Walker correspondence in *Forward* 1911 (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson papers, MS 17,114).
Campbell to dominate Belfast's voice within the ITUC. It was Ireland's most significant socialist split because it alienated a significant population of Belfast's labour schools.

**Revolutionising the working-class image, 1912-1916**

Belfast leaders sympathetic to Unionism maintained that their place was best served within the British movement, but that the British movement often failed to reciprocate. In 1912, the British movement was undergoing its own set of problems with the delicate alliance between the ILP and SDF Marxists within in the British Labour Party now falling apart. The breakaways, led largely by Hyndman, had formed the British Socialist Party and applied for a separate affiliation to the Internarional Socialist Bureau. Adding to British domestic troubles were events unfolding in Dublin in 1913. The horrors of Dublin's famous labour struggle superseded interest in Belfast politics. This meant that Ireland's nationalist radical movement garnered most of the attention of the British socialist and labour circles, leaving Belfast socialism on the side lines.

Representations of the Dublin 1913-14 Lockout transformed Dublin into a site of capitalist horror. Larkin's arrest combined with reports of RIC attacks on civilians on Bloody Sunday led to sensationalist headlines in British socialist and labour party papers. Hoping to keep the flame alive, Larkin travelled back to England on his 'fiery cross tour' calling for continued moral and financial support to the Irish struggle. Having former Irish socialist contributor, W.P. Ryan as the editor of the new British labour organ, the *Daily Herald*, certainly helped. In Dublin, leaders tried to launch a branch of the 'Daily Herald League', hoping it would increase the likelihood more money would follow through the network. However, Larkin's past disputes with English trade unionists did not help to generate the most cordial welcome. Even the American SPA

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166 First annual conference of the British Socialist Party in Manchester flyer, 25-27 May 1912 and application to the International Socialist Bureau (L.S.E., Independent Labour Party papers, ILP 13 Folder 3).

167 For examples of these articles, please see the *Daily Herald*, 1 September 1913; 2 September 1913; 16 September 1913; 6 October 1913; and 7 October 1913; *Daily Citizen*, 3 September 1913; 6 September 1913 and 8 September 1913; *Justice* 13 September 1913; 18 October 1913; 8 November 1913 and 22 November 1913.


169 Maurre, *The long gestation*, p. 87.

170 Card for the Daily Herald League (Dublin Branch), 26 January 1914 (N.L.I., Librarian's Office Collection, LOP 109).
organ, the *New York Call*, cautioned its audiences on the potential success of Larkin's endeavours, noting that English trade unionists were not fans of Larkin. As the strike continued and cross-channel resources ran dry, the ability of Dublin's labour leadership to keep the British Labour Party focused on the Irish struggle diminished and funds began to dissipate.

After the *Irish Worker* announced the 'return to work' order in January 1914, ITGWU leaders and the city's socialists went into recovery mode. Since socialists had linked their success to the ITGWU, the failure of one movement meant a significant setback for the other. In October 1914, Larkin announced he would be embarking on an American tour to raise funds for the ITGWU. Once gone, Larkin was not allowed to return, though it is disputed whether he really wanted to. The money he raised did not make it back to the ITGWU until 29 October 1915, when one transfer came through to Liberty Hall for £100. Simultaneously, another £100 transfer came through to Larkin's wife, Elizabeth, with a note telling her to come to America immediately. Upon discovering this, Thomas Foran and William O'Brien wrote to Cornelius Lehane, who was now living in America, asking him for Larkin's location and answers on what was going on. With union funds decimated, the threat of financial scandal proved to be more stress than union leaders could take. Legal fees for the defence of both union and non-union workers during the Lockout had been mounting. Also, Delia Larkin's poor management of the National Health Insurance Scheme had left the union in danger of losing its charter, one of the primary resources allowing it to hold onto some of its members.

Furthermore, the Larkin family's continued residence in the ITGWU-leased property in Croydon Park was becoming a point of contention amongst leaders. Pointing to the cow that had been purchased to supply the Larkin family with milk, William O'Brien complained that the sum spent to 'keep the Larkin family happy' was too costly
for the union. Frank Robbins recalled the union surviving only on the £40 to £50 a week that came from the house game, which in late 1915 was declared illegal. In the end, the union decided to cut its losses and sell Croydon Park and any other items deemed non-essential at Liberty Hall. The union also started advertising room rentals to outside organisations, making Liberty Hall a new eclectic revolutionary house. When the ITGWU decided to sell the union’s grand piano, Delia Larkin chained herself to it in an act of defiance, threatening not to leave. In the aftermath, she attempted to turn her followers against the remaining ITGWU leadership, in particular Connolly. Her eventual resignation from the Irish Women Worker’s Union and departure from Ireland in July 1915 was met with enthusiasm by the ITGWU leadership, who were relieved to have the last of the Larksins out of the city.

These internal disputes were exacerbated by the outbreak of the First World War, which added greater external pressures to labour’s recovery. The Second International’s failure to mobilise socialist wartime opposition led to the slow death of the movement. The failures of internationalism encouraged a more inward looking, nationalist socialist strategy across the Atlantic. Ireland was no exception. At the Clonmel Congress of 1912 the SPI decided to focus on national aims. The ILP started by mounting opposition to the war. On 13 October 1914, its delegates organised a meeting in Dublin’s Ancient Concert Rooms to form an Irish Neutrality League to mobilise anti-war activities throughout the country, although due to its origins it remained initially limited to urban ILP support bases.

As long as Ireland was not subjected to British conscription, opposition to the war was not popular. Both Nationalist and Unionist camps supported the British war effort, which led to increased Irish wartime propaganda throughout the country. During the initial phases of the war, Ireland, like other Atlantic nations, became entrenched in a

178 Ibid.
179 The house game was a form of gambling, Robbins compares to Bingo. Frank Robbins, Under the Starry Plough: recollections of the Irish Citizen Army (Dublin, 1977), p. 165.
180 For advert please see the Workers’ Republic, 29 May 1915.
181 ITGWU papers: the early years (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,676/1).
182 Workers’ Republic, 31 July 1915.
183 Haupt, Socialism and the Great War.
184 Minute books of the Independent Labour Party, 10 June 1912 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 16,270).
dialogue of wartime enthusiasm. The commemorative work, Fifty Years at Liberty Hall, even jokingly recalled a remark to a Dublin correspondent of the London Times that the only two institutions in Dublin not displaying recruitment posters for the war were Trinity College Dublin and Liberty Hall, 'two well-known seats of learning.' In spite of the union's opposition, ITGWU leaders claimed that 2,700 former members had enlisted in the British Army and were serving in France by 1915. Since urban areas like Cork, Dublin, and Wexford contributed a higher level of unskilled workers to the army's ranks, the union's concerns over losing members to the war were justified. In public, the union decried that economic conscription forced Irish workers into the ranks of the British Army even without the formal imposition of conscription. In private, however, the financial distress of the ITGWU meant that it could not recognise economic conscription. The ITGWU denied claims by members killed or injured during wartime service, arguing their liability was only due in 'civil life'.

The gradual loss of people, funds, and the ability to maintain the idealism the ITGWU once captured, led to a greater sense of urgency and militancy amongst labour leaders who feared the movement was slipping away. The focus shifted to the rapid revolutionising the Irish working classes, which led to the creation of a plethora of new Irish-focused militant propaganda in place of the traditional Atlantic material previously used. The anti-war coverage in the Irish Worker led to the paper's suppression. Connolly reached out to his former Scottish SLP contacts, now engaged in their own anti-conscription campaign to see if they would print the paper in Glasgow. They agreed and the new paper, Irish Work, and later just the Worker, went to press in January 1914. The paper managed to have five issues shipped to North Wall and transported to Belfast before British officials used the Defence of Realm Act to have the paper suppressed.

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186 For specific details on Irish wartime propaganda and national war culture relative to the Atlantic, please see Pennell, A kingdom united.
190 Worker, 2 January 1915.
191 James Connolly to Peter Keeley, 25 February 1915 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 13,931).
192 Advertisements for its launch can be found in Scissors and Paste, 2 January 1915.
The scheme’s failure exposed the new limitation that radicals faced in continuing their traditional exchanges. Wartime restrictions meant that transnational connections could no longer function in the same way they had in the past. Socialists needed to look inward if they wished to continue advancing their cause.

The focus on internal networks and connections played a part in drawing working-class radicals closer to advanced nationalist circles which were also becoming increasingly militant against the backdrop of the First World War. By 1915, the Irish Citizen Army, which had been created during the 1913-14 Lockout to protect workers, was shifting towards national resistance to the British government. It was training regularly for an armed attack on the British state. This transition was accompanied by the revival of the *Workers' Republic*, which helped Dublin socialism return to its revolutionary roots, only this time the paper had a much wider audience. While the paper displayed a greater focus on labour activity than during its earlier iteration, it was still primarily used to prepare for the coming battle with articles focused on street fighting, medical training, and nationalist commemoration. The paper declared that the ICA was no longer working toward anti-war activity, but was instead laying the ‘foundations for the great Labour movement in this country.’ It was unclear, however, the exact role the labour movement would play in this process. What was clear was that it was no longer operating within a wider Atlantic socialist network. Connolly refused invitations to speak in Glasgow, a common practice before the war. SPI headquarters, which once sold copies of international socialist papers, was now replaced with Liberty Hall, whose shop racks were filled with copies of advanced nationalist papers alongside Ireland’s only socialist paper filled with nationalist ideals.

The ICA’s role in the Easter 1916 Rising only further complicated the position for the labour movement and socialism throughout the country. The ICA had to balance the practical ramification of a rising alongside the theoretical justification for such a course of action. The socialists who had managed to seize control of the Irish trade union movement were now thrust into the same position as Irish nationalist revolutionaries. British authorities raided Liberty Hall for its part in the Rising. Leading labour

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194 For further details on the relationship between working-class radicals and advanced nationalists, please see chapter two.
195 *Workers' Republic*, 29 May 1915.
personalities, like William O'Brien, P.T. Daly, and Thomas Foran, who abstained from fighting during Easter Week, were arrested. In the short term, labour's campaign suffered significant external pressures. In the long-term, the position pushed labour closer to nationalist sectors whether it liked it or not. Labour and socialism had few places to turn by the end of 1916.

The Irish working classes

In 1894, Francis Willard wrote to the *American Federationist* about the British working-class struggle. In the article, he concluded that the root cause of working-class poverty was overpopulation, which he linked to the further issues of urbanisation and underemployment. Another writer replied to his article posing the question: if this were the underlying cause of poverty, then 'why was Ireland worse than England'? The question captured more than the flawed logic of a universal diagnosis to economic problems, it also exposed the way in which Atlantic labour leaders and working-class radicals approached working-class concerns and how this perspective failed to address the Irish experience. Furthermore, it demonstrated that both socialist leaders, and the movements they constructed, fixated upon a distinctly urban image of class struggle, and thus operated upon a false understanding of the nature of the Irish working classes. This discrepancy hindered leaders' ability to reach the Irish working classes and to effectively mobilise any real national movement.

Ireland's economy expanded between 1889 and 1917, generating a certain amount of economic optimism, particularly among the elite industrial classes who were receiving the greatest benefits from the growth. Irish cities, similar to other major Atlantic urban areas, experienced a physical and social transformation during these years. Unlike other parts of the Atlantic, however, this process of urbanisation was

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197 *American Federationist*, May 1894.
largely a product of internal movements with rural populations filling cities. Like Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Galway often functioned as temporary stopping points for rural migrants hoping to find work within Ireland before having to choose emigration. Most often, the stop was temporary.

Life in Irish cities was more difficult than it was in England, which made emigration certainly more appealing. As table 1.2 demonstrates, in Dublin, and Ireland more generally, rents and the cost of food came close to those of London, while wages remained significantly lower, particularly among the unskilled. The capricious conditions of city life combined with the divide between skilled and unskilled workers and sectarianism made trade union organisation in Irish cities particularly difficult.

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<th>Geographical Groups and Towns</th>
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<td>Mean</td>
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Source: This table is a combination of two tables featured in the Board of Trade papers. For the original tables, please see Cost of living of the working classes. Reports of an enquiry by the Board of Trade into working-class rents, housing and retail prices, together with the standard rates and wages prevailing in certain occupations in principal industrial towns in the United Kingdom. With introductory memorandum [Cd. 3864], H.C., 1908, CVII.319, pp xxxviii-xxxix.

200 Mary Daly, A socio-economic history of Ireland since 1800 (Dublin, 1981), p. 103.
The Irish trade union movement initially remained apprehensive about the growing labour force in cities. Fearing the 'overcrowding' of the skilled labour market, Irish labour leaders distanced themselves from the influx of rural migrants. The growth of Ireland's unskilled workforce could not be denied or ignored. Dublin, for example, saw an increase from 26 per cent in 1871 to 31 per cent in 1911 among unskilled workers. The transient nature of these workers made them difficult to organise and was a cause of considerable frustration among labour leaders.

When leaders did attempt to open the labour movement to the new body of workers, recruitment proved difficult. In Derry, the city's population doubled from 1851 to 1901; however, the city's main industry, shirt making, did not expand enough to meet labour availability. The overabundance of unskilled labour remained problematic for the city, as it did in most locations. When the city experimented in the promotion of new unionism from 1889 to 1892 in an effort to bring the unskilled into the labour movement, the project ultimately failed. Despite the city's perceived successes in tailoring, the city's most progressive labour organiser, James McCarron, still faced significant obstacles in advancing the working-class movement. At points, he struggled to consistently promote a radical agenda. By 1907, McCarron was even complaining about rural immigrants to the ITUC. He described rural migrants as 'physical and moral wrecks, a menace to organised labour and a burden to the community and to themselves.' His outlook reflected sentiments many trade union leaders held toward each city's new population.

The arrival of unskilled workers from rural areas into Irish cities is broadly analogous with the arrival of Irish emigrants into urban areas abroad. In both cases the economic conditions of immigrants in their new communities impacted their

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201 *Brotherhood*, May 1889.


205 ITUC 1907, p. 17 (N.A.I., Digital collections) (http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/) (8 January 2014).
Commitment to working-class radicalism. Kerby Miller has argued that Irish-American working-class militancy waned after 1886 because of Irish-American embourgeoisement. By 1900, 65 per cent of the 1.2 million Irish-American workers were blue-collar, with the majority occupying skilled professions. The only state Miller noted as an exception was Massachusetts. The increased level of Irish-American involvement in socialist politics in this state perhaps only further validates Miller's conclusions. Steven Fielding has suggested that the same pattern did not apply to English cities, where the Irish did not integrate to the same degree as in America and therefore failed to achieve the same degree of social mobility. The same may be said of Scotland, where historians have argued Irish nationalism and religion hindered Irish loyalties to working-class identity during these years. Here the Irish were seen largely as outsiders in their new communities.

This fact has played a significant part in generating an image of the Irish abroad as the oppressed. Although Irish cities did not experience the same levels of hostility towards outsiders, this is not to say that Irish workers never acted as agents of oppression at home. This reality has been largely obscured because the 'outsiders' taking urban jobs were mainly rural workers hoping to find Irish employment before succumbing to emigration. Preference for rural workers had particular appeal in certain industries. Nevertheless, even when this preference was not so transparent, there were still indications of rural workers being favoured. Of the 179 men working at Guinness in 1911, 34.6 per cent were born outside of Dublin. This preference fostered a dialogue of resentment that played into the power of local identities in Ireland and

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207 Miller, Emigrants and exiles, p. 499.
208 In two Massachusetts cities (Haverhill and Brockton) socialist mayors attained office. Both of these cities contained significant Irish-American workforces. Furthermore, correspondence of Irish-Americans to Irish socialist parties and purchasing of the Worker's Republic and the Harp demonstrate significant support for Irish socialism from this state. For examples of this material, please see the Workers' Republic, 24 September 1898; M.D. Fitzgerald to James Connolly, undated (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 13,925); or J.E.C. Donnelly to James Connolly, undated (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 13,916). For further reading on the socialist movement in Massachusetts, please see Henry F. Rochford, Socialism and the workers in Massachusetts, 1886-1912 (Amherst, 1966).
211 Foreign populations in Irish cities will be addressed further in chapter four.
212 Daly has suggested that due to strict height and size requirements for workers, Guinness could not find enough Dublin men to fill these quotas. Mary Daly, 'The social structure of the Dublin working class' in Irish Historical Studies, 23, 90 (November, 1982), p. 129.
generated a distrust against 'country workers' in the city. Adding to this bias was the fact that rural workers were also largely recruited as temporary employment during labour disputes. The general negative outlook shaped the way in which labour leaders engaged with country workers in the urban workforce. In Cork, Patrick Tobin complained of not being able to organise tramway workers because they 'were all country chaps...imported from the depths of Kerry.'

Instead of bringing working-class consciousness to the countryside, the labour movement chose to deal with rural workers only when they entered Irish urban environments. In the earlier periods of the labour movement a greater effort had been made to reach rural audiences. Organisation such as the Irish Democratic Trade and Labour Federation, the Ulster Labourers' Union, and the Irish Land and Labour Association worked directly with urban-based trade unions in the ITUC. After 1896, however, rural migration into cities, the residual effects of the Parnell split and the failure of the Second Home Rule Bill increased levels of acrimony between urban labour leaders and rural agitators.

The divide created a significant level of misunderstanding between the two groups and a series of missed opportunities. The absence of a rural voice within the working-class movement pushed small farmers and agricultural labourers to its margins. Small farmers looked in apprehension towards outsiders and urban elite reforms and as such feared the dangers that could come from urban elitism in its most radical form – socialism. Rejection of an urban working-class identity became increasingly likely due to clerical and nationalist influences which warned against the moral and national threat, posed by socialism. In this climate, arguments that workers, small farmers, and farm labourers shared economic interests could make little headway.

Agricultural labourers also remained outside the movement, despite the fact that some historians, like J.J. Lee, have argued that labourers were increasingly

213 For further development of this topic, please see chapter four.
214 Patrick Tobin to Lyng, 11 February 1901 and 27 March 1901 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,701/2).
215 O'Connor, A labour history of Ireland, pp 57-8.
216 Paul Bew and Patrick Maume have discussed how rural Ireland remained apprehensive even of agrarian radicals, like Michael Davitt, who appeared as outsiders and part of the elite political world. Paul Bew and Patrick Maume, 'Michael Davitt and the personality of the Irish agrarian revolution' in Lane and Newby (eds), Michael Davitt new perspectives, pp 662-74.
217 For further details on this threat, please see chapter three.
embracing a modernist outlook and rejecting their traditional position in Irish society.\footnote{J.J. Lee, \textit{The Modernisation of Irish Society, 1848-1918} (Dublin, 2008), p. 8.} If this mental transformation was occurring among Irish labourers, the working-class movement paid little attention to it. By the turn of the century, Ireland's migrant workforce was no longer engaged exclusively in agricultural labour work abroad.\footnote{David Fitzpatrick has pointed out how there was a general divide between Irish cities, operating on British industrial economies, and rural Ireland, which supplied a significant portion of the British imperial workforce. Labour leaders arguably just maintained this divide. Fitzpatrick, \textit{The disappearance of the Irish agricultural labourer}, p. 74.} In fact, many were engaged in off-season work at 'oil refineries and other miscellaneous occupations.'\footnote{Ó Gráda, \textit{A new economic history of Ireland}, p. 233.} A significant portion of the migrants from Kerry found employment in the Welsh mines, among the strongest sites of labour radicalism in Britain.\footnote{David Fitzpatrick, 'The Irish in Britain, 1871-1921' in Vaughan (ed.), \textit{A new history of Ireland}, p. 660.} With little attempt to appeal to the transnational consciousness developed by migrant workers, the Irish labour movement essentially ceded all political benefits of the group's working-class militancy to the Land and Labour League.\footnote{Gerard Moran, 'Seasonal migration and social change in the west of Ireland' in \textit{Saothar}, 13 (1989), pp 22-31.} Furthermore, this strategy neglected the increasing importance of urban developments on the culture of the countryside. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the divide between the country and the city was not as distinct as it had been earlier. The increased readership of the national press and the importance of weekly urban markets, which saw rural residents entering urban environments to trade and sell products, regularly brought these otherwise distinct worlds together.\footnote{L.P. Curtis, 'Ireland in 1911' in Vaughan (ed.), \textit{A new history of Ireland}, pp 149-51.}

Rather than attempting to develop a proper rural policy, however, both the labour and socialist movements only acknowledged rural Ireland when it suited their propaganda or romanticised the struggles of the working classes.\footnote{This concept is further addressed in chapter two.} Other than these superficial links there were few attempts to include rural experiences within the working-class movement. Even when Connolly travelled to Kerry in 1898 to write an article on the Kerry Famine for Maud Gonne's Parisian newspaper, \textit{L'Irlande Libre}, he did little more than use it as an example of Ireland's economic plight. As Paul Dillon has noted, 'Connolly felt that the most important struggles for the Irish peasantry would occur not in the countryside, but between labour and capital in the cities.'\footnote{Paul Dillon, 'James Connolly and the Kerry Famine 1898' in \textit{Saothar}, 25 (2000), p. 40.} As a result,
working-class identity failed to address class divisions and competing identities that were developing in rural Irish society, which, due to years land agitation, had witnessed a certain level of *embourgeoisement* among small land-holding farmers. The relative neglect was apparent even through Connolly's reflections on agrarian labour elsewhere in the Atlantic. In the *Workers' Republic*, for example, he wrote that the issue of farmers' demands was what separated the SDP from the SLP in America, using the divisions to justify the true Marxist principles of the SLP. Connolly did, however, provide a disclaimer to the position stating:

> we wish to point out to all whom it may concern that the cases of America and Ireland are not analogous. Agriculture in America has assumed already its company form, being in many cases administered purely on capitalist lines for the profit of the non-resident owners; agriculture in Ireland is still in a semi-feudal form, the largest farm in Ireland would be classed as a petty farm in America, and the absorption of the working farmer by the capitalist managed estate of non-resident farmers practically unknown.

His words of caution captured the problem with universal acceptance of the SLP's line, but they also reveal a level of apprehension that Irish socialists maintained when addressing rural questions. Rather than deal with the intricacies of working-class identity and its inclusion of rural demands, Irish leaders instead only addressed agrarian questions on a superficial level, attributing rural suffering to landlordism and capitalism and promising that urban support of the nationalisation of the land would cure all of rural Ireland's economic problems.

Labour and socialist leaders on both sides of the Atlantic acknowledged their inability to reach rural workers. It was a failure attributable to the movement's modernist outlook, which relied on industrial progress and thus drew its focus largely from the social problems arising from urbanisation. This acknowledgement prompted parties to focus on the issue. The 1900 SPA campaign handbook dedicated a section to farmers who, they argued, were 'becoming less a holder of capital' and entering into a shared position with workmen. The failure to organise small American farmers led to a series of articles in the *International Socialist Review* in 1902, with American A.M.

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227 *Workers' Republic*, 21 October 1899.
228 ‘The Socialist Campaign Handbook, 1900’, 14 June 1904 (H.C.L., Digital collections, 1410.5.5), available only on campus network.
Simmons elaborating on the role of the farmer in the socialist movement.\textsuperscript{229} As early as 1893, H.W. Lee's report of the SDF to the International Socialist Workers' Congress highlighted the gap between the importance of farmers to the working-class movement and the propaganda designed to bring farmers into the movement, stating:

The condition of agriculture throughout Great Britain is even more serious than it is in other European countries. The recruiting ground for our great cities is now so restricted that it may be said no longer to exist, while the deterioration of the physique of the working people is so marked that more than ever do they require the influx of fresh blood from the country to keep up the standard of strength necessary even for the success of the capitalist exploitation.\textsuperscript{230}

Yet, even after this call, the British socialist movement still struggled with the issue. In 1913, Dr Hicks wrote in the \textit{Daily Citizen} that significant headway still needed to be made with both farmers and women.\textsuperscript{231} Recognising its failures, the second annual convention of the British Socialist Party instructed its executive committee to formulate a propaganda scheme to reach agricultural workers.\textsuperscript{232} Despite their limitations, the American and English movements were at least making attempts to address the gap.

The same cannot be said for Ireland, where labour leaders intentionally moved away from the rural workforce, especially after 1900.\textsuperscript{233} At the 1901 ITUC, former MP and current councillor, Bernard Collery, even delivered a speech calling for the new rise of Irish industry, while simultaneously dismissing Ireland's rural workforce. Expressing the festering resentments still maintained from the Irish land campaign, Collery complained that too much national attention had been 'directed toward the benefit of one working-class in the community.'\textsuperscript{234} While his anti-Parnellism explained his desire to shift political focus onto urban industry, his approach certainly did not reflect the state of Irish industry. Even by 1914, Ireland was still 7.1 per cent below the European norm.

\textsuperscript{229} \textit{International Socialist Review}, 1 October 1902.
\textsuperscript{230} SDF Report to the International Socialist Congress, 6-12 August 1893 (B.L., George Bernard Shaw papers, MS 50,680).
\textsuperscript{231} \textit{Daily Citizen}, September 1913.
\textsuperscript{232} British Socialist Party annual conference, 10-2 May 1913, (L.S.E., ILP Print Collection, ILP13 folder 3).
\textsuperscript{233} Claire Fitzpatrick has argued that Thomas Johnson was an exception to this dominant labour ideology. While Thomas Johnson was part of the later shift toward rural labour in 1917, his interest in rural Ireland fitted into a much wider shift at the time. Prior to 1917, Johnson's focus was on anti-war action which led him to rural Ireland. Clare Fitzpatrick, 'Nationalising the ideal: Labour and nationalism in Ireland, 1909-1923' in Biagini (ed.), \textit{Citizenship and community}, p. 284.
for urbanisation.\textsuperscript{235} Irish cities and Irish industry were not expanding enough to warrant such an approach.

Joseph Cleary has attributed this outlook of radical socialist and labour leaders to a desire to escape the perceived ‘idiocracy of rural life in the South’ and the ‘atavism of sectarianism in the North.’\textsuperscript{236} This perspective, of course, raises the question of whether this outlook was a product of a colonial mentality, one in which Irish leaders viewed Irish society through a British lens, or a result of a wider Atlantic framework, where the unquestioning faith in modernity made rural life appear a product of the past. The reaction to the failures of the Irish land campaign indicate the latter. The lack of progress made by land reformers caused many to see the IPP as an ineffectual vehicle for addressing Ireland’s grievances. For Unionists, it was more of a rejection of rural Ireland, which they perceived as focused exclusively on national questions. Uniting both Unionist and Nationalist labour schools was a desire to move away from rural Ireland and into a modern labour framework. The ITUC was an attempt to dispel notions of Irish difference by connecting Irish trade unionists not just to a British movement, but rather to a wider Atlantic one, a movement that was still largely focused on urban concerns. The outlook required Irish leaders to disregard the realities that lay before them.

As a result of these attitudes, the ITUC developed an almost exclusively urban character that was in line with trades congresses across the Atlantic. Between 1901 and 1917 Dublin delegates represented 39.96 per cent of the overall ITUC delegation, with Belfast contributing another 19.6 per cent.\textsuperscript{237} While the focus on industrial concerns then became a practical goal for the organisation, the lack of political focus meant the organisation failed to achieve one of its major objectives – the politicisation of the nation under the banner of labour. Therefore, there had to be a choice. The ITUC could force its political significance without regarding the majority of Ireland’s rural population or it could become exclusively an educational organ. Irish socialists pushed for the former, leaving the farmer behind.

It was not just rural Ireland that the movement ignored, however, but women too. At the funeral of Alice Brady, a young woman who died from injuries sustained

\begin{footnotes}
\item[235] Ó Gráda, Ireland: a new economic history, p. 383.
\item[236] Joe Cleary, ‘Misplaced ideas? colonialism, location and dislocation in Irish studies’ in Cleary and Connolly (eds), Theorizing Ireland, p. 92.
\end{footnotes}
during the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, Larkin stated that the loyalty of women workers during the 17 weeks of the strike ‘could not be surpassed.’ Since most of those women remained locked out for about two months longer than the men, the statement could not have been more correct. Yet, Larkin’s sentiment was in stark contrast to the way women were treated within the movement itself.

In part, this was in consequence of the movement’s projected masculine ideals. The working-class movement was on a quest to achieve its true ‘manhood’. This approach, which was shaped by the imperial masculine climate, left little room for a feminine contribution to the movement. Even those women who were able to integrate into socialist and labour circles remained largely on the margins. The ISRP had only one female member at its foundation, Alise Kennedy, who continued to play a hidden and largely unacknowledged role in the movement throughout this period. She would later be joined by Kittie Shannon, who would become a regular participant in SPI meetings by 1910. Until the establishment of the ‘Irish Women’s Workers’ Column’ in the Irish Worker, women’s voices in the labour press remained largely absent. The Harp featured correspondence from Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Agnes Halpin, and Helena Molony, but these articles remained small and irregular.

Irish suffragists increasingly threw their support behind Labour Party candidates who endorsed women’s enfranchisement as part of their election manifesto, but a combination of conflicting political agendas and suffragists’ own class biases prevented any real solidarity between the causes. A number of Ireland’s suffragists took issue with the class critiques delivered by labour leaders, which they interpreted as undermining their claim to a shared narrative of oppression. Those few powerful female personalities who did throw themselves into the labour and socialist movement, like Helena Molony, Countess Markievicz, Maria Perolz, Elizabeth O’Farrell, and Nellie Gifford tended to do so post-1913 and usually with alternate objectives of female

238 Irish Independent, 5 January 1914.
239 Irish Worker, 17 March 1914.
240 ITUC 1895 (N.L.I., Irish Trade Union Congress records, P3212).
241 List of original members of the ISRP according to Lyng (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,953).
242 For examples, please see, Harp, July 1909; April 1909; or November 1909.
243 For evidence of this, please see, Helen Chenexiv to Thomas Farren, 9 June 1915 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,654) or Irish Citizen, 8 June 1912, 4 January 1913; or 27 September 1913.
244 For examples, please see, Irish Citizen, 26 October 1912, 28 December 1912 or 19 July 1913.
suffrage and nationalism in mind. Even with this support, a number of these women still maintained condescending views towards the working classes and the labour movement, which they perceived as being incapable of forming an acceptable moral culture. For instance, an article in the Irish Citizen encouraged women to participate in the labour movement because:

> we believe it to be typical of the role which women, and the women's movement, are destined to play in the next stages of our social evolution. We believe it is the special function and destiny of the women's movement to stand between the movement of Labour and the movement of Culture, and to link the two. It will lead to each of the other movements the one factor which they might lack; it will humanise them.

These views capture the class divide that was maintained even under the slogan of solidarity. As such, while the working-class movement pushed women away, leading female activists distanced the movement from them as well.

Even those women who did take part in the labour movement, did not necessarily succeed in having their place and voice accepted. The fact that these women were largely from the upper or middle classes only proved labour's willingness to make room for bourgeois femininity. Perhaps even more indicative of the gendered practices of the socialist movement was the continued refusal to give a voice to those women who did start to take a greater interest in working-class politics. The only evidence of active female participation in the SPI meetings comes from the social committees, a group dominated by women whose contribution to the party was reduced to planning social events. Such division meant that to a great extent socialist parties remained masculine both in terms of participants and culture.

It is true that the Irish labour movement gradually integrated women into trade unions during this time, but it is important to remember that the number of unorganised female labourers still far exceeded organised ones. Most women employed in factory work were in the clothing industry in Ulster, though at least 1,700 were also employed in woollen mills in the Cork area. The only other factory to employ significant

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247 *Irish Citizen*, 27 September 1913.
numbers of women outside of the clothing industry was Jacob's biscuit factory in Dublin, where 2,000 of the workers were women. Undoubtedly, it was for this reason that the IWWU focused on Jacob's as their first major industry to organise. The Jacob's strike in 1911 did successfully see 3,000 women identify as strike participants, but those numbers had dwindled to 300 active IWWU members by 1913. Additionally, Michael O'Lehane's Irish Drapers' Assistant Association made some slow, but progressive strides towards bringing women into the union. It reported representing 701 female workers in 1910, a number that jumped to 1,400 in 1914, largely due to the increased employment of female labour in wartime Ireland.

Once again, a disparity remained between the revolutionary spirit and the reality of the labour movement. In 1901, Mary Galway lamented that of the 60,000 women working in Belfast, only 1,200 were members of TOSI. By 1907, TOSI's membership had increased to 3,023, in line with trends in the United Kingdom. By 1910, however, it had dropped again to 2,411. The loss was significant, for as table 1.5 shows, TOSI was one of the few unions representing women workers at the ITUC. Even with the BUTC actively recruiting women into the fold, between 1895 and 1897 and again in 1899, a woman's voice remained completely absent from the ITUC.

253 These numbers reflect only female membership for each year. Board of Trade Report on Trade Unions, 1908-1901 with comparative statistics for 1901-1910 [Cd. 6109] H.C. 1912-13, CLVII.655.
Table 1.5: The voice of the voiceless: female delegates to the ITUC, 1894-1917

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>% Overall</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.37%</td>
<td>Miss McCroy</td>
<td>Belfast Trades Council (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Morris</td>
<td>Belfast Trades Council (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Valentine</td>
<td>Bookfolders Branch Irish National Labourers Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss Stanley</td>
<td>Bookfolders Branch Irish National Labourers Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth Bruce</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.74%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miss McKenna</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.04%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Julia Lee</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.33%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.70%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.30%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Ogle</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.85%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.35%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Minnie Rodgers</td>
<td>Lurgan Hemmers and Vieners Society (Lurgan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.45%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delia Larkin</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
<td>Mary Galway</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ellen Gordon</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delia Larkin</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth McCaughley</td>
<td>Textile Operatives' Society of Ireland (Belfast)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.19%</td>
<td>Brigit Butler</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ellen Gordon</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delia Larkin</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
<td>Marie Perolz</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
<td>Ellen Cross</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Helena Moloney</td>
<td>Irish Women Workers' Union (Dublin)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this table reveals that TOSI delegates were certainly not alone at the ITUC on a few occasions, appearances can be deceiving. Even with the presence of women in the ITUC, the female voice did not necessarily increase. The only woman to raise a resolution from 1898 to 1910 was Mary Galway and the majority of these resolutions were demands for female factory inspectors. Elizabeth Bruce, Elizabeth McCaughey, Martha Carberry, and Miss McKenna were only recorded in ITUC reports as seconding Galway’s resolutions. Julia Lee and Sarah Ogle were visible, but silent throughout the duration of their respective congresses. Minnie Rodgers did raise a resolution in 1911, but it was another call for female factory inspectors, which was in turn seconded by Mary Galway. Women may have been welcomed, but, excluding Mary Galway, they were largely isolated.

The arrival of the IWWU certainly increased the number of women within the ITUC, but it came at the cost of gradually pushing TOSI out. Perhaps Penny Halloway and Terry Cradden captured it best when they concluded that ‘there was much lip service paid to organising women.’ The very legitimacy of women within the working-class movement, much like farm labourers, was contested. This organisation of women workers was carried furthest in Belfast, but as the political aims of the labour movement moved away from this city, the amount of attention given to women diminished perceptibly.

If, as G.D.H. Cole described, the child of socialism was born ‘out of unemployment with the Liberal Party as midwife,’ then Irish socialism probably should have fared much better than it did. There was certainly enough unemployment and resentment towards the Liberal Party for this to happen. However, the fact remains that the Irish working classes remained among the most docile of the Atlantic World during these years. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Irish labour

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255 For examples of these women seconding Galway’s resolutions, please see Lizzie Bruce, ITUC 1898 (N.L.I., Irish Trade Union Congress Annual Reports, P3212); Miss McKenna, ITUC 1901, p. 49; Carberry ITUC 1904, p. 43; McCaughey, ITUC 1905, p. 37; ITUC 1907, p. 50; ITUC 1907, pp 50 and 53; ITUC 1908, pp 49, 50 and 53; ITUC 1909, pp 32 and 37; ITUC 1910, pp 23 and 33 (N.A.I., Digital Collections) (http://divi.test.roomthree.com/) (4 January 2014).
movement was on the rise. However, as table 1.6 demonstrates, while trades councils continued to develop, the total number of individuals they represented stagnated. As evidenced in table 1.7, this was largely due to the slow decline of Belfast’s representative body, which suffered significant drops in 1901 and again in 1909, along with the inconsistency of Ireland’s smaller urban trades councils. While the inconsistency is certainly attributable to particular local councils’ decisions not to file reports, the data still expose the limited expansion of trades council representation across the country from 1896 to 1910.

Table 1.6: Total number of individuals represented by a local trades council in Ireland, 1896-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1903</td>
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<td>1904</td>
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<tr>
<td>1905</td>
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<td>1906</td>
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<td>1907</td>
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<td>1908</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The totals were compiled by viewing five year intervals from: Board of Trade (statistics on trade unions). Labour Department. Report by the chief labour correspondent on trade unions [Cd. 7436, Cd. 2838, and Cd. 6109].
This same docility is notable in respect of strike activity which, as can be seen in table 1.8, remained remarkable only for its irregularity during the 1890s. The hosting of the 1893 TUC in Belfast may have purported to bring a spirit of change to Ireland, but evidence suggests there was still far to go and a level of uncertainly as to the outcome.
Table 1.8: Irish working-class docility: total number of strikes in Ireland and the Atlantic World, 1889-1894

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1889</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1892</th>
<th>1894</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1075</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>1717</td>
<td>1298</td>
<td>1305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1897, the Board of Trade was still reporting that Ireland was ‘conspicuous for the small number of workpeople engaged in disputes relatively to population’. The situation did not improve much in later years. As table 1.9 shows, the number of individuals recorded as affected by a strike continued to remain unstable and frequently low, until the outbreak of the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout.

Table 1.9: Remaining on a small and unsteady scale: individuals affected by a strike 1897-1913

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>8713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>6984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>2889</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>4690</td>
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<td>1901</td>
<td>1887</td>
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<td>1902</td>
<td>2456</td>
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<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>7560</td>
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<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>3046</td>
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<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>7747</td>
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<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>29729</td>
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<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>14185</td>
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<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>4851</td>
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<td>1909</td>
<td>4080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>3916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>16887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>4415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>38023</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Board of Trade-strikes and lockouts, (Labour Department), Report by the Chief Labour Correspondent on the strikes and lockouts of 1889-1913. [C.6890, C.7403, C.7566, C.7901, C.8231, C.8643, C.9012, C.9437, Cd. 316, Cd. 689, Cd. 1236, Cd. 1632, Cd. 2112, Cd. 2631, Cd. 6065, Cd. 3711, Cd. 5325, Cd. 6472, Cd. 7089].

Even at moments when numbers rose, it did not mean that Ireland was standing out in the Atlantic World. When comparing those affected by a strike or a lockout to the

259 Board of Trade-Strikes and Lockouts, (Labour Department), Reports by the Chief Labour correspondent on the strike and lockouts of 1896 [C.9012], H.C. 1898, LXXVIII.423.
overall national population, as table 1.10 shows, it becomes clear that the conclusions of the 1897 Board of Trade report still held true in later years.

Table 1.10: Ireland’s disconnect: individuals involved in labour disputes in Ireland and the Atlantic World, 1896-1912

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1896</th>
<th>1897</th>
<th>1898</th>
<th>1899</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1902</th>
<th>1903</th>
<th>1904</th>
<th>1905</th>
<th>1906</th>
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<th>1908</th>
<th>1909</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1912</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>England</strong></td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wales</strong></td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>7.49</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scotland</strong></td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ireland</strong></td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These totals are expressed as percent and have been rounded to the hundredth per cent place. Population figures were used relative to census material gathered in 1891, 1901, and 1911 as reported in the Census of England and Wales. As a result of the mining industry, Wales is significantly above the UK average.

Sources: Board of Trade Report on Strikes, 1896-1912 [c. 9012, c.9437, cd.316, cd. 689, cd. 1236, cd.2112, cd. 2631, cd. 3065, cd. 4254, cd. 4680, cd. 523, cd. 5850, cd. 6472, cd. 7089].

Census of England and Wales. 1911. (10 Edward 7 and 1 George 5, ch. 27.) Preliminary report with tables of the population enumerated in England and Wales (administrative, registration and parliamentary areas). And in Scotland, Ireland, the isle of Man and the Channel Islands, on 3rd April, 1911. [Cd. 5705], H.C., 1911, lxxi.479, p. xviii.

Being tied to the British movement did not help to bolster Ireland’s significance as a location for the working-class struggle. Due to the small numbers involved, only seven Irish strikes even fell into the Board of Trade category of ‘great industrial disputes’ in the 1913 review. Ireland’s desire to be taken as a serious part of the British labour struggle often faced the harsh reality that the movement was not as advanced as the increased militancy of its leaders may have suggested.

This position explains why Belfast leaders were willing to move forward with independent Irish trade union movement. They, along with Southern Irish leaders, wanted Ireland to establish its own significance, with the expectation that Belfast and Dublin lead the way. As image 1.1 shows, Belfast and Dublin were the most active areas

\[^{260}\text{Board of Trade- Strikes and Lock-outs, (Labour Department), Report by the Chief Labour Correspondent on the strikes and lock-outs of 1913 [Cd. 7658], H.C. 1914-16, XXXVI.489, p. 122.}\]
for strike action. Belfast’s sectarian tensions, however, often masked these achievements.

Image 1.1: Belfast and Dublin lead the way: strikes in Ireland expressed by county

*After 1895, strikes are no longer listed by county, but instead by local area. For the purposes of these maps, totals from Belfast have been allocated to Antrim, Newry to Down, and Drogheda to Louth despite the fact that these areas partly fall into other counties.

**Please note these maps were compiled using the Board of Trade reports on strikes and lockouts. After 1900, these reports only featured principal strikes, which is why the number of strikes reported in Ireland decreases. As such, these maps do not claim to represent all strikes in Ireland during these years. Rather they are here to provide a general sense of where most strike activity took place during this time period.

Source: Board of Trade- strikes and lockouts, (Labour Department), Report by the Chief Labour Correspondent on the strikes and lockouts of 1889-1913. [C.6890, C.7403, C.7566, C.7901, C.8231, C.8643,C.9012, C.9437, Cd. 316, Cd. 689, Cd. 1236, Cd. 1632, Cd. 2112, Cd. 2631, Cd. 6065, Cd. 3711, Cd. 5325, Cd. 6472, Cd. 7089].
The distortion of labour's advances in the city have been perpetuated by historians who have focused instead on the Protestant community's supposed 'economically and psychologically rational' aversion to working-class politics.\textsuperscript{261}

The negation of Belfast's role in advancing Irish working-class radicalism was only further clouded by the Dublin-based leadership's usurpation of the movement post-1910. However, pushing the Belfast leadership out of the movement meant abandoning the progress made amongst the city's Protestant working classes. The Dublin leadership's disregard for the position of Belfast labour leaders captured more than just their unwillingness to engage with schools of thought that advocated differing nationalist views than their own; it exposed their willingness to turn against working-class militancy where it already existed, simply because they did not agree with its nature. Therefore, their role in creating Ulster Protestant aversion to working-class politics should not be understated. They too were partly responsible for making working-class politics less appealing to a vital part of the nation's working-class people.

The tour de force that was Larkinism contributed to the Dublin leadership's belief that they could represent Ireland's working classes even when faced with accusations that they were alienating a significant portion of them. The ITGWU's decision to reach out to farm labourers in the greater Dublin area led to a softening of the position towards agricultural labourers within the working-class movement. These initial steps, however, would not reap their greatest rewards until the post-1917 period. In fact, in 1914, when the ITGWU first began turning toward farm labourers as a potentially untapped group, Michael O'Lehane raised concerns in the ITUC. Fearing that the gradual absorption of farm labourers into the working-class movement would lead to a rural-led Labour Party, O'Lehane raised serious objections to their inclusion.\textsuperscript{262}

The First World War enhanced these tensions by altering the social conditions feeding into labour radicalism. The war proved to be a significant setback for building working-class consciousness, largely because wartime conditions improved the socio-economic outlook for many Irish workers. As David Fitzpatrick has shown, strikes in


\textsuperscript{262} ITUC Reports, 1914, p. 50. (N.A.I., Digital collections) \url{http://divi.test.roomthree.com/} (4 January 2014).
Ireland decreased during the war as wages and employment levels went up. While most of these benefits went to rural Ireland where wartime food demands increased the need for farm labourers, smaller benefits were also received by the industrial unskilled. A government policy of conciliation was sought to minimise the likelihood of prolonged strikes in essential wartime industries, through concessions such as increased wages. Additionally, war contracts resulted in increased employment particularly among women, who found work in national munitions or woollen firms. The war certainly put the Irish to work. This was one of the main reasons, beyond Irish enlistment, why Irish labour leaders feared losing the popular support of the working-classes to wartime patriotism.

When, in 1914, the ITUC tried to evoke Famine memory by claiming that wartime demands of Irish food exports would bring a return of the 1840s, they were largely unheard. This was mainly because in rural Ireland, where the memory of the Famine remained the strongest, the wartime economy brought some of its strongest benefits. Moreover, the ITUC simply did not have the support base in place to make such an appeal stick. It was a weak attempt to mobilise mass resistance amongst a section of the working classes, which up until this point they had not acknowledged as having a role in their movement.

Conclusion

It is worth considering a warning Timothy Meagher issued on the use of transnational approaches to the Irish diaspora. He cautioned historians about falling into the trap of ‘essentialising Irishness’; that is to say, defining Irishness through sweeping statements that neglect local, regional, and national differences. It would have been in the interest of many Irish working-class leaders to heed his warning. The Irish working-class movement was led by leaders who were schooled in British and American forms of

263 Fitzpatrick, *Strikes in Ireland*.
socialism and labour. Their understanding of the nature of the working classes came primarily from their own transnational experiences and international contacts within the Atlantic World. If it seemed that urban industrialism existed everywhere, it was because for them it did.

This perspective is important in identifying how Irish radicals sought, but failed, to mobilise the Irish working classes. They were, in fact, targeting the wrong audience. Even when Irish socialists rejected colonial rule, they moved beyond colonialism by turning to points of familiarity. These were areas where Irish emigrant networks existed, and where they felt comfortable navigating linguistic and cultural barriers, where they felt the Irish were accepted not as a colonial inferior, but as a potential equal. The result was that their ostensibly expanded horizons merely brought them to a narrow view of the Atlantic World and allowed them only to exchange one imperial consciousness for another.

After 1916, the external urban connections that the Irish leadership had relied on could no longer keep socialism and labour alive. In fact, during these years both labour and socialism drifted away from their previous international links. The slow transition away from these internationalist connections forced Irish leaders to look deep into Irish society to develop a new way to survive. It was now about connecting to the Irish working classes as they existed, rather than simply trying to transform them into something they were not. The new perspective led them to a harsh realisation: the working-class movement was missing most of the Irish working classes.

Unsurprisingly, this new strategy led them to a group amongst whom they had yet to make significant headway: farm labourers. In the aftermath of 1913, the ITGWU achieved a moderate level of success with the group, particularly in areas outside of Dublin. This change was important because, as Emmet O'Connor has pointed out, farm labourers played a critical role in increasing the militancy of the later movement. By 1918, the ITGWU was operating branches out of Belfast, Sligo, Waterford, Cork, Wexford, Bray, and Kingstown in addition to the three still remaining in Dublin.

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268 ITGWU 1918 return to the Registrar of Friendly Societies (N.L.I., ITGWU papers, MS 27,034).
Overall, we may say that the Atlantic networks that existed amongst Ireland's radical circles did more harm than good to the working-class movement during these years. The restrictions implemented during the war and in the aftermath of 1916 unintentionally did more to promote working-class consciousness in Ireland than Irish radicals ever did on their previous course. Their continual assertion that the city would be the place for the revolution only blinded them to the realities of Ireland's condition. They internalised a particular vision of the Atlantic World at the expense of the Irish community that they sought to mobilise. However, perhaps even more damaging were the ways in which this course penetrated the culture of the movement itself. It was not just that the leadership's urban perspective caused them to miss the working classes, it also caused them to create a movement that missed key aspects of Irish working-class culture, which in turn caused them to attribute a non-representative identity to the Irish working classes.
Chapter 2: Separating class from the 'master' narrative: nationalism and the Irish working-class movement

'We shall never forget that we are Irishmen'
– Dublin Trade and Labour Journal, May 1909

Introduction

In the introduction to Nations and nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality, Eric Hobsbawm stated he was able to write about nationalism without having to leave his 'personal convictions behind' because, as he saw it, nationalism was a modernist mechanism of social control, which he, as an internationalist, could see beyond. In his work, Hobsbawm attributes the same abilities to socialists of the Second International. Socialists, he argued, never used the term nationalism without the prefix 'petty bourgeois'. They were, after all, the intellectual pioneers of the international ideal at a time when collective identities were increasingly defined by the nation.

Hobsbawm's assertion that Second International socialists distrusted nationalism because of its potential to impede international revolutionary working-class consciousness is undoubtedly correct; this is a point that has been reasserted by socialists of the time. Such attitudes were not, however, universal among socialists or even embraced unconditionally by those who professed their disdain for national ideologies. This was largely because socialists were forced to promote working-class identity within national frameworks and to audiences that, to varying degrees, embraced national identities. This dilemma is at the heart of Stefan Berger and Angel Smith's work on labour, nationalism and ethnicity. Although these authors dedicate their work to Hobsbawm, they probe his conclusions by arguing that socialists willingly used nationalism as a vehicle to promote a socialist agenda.

Hobsbawm's overemphasis on socialist opposition to nationalism was, perhaps, a product of the era in which he was writing. The 1980s saw a resurgence of historical

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2 Ibid, p. 117.
3 Stefan Berger and Angel Smith (eds), Nationalism, labour and ethnicity, 1870-1939 (Manchester, 1999).
works investigating the role of nationalism and political engagement. Aiming to explain the contemporary political climate, historians generated a theory of 'false consciousness' to describe working-class voting patterns. The term was coined in reaction to counter-interest voting reflected in the support working-class voters gave to the conservative governments of Regan and Thatcher over Labour or the left. The apparent misnomer prompted a re-evaluation of works by notable historians of the Left who, during the 1970s, were using social history to expose national patterns of working-class resistance to capitalism and conservative government policies. Many new labour historians perceived the 'false consciousness' thesis to be an attack on the radical left, especially when coupled with the increase in the number of works analysing the resurgence of nationalism within the Soviet bloc.

To a certain degree, historians of the left had a reason for such caution. Some of these works made direct attacks on Marxist historians and denigrated the premise of class-driven histories. John Schwarzmantel argued that 'the Marxist fetish of making sense of every significant social phenomenon by subsuming it within the logic of the universal development of the forces of production, was the blueprint for ingenious but ultimately inapplicable theories of the national question.' In essence, instead of stimulating inquiry into the relationship between class and national identity, the resurgence of nationalist histories appeared to call into question much of what labour historians had accomplished.

Perhaps understandably, working-class historians reacted by taking a defensive position, publishing a series of works that upheld working-class consciousness in the

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4 In an obituary for Eric Hobsbawm, Roy Foster points to the incredible influence of the questions of nations and nationalism on Hobsbawm's career and connects it directly to his experiences in contextualising Marx within the long Thatcherite hegemonic period. Roy Foster, 'Eric Hobsbawm' in Past and Present, 218, 1 (2013), pp 10-13.


7 For examples of these works, please see James Mayall, Nationalism and international society (Cambridge, 1990) or John Schwarzmantel, Socialism and the idea of the nation (London, 1991).

8 Schwarzmantel, Socialism and the idea of the nation, p. 3.
face of conservatism, the socialist international ideal, and traditional Marxist approaches to history. These histories, however, failed to expose the degree to which labour leaders and socialists used nationalism as a mechanism to awaken working-class consciousness; this resulted from a fear that such inquires would be perceived as concessions to critics. The result was a certain degree of stagnation in the field.

This debate has served to further problematise our understanding of the relationship between nation and class, as it established the two concepts as being in fundamental opposition. As such the deconstruction of one meta-narrative simply made room for another. New perspectives into questions such as how allegiance to class and nation shared space in popular consciousness have been overshadowed by these debates. The purpose of this chapter is to question whether allegiances to nation and class were mutually exclusive within the turn of the century Atlantic World.

James Connolly’s participation in the 1916 Easter Rising has resulted in a significant focus on this topic in Irish historiography. Historians and committed Connollyites have felt they need to justify Connolly’s decision to partake in a nationalist campaign, especially in the aftermath of the attack on Connolly waged by members of the Irish radical left in the 1970s. Those in opposing quarters asserted that non-national forms of socialism existed outside of Ireland’s dominant national brands, but argued that its ideology failed to emerge due to structural forces polarising even those of the radical left. The debate, while providing an exhaustive study on Irish historical assessments of the relationship between socialism and Irish nationalism, fails to give agency to the working classes, a large majority of whom were not active in Irish socialist republican circles. Further problematising this methodology, the focus on Connolly has ensured that Irish working-class history exists in a national vacuum shielded by claims of national exceptionalism.


11 British historians appeared to concede the position using claims of academic deference to avoid the Irish situation altogether essentially cutting imperial cultural ties to the island before they had actually been cut. In his work on the English working class, Thompson claimed while he addressed the Irish in 110
This chapter seeks to challenge Irish national exceptionalism by considering the extent to which nationalism, both of the British and Irish brands, was used in Ireland as a vehicle for promoting working-class consciousness. The aim is to assert that socialist rejection of nationalism is a mythical ideal, denying the role both leaders and the working classes played in preserving the national character within working-class movements. It will accomplish this by also addressing how labour leaders used the working-class movement, in part, as a vehicle for nation building. It will explore the importance of the ‘defensive’ use of nationalism by socialists, to counter attacks on the movement and to dispel notions of ‘foreignness’, but it will also examine whether socialist leaders could successfully incorporate nationalism into their visions of an ideal working-class order. It will address questions such as: how was nationalism used to validate working-class action? Did leaders portray fighting for the working-class movement as a patriotic act? Did Irish socialists approach these problems in a similar manner to socialists elsewhere in the Atlantic world? Addressing such questions allows us to open up a new perspective on the history of the Irish working classes, while further demonstrating that Ireland was neither unique nor exceptional. Across the Atlantic world socialists did not merely submit to the ‘master narrative’ of the nation, but actively contributed to its development.

Irish working-class nationalism and internationalism

The language of ‘the Irish working class’ was a tool used by many Irish nationalist organisations looking to court a working-class vote and, as such, labour leaders certainly did not have a monopoly over the formation of working-class identity. In fact, nationalist discourse focusing on working-class identity surged in 1891 as a result of the
Parnell split. The Parnellite leadership attempted to thwart power challenges from middle-class nationalists while simultaneously undermining Michael Davitt’s rural-artisan alliance by establishing a political base amongst the urban working classes. The new focus provided an opportunity for labour leaders, who were already revelling at the arrival of new unionism, to increase the significance of the trade union movement in Irish politics.

Leading Southern Irish trade unionists, many of whom were already active in nationalist circles, used labour platforms to rally the working classes to both sides of the debate. In Dublin, where Parnellism remained a strong, trade union officials largely came out in support of Parnell’s working-class politics. The Dublin trade union organ, the Irish Labour Advocate, which just launched in February 1891, quickly became engrossed in the nationalist split. The continued defence of Parnell, however, gave the appearance of the paper being another Parnell organ, which only contributed to its quick demise. In Cork, where members of the trades council were split, the council managed to purge leading Davitt supporters, Michael Austin and Eugene Crean, only to have the two men contest the 1892 elections as anti-Parnellite labour candidates. Meanwhile, that same year, the Drogheda trades council canvassed for Parnellite candidate James Nolan for the South Louth Parliamentary seat, claiming he and his party best represented working-class needs. Southern Irish trade unionism became so engrossed in nationalist politics that it became difficult to ascertain exactly what type of nationalism working-class identity was supposed to denote.

The divide provided significant ammunition for middle-class nationalist leaders looking to discredit both Parnell and the new unionist movement. Anti-Parnellite politicians attacked new unionist advocates, Michael Canty and Adolphus Shields, claiming they were intentionally conflating working-class identity to Parnellism, after

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13 Ciarán Wallace argued that both the national and regional press in Ireland operated on the assumption that Labour councillors were nationalists. Ciarán Wallace, ‘Local politics and government in Dublin city and suburbs 1899-1914’ (PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 2009), p. 113.
14 For information on Davitt please see Fintan Lane, ‘Michael Davitt and the Irish working class’ in Lane and Newby (eds), Michael Davitt new perspectives, pp 82-92.
16 For examples of article endorsing Parnell, please see, the Irish Labour Advocate, 14 February 1891 or 21 February 1891.
18 Dundalk Democrat, 25 June 1892 and 9 July 1892.
they advised members of the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers to vote for Parnellite politicians. Opposing nationalist attacks gained enough momentum to force the closure of the Monastervan, Co. Laois, branch of the United Labourer’s Union in February 1891, after accusations were made that the union was only created to aid Parnell’s campaign. Foreshadowing later events discussed below, this mobilisation of anti-Parnellite leaders against the working-class movement served as a training period for radical challenges to the growth of Larkinism. It was, after all, largely anti-Parnellite politicians like William Martin Murphy and Timothy Healy who would be at the face of anti-Larkite resistance during the 1911-14 period.

British socialists in the SDF, embittered by the alliance between the IPP and the Liberal Party, used the opportunity to slander Irish nationalist politics. The party’s paper, Justice, claimed Parnell’s support from rigid Catholic bases warranted their moral scorn. The paper further accused Irish supporters of the IPP of being ignorant and shameless and labelled Parnell’s former associate, William O’Brien, a bigoted Catholic. The paper glowingly used the opportunity to advertise the creation of the Dublin Socialist Union, which it made sure to position under its extended diatribe against Parnell. It concluded by sarcastically noting that the Parnell scandal would mean ‘Ireland won’t be quite such a nuisance in the future as it has been of late.’ The hope was that the IPP’s death would mean life for the socialist movement in Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

In spite of the affront to Parnell, the SDF was not entirely opposed to Irish nationalism, as they were themselves a party openly supporting Irish home-rule. According to the SDF, the only hope for Irish nationalism was through the advancement of English socialism. As one writer declared: ‘we are all for justice in Ireland, but we are for justice to England too, the more as we believe the road to justice in Ireland is

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19 Shields was an editor for the Irish Labour Advocate, but even earlier he wrote in defence of his pro-Parnellite stance in the letter to the Irish Times on 16 December 1890. For information on the Parnellite split in the press, please see Maume, ‘Parnellite politics and the origins of independent newspapers’, pp 2-3. For criticism of Shields and Canty in the press, please see Freeman’s Journal, 14 March 1891.

20 Irish Labour Advocate, 21 February 1891. For further information on this event, please see Lane, ‘Michael Davitt and the Irish working class’, p. 93.


22 Justice, 6 December 1890.


24 Ibid, 29 November 1890.
through England. The SDF treated Michael Davitt's political evolution more positively, though this could have been a result of Davitt's greater willingness to rally Irish voters in England behind Labour. In 1890, just prior to the Parnell split and preceding Davitt's launch of his paper, *Labour World, Justice* praised Davitt's creation of what the paper deemed to be the first 'Irish Labour Party.' While being sure to add a note stating that a separate Irish Labour Party was not ideal, it wrote that the development was better than 'the wretched middleclass mockery which Parnell, T.P. O'Connor, William O'Brien and Co. think good enough to gull the working class man.' Featured immediately under the article was an advertisement for the newly created socialist society called the Irish Socialist Union, which indicated that English socialist hopefulness in Davitt's venture still needed a significant disclaimer. Nevertheless, the SDF's position does expose their cautious embrace of the Irish national ideal in its radical working-class form.

The incipient political labour movement developing in Scotland took stock of the struggle. By 1893, when the ILP had officially launched, the party knew enough to approach the Irish labour movement with two separate national working-class dialogues. In Belfast, the party orchestrated direct political links with the BUTC and put forward the ideal of a common British struggle. At the launch of the Belfast ILP, Edward Aveling even declared to the crowds that he was there 'to address the working men in Belfast as fellow-countrymen', thereby reiterating that they shared a common national struggle. In Dublin, on the other hand, the ILP refrained from formal labels around national identity and national politics, hoping that a delicate approach would lay the foundation for future co-operation with Parnellite politicians looking to secure their

25 Ibid, 23 March 1889.
26 Fintan Lane has suggested that Hyndman was quite supportive of Davitt and the Irish Democratic Federation. While this may have been the case, the outlook was not universal across SDF circles, many of which harboured significant ill-will toward Irish land campaigners and nationalists. Hyndman, while more supportive, was still cautious and willing to keep his options open. Lane, *The origins of modern Irish socialism*, pp. 43-50.
27 Ibid, 8 February 1890.
28 Ibid. The Irish Socialist Union was advertised as being launched on 87 Marlborough Street, without any official socialist party allegiances. The Irish Socialist Union changed its name to the Dublin Progressivist Club and later the Dublin Socialist Union. For the Dublin Progressivist Club please see *Justice*, 3 May 1890. For the Dublin Socialist Union please see *Justice*, 29 November 1890.
29 While politics is not mentioned, the *Irish Labour Advocate* complains about the *Belfast Weekly Star* not acknowledging it as a fellow labour paper. The *Belfast Weekly Star* is John Bruce Wallace's paper *Brotherhood* operating under a new title. For further information on Wallace and the paper, please see chapter three. *Irish Labour Advocate*, 14 February 1891.
30 Please see chapter one.
31 *Belfast News Letter*, 4 September 1893.
working-class credentials. The ILP suggested a political arrangement whereby Parnellite candidates in Southern Ireland would endorse ILP candidates in Northern England and Scotland in exchange for reciprocating ILP endorsements in Ireland. This was an attempt to push Irish nationalists in Ireland towards a more sympathetic labour line, while also keeping the Irish in England and Scotland voting for Labour instead of the Liberal Party.

It was in this context that James Connolly, who was in Scotland at the time, reached out to Dublin socialists, Adolphus Shields and Michael Canty. By 1893, Dublin trade unionists had regrouped and managed to secure their second labour organ, the *Irish Worker*, in the hopes of rebuilding the working-class movement, this time outside of nationalist politics. While the paper claimed to promote a 'non-sectarian' message, preferring to address socialist politics, bitterness from the nationalist split still festered, preventing universal acceptance of the more compromising tone.\(^{32}\) When the DCTU invited Michael Davitt and Michael Austen to speak on a labour platform at the annual Labour Day celebrations, the Dublin coach makers refused to participate on the grounds that the two men represented a party that was opposed by Dublin workingmen.\(^{33}\) Positions such as this made it increasingly clear that Irish labour would need to look beyond Irish shores to promote working-class identity outside of nationalist politics.

Grasping the opportunity, in 1894, Connolly tried to orchestrate a political endorsement arrangement between Keir Hardie and Dublin Parnellite-Labour candidate William Field.\(^{34}\) After Hardie's endorsement of Field, the anti-Parnellite press went on the attack. The *Freeman's Journal* claimed that Hardie's attempt to split the Liberal Party guaranteed a Conservative victory in Westminster.\(^{35}\) It was an underhanded nationalist challenge to the rise of Labour politics, but it was nevertheless effective. Field, fearing nationalist backlash, retracted the arrangement.

The failure, while a set-back to the Irish nationalist and ILP courtship, did not mean its end. ILP leaders did not interpret the attack as being exclusively Irish, as similar scare tactics were used by the Liberal Party against Ramsay MacDonald in his Dover

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\(^{32}\) *Irish Worker*, March 1893 and June 1893.

\(^{33}\) Ibid, May 1893.

\(^{34}\) James Connolly to Keir Hardie, 8 June 1894, 19 June 1894, and 3 June 1894 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 13,933).

\(^{35}\) *Freeman's Journal*, 5 April 1894.
Their belief that the change in Field’s position resulted from Liberal slandering made Hardie’s defeat appear to be caused by the lack of labour consciousness in Ireland, rather than the direct opposition of Irish nationalism. It was for this reason that Hardie and other ILP leaders would continue to support the growth of working-class education in Ireland, even if it was not directly under the auspices of their own party. It was for this same reason that Connolly was able to later turn to Hardie for a loan to establish the *Workers' Republic*, even when the paper was not directly endorsing the ILP. Hardie and the ILP, remained firm advocates of Irish nationalism as part of wider UK Labourism. Hardie had even been posed the question on Irish home rule during the creation of the Scottish Labour Party, at which time, he affirmed this very position. He claimed that while the party sympathised with Irish concerns it did not eliminate the shared economic grievances of all United Kingdom workers. Overall, Hardie concluded the party would support home rule legislation, but they would place working-class concerns first and foremost.

Dublin’s militant socialist circles, which were consolidating forces in 1896 with the creation of the ISRP, did not share Hardie’s opinion. In an article on the relationship between socialism and nationalism in relation to the English working classes, Connolly stated the English were ‘not bad fellows’, but reasserted that concerted action could not occur until after the revolution. The paper remained scathing of both nationalist politicians and the nationalist press. Even Michael Davitt, who the SDF placed faith in as a new hope for labour, remained an object of ISRP critique. The party remained sceptical of the true extent of his support of socialism, drawing a distinction between Davitt in England and Davitt in Ireland. It was not a popular opinion, since Davitt’s progressive social policy was viewed by some in socialist quarters as being reflective of Ireland’s evolution toward socialism. Nevertheless, the party upheld that the only type

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36 Series of letters from Arthur Harby to James Ramsay MacDonald, 19 October 1894, 30 October 1893, December 1893, 4 January 1894 (J.R.L., Ramsay MacDonald Papers, RMD 1/1).
37 For information on this loan, please see chapter one.
38 Labour Leader, April 1889.
39 This article first featured in Maud Gonne’s *Irlande Libre. Workers' Republic*, 3 September 1898.
40 *Workers' Republic*, 3 September 1898.
42 This is the position put forth in Francis Sheehy-Skeffington’s biography of Davitt shortly after his death. Sheehy-Skeffington argues that Davitt is one of the Ireland’s first true socialists. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, *Michael Davitt: revolutionary, agitator and labour leader* (Dublin, 1908). Supporting the shift away from revolutionary socialism first advocated by the Irish Socialist Republican Party, James Connolly’s
of socialism Ireland should embrace was of the revolutionary variety and, therefore, Davitt's evolutionary socialist potential was linked to the more compromising position of possibilist schools, like the SDF.

The ISRP did not completely isolate itself from the opportunities posed by the growing factional tensions within the nationalist movement either. Similar to the SDF and the ILP, the party tried to use the turbulence within the nationalist movement to its own advantage. Capitalising on the factionalism developing within nationalist circles surrounding the centenary commemorations of the 1798 rebellion of the United Irishmen, the ISRP positioned itself as the inheritor of Wolfe Tone's ideals. It did this by both romanticising 1798 leaders within the party press and using 1798 clubs and societies to preach socialism inside of nationalist circles. The most successful such campaign took place in Cork, where Cornelius Lehane was able to recruit enough members from the Wolfe Tone Literary Society to establish the ISRP Cork branch.

However, this strategy complicated the significance of nationalism and socialism within the ISRP's platform. Sometimes nationalism became the focal point of ISRP action, meaning that it is hard to distinguish whether participation in the party's protests resulted from working-class or nationalist discontent. For instance, protests against the Boer War in 1899 and the British royal visit in 1894 attracted significant amounts of attention to the party, but they were taking place alongside significant nationalist action, making ISRP support appear more nationally inspired. This is clear from official reports sent to the Chief Secretary of Ireland, which claimed the Boer War protests organised by the ISRP posed the greatest potential threat. In spite of the organisations small membership and unremarkable past meetings, this event, they

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44 For examples of poems on the United Irishmen in the socialist party press, please see the Workers' Republic, 13 August 1898 or 5 August 1898.
45 For information on Lehane's work within the Cork Wolf Tone Literary Society, please see the Workers' Republic, 1 October 1898.
46 For further evidence, please see Maud Gonne to James Connolly, 1894 (N.I.L., William O'Brien papers, MS 13939,ii).
warned, had the potential to ignite more popular support.\textsuperscript{47} While this perspective could have been representative of the government's own focus on national threats, it captures at the very least the perceived importance of nationalism as a source of popular discontent within socialist radicalism.

Dublin socialists pushed their nationalist objectives further in response to this attention. It gave them the opportunity to reach workers who were not likely to read the *Workers' Republic* and who did not spend their free time on Sunday afternoons listening to Dan O'Brien, James Connolly, or Edward Stewart's lectures on Marx in the Phoenix Park. Protests and rioting attracted crowds and therefore gave socialists the attention they desperately desired. However, these actions risked putting nationalism before socialist critiques of capitalism, and therefore risked confusing the organisation's mission. Opposition press outlets labelled the ISRP as 'the most extreme and least reputable Nationalists in Dublin,' confirming to its enemies that the party's nationalist platform mattered more than its socialism.\textsuperscript{48}

Despite the tension that this emphasis on nationalism created with English socialists, the ISRP continued to justify its position in the Atlantic socialist press.\textsuperscript{49} It argued that Irish national protest was in line with international revolutionary socialist thinking. The party reported its anti-Boer War activities to the American SLP paper, the *People*, citing them as an example of revolutionary socialism being embraced by the Irish working classes.\textsuperscript{50} Working-class leaders were arguably, acting out of socialist self-interest in absorbing these activities into the greater working-class fight. The Irish working classes showed up in greater numbers to nationalist protests and their support of socialism increased when the movement worked directly toward national objectives. Socialists abroad were willing to accept these messages for the benefits they received as well. Connolly's former colleagues at the Edinburgh paper, the *Socialist*, printed justifications for why Ireland's struggle needed to be both class-based and national. The irony of this policy lay in the disconnect between this narrative and Scotland's own relationship to the British Empire. The paper never addressed why the same logic did

\textsuperscript{47} Letter to the Chief Secretary from the Under Secretary (T.N.A., Dublin Castle Files, CO904, Boxes, 193-216, file 5435), p. 795 (http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/browseCollection) (1 September 2015).
\textsuperscript{48} 'Untitled Press Clipping' undated (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,674/2/1).
\textsuperscript{49} It should be noted that many English socialists, including SDF leader, Henry Hyndman, opposed to the Boer War. It was the anti-British elements of these activities that caused the greatest discomfort for English socialists who were still British nationalists. Chushichi Tsuzuki, *H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism* (Oxford, 1961), p. 126.
\textsuperscript{50} *Weekly People*, 14 January 1900.
not apply to Scotland. These unquestioning acceptances of Irish protest from Scottish and American socialist parties again developed largely in response again to Irish working-class interests. Both the American and Scottish SLPs were trying to recruit supporters from the Irish diaspora and therefore had a vested interest in moving Irish nationalism closer to socialism, even if this meant giving attention to issues that did not resonate within their own national movements. The result, however, was the emergence of a dialogue of Irish exceptionalism within international socialism.

This exceptional position embraced by revolutionary Irish circles was in stark contrast to the line maintained by socialists in Belfast, where the local ILP wished to see Ulster Unionism accepted as part of a British socialist dialogue and acknowledged as a counterpart to nationalism within the Irish labour debate. As a reminder that all national identities had a place in the Irish labour movement, Alexander Bowman opened the 1901 ITUC with a reminder that 'no one of the all too many sections into which the population of this country is divided has a monopoly of patriotism.' As a former member of the Protestant Home Rule Association and the British SDF, Bowman, like many Ulster labour leaders, was sympathetic to the Irish national debate, but very much aware of the dangers of labour turning against Unionist identity. The earlier wave of new unionism had indeed suffered defeat in part due to the exposure of nationalist sympathies expressed by Ulster organisers, like Michael McKeown. Ulster leadership preferred to have nationalism remain outside of labour though they would not protest the rallying calls of their southern counterparts if they were willing to respect their position.

British socialist circles were aware of the delicacies of the situation, but also faced the reality of being political parties supportive of Irish home rule. At first, the British ILP hoped to win support across Ireland and keep its Irish supporters in England and Scotland content by avoiding the home rule question when addressing Ulster audiences. However, the debate soon surfaced when opponents of the ILP began to use home rule as a slogan to scare away potential Belfast working-class Labour supporters. For instance, in the 1905 Walker-Dixon parliamentary race, Dixon used Walker's LRC Socialist, August 1902.

53 Terence Bowman, People's champion: the life of Alexander Bowman: pioneer of labour politics in Ireland (Belfast, 1997); Carr, The Belfast labour movement, pp 2-8 or McCarthy, Trade unions in Ireland, p. 10.
54 O'Connor, A labour history of Ireland, p. 53.
endorsement to equate a vote for Walker to a vote for home rule. The attacks resulted in Walker’s Unionist identity being a primary focus of his campaign.

Walker’s defence of Unionism, of course, led to questions within the British socialist press about whether or not a Unionist candidate should be endorsed by the LRC, when its two main parties, the SDF and the ILP, were both home rule supporters. The SDF paper, Justice, used the LRC as a buffer to protect the party line. It claimed that the LRC had the right to endorse Walker as it did not have a mandate on political questions beyond the promotion of labour, whereas the SDF did and therefore could not extend its formal support. The ILP did not take the same stand as the SDF, though it chose not to debate the topic in the party press either, possibly fearing that such questions could be problematic for the party’s position in Belfast. The SDF, which unlike the ILP, had little support in the city and therefore little to fear.

Officially, the BUTC took a similar line of not addressing national questions, and, in effect, went either way; but, in reality, the council largely protected the interests of Unionism over Irish Nationalism. In May 1905, when the BUTC contemplated endorsing Thomas Sloan as the ‘workingman in the House of Commons,’ for re-election in South Belfast, they ultimately declined. The council cited fears of the long-term ramifications of such an endorsement on the grounds that it would mean having to support Davitt’s candidacy in West Belfast in the next election. With Davitt opening a dialogue with both the SDF and the ILP, Belfast’s concerns about the influence of Irish nationalism on the British socialist movement were already heightened and endorsing Sloan did not seem worth the risk. That June, the BUTC summarised its decision in the Belfast Labour Chronicle, stating: ‘It is the policy in a city like ours where Trade Unionists are so sharply divided on questions of party politics. The independence of Labour must be maintained at all costs.’ Labour supporters tapped around the issue, hoping to first construct a

55 Dixon Election handbill (N.I.I., Librarian’s Office Collection, LOP 114, 32).
56 Justice, 23 September 1905.
57 The quotation originates from a lecture delivered by Sloan at George’s Hall. Irish Protestant, 21 January 1905. Thomas Sloan first successfully contested the MP seat in South Belfast in 1903 after the death of William Johnston. Sloan’s candidacy caused controversy in the Grand Lodges and Sloan ran on an Independent Unionist ticket. Issues with campaign financing led to a dispute in the Grand Lodge. Sloan and supporting lodges broke away and formed the Independent Orange Order. For further reading on Sloan or the formation of the IOO, please see Henry Patterson, ‘Conservative politics and class conflict in Belfast’ in Saothar, 2 (1976), pp 22-32.
58 Belfast Labour Chronicle, June 1905.
more significant support base for the ILP and trade unionism in Belfast before confronting the national issue.

The IOO, however, did not have to abide by the same reservations, and it declared Sloan was both a Protestant and labour candidate without the burden of promising the same treatment to Catholic labour candidates. In doing so, it communicated the message that the BUTC could not. The IOO’s endorsement of Sloan’s campaign, however, was not entirely beyond nationalism. In fact, the body began presenting its own version of nationalism that called for a sharing of Irish traditions across sectarian lines. For example, in a Battle of the Boyne commemoration flyer sponsored by the IOO and attributed to Sloan and Crawford, the Boyne was advertised as a victory for human liberty that should be celebrated by ‘all Irishmen whose Country stands first in their affections.’ It was certainly a different brand of Irish nationalism, but it was enough to raise questions as to where the IOO stood on the issue of home rule.

The position soon landed the IOO grandmaster Lindsay Crawford in troubled waters. His paper, the Irish Protestant, advocated firmly that Protestantism was best for national economic development, while also arguing that reform needed to come internally as opposed to external support from Westminster, a significant transformation from the core Liberal Unionist message propagated by the paper during the Gladstone years. It was this platform that sparked the attention of Liberal Unionists who saw it as advocacy for Irish nationalism. Crawford was dismissed and the Irish Protestant printed an article clearly disassociating itself from the previous editorship.

The differing national politics of the two labour schools neutralised questions of nationalism within the ITUC. Many of the stronger and older personalities who rose to power through the British trade union movement, like John Simmons, E.L Richardson and George Leahy, still exerted enough influence to keep the body focused on non-

59 Manifesto from the Independent Orangemen of Ireland, 22 July 1905 (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson papers, MS 17,103).
61 Murray, Peter, ‘Radical way forward or sectarian cul-de-sac? Lindsay Crawford and Independent Orangeism reassessed’ in Saothar, 27 (2002), pp 31-42.
62 Irish Independent, 5 January 1907.
national and socially moderate labour reforms. By doing this, they enabled external socialist party to profess its own national politics outside of the ITUC, encouraging ITUC delegates to profess their political beliefs through these outlets instead. The stronger presence of Belfast socialist leaders in the Congress, however, meant that it was giving de facto preference to British labour and socialist thinking. Historians of the labour movement have acknowledged this, with Emmet O'Connor even using John Simmons to personify the ITUC's 'anglicanisation', which created the image of 'nationalism and Labour as dichotomous'. The position became even more evident when, in 1903, Keir Hardie and Ramsay McDonald addressed the Congress and encouraged Ireland to join the ranks of the British labour movement.

If British Labour Party sympathisers were to suppress the growing tide of Irish national discourse within the Labour movement, however, they would need more tangible evidence that Irish nationalism was hurting British Labour. The moment came with the 1907 by-election in Jarrow. After the death of the Liberal candidate holding the seat, the British Labour Party announced it would contest. However, Jarrow's significant Irish population made it a coveted spot for the IPP. When the IPP announced it would field John O'Hanlon against the British Labour Party's candidate Pete Curran, ILP supporters decried the move as a betrayal. ILP leadership accused the IPP of using Irish nationalism to split the Irish vote in a working-class community. Curran, who was well-known in Belfast, particularly within the city's labour circles, became the perfect symbol of why labour should not trust Irish nationalists. He had served as the Belfast delegate to the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers and helped to launch the city's branch of the ILP.

The Belfast working-class leadership used the Jarrow election to assert their strict opposition to Irish nationalism on the grounds that it was detrimental to the interests of the working classes. The move was intended to assert that the Belfast labour movement was committed to two key issues – labour and resistance to Irish nationalism. The platform certainly offered a means of deflecting claims that the Belfast labour party leaders were in fact supporting Irish nationalism. The Belfast LRC even

64 O'Connor, A labour history of Ireland, p. 61.
66 For evidence of Pete Curran's activities in Belfast, please see Belfast News Letter, 18 November 1893 or 4 September 1893.
67 Ulster Guardian, 13 July 1907.
vowed retaliation for Jarrow by challenging Joe Devlin, the nationalist candidate in West Belfast, during his next election. In spite of Curran's 2,574 vote victory over O'Hanlon in addition to his defeating both the opposing Liberal and Conservative candidates, the election helped to justify Belfast's position regarding Irish nationalism in the eyes of the English socialist leadership, and allowed them to come out formally against the IPP. 

The Jarrow election, of course, could have been an opportunity for Dublin socialists to weigh in on the issue. If indeed labour leaders were in favour of Irish citizens abroad supporting the British Labour Party, then a response to the IPP challenge to Curran could have been an opportunity to build a bridge with Belfast labour circles. Dublin socialists, however, did not feel the Jarrow issue warranted significant attention.

In part, this was because the party was struggling to stay afloat and did not want to offend the British ILP leadership, who they were hoping to use as a potential lifeline if needed. The SPI had lost its main propagandists, John Arnall and Thomas Lyng, in 1907. By 1908, leading party member Thomas Brady had abandoned his socialist politics to instead focus his efforts on Sinn Féin, seeing its development as more hopeful. Similarly, SPI member, Frederick Ryan, decided to focus his efforts primarily on the nationalist movement. He first joined a branch of Young-Ireland before moving temporarily to Cairo to launch a left-wing nationalist paper there. The SPI, now barely holding on, had reached out to British socialists for help, and they duly obliged. Keir Hardie and Victor Grayson addressed a meeting in the Phoenix Park in 1908 and Hardie returned again in 1909 to address a meeting in the Ancient Concert Hall. The message the British leadership made was clear - Irish socialists would need to accept that they were part of the British movement and therefore join the ILP. It was a call to officially and categorically place nationalist politics behind the cause of labour.

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68 Northern Whig, 13 June 1907.
69 For the election results, please see Edward Porritt, 'The British Socialist Labour Party' in Political Science Quarterly, 23, 3 (September 1908), p. 475. For references to the Jarrow election and its connection to Irish working-class politics, please see Hutchison, 'Diaspora dilemmas and shifting allegiances', pp 113-14.
70 William O'Brien Notebook, undated (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, M.S. 15, 674 (2)).
71 Frederick Ryan died in England while the editor an English-language Egyptian journal there. For information on Ryan's move to Egypt and his establishment of the left-wing nationalist paper, please see 'Report on Frederick Ryan from Chief Inspector', 20 January 1908 (T.N.A., Dublin Castle Files, CO904, Boxes 193-216) (http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/browseCollection) (4 September 2015). For further information on Ryan and his socialism, please see Maume, The long gestation, pp 87 and 243.
72 1908 Labour Day Bill, 3 May 1908 (N.L.I., Librarian's Office collection, LOP 112) and a ticket for the Keir Hardie Lecture (N.L.I., Librarian's Office collection, LOP 109).
The SPI refused to abandon its nationalist line, however, and turned instead to advanced nationalist circles for support. While it could be argued that this decision was ideological, and amounted to the SPI leadership refusing to acquiesce to British control of the Irish working-class movement, an alternate argument could be made against their decision to ally with nationalist organisations whose progressive social policies remained unclear. Regardless, the SPI began informally working with Sinn Féin and other advanced nationalist organisations. Socialist speakers began lecturing on the nationalist circuit. Peter Macken gave lectures to the Young Ireland branches while P.T. Daly delivered lectures to Sinn Féin. Meanwhile, the SPI held its weekly talks on topics such as, 'Why Irish Nationalists should be socialist' and 'Socialism and Internationalism.' They were ensuring that national questions had a clear place within the socialist movement.

Not all members agreed with this course. One of the most ardent critics of the approach was Cornelius Lehane, who was still taking an active part in revolutionary socialist circles in Finsbury Park. In 1907, three police officers reported Lehane to British authorities for his attendance at a Sinn Féin rally. Lehane attracted their attention because he was howled down from the stage by the crowd, who called him, ‘an extreme socialist,’ after he proposed an amendment to the policies outlined by Sinn Féin that included more revolutionary working-class language.

Lehane’s position in London, however, was not the same as that of his former ISRP comrades in the United States. By 1908, the ISF in New York had received word of the SPI’s increasingly nationalist platform from SPI members, like Frederick Ryan, who were writing into the party paper, the Harp, endorsing Sinn Féin’s socialist potential. Standing in solidarity with the Dublin comrades, the ISF presented Sinn Féin as the new face of revolutionary Ireland, claiming ‘socialism in Ireland very likely will be worked out through Sinn Féin’. Their advice was simple, Irish Americans should vote for the SPA, but the Irish in Ireland should support Sinn Féin. Over time, the latter position was given increased attention in the party’s paper. In spite of the paper’s American readership, by the end of 1909 coverage of exclusively Irish topics outnumbered American topics at a

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71 Socialist Party of Ireland Lecture List (N.L.I., Sheehy-Skeffington papers, MS 40,480/1&3).
72 Ibid.
74 Harp, 10 November 1909.
75 Ibid, March 1908.
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rate of five to one.\textsuperscript{78} Sinn Féin, in particular, received coverage in over seven articles across the twelve 1909 issues.\textsuperscript{79} When the paper relocated to Dublin in 1910, however, Larkin did not echo these sympathies, declaring that both Sinn Féin and the IPP were not worthy of Irish working-class support. Instead, Larkin declared, ‘never in the history of this country was there such a low level of political, economic and intellectual intelligence.’\textsuperscript{80} Larkin, like Lehane, was among a minority of Irish socialists who were opposed to direct political ties with nationalist parties to achieve working-class aims. This line was his attempt to attract supporters for the newly developing, independent working-class movement.

Larkin’s scepticism about Sinn Féin’s working-class revolutionary potential did not, however, extend to him blocking former Sinn Féin politicians from entering the labour movement. When, in 1910, Sinn Féin opted to not contest elections and to instead focus on party propaganda, the Labour Representational Committee welcomed a number of lost politicians looking for a new party to endorse their candidacy. The result was that six of the thirteen elected Dublin Labour Councillors between 1912 and 1915 were former Sinn Féin candidates.\textsuperscript{81} In Belfast, where Connolly was now trying to launch new branches of the SPI, the party sought the support of nationalist leaders, like Bulmer Hobson, who put forth his name for admission to the new party.\textsuperscript{82}

While all of this was occurring, the \textit{Irish Worker} increased its nationalist criticisms against both the IPP and Sinn Féin, hoping to stir nationalist support firmly into the labour movement. The opening issue accused Arthur Griffith of importing foreign capitalism and politics into Ireland.\textsuperscript{83} The paper also accused, IPP leader, John Redmond, of not caring about the Irish working classes. Moderate and advanced nationalist organisations were called ‘sham capitalist parties’ and Irish nationalist newspapers were accused of being against the working classes.\textsuperscript{84} The attacks did not earn Larkin many friends and while not the only reason for the reluctance if the IPP to lobby for greater assistance in Westminster later during the 1913 Lockout, it was

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid, 1909.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid, February 1909; March 1909; July 1909; August 1909; and September, 1909.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid, February 1910.
\textsuperscript{81} O’Connor, \textit{A labour history of Ireland}, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{82} Untitled note on Belfast Branch of SPI written by William O’Brien date of Hobson entry is 1910 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674 (3)8).
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Irish Worker}, 27 May 1911.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid, 23 September 1913.
certainly a factor. Frustration against such hard-line opposition to Irish nationalists did exist even in Dublin socialist circles. A concerned Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, perhaps perturbed by his own father-in-law’s conversion to militant anti-Larkinism, asked William O’Brien, ‘can nothing be done to stop Larkin in his incessant campaign against the Freeman and the Telegraph? – the only two papers that give the strikers any kind of fair show editorially?’ Larkin, however, did little to address the concerns seeing the attacks as a way to justify labour’s future claim as an independent and truly nationalist movement.

As a result, the anti-Larkinite press, which was largely controlled by IPP-affiliated nationalists, focused in on the potential for socialism to kill home rule. The anti-Larkinite paper, the Liberator, presented socialism as a chaotic alternative to Irish home rule. Similarly, the Irish Independent claimed Larkin addressed a meeting in East Ham, stating he would actively oppose home rule until Dublin employers were brought to their senses. These claims were scare tactics, but when coupled with the Irish Worker’s continual criticism of home rule politicians, they carried significant weight.

Irish working-class leaders were, of course, not opposed to home rule. In spite of Larkin’s criticisms, the Irish Worker still came out in support of the Home Rule Bill. The paper used the bill to advocate for the formation for an Irish Labour Party, the end goal which the movement had in sight from the start. Essentially, the paper called on nationalist labour action to drive working-class politics through the new Irish government. The result was that the paper, and its affiliate the ITGWU, became associated with their own brand of revolutionary labour nationalism.

As part of this transformation, Irish working-class leaders had to distance themselves not only from Irish nationalist politicians, but also the British Labour Party, whose uncritical partnership could potentially undermine their nationalist claims. The British Labour Party’s role in supporting the Liberal Government’s ‘People’s Budget’ of

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85 Niamh Puirséil raises the point about the limited effort made by the IPP leadership in her essay. Puirséil, ‘The echo of battle’, p. 227.
87 Liberator, 6 September 1913.
88 Irish Independent, 1 December 1913.
89 Ibid, 20 April 1912.
1909 and the National Health Insurance Act of 1910, grounded the critique. Irish leaders claimed the lack of extension of medical bills and of funding to feed children in Irish schools equated to British Labour's condoning of Ireland's secondary status within the union. Irish labour leaders, of course, did not fail to capitalise from the benefits of the legislation that did extend to Ireland. Since the National Health Insurance Scheme extended benefits to any approved trade union member, the Irish Worker used it as one of the major selling points in attracting new members to the ITGWU throughout 1912, while simultaneously maintaining Irish labour's demands for autonomy. These attacks certainly did not leave any warm feelings among British trade union and Labour Party leaders and offer a potential reason for their lukewarm embrace of Larkin during the 1913 dispute.

This largely Dublin-led campaign to advance the cause of an independent Irish Labour Party had divisive effects on the ITUC. Derry representative, James McCarron, complained that Dublin delegates were using the ITUC to build an 'Ireland for Dublin' by

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93 For examples please see, Irish Worker, 16 March 1912; 25 March 1912; 6 April 1912; or 20 April 1912.

94 The British Labour Party is largely criticised for its decision to provide funds over solidarity strike action during 1913. For examples, please see Puirseil, 'The echo of the Battle', p. 225. For reasons contributing to British trade union financial constraints and conflicted opinions on a solidarity strike, please see Colin Whitston, , The 1913 Dublin Lockout and the British and international labour movements in Devine (ed.), A Capital in Conflict, pp 44-5.

95 This process has recently been connected to the bringing of syndicalism and later communism to Ireland. The argument was first presented by Emmet O'Connor in his work Syndicalism in Ireland. Recently, Adrian Grant has expanded upon this argument by linking the activities within the TUC during to the period to the initial birth of socialist republicanism in Ireland. Grant, Irish Socialist Republicanism. Grant's work has come under criticisms by trade union activists and historians, particularly Padraig Yeates, for its premise that socialism existed within the TUC. The debate played out in the pages of History Ireland reveals the ambiguity between trade unionism and socialism during this period. For evidence of this debate, please see History Ireland, September-October 2013, November-December 2013, and January-February 2013. David Convery's review of Grant's work made a similar more moderate criticism of Grant's assessment claiming that Larkin and Connolly's lieutenants, Thomas Johnson, William O'Brien and Cathal Ó Shannon were not socialist republicans. David Convery, 'Book Review of Irish Socialist Republicans' in Saothar, 38 (2013), pp 152-3. Grant's assessment that socialists were using the trade union movement to fit their own advancing socialist agendas is connected to the wider argument presented in this chapter. Grant is correct in his incorporation of this period as feeding into a wider revolutionary change, even if original revolutionary members did not follow the trajectory all the way through. The emphasis here is placed on identity over impact. The failed socialist vision of Labour should not discredit the socialist revolutionary identity these figures adopted as part of their personal identity.
turning Irish labour away from their natural allies, the English.\textsuperscript{96} William Walker asked why the Irish should divorce themselves from England and Scotland to achieve internationalist objectives.\textsuperscript{97} Others, including former ISRP member, E.W. Stewart, went directly after James Larkin claiming he was out to dominate the Irish labour movement.\textsuperscript{98} Larkin’s supporters fired back with an uncompromising nationalist line. At the 1911 Congress Larkin declared:

When dealing with Labour questions, let the Congress not be humbugged by men who talked about internationalism. The Labour Party in the United States, Canada, or Australia, would never allow any English Labour Party to manage their affairs \textit{(applause)} Why should they in Ireland? He declined to allow any Scotch, English, or Welsh party to come into this country to interfere with the Irish workers.\textsuperscript{99}

The remark was met with applause. It symbolised the nationalist course that the ITUC was now also following.

The debates taking place in the ITUC around the Irish Labour Party and the Home Rule Bill had taken their toll on the Belfast socialist movement. The Belfast branch of the SPI was already drawing support away from the ILP. Now with the ITUC launching a separate Irish Labour Party, the fear was that the Belfast ILP would be pressured into joining the Nationalist-led course. Knowing that the British ILP supported home rule, Connolly crafted ‘a plea for socialist unity’ that he had printed in the Glasgow organ, \textit{Forward}.\textsuperscript{100} The plea called on the SPI and Belfast branches of the ILP to merge into one Irish Labour Party.\textsuperscript{101} Walker responded by claiming that the SPI’s positon on home rule was ‘a peculiar kind of Socialism that aims at legislative independence before

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Former ISRP secretary, ISRP municipal candidate, SPI founding member, DCTU representative, ITUC Treasurer (1904-6) and Chairman (1909), E.W. Stewart became one of the major voices of opposition to the move writing a scathing pamphlet in 1912 titled, \textit{The History of Larkinism}. The pamphlet accused Larkin of bringing ‘reckless continental anarchy’ despite Stewart’s lifetime connections to international socialist and trade union activity. Interestingly enough, under the penname ‘Yumen,’ Stewart originally raised the issue of conditions of the Dublin Tramway Workers, the industry Larkin’s ITGWU targeted in 1913, in the \textit{Workers’ Republic} in 1898. For this article please see \textit{The Workers’ Republic}, 13 August 1898 or 27 August 1898. Stewart was also who Connolly originally fought with during the break-up of the ISRP, with Connolly blaming him for the break-up of the party. For evidence of the Connolly Stewart dispute, please see Connolly to Lynge, 15 May 1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,912/3); Connolly to Thomas Lynge, 1903 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,912/4). For the pamphlet, please see E.W. Stewart, \textit{The History of Larkinism} (P.R.O.N.I., D3983/PTE 11/ ACC 1993).
\item \textit{Forward}, 27 May 1911.
\item Further information on this call can be found in the \textit{Irish Worker}, 20 April 1912.
\end{thebibliography}
Socialism. From there the debate escalated into a series of personal attacks between the two men. Walker received some support from readers of Forward who questioned Ireland's decision to form its own separate Labour Party. As one ILP supporter claimed, 'the truth of the matter is that the only peculiar thing about the Irish condition is the idea that they are peculiar.' The compromise was to remain known as the Independent Labour Party until after home rule, which appeased the British ILP. However, almost immediately after the formation of the new ILP, the Belfast branch began focusing its work on lobbying for home rule. The BUTC by 1913 was also dominated by home rule sympathisers. The council officially did not take sides in political questions, but leaders claimed they could not prevent home rule debates from taking place at meetings. As such, it too became another working-class body battling for the issue of home rule and Irish working-class identity.

While Dublin socialists clearly felt secure in their control of the ITUC, they were simultaneously unsure of Irish working-class willingness to embrace socialism as part of their new revolutionary labour movement. Long-time Belfast socialist society member, Thomas Johnson, rejected suggestions from the British delegation that the ITUC and Labour Party extend affiliation rights to socialist organisations. ITUC leaders wanted to establish labour's nationalist credentials first and worry about socialism later. Although, the exact answer to when that evolution would take place was left undetermined. British leaders saw it as a step backward, since their movement had already begun to bring socialism into British Labour politics. However, Irish labour leaders stood by the decision.

In the end, the working-class movement's turbulent relationship with Irish nationalist politics from 1889 to 1910 led to the movement establishing its own brand of revolutionary working-class nationalism. This process served as the force propelling the creation of the Irish Labour Party in 1912, but it ended up placing nationalism before internationalism and certainly before socialism. It was a position that cost the support

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102 Forward, 3 June 1911.
103 Ibid, 10 June 1911, 1 July 1911 and 8 July 1911.
104 Ibid, 7 June 1911.
105 Untitled News clipping (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,675(3)3).
107 Belfast and Districts Trades and Labour Council Annual Reports, 1913 (N.L.I., Irish Collection, IR 304 P17).
108 Ibid, p. 44.
129
of the British Labour Party and Unionist sections of the Irish labour movement. In response, Irish Labour politicians, including the fiercely critical Larkin, began turning to Sinn Féin as potential new allies by 1914. Nationalist politics may not have triumphed over Ireland's working-class movement directly, but they certainly ensured that following the birth of the Irish Labour Party working-class grievances would remain in a subservient position to nationalist ideals.

**Working-class culture and cultural nationalism**

In addition to their links to political nationalist organisations which, of course, did not shield them from criticisms of being 'anti-nationalist', Irish working-class leaders actively embraced forms of cultural nationalism. John Hutchison had distinguished Irish cultural nationalism from Irish political nationalism through each movements' relationship to England. Irish cultural nationalism, he argued, was defined more by its love of Ireland than its resentment of Britishness. Hutchison's conclusions suggest how working-class leaders may have been able to better package working-class identity as Irish and international. In line with late nineteenth century trends, clubs and associations increasingly played a significant role in Victorian and Edwardian civil life. Due to their added benefits of fostering communal cultures and discipline among participants, they were encouraged by religious and political organisations. As such, they served as ideal forums to cultivate working-class identity and were used as standard tools by socialist parties and labour organisations across the Atlantic. In the Irish working-class movement, these societies took a distinctly national character, intersecting and mirroring some of the clubs and societies developing through the Irish cultural nationalist movement. Activities such as Irish dance, sport, and language classes allowed working-class and national allegiances to exist together without complication, but they

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111 For information on associational culture in Ireland during this period, please see Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010), pp 1-9.
ultimately reaffirmed the strength of nationalist sentiment within working-class communities.\textsuperscript{112}

In the early years of labour activism, the BUTC and the Belfast socialist leadership distanced themselves from non-labour focused activities. In part, this was due the national aspect of these associations and the city's sectarian climate, however, it was also impacted by the strong Christian values maintained by earlier leaders. Both groups discouraged outside activities that may have involved drink, smoking or sport. Belfast Christian Socialist, John Bruce Wallace, for example, made a point of not allowing sport into his paper, \textit{Brotherhood}, because he regarded it 'as ruinous vice' and further claimed that 'the paper exists only to help people upwards and can have nothing to do with what tends to drag them down.'\textsuperscript{113} Similarly, the BUTC refused to support the DCTU's decision to sponsor sporting activities because they took place on Sunday.\textsuperscript{114} The result was that such activities were left to nationalist and loyalist clubs leaving cultural nationalist organisation firmly outside of the city's working-class movement.

This, however, did not mean national identity was removed from the movement altogether. Belfast's connection to the burgeoning national trade union movement meant that limited amounts of national expression were tolerated and indeed validated for their role in expanding the trade union movement. After the 1894 ITUC in Dublin, trade unionists from each school marched through the city displaying union banners projecting images of the Union Jack and Brian Ború, the quintessential visions of the two national identities coming together in one struggle.\textsuperscript{115} These images, of course, remained on the back of each banner, with religious symbols displayed on the front, symbolising the hierarchy of identities these leaders wished to maintain - working-class under nation, and nation under God.

Dublin working-class leaders, on the other hand, intentionally politicised these national messages. They packaged the new trade unionist movement of the 1890s as a type of nationalist expression. The National Union of Gasworkers and General

\textsuperscript{112} This position is drawn from Michael Billig's work on what he called 'banal nationalism', which is the promotion of nationalist ideals through everyday activities. These activities allow for strands of nationalism to advance beyond political discourse. For further information, please see Michael Billig, \textit{Banal nationalism} (London, 1995).

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Brotherhood}, 26 April 1890.

\textsuperscript{114} For full details on this event, please see chapter three.

\textsuperscript{115} Programme for Labour Day Celebrations attached to the ITUC 1894 reports (N.L.I., Irish Trade Union Congress records, P3212).
Labourers' gatherings were accompanied by banners featuring images of Daniel O'Connell, with union members escorted by the Wolfe Tone Brass band, a significantly different feature to union meetings taking place in Belfast. The union's British identity was, therefore, offset against continual affirmations of Irish national history and culture. This process gave an otherwise British union an Irish identity, which, in turn, appealed to workers who could claim national and working-class identities side by side.

In contrast to the trade union movement, the ISRP invested little time and attention in arts, sport, and culture as a branch of the workers' movement. Irish writing received slightly more attention, but mainly when it was political in nature. The _Workers' Republic_ featured poems and passages from Fenian writers and Irish Chartists, but rarely from contemporary Irish writers. Even when these nationalist literary pieces were featured in the press, they were rarely accompanied by context, nor were they explicitly connected to the socialist vision. It was as if their mere presence equated to acceptance of the burgeoning Irish republican tradition. There were exceptions to this, however. A few notable Fenian leaders such as James Fintan Lalor and John Mitchel not only had their writings featured in the socialist press, but also had their revolutionary work re-interpreted through a socialist lens.

In contrast to this half-hearted embrace of Irish writing was the attention given to the Irish language. At first, the promotion of the Irish language was not a major initiative of the ISRP. Connolly, who wrote about this topic in the _Workers' Republic_, asserted that language should be second to socialism, declaring: 'you cannot teach starving men Gaelic.' Connolly maintained that the Irish language was a key piece of Irish culture but, he further argued, without combating capitalism directly, cities like Dublin and Galway would receive the same cultural fate as Manchester and become the victims of industrialisation and capitalism. Although, as will be shown later, Connolly did eventually moderate this position, embracing Gaelic Revivalism in the _Harp_ by 1908. Prior to this shift, the Irish language only made appearances in the paper in the form of pen-names and small notes. Party members, however, made sure to continue to support Gaelic League ventures. Five members even served as a party delegation to one

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116 _Freeman's Journal_, 28 July 1890.
117 _Workers' Republic_, 13 August 1898; 18 August 1898; 22 July 1899; or 28 October 1899.
118 Ibid, 1 October 1898.
119 _Harp_, April 1908.
of the founders of the Gaelic League, William Rooney, in 1901, ensuring that the party would be represented as part of the Revivalist movement.  

When the ISRP collapsed, the SPI’s increased interaction with nationalist circles meant a similar increase in involvement in cultural nationalist clubs and societies. Due to the lack of political entanglements, these links seemed the most appropriate for radical socialist leaders still escaping the shadow of their recent defeat. In a similar fashion to the Fabian Society, the SPI began offering Irish language classes every Thursday evening to party members. The party press letterhead began featuring the name of the party in both English and Irish. These actions reflected a more concerted effort to bring the Irish language into the movement.

The *Irish Worker* continued this trend of endorsing the language revival, though it ceded the responsibilities of teaching it to the Gaelic League. It was a similar tactic to many of the nationalised unions of the time who would maintain branches within the Gaelic League, report on events in union bulletins and the press, and advertise Gaelic League events as a noble expression of working-class culture. The paper advertised Gaelic League events and encouraged readers to partake in the Revival movement, but on their own time. By the spring of 1912 this relationship became more direct. The *Irish Worker* began featuring an irregular English-language column entitled, ‘Irish-Ireland’ written by the ‘Spailpin Fanach’ (wandering labourer) that detailed events in the Dublin Ard Fheis (Gaelic League Annual Event) and petitioned to have Irish taught in all schools.

The paper did not use Irish as much as it advertised its importance, but it was at least giving space to the movement. It did infrequently feature a small Irish language column, but this remained a neglected venture. As was the case with the *Workers’ Republic*, some contributors, like W.P. Ryan, signed articles in Irish or used an Irish pen-name, but more often than not these signatures accompanied articles written exclusively in English.

The failure of the Irish language to flourish in the socialist movement may have been more a reflection of the interests of the workers themselves, however. As David

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120 Freeman’s Journal, 9 May 1901.
121 Notes from SPI branch meeting, undated (N.L.I., Francis Sheehy-Skeffington papers, MS 40,480(2)).
122 SPI letterhead (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674(3)).
123 For examples please see the *Irish Draper*, January 1905, or February 1905.
124 *Irish Worker*, 2 March 1912; 9 March 1912; or 16 March 1912.
125 For examples, please see, the *Irish Worker*, 2 March 1912; 13 April 1912; 27 September 1913; or 4 October 1913.
Dickson and Mary Daly have shown, while overall Irish Anglophone literacy rates increased significantly from 1841-1911, the advance correlated to a decrease in the number of Irish language speakers. The Irish language remained most prominent in the west of Ireland and Donegal, where literacy remained the lowest, and unsurprisingly so did sales of the *Irish Worker*.\(^{126}\) For those in the east and in urban areas, Irish remained little more than a middle-class venture.\(^{127}\)

In addition to these difficulties at home, Irish socialist interest in the Irish language did not always appeal to Atlantic socialist audiences, who saw its promotion as being in conflict with modernity and internationalism. British socialist parties questioned the desire to keep the language alive when many socialists were advocating for the internationalisation of working-class language and culture. Knowing that featuring an article challenging the legitimacy of teaching Irish may alienate Irish support abroad, the *Daily Herald*, a paper now under the editorship of left-wing Irish revivalist W.P. Ryan, tried to address the question by posing it to two different members of the Ulster socialist movement.\(^{128}\) One of the respondents firmly asserted that there should be only one national language and that it should be English. The other contributor argued that Esperanto should be promoted as an international language but expressed a moderate level of sympathy for the plight of Irish language supporters.\(^{129}\)

The promotion of Irish sport, on the other hand, garnered more support from the Irish working classes and appeased English liberal reformers whose focus on physical improvement and working-class discipline was met through team sport activities.\(^{130}\) Even though the wider glorification of athleticism was an aspect of imperial culture, in this context it was seen as serving the needs of working-class communal identity and discipline first and foremost.\(^{131}\) It addressed Atlantic concerns with the body and urban

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\(^{126}\) Mary Daly, 'Literacy and language in the late nineteenth century' in Mary Daly and David Dickson (eds), *Language, change and educational development, 1700-1920* (Dublin, 1990), pp 153-4.


\(^{128}\) Maume, *The long gestation*, p. 87.

\(^{129}\) *Daily Herald*, 3 September 1912.

\(^{130}\) Dorothy Porter, "'Enemies of the race': biologism, environmentalism and public health in Edwardian England' in *Victorian Studies*, 34, 2 (Winter, 1991), pp 159-78.

\(^{131}\) For athleticism and the imperial connection, please see Mackenzie, *Propaganda and the Empire*, pp 228-249. For the Irish connection, please see Alan Bairner, 'Ireland, sport and Empire' in Jeffery (ed.), 'An Irish Empire?*, pp 57-73.
health and tapped into socialist desires to bring entire family units into the movement, therefore despite its association by some with the Empire and militarism, Atlantic socialists encouraged it as a key tactic. It was not an innovative strategy for the trade union movement, as trade union sporting teams and trade union-sponsored sporting events were a regular feature of working-class life. The ITWGU, however, differed in that it used trade sporting events as a mechanism for promoting working-class identity alongside nationalism. At first, this was done by reaching out to independent sporting organisations. For instance, the union actively encouraged working-class support and participation in the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) over other traditional working-class sports, like football, because it saw the association as a 'militant nationalist organisation'. These endorsements came with assurances that they would be accompanied by union propaganda. The union band would play, union banners would be displayed, and union delegates would actively recruit new members at games. These matches were, in effect, visually transformed into working-class events. This was done in part because of the acknowledged appeal the GAA had with Irish workers, but it was also done to validate the culture of the Irish working classes beyond the political realm. It connected Irish working-class leaders to matters of Irish culture beyond their domain. Even during the 1915 Dublin Steampack Dispute, James Connolly made reference to keeping his speech short so audience members could make it to the All-Ireland GAA match at Croke Park later that evening. Support of the ITGWU thus became fused with Irish working-class sport culture.

But the working-class movement did not merely support the GAA; it also actively promoted Irish sports itself, further ensuring that they had an important place in working-class life. For example, the ITGWU hosted Gaelic sports inside the union's own Croydon Park, ensuring that manifestations of working-class and national identities shared the same physical space, and thereby reaffirming their mutual compatibility. The language used to describe such events highlighted how important they were for the development of a distinct working-class identity – one that was both national and

132 Socialist Record, April 1913.
133 Irish Worker, 15 July 1911.
134 For examples please see, Irish Worker, 22 July 1911; 19 September 1913 or 27 September 1913.
masculine, two points of comparison that correlated to measures of superiority created within English imperial consciousness.\textsuperscript{136} It was the Irish working-class movement combatting English portrayals of the Irish as effeminate and infantile by asserting that, while firmly distinct, the movement measured equally on an English imperial scale.\textsuperscript{137} The \textit{Irish Worker} explained the need for Irish workers to support Gaelic sports by highlighting their role in maintaining the national masculine character of the working classes:

\begin{quote}
In our opinion, nothing has tended more to sag the manhood of the nation than the introduction of the effeminate foreign games of hockey, cricket, lawn-tennis, &c., which are so patronised by the "genteels" and snobs of this country.\textsuperscript{138}
\end{quote}

Participating in Irish sports therefore became a way to preserve national character and prepare workers for the battle that lay ahead. The strength, independence, and patriotism that Irish sports were seen to promote were thus incorporated into a broader working-class identity.

Aiming to build this physical culture further, the union soon began to expand its activities to include non-Irish sports, but made sure to attribute a distinctly national flavour to them. At the same time, they sought to make their national sporting events more independent of organisations such as the GAA, in order to ensure that the consolidation of the working-class occurred within a union regulated realm.\textsuperscript{139} Although co-operation with outside organisations was not abandoned entirely, events hosted at Liberty Hall and Croyden Park claimed a national authority on their own. For instance, the union began organising Musical and Athletic Carnivals that featured events and activities ranging from tug-a-war to hammer throwing to potato racing.\textsuperscript{140} Activities stretched across generational and gender lines, allowing for families to become part of the process of working-class formation. Children engaged in egg and spoon races, while

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{137} For these depictions of Irish in British imperial culture, please see, Kiberd, \textit{Inventing Ireland}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Irish Worker}, 1 July 1911.
\textsuperscript{139} For a history of the GAA as being an agent of nationalism, please see Mike Cronin, \textit{Sport and nationalism in Ireland} (Dublin, 1999), pp 70-116 and Alan Bairner, ‘Irish Sport’ in Cleary and Connolly, \textit{The Cambridge companion to modern Irish culture}, pp 194-6.
\textsuperscript{140} Croydon Park Musical and Athletic Carnival Pamphlet (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS 33,718/B/86).
\end{footnotes}
wives competed in short-distance running. More pseudo-military training events, such as the balaclava melee or the mounted mop fight, were reserved for the ICA, but their general working-class nature remained central to their performative value. Additionally, the union sponsored boxing tournaments and hosted a shooting gallery, which took place right inside Liberty Hall. Each of these events remained manifestly national in their tone and symbolism. Teams were named after Irish republicans and traditional rebel songs sung at each event.

Sport was not the only vehicle for projecting nationalism, as union-sponsored activities soon expanded to include theatre, music, and dance. The Irish Workers’ Concert Hall was instrumental in this regard, and became the site where nationalism was performed by the working classes in a working-class domain. Featured plays were written by Irish writers and republican leaders like Lady Gregory and Countess Markievicz. Nationalist ballads were sung by the Workers’ Choir, with songs like ‘Bold Fenian Men’ and ‘An cailín deas cruídthe na mbó’ (a pretty girl milking a cow) featured at concerts. Kitty Pollard’s Liberty Hall dance trio performed Irish dance to traditional Irish music. Bringing the working-class audience into the performance, every show ended with a sing-along of ‘A Nation Once Again.’ Flyers for these events printed in bold that they featured, ‘Irish song, Irish dance, and Irish recitation.’ The reaffirmation of the nation as a motive for working-class militancy was a clearly articulated message.

These practices became the rehearsed behaviours then attributed to Irish socialist tradition and culture. This foundation allowed them to easily carry over into the political realm. Socialist election meetings and street gatherings, as well, would involve crowds singing nationalist anthems. These practices, however, blurred the line between promoting cultural nationalism and refashioning imperial mechanisms designed to control or alter working-class behaviour for socialist aims. Extracurricular

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141 The term ‘wives’ is used here intentionally, as the event was limited to married women. *Workers’ Republic*, 17 July 1915.
142 *Workers’ Republic*, 28 August 1915.
143 William O’Brien sketch of the ITGWU for the solicitor for 1924 case (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS 33,718/A).
144 Croydon Park Musical and Athletic Carnival Pamphlet (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS 33,718/B/86).
145 Irish Workers Concert Hall Programs, 9 April 1916; 15 April 1916; 10 May 1916 (N.L.I., Librarian’s Office Collection, LOP 112, 64-66).
146 Flyer for Victims performance (N.L.I., Librarian’s Office Collections, LOP 112, 62).
147 For an example, please see, *Freeman’s Journal*, 8 January 1912.
activities, such as sport, dance, band participation, theatre performance, and choir were used to teach discipline to the working classes while also serving a propagandist function. It was for this reason that they were among the favoured vehicles used to communicate imperial propaganda. In this instance, however, they were being used to mobilise workers under the banner of the working class. It was a different goal, but the same process.

Women, in particular, played a key part in this process because, as mentioned earlier, it was often women's organisations that dedicated the most attention to social activities in the working-class movement. The theatrical society, evening socials, and union choirs were all organised by women largely drawn from the Irish Women Workers Union and the ITGWU Ladies Committee, which consisted of a mix of sympathetic non-union members and wives of ITGWU men. In 1913, to raise money for the women locked out of Savoy's, Delia Larkin and Miss Neale took charge of the Irish dance sessions at Liberty Hall. Later during the same dispute, Delia Larkin even took the Liberty Hall Players on tour in Great Britain to raise funds. The special fund created for women and children of locked-out workers used money raised from nationalist performances organised by the Ladies Committee and Irish Theatrical Society affiliated with the union. This female presence is important because it shows how women embraced their role in promoting nationalism within the working-class movement even while they were restricted to its margins and denied an equal place within it.

One of the great difficulties with this gendering of working-class cultural activities was that it kept women and men in separate spheres of the socialist movement. This social divide, in turn, perpetuated the wider gendered divide that kept women in a subsidiary position. It was giving in to the assumption that women should be the guardians of culture and artistic conditioning, while men should be the leaders of political and military objectives, the true guardians of the nation's manhood. This could partly explain why Mary Galway, who did not take an active role in cultural activities,

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148 Mackenzie, Propaganda and Empire, pp 229-51.
149 Irish Worker, 9 August 1913.
150 William O'Brien claimed that money raised on this tour never made it back to the union. William O'Brien's Sketch of the ITGWU for solicitor for the 1924 case (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS 33,718/A).
151 Irish Worker, 29 November 1913.
152 For readings on the gendered divide of socialist movements please see Karen Hunt, 'Fractured universality, the language of British socialism before the First World War' in Belcham and Kirk (eds), Languages of labour, pp 65-80.
was able to advance to the highest position achieved by a woman in the national trade union movement, vice chair of the ITUC, while other women who became enveloped in the cultural nationalist crusade were left behind.

Regardless of their gendered nature, the appeal of these events was undoubtedly their clear affirmation of both Irish national identity and working-class pride. Activities were advertised as belonging exclusively to the workers and being distinctly Irish in character. For example, a flyer for an ITGWU-sponsored ballad contest noted that a prize would be awarded for the best rendering of two Irish street ballads, but it made a point to state that 'songs of the music hall variety are debarred.' This was a rejection of British imperialism and jingoism, an aspect associated with music hall culture, but it was being used as a foil for Irish working-class national identity.

Irish working-class leaders therefore sought to use cultural nationalism to fuse Irish national identity to the working-class movement. Yet, although they may have felt that their efforts in this regard were exceptional, the use of sport, art, and music to give the working-class movement a national character was not out of trend with activities in the rest of the Atlantic World. In northern England Socialist Sunday School children were taught Morris Dancing, which they then performed in shows at local halls for parents. Whereas in Scotland, children in local Socialist Sunday Schools recited the poetry of Robert Burns to theatrical interpretations for public show. These are, in effect, examples of the same socialist organisation creating culturally-distinct national working-class identities. In the United States, the socialist monthly, the Masses, even organised charity boating excursions in which participants were encouraged to incorporate red, white and blue into their traditional working-class dress in order to show off their patriotic spirit. As these events demonstrate, the fusion of socialism and nationalism was a core part of the construction of working-class movements across the Atlantic.

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153 Croydon Park Music Syllabus, 12 and 13 June 1915 (N.L.I., Librarian's Office Collection, LOP 114, 67).
154 The association of music hall culture with popular support of British imperialism has been challenged by historians. Nevertheless, at the time, this belief was maintained by many critics of music hall culture. Penny Summerfield, 'Patriotism and Empire: music hall entertainment 1870-1914' in Mackenzie (ed.), Imperialism and popular culture, pp 17-48 or Mackenzie, Propaganda and Empire, pp 39-40.
155 Morris Dance is a traditional form of English dance to folk music. The Young Socialist, October 1907.
157 This event was advertised in the New York Call. For evidence, please see, the New York Call, 25 July 1911.
Overall, however, the ITGWU’s embrace of cultural nationalism had positive effects on the working-class movement. It generated a positive dynamic with Gaelic organisations and as such helps explain why a number of local GAA clubs issued formal votes of support for the union and its actions during the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout. These acknowledgements went a long way when the ITGWU was suffering from attacks to its national credibility from opponents in the nationalist press. However, cultural activities also had an important function, as they helped to firmly root nationalism within the working-class movement. It remained to be seen, however, whether the workers themselves would join the increasingly nationalist revolution their leaders were advocating and more importantly, whether they would maintain the importance of working-class identity after the national revolution took place.

Making workers into Irishmen

The image created by Irish working-class leaders aimed to link Irish workers to an international working-class fight. This was, of course, an objective shared by both Dublin and Belfast schools. Yet, whether as a result embracing nationalism to counter opposing nationalist attacks, or as a result of an increasing dependence upon nationalist inspired activities to generate working-class enthusiasm for the movement, from 1889 to 1917 Dublin-based Irish leaders elevated the importance of Irishness within the Irish working-class movement. In Belfast, at the same time, working-class leaders were trying to diminish the significance of Britishness to the city’s movement. Rather than a meeting of minds, however, a schism occurred between the two groups that proved to be irreparable. The result was that Dublin leaders played a significant part in the process of transforming Irish workers into Irishmen, while Belfast leaders watched Ulster workers abandon working-class politics out of fear of its nationalist agenda.

Constant attacks from opponents of socialism, asserting that socialism was ‘imported,’ ‘foreign’, or ‘anti-national’ certainly played a part in re-establishing the importance of national identity to the working-class movement. While any international movement stood the risk of potentially being branded anti-national for its calls to move

158 For examples of these votes, please see, the Irish Worker, 11 October 1913; 18 October 1913; or 25 October 1913 and O’Connor, A labour history of Ireland, p. 88.
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beyond the nation, the popularity of socialism amongst immigrant and migrant workers contributed to the fear that socialism was an outside movement invading the nation. Opponents therefore tried to keep the ideology of socialism and its leaders outside of the national narrative. In response, socialist parties reacted by situating themselves firmly within the nation's history and values, crafting a nationalist image for both the party and its leaders.

This obstacle was not just faced by working-class organisations in Ireland. In the United States, the high number of immigrant members participating in socialist groups sparked similar concerns. The SLP, which had been printing a German weekly, \textit{Volkzeitung}, switched to an English weekly, the \textit{People}, as part of their campaign to Americanise the party.\footnote{The SLP paper, the \textit{People} was a weekly and as such is commonly referred to as the \textit{Weekly People}. In 1901, the paper became a daily and took on the name, the \textit{Daily People}. To avoid confusion, within the body of the research the paper will simply be referred to as the \textit{People}, however, distinctions are made in the footnotes. For further reading on the Americanisation of the Socialist Labor Party, please see Hubert Perrier, 'The socialists and the working class in New York: 1890-1896' in \textit{Labor History} 22, 4 (1981), pp 485-511.} The SLP further described its mission as being 'the legitimate child of the American Revolution that struck off the feudal shackles from the Colonies.'\footnote{\textit{Daily People}, 13 September 1912.} It, in essence, made revolutionary working-class internationalism an American product.

Oppositional attacks claiming socialism was a foreign threat occurred most often in Southern Ireland, although, as will be addressed in chapter three, some Ulster leaders similarly treated socialism as a British construct separate from Ulster Protestant identity. Nonetheless, Southern Irish socialists responded to claims that they were 'anti-national' in a similar manner to their Atlantic partners, applying increased levels of Irishness to the working-class movement. This process was difficult given that the Irish socialist movement had a high rate of non-Irish born participants, particularly among the party leadership. Leading ISRP propagandist, John Arnall, was from Cornwall; Belfast Socialist Society organiser, Thomas Johnson, was from Liverpool; Dublin ILP leader, Walter Carpenter, was from Kent; and SPI propagandist, R.J.P. Mortished, was from London, for example.

The apparent foreign nature of the movement, especially evident among leading personalities, frequently caused difficulties in an environment where nationalism dominated the Irish public debate. Some leaders, like Connolly and Larkin,
tried to distance themselves from their foreign roots, with both falsely declaring Irish births. In order to add to his nationalist credentials, Larkin even claimed heritage linking him to Fenian leaders. These fabrications, of course, came from Connolly and Larkin’s desire to be seen as Irish and not foreign leaders. An element of this undoubtedly was a product their own experiences in Irish diaspora communities in which Irishness was maintained as a distinctly separate identity to Britishness unlike in Ireland, where local identities still at times superseded national ones. Regardless of the dominant motivation compelling this action, the important feature is that these men felt that in order to gain support among the Irish working classes, it was necessary to package Irish socialism as a movement formed organically within the nation itself. This packaging therefore included firmly planting them, as leaders, within the nation.

Despite such efforts, the foreign make-up of much of the movement’s leadership was plain to see and remained a clear target for opponents. When attempting to elicit Archbishop William Walsh’s support against the ITGWU, John Kelly, the organiser of the Irish Railway Workers’ Trade Union, demanded Larkin and Connolly be deported on account of their ‘imported international socialism.’ One man from London wrote to Walsh praising his action stating that ‘the socialist has no conception of the idea of nationality; and is ever ready to seek foreign help in thrusting his opinions upon his own people.’ When Walsh finally did come out against Larkin and other 1913-14 strike leaders, he used this argument. In his attack on Larkin and his supporters, former ISRP party member, E.W. Stewart, did the very same thing. He claimed the movement was ‘reckless continental anarchy’, pointing out (in bold) that Larkin was ‘not an Irishman’, but ‘merely a foreign adventurer from the slum recesses of probably some clog-wearing

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161 Connolly reported in the 1901 and 1911 census that his birthplace was Co. Monaghan. This was later propagated by the SPI in advertising even after Connolly’s death. For evidence, please see ‘James Connolly birthday celebration flyer: Mansion House Dublin’, 5 June 1919 (B.C., Irish Political Pamphlet Collection). This error was later corrected by C. Desmond Greaves, who located his birth certificate in Scotland proving his birth in Edinburgh. C. Desmond Greaves, *The life and times of James Connolly* (London, 1975), p. 1. Similarly, Larkin claimed he was born in Armagh when his mother was home on holiday visiting family. However, Emmet O’Connor’s biography on James Larkin proves he was born in Liverpool. Emmet O’Connor, *James Larkin: radical Irish lives* (Cork, 2002).

162 Irish Worker, 31 January 1914.

163 The importance of local identities has been attributed to rural Ireland by Kerby Miller. While writing about Irish Americans, Miller’s argument has been used in British historiography to describe the Irish national consciousness that development within similar Irish communities in Britain. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*.


165 Unsigned to Walsh, 27 October 1913 (D.D.A., William Walsh papers, Laity 377/3).
Lancashire town'. Stewart followed these challenges with attacks on the nationality of Irish-born leaders, claiming that Michael O'Lehane was a fake nationalist who put an O in his name to sound more Irish.

Problems soon developed from working-class leaders' attempts to counter such attacks by falsely claiming Irish roots. False assertions of nationality left socialists defenceless against attacks on their birth, which were often used by opponents of Larkin during the height of the 1913-14 Dublin lockout. When the anti-Larkinite paper, the Toiler, began spreading a rumour that Larkin was actually the son of James Carey, the informer of the Invincibles, Larkin remained defenceless as he could not use evidence proving his actual birth in Liverpool. The paper cited as proof of their claim Larkin's vague answers on 'where he is from, where he was born or where he received his education.' The rumour was a clear challenge to Larkin's nationalism and drove to the heart of the relationship between Irish working-class culture and national identity.

While the rumour was sensational and supercilious, it was damaging enough to make its way to American shores. Patrick Quinlan, the Irish-American socialist, even expressed concerns about working with Larkin due to his anti-national familial connections. The accusation of being non-Irish remained the Achilles heel of the Irish working-class movement both in Ireland and abroad.

For many Irish working-class leaders, hiding their difference was not an option. A 'foreign accent' was often enough to spark protest amongst Irish audiences. Cork socialist William Gallagher recalled being taunted for his accent when delivering open-

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166 Full quotation as it appears in pamphlet: 'I don't believe he can do so, because any person hearing him addressing a meeting must be struck with the manner in which he drops his H's and speaks of the 'orse, the 'ouse ad the 'all (house, horse, hall) in the most approved manner of an English slum, and from which he would naturally conclude that Larkin is NOT AN IRISHMAN


168 Toiler, 17 January 1914. For a response claiming Larkin's Irish birth, please see, the Irish Worker, 31 January 1914. C.S. Andrews recalled in his autobiography being exposed at an early age to folklore on Carey the Informer that resulted in Irish children’s hatred toward the image and the name. The sentiment captures why opponents were so quick to use the slander against Larkin. C.S. Andrews, Dublin Made Me: an autobiography (Dublin, 1979), p. 28. For information on James Carey, please see J. L. McCracken, 'The Fate of the Infamous Informer' in History Ireland, 9, 2 (Summer, 2001), pp 26-30.

169 Ibid, 4 July 1914.

170 The rumour was relayed to P.L. Quinlan by Kate Richard O'Hare. P.L. Quinlan to James Connolly, 7 June 1915 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS1393(ii)).
air campaigns. This type of protest was common in the early years when the movement was small and propagandists relied heavily on outdoor campaigning to promote the socialist message.

Such criticisms were not merely aimed at individual leaders, but were also applied to the movement as a whole. The working-class movement needed to be seen as Irish and not British in nature both in Ireland and abroad. In 1907, Connolly even resigned his position on the national executive committee of the SLP after Daniel De Leon stated that he had been originally invited to tour the United States 'in the interest of the British movement.' Connolly claimed the remark was intended as an insult to undermine the Irish movement. Whether it was intended as such is, perhaps, beside the point. Connolly had to protest, as failure to do so may have appeared an acceptance of British identity – an impossible position for an Irish leader.

The exact opposite was true for the Belfast movement, where leadership increasingly moved away from claims of Britishness from 1889 to 1907 as a means of drawing more Irish nationalists into the movement. Part of this process included eliminating possible symbols of Irishness or Britishness from the working-class movement, though due to the movement's starting point, more attention was given to the former. This concern is clearly evident from Robert McElborough's recollection in his memoir of an incident that occurred around this very issue during Will Thorne's speech to Belfast workers after the 1893 TUC. Thorne came to speak in Ormeau Park wearing his union sash, which bore the colours red, white, and green. The Belfast leadership asked Thorne to remove the sash because 'it had too much green in it' and with it being so close to the second home rule bill leaders were concerned Belfast workers would perceive the sash as too Irish. McElborough noted Thorne's opposition, especially given that his parents were both Irish, however, Thorne still reluctantly complied as he recognised the importance of distancing the movement from national sentiments.

By 1907, however, leaders were increasingly using the slogan of working-class internationalism without mention of Irishness or Britishness. Instead, leaders used slogans of economic reform and social morality along Christian lines that appealed to...
both sides of the national question. As mentioned in the previous section, it was the progression of this line that resulted in Lindsay Crawford's driving the 100 into increasingly contentious waters as regards to Irish nationalism. Certainly, having Larkin, an Irish-identifying British trade union representative, working with the Belfast movement during the 1907 Belfast Dock Strike helped their cause. Nevertheless, in spite of their best efforts, the slogan of internationalism could not completely erase the British culture the movement was built on, nor could it avoid the increasingly national-driven climate produced by the question of Irish home rule.

The undeniable British culture that still remained under the surface gave southern Irish leaders more of a reason to justify their distance from Belfast. This was clearly seen in 1909, when the SPI was struggling to survive, and the Harp came out in defence of the SPI position not to merge with the Belfast ILP and form one Irish socialist party:

There is in Belfast a strong Socialist movement, born out of the advanced industrial conditions which prevail in that district. But, as was perhaps natural under the historical circumstances, that Socialist movement keeps itself apart from the life of the rest of Ireland. Its associations are with England, its chief speakers are imported from England, and its methods are distinctly those of the English Labour Party. Indeed, it is a part of the English movement known as the Independent Labour Party. As a result, it has never yet run a candidate as a Socialist Party distinctly and avowedly with a revolutionary purpose and aim, differing in this from the Socialist movement in Dublin.

Not only did the article fail to address the existence of revolutionary socialist thought in England, it presented the main problem of Belfast socialism as being its British identity, rather than the more obvious point of its evolutionary socialist policies.

To argue that southern Irish leaders increased working-class nationalism exclusively in reaction to competing national allegiances or as a result of their colonial consciousness would overshadow the role the wider Atlantic movement played in this process. In many cases, socialism maintained its own level of nationalism as a result of fin de siècle revolutionary culture. In part, the continual projection of the nation came from the return to the historic past, which was simply a general trend of the time. With

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174 Belfast Labour Chronicle, 10 February 1906.
175 Harp, September 1909.
historical writing gaining popularity in academic and elite networks throughout Europe, it is perhaps unsurprising that the working-class movement shared in the practice.\textsuperscript{176}

The reclaiming of the past, however, also served a greater purpose. On a more abstract level, it was seen as rejection of imperialism, an escape from social controls and a return to an idealised nation.\textsuperscript{177} Indeed, such yearnings were not just confined to the working-class movement or Ireland.\textsuperscript{178} As Roy Foster has demonstrated, the idealisation of rural life was an important part of fin de siècle Irish middle-class culture that linked Irish and Russian intellectual revolutionaries. Foster has described how, for instance, participants in Gaelic League retreats searched for ‘authenticity in rural life’ and hoped ‘that the uncorrupted values of the Irish peasantry would somehow rub off on them.’\textsuperscript{179} Likewise, Irish artists used rural Ireland as a sanctuary from modern religion, state control, and urban corruption.\textsuperscript{180} Much the same can be said of the working-class movement. Rural Ireland and the Irish peasant farmer became the symbolic face of the Irish revolution, even when, as described in chapter one, the working-class leaders largely ignored their role in the movement.

Both Belfast and Dublin working-class leaders believed that the working-class movement would develop in urban industrial Ireland. However, there was a clear difference in how the two groups dealt with Ireland’s rural workers. Belfast leaders actively avoided romanticising rural Ireland because Ireland’s dependency on agriculture was portrayed within Ulster urban communities as a consequence of the backwardness of southern Irish Catholic peasant culture. Whereas in Southern Ireland leaders embraced rural romanticism as a core concept within the working-class movement.

Southern Irish working-class propagandists turned to the farm as a place where industrialisation had not yet corrupted natural life. This was not an uncommon practice.

\textsuperscript{176} In their work on historical writing in Europe, Berger and Conrad explain how Marxist writing grew in England. They make a point to connect this to wider trends in Europe and situate within a wider chapter on transnational educational pursuits in national historical writing. Stefan Berger with Christopher Conrad, \textit{The past as history: national identities and historical consciousness in modern Europe} (Basingstoke, 2015), p. 207.

\textsuperscript{177} Hutchison, \textit{The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism}, pp 119-27.

\textsuperscript{178} Antoinette Burton, ‘Who needs the nation? Interrogating “British” history’ in Hall (ed.), \textit{Culture of Empire, A Reader}, p. 138. Hutchison also points out how Irish revolutionary thinkers were allied to British anti-imperialist radicals as well. Hutchison, \textit{The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism}, p. 119.

\textsuperscript{179} Foster, \textit{Vivid Faces}, p. 18.

because a return to nature played a key part in constructing the romantic image of the future socialist world across the Atlantic socialist press. It also mirrored the ideal status given to rural life in Irish revivalist art and literature, further validating the national core of this practice. Similar to reformist support of outdoor activities and sport, it too was a reaction to concerns with urban decay and working-class health and as such was certainly underpinned by middle-class desires. Nevertheless, as is evident from image 2.1, the Atlantic socialist press frequently featured depictions of natural settings to advertise urban papers.

**Image 2.1: Depictions of nature in socialist literature**

These included the sun illuminating the countryside, farm labourers and industrial workers fleeing urban centres for rural life, and natural landscapes untouched by industrial development. These images carried over into the symbols of the working-class movement as well. The United Labours of Ireland, for example, had a banner that

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183 These images frequently filled the work of socialist artist Walter Crane. In the preface to his work on the social and ethical foundations of art, it is clear the focus on nature was used as a corrective to urban industrial life. Walter Crane, *Ideals in Art* (London, 1906), pp vi-viii.
184 For further examples please see the *Industrial Worker* and the *Young Socialist*. 

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portrayed an image of Lady Erin amidst a sweeping Irish rural landscape identifiable by a Celtic Cross.\(^{185}\) The fact that the image of the Starry Plough came to be a symbol of the ICA, which was an exclusively Dublin-based industrial army, was a further manifestation of this concept. Irish rural life thus became a potent symbol for hope and redemption from industrial Ireland within the working-class movement was maintained.

Along with the romanticisation of rural life came the glorification of the small farmer and farm labourer as symbols of both socialist idealism and working-class national culture. For the diaspora in particular, this had significant appeal. In his famous work, *Merrie England*, the British Clarion writer and SDF leader Robert Blatchford’s depiction of Irish life concentrated on the concept of the exploited tenant farmer whose life had only been infringed upon by the imposition of a landlord capitalist class.\(^{186}\) His merger of rural romanticism with capitalist exploitation was intended to appeal to the Irish in Britain whose new urban life included nostalgia for rural Ireland. It was a similar practice to that employed by Scottish Labour Party leader, R.B. Cunninghame Graham in his ‘Evolution of the Village’, in which he traced Northern Ireland’s idyllic rural existence to a modern immoral capitalist city-run area.\(^{187}\) This practice, however, was not just used by socialists or designed to exclusively appeal to Irish workers, and can also be seen in the modernist writing tendencies of socialists across the Atlantic.\(^{188}\) In the United States, for example, the essence of American liberty was personified in the yeoman or farm labourer in American literature.\(^{189}\) In a similar manner, Socialist League leader William Morris claimed that English farmers were the symbols of the country because they lived in a more beautiful England.\(^{190}\)

Irish socialist leaders continued to foreground their revolutionary idealism in Irish life before industrialisation and pre-Famine emigration. Yet, this nostalgia still

\(^{185}\) ‘Labour Day Celebrations Programme’ attached to the 1894 ITUC Report (N.L.I., Irish Trade Union Congress Records, P3212).


\(^{188}\) Luke Gibbons has argued that the allure of the West or the return to the rural ideal in modern times is a shared Irish and American idea. Gibbons, ‘Synge, Country and Western’. During this period, however, rural romanticism has also been associated with the imperial project, focusing audiences on historical past and national roots. For evidence, please see Burton, ‘Who needs the nation?’, p. 198 or S. Bratton, ‘Of England, Home and Duty: the image of England in Victorian Edwardian Juvenile Fiction’ in Mackenzie (ed.), *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, p. 89.


\(^{190}\) *Commonweal*, 6 July 1889.
served more roles than just escapism from urbanism and modernity, it also, as Alastair Bonnett has argued, helped construct of an indigenous tradition of radicalism, the conventionalisation of radical politics, and a rejection of colonialism. This structure was used regularly in propaganda designed specifically for the Irish diaspora. For instance, the Scottish SLP organ, the Socialist, retold the story of an Irish village before capitalism which it contrasted to the life of an Irish-American New York prostitute living through the industrial period. The Irish-American socialist organ, the Harp, argued that Irish Americans simply changed the location of their slavery, while adding it was even more humiliating in America because Irish men had to admit to being, 'a citizen of an Anglo-Saxon country' whereas in Ireland at least Irish workers had 'the mournful privilege of remaining an Irish Celt.' These articles coupled traditional elements of modernist writing: the concepts of losing control of the physical, economic, and moral world with the lived experiences of Irish emigrants. The result was a nationalist-based rejection of foreign modernity wrapped in socialist idealism.

Linked to this focus on rural life was an attempt to appropriate the imagined values of a historically and morally superior world, again, a practice that was embraced across Atlantic socialist writing and likewise propagated by urban Irish intellectuals who associated modern capitalist culture with the destruction of Gaelic Ireland. Contrary to modern accusations of Ireland's 'cliché' clinging to 'an image of the past', this historic idealism has much to do with leaders' visions for a radical future. Plays endorsed by socialist parties always had a clear underlying message of socialist politics, but their vision of the future often found its justification in the past. For example, the Clarion Players performed Jack Burt's play, 'Glimpses of the Class Struggle,' which opened with the peasants' revolt of 1381. The play then divided its scenes into the major eras of British history leading up to the imagined coming of the working-class revolution. Similarly, the March 1916 Worker's Dramatic Company performance of 'Under Which

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191 Bonnett, Left in the Past. Please see pp 1-15 for introductory overview and pp 87-113 for anti-colonial projections.
192 Socialist, August 1902.
193 Harp, February, 1908.
194 Linehan, Modernism and British Socialism.
195 For socialist writing please see Bonnett, Left in the Past, p. 89. For Irish urban intellectuals please see Foster, Modern Ireland, p. 455.
196 Cleary and Connolly, Theorizing Ireland, p. 12.
197 Socialist Record, February 1913.
Flag’ depicted a rural family living through the Fenian Rising in an effort to detail the value of militarism, anti-colonialism, and class radicalism in the modern day.¹⁹⁸

This return to the past was a way to implant working-class identity in a past that was constructed largely through a national paradigm. This reconstruction served a number of roles. It combatted accusations that working-class identity was a foreign import, it increased the national significance of the working-class revolution, and it gave socialism, a modern movement, an aura of conservativism in its quest to rebuild the past, an element that, perhaps, appealed to the conservative tendencies of the working classes.¹⁹⁹ Atlantic socialists traced working-class oppression through national narratives as a way to motivate the working classes to embrace socialism as the logical advancement of their national trajectory. For example, in an article in the SLP’s Weekly People, a writer who used the pen-name ‘A Pittsburgh Patriot,’ traced the evolution of the struggle for American liberty to the current system of chattel slavery in the United States. The author asserted that socialists were the truest patriots because they were fighting the last great struggle for American liberty.²⁰⁰ The Great British Socialist Labour Party (GBSLP) based in Edinburgh published a ‘History of the Third Estate in Medieval Scotland’ in its organ, the Socialist, which concluded with a call to end the continued narrative of slavery. Similarly, in Ireland, the ISRP published Thomas Brady’s The historical basis of socialism in Ireland and James Connolly’s Labour in Ireland each of which traced socialist development back to Celtic times.²⁰¹ Thomas Brady’s work was noted by the party as being one of its most influential pieces of propaganda, demonstrating how effective these narratives were.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ ‘Under Which Flag: A Play’ by James Connolly is set in 1867, during the time of the Fenian Rising, and tells the story of the O’Donnell family. Frank O’Donnell, the farmer’s son, joins the IRB instead of enlisting in the British forces. The play features a blind veteran named Brian McMahon, played by Sean Connolly, who kneels to give his blessing as Frank O’Donnell goes off to fight with the IRB. (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,945).

¹⁹⁹ This refers to the conservative, defensive tendencies highlighted by historians like Ross McKibbin, who has argued that the working classes tend to reject radical change and fight modernity. McKibbin, Ideologes of Class (Oxford, 1990), p. 295.

²⁰⁰ Daily People, 3 July 1909.


²⁰² Balance Sheet for SPI with notes, undated (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,683(5)).
In order to fit socialism into a nationalist narrative, leaders needed to portray socialism as a natural development of the state’s evolution. Capitalism impeded state development and therefore it was the patriotic duty of the working classes to set it right. In order to demonstrate how this aim could be achieved, propagandists rooted socialism in national historical traditions. They did so in two overt ways. Firstly, capitalism was portrayed as ideologically contrary to the principles of national liberty. As can be seen in image 2.2, the *New York Call* featured images of capitalist scissors cutting up the constitution, as well as the personification of capitalism igniting constitutional rights as fireworks on the Fourth of July, and blowing out the socialist flame.

**Image: 2.2: Patriotism in the American socialist press**

New York Call, 6 August 1908

New York Call, 3 July 1908

New York Call, 11 June 1908

Similarly, the *Workingman's Times* featured the poem, ‘Britain for All’ by R.J. Derfel which told of capitalists and landlords stealing Britain from the workingman. Capitalism and landlordism were thus presented as corrupting the natural rights and civil liberties that states sought to protect.

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203 Paul Buhle has argued this process in American occurred directly in response to the exceptional American condition. This interpretation, however, negates the shared experience socialist parties who each re-crafted socialism to fit national conditions. Buhle, *Marxism in the United States*, p. 57.

204 *Workingman's Times*, 9 July 1892.
Contrastingly, and taking a more positive approach, working-class leaders sometimes claimed that socialist values were implanted in the founding principles of the modern state. Socialism became the evolutionary product of democracy and liberalism in the modern world. The SLP’s platform contained a reassertion of the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The *People* featured a regular column entitled ‘Uncle Sam and Brother Jonathan’ that fused socialist lessons and nationalist tradition into a short question and answer session with a socialist Uncle Sam, which continually drew on the themes of liberalism, democracy, and equality. Robert Hunter wrote a series of articles for the *New York Call* fusing Americanism and socialism into one identity. As image 2.3 shows, the *Irish Worker* did the same. The paper used the image of Erin to depict the glorified entry of members into the ITGWU, and also presented images of Wexford ITGWU men as contemporary United Irishmen. These practices rooted working-class identity in national protest and the spirit of liberty.

**Image 2.3 Nationalist images in the *Irish Worker***

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205 For examples of these claims please see *Appeal to Reason* 15 May 1913, 8 March 1913; or *New York Call*, 22 July 1905, 5 July 1911.


207 The column is reoccurring, but for specific initial examples please see the *Weekly People*, 14 June 1891; 21 June 1891; or 9 August 1891. Some of these were also reused in the Scottish SLP organ *The Socialist*. For an example, please see the *Socialist*, June 1904 or November 1904.

208 For examples of these articles please see the *New York Call*, 10 August 1909 or 22 July 1909.
Even working-class propaganda designed for children professed such nationalist sentiments, equating socialism and working-class organisation to the fulfilment of national duties. In a story from the *Young Socialist* entitled ‘England and the Dragon,’ England was personified as a woman with ‘eyes of Saxon blue.’ When the dragon threatened England, she was saved by the stranger ‘socialism’ who defeated the dragon by making it drink a bowl filled with the blood of past national heroes. The greedy capitalist dragon dies from drinking all the blood and thus socialism saves the nation. With children’s participation still underdeveloped even at the high point of ITGWU expansion, leaders instead targeted parents. Even with this different audience, the message was the same. The *Irish Worker*’s ‘plea for the children’ called on parents to organise and teach their children working-class consciousness on the grounds that ‘they must be taught to preserve their National independence and freedom, which belongs to them by the right of race.’ This message sought to bring children into the working-class movement through nationalist action. In essence, it equated nationalism and socialism, but implied that the best way to achieve nationalist ambitions was through class-based action, a course that needed to be maintained across generational lines.

The desire to escape modernity was a prominent theme across an array of socialist literature. This was not just an abstract ambition, as socialists undertook practical measures to realise their pre-modern idylls. Socialists felt that by removing the working classes from the corruption of a capitalist environment, they could separate them from competing forces shaping their consciousness while still maintaining national ties. This amounted to a form of spatial control designed to enhance socialist development. One of the key elements of this practice can be found in the socialist desire to regulate education. Socialist Sunday Schools (SSS), in particular, sought to control space, because they were wary of modernity and emphasised natural education. Leading Scottish SSS teacher Margaret McDoughall described the model SSS as one in which children could ‘solve the mighty economic problems in the only way possible to them, by play and make believe; by lessons from Nature’s great storehouse: the birds, the flowers and the bees.’ Socialist lessons became equated with a type of naturalism, and thus constituted both tangible escapes from modernity and natural

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209 *Young Socialist*, September 1915.
210 *Irish Worker*, 22 July 1911.
211 *Young Socialist*, July 1907.
justifications for radical socialist change. These elements fused the nationalist motifs into these themes keeping the practice still firmly planted within the concept of nation.

Similar reasoning can be applied to working-class desire to control space. In line with middle-class liberals, socialists sought to take ownership of their own green spaces. Garden city socialists or the socialist-led community parks combined urban escapism with spatial working-class autonomy, which were crucial to fostering working-class social life. The ITGWU’s Croydon Park served as an escape from slum life in Dublin, but it also allowed for mobilisation of individuals under the banner of working-class identity. Activities ranged from sporting events, rallies, and later military drilling for the ICA. These spaces were, however, defined by their promotion and validation of a working-class culture that was distinct and depicted as superior to that of its middle-class counterparts. While other parks were filled with ‘artificial toys for children’s amusement’ that were only there from ‘bourgeois playboy philanthropy’, Croydon Park found virtue in it ‘lack of respectability’. It was packaged as the heart of the ‘social revolution’. The space was nevertheless still intimately connected to the nation.

The fusion came not only from the national activities conducted in these spaces, but also their function in producing independent citizens who rejected colonial control, British culture, and capitalism. It was a similar process to that employed by nationalists. David Lloyd, for instance, described how Irish nationalists used organisations like the GAA and the Gaelic League as ‘autonomous spheres for the modernising function of education, recreation and political action by whose means national citizens would be formed’. The Irish working-class movement was taking part in the same process. Their

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212 Robert Rotenberg has argued that the desire to transform urban space in nineteenth-century metropoles was itself rooted in an imperial framework, with the underlining ambition being to distinguish metropolitan culture from the Empire. Robert Rotenberg, 'Metropolitanism and the transformation of urban space in nineteenth-century colonial metropoles' in American Anthropologist, 103, 1 (March, 2001) pp 7-15.

213 For garder city socialists, please see Daily Herald, 4 Sept 1912.

214 The ITGWU began the process of acquiring Croydon Park in October 1913. Bradshaw to James Larkin, 9 October 1913 (N.L.I., ITGWU papers, MS 27,054/1). However, the park was previously advertised as being the part of the union’s choice as early as August 1913. After an event held by the Fianna Éireann in the park, the union inquired into exclusive rental rights to prevent the space from being used by opposing groups. Irish Worker, 18 September 1913. Due to increased debts, the union surrendered the park on 9 February 1916. O'Neill to William Smyth & Son, 5 January 1916 - 9 February 1916 (N.L.I., ITWGU papers, MS 27,054/2).

215 Irish Worker, 9 August 1913.

216 Ibid.

217 Lloyd, Irish culture and colonial modernity, p. 106.
political ambitions remained markedly different, with the hope that working-class identity would prevail as the primary political identity; nevertheless, the process remained the same. These social gatherings were designed to prepare Irish workers to become conscious and active working-class citizens in the modern Irish state. Dublin working-class leaders were laying the foundation for post-revolutionary national society.

This shared national focus of Atlantic socialist parties generated obstacles to the supposed mutually beneficial relationships of international parties. The confusion of whether socialist parties were making national citizens or socialists first proved troubling when instructing the working-class diaspora on how they should behave. In his speech bidding farewell to James Connolly after the completion of his 1903 American tour, De Leon wished his Irish socialist comrades well, while still asserting it was ‘the historic mission of America to liberate the world.’ Since Connolly’s presence in America captured the attention of American socialists and wider Irish-American audiences, De Leon’s rather blatant patriotic remark also had a practical aim. The message was that Irish Americans could best serve the international socialist movement by embracing socialism in the nation in which they now resided.

Others opted for a different approach. While many working-class leaders believed Irish nationalism was a tool that could be used to reach the Irish diaspora, many did not agree with the Irish focusing on a national revolution over working-class action. As a result, working-class propaganda that was designed to target Irish-Americans often avoided addressing the real issues of the national question and instead played upon superficial aspects of Irish identity. For instance, in a piece of propaganda aimed at Irish-American workers, the American IWW paper, the *Industrial Worker* featured a cartoon of an IWW member chasing snakes off the earth, just as St Patrick had done in Ireland. Many Irish-American socialists believed this type of approach explained part of the reason why Irish workers were reluctant to embrace working-class radicalism.

While a desire to escape modernity partly accounted for Irish socialists’ return to the nation, the movement’s additional nationalist tone caused this framework to merge with those forged in radical Irish nationalist circles. While international revolutionary

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218 *Socialist*, January 1903.
219 *Industrial Worker*, 1 April 1909.
working-class action was acknowledged and encouraged alongside this narrative, the main goals and vision of Irish socialism consistently came back to the nation. Undoubtedly, this limitation was due to the national political realm in which socialist propagandists operated. However, the ambiguity between working-class radicalism and nationalist action only further perpetuated the interdependency of working-class and national identities. The pathway that led Irish socialists to this convergence was, however, not out of tune with other Atlantic socialist movements. Its fate, on the other hand, suffered a unique end due to the revolutionary national movement underway.

The First World War: a patriotic duty to class

In the years prior to 1914, therefore, a combination of factors ensured that the Irish working-class movement was on an increasingly nationalist trajectory. The crisis of international socialism provoked by the outbreak of the First World War, which affected advocates of both revolutionary and evolutionary tactics, signalled the beginning of a new phase. These two phases, however, should not be completely separated from each other, for as John Horne has argued, 'the ambiguities of pre-war nationalism' in the working-class movement gave its wartime course its context. The abstract escape from modernity was no longer an option as national propaganda became transfixed by the war. Despite divided stances on how the working-class movement should respond, socialists universally attempted to preserve working-class identity through the conflict. However, their diverging perspectives on how the working classes should behave were all concerned with the need for national, rather than international, action. The result was that working-class identity increasingly became defined in relation to national political beliefs and action. Therefore, both pro and anti-war socialist propaganda, shifted the dialogue of working-class identity to a wartime condition shaped by nationalism.

Defining a socialist future now meant constructing a new nationalist working-class narrative that incorporated a wartime stance. The result was that the working-

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21 Horne describes this process as the victory of 'bourgeois internationalism' which was used to justify national intervention in the First World War. In English traditions of labourism, Horne argues, this ideal prevails over revolutionary internationalism. Horne, *Labour at War*, p. 27.
class movement became less about ‘class war’ in the Marxist sense and more about the relationship of the working-class to the First World War. International perspectives, particularly coming from the International Socialist Bureau, became less appealing to the national movement and national socialist organs tended to become even more insular in their reporting. The crumbling Second International’s last effort at peace at the September 1915 Zimmerwald Convention saw very little support from any of the major Atlantic nations. The British government refused to issue passports to British and Irish delegates, while American delegates turned their attention to domestic politics.\(^{222}\)

America’s neutrality gave American socialist parties more time and space to prepare for the transformation of socialism in the new wartime climate. The hard-line anti-war stance taken by many leaders of the SPA and SLP was not out of line with American sentiments that saw the war as largely a European problem. However, US industrial preparedness for the wartime climate increased tensions around industrial action, which led to the greater suppression of advanced labour actions such as the promotion of syndicalism. American socialist parties responded to such pressures by crafting their own national working-class dialogue which was anchored even more deeply in American traditions. In the SPA paper, *Appeal to Reason*, for example, socialists delivered ‘The Worker’s New Declaration of Independence.’ The document drew on the revolutionary national tradition of the Fourth of July and emphasised core American concepts of natural rights, Providence, and universal justice. It infused religious language while still keeping a clear concept of militant working-class action:

> We the workers of the United States of America, therefore, in union with the working class of all lands, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, in the name and by the authority of eternal justice, solemnly publish and declare that we are absolved from any allegiance to the capitalist control of industry and shall take that which is our own by virtue of having produced it; and that we as workers have the right and power to rule industry, to end profit, to conduct commerce and do all other acts and things that have been done by others for the sake of exploiting us. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge our lives, our votes, and our sacred honor.\(^{223}\)

\(^{222}\) *The Call*, 17 July 1916.  
\(^{223}\) *Appeal to Reason*, 4 July 1914.

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During the war, American working-class identity was thus situated between God and nation.

The American government, however, also had greater time to focus on defeating labour before its entry into the war. American socialists reacted by defining more explicitly their relationship to patriotism. In March 1916, the *Masses* featured an article printing the responses of leading socialist figures to the question, ‘Are you a patriot?’

However, American anti-war socialists paid dearly for their position. As government and popular responses to anti-war protests increased, many leading socialist speakers suffered arrest and persecution under the Espionage and Sedition Acts of 1917 and 1918. Among those targeted was former Cork ISRP founder Cornelius Lehane, whose arrest on 13 June 1918 resulted in his detention in Bridgeport Connecticut prison until his death.

In England, Marxists, industrial unionists, the ILP and Labour Party supporters were divided over the war. Impossibilist socialist parties, which consisted of the SPGB and the SLPGB, remained ardently anti-war, while possibilists sections divided. The split of the British Socialist Party was the most turbulent, with the party’s founder, H.M. Hyndman, silenced at the 1916 Convention after opponents labelled him a jingoist nationalist. Siding with Hyndman and the pro-war faction, the editor of the party’s newspaper, H.W. Lee, attempted to sever the paper’s association with the party, claiming the party was now run by ‘the new anti-national Zimmerwaldian outlook’ that was counter to the original doctrine of the previous SDF. Meanwhile, the anti-war faction used the *Socialist Record*, the party’s executive organ, to call for a coup. One member called on socialists to use the *Socialist Record* to replace *Justice* as the official organ of the party.

The split within the British Socialist Party was manifested along national lines, with Scotland taking the lead in opposing the war. Similar to the earlier break of the

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224 *Masses*, 5 March 1916.
227 *Justice*, 27 April 1916.
228 *Justice*, 11 May 1916.
229 *Socialist Record*, April 1916.
230 Ibid.
Edinburgh Scottish impossibilists from the SDF, British Socialist Party leaders in Glasgow led the coup against Hyndman. John Maclean's Glasgow organ, Vanguard, disparaged the party's central branch and attempted to undercut Hyndman's support base in London. The paper roused Scottish opposition to the war by associating Scottish nationalism with anti-bourgeois, anti-war rhetoric arguing, 'we in Glasgow are internationalists first, last, and all the time.'

Maclean shifted attention more to the work of labour leaders on the Clyde like William Muir, William Gallacher and Walter Bell, who organised the Clyde Workers' Committee along militant anti-war industrial lines. After the suppression of the ILP organ, Forward, for reporting on popular anti-war protest, the Clyde committee's paper, the Worker, met the same fate in February 1916 after the January issue featured an article entitled, 'Should Worker's Arm?' and the February issue featured another article entitled, 'Prepare for Action' telling workers to 'strike to kill.'

Muir and Gallacher received 12 months with Bell receiving three for publishing the content. In April 1916, Maclean was also arrested for seditious speeches and sentenced to three years imprisonment. Maclean went on after his release to become one of most outspoken Scottish defenders of James Connolly's participation in the 1916 Easter Rising.

The Labour Party's acceptance of the inevitability of war increased vocal opposition within the ILP and its press, but the ILP refused to completely abandon the party, a tactic that resulted in its visceral critique of opposing socialist circles like the SPGB. ILP leaders dealt with the problem by trying to compartmentalise anti-war resistance and labour politics by forming the Union of Democratic Control (UDC), which took on the role as the full-time anti-war propaganda branch of the party. The UDC was still given a voice through key ILP propaganda organs like the Labour Leader and Vanguard, October 1915.

231 Vanguard, October 1915.
234 Trial Transcripts of William Gallacher, William Muir, and Walter Bell, 12 April 1916 (S.N.A., Department of Justice papers, J.C.5/11).
235 Petition for John Maclean's release addressed to The Right Honourable John Monro (N.L.S., John Maclean papers, ACC 4251).
Forward and as such information on its anti-war resistance reached Irish shores.\textsuperscript{238} The UDC promoted works like Norman Angell's *War and the Workers*, which attempted to associate the pro-war language of Western capitalists with fatalism.\textsuperscript{239} The problem with this was that it was questionable how much the British working classes supported the policy. Some historians, such as Ross McKibbin, have argued that 'outside of those who regarded themselves specifically as socialists, the working classes were quite as military-minded as the bourgeoisie.'\textsuperscript{240} With socialists continually disappointed in working-class radicalism and self-determination, it is perhaps unsurprising that the ILP leadership held this belief. By 1915, UDC member, E.D. Morel, wrote privately to Ramsay MacDonald expressing concern that nationalist papers, particularly the *Daily Express*, were turning the working classes against the UDC and the Labour Party by playing upon working-class patriotism.\textsuperscript{241}

The growing militancy on both sides of the issue only intensified the divide. Fearing wartime enthusiasm would undermine socialist advances, opponents of the war began to accept their own form of militant working-class resistance. For example, ILP-sponsored Socialist Sunday Schools augmented the school curriculum with boys' brigades, such as the Young Citizen Crusaders. While the organisation maintained that the brigade was only an effort to address the lack of young male retention in the schools, and to serve as 'antidote to the jingo mentality of the Boy Scouts, Boys Brigade and Girl Guides', the comparisons between it and the objects of their criticism proved otherwise.\textsuperscript{242} Young Citizen Crusaders mirrored imperial wartime youth organisational practices, with participants wearing uniforms, conducting drills, boxing, and playing a series of outdoor sports.\textsuperscript{243} While the *Young Socialist* proclaimed that these children were training to 'march like elves to a fairyland of rainbows and wind chimes,' in reality they were teaching children similar militaristic behaviours to their opponents.\textsuperscript{244}

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\textsuperscript{238} In fact, the William O’Brien collection indicates that collections of the *Labour Leader*, did not occur until the war period. Prior to this, O’Brien’s anti-ILP position would have kept him and like-minded Irish socialists more focused on revolutionary socialist organs. Therefore, his retention of the *Labour Leader* from 1914 onward, perhaps, indicates an increased interest in the party’s wartime position. *Labour Leader, 1914* (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, 1M 245).

\textsuperscript{239} Norman Angell, *War and the Workers* (London, 1914).

\textsuperscript{240} McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class*.

\textsuperscript{241} Morel to Ramsay MacDonald, 23 July 1915 (U.MAN., Ramsay McDonald papers, RMD 1/3/31).

\textsuperscript{242} 'History of the Young Socialist National Camp' (P.H.M., Ivy Tribe Collection, File 2C).

\textsuperscript{243} *Young Socialist*, April 1915.

\textsuperscript{244} *Ibid*, October 1915.
using fantasy to indoctrinate youths for political aims.²⁴⁵ It was perhaps the most significant admission that even anti-war socialists could alter their stance in relation to working-class wartime enthusiasm if it meant maintaining the organisation of the workers around working-class aims.

With the passing of the Defence of the Realm Act, campaigning against the war effort in Britain and Ireland became a dangerous game, particularly for labour activists. Workers in transport, who were the focus of industrial unionist campaigns in the pre-war period, now fell into one of the most regulated areas due to the industry’s wartime significance. Socialist leaders who opposed the war recognised the danger and attempted to keep anti-war messages and socialist labour campaigning separate. However, shared facilities and leadership made such distinctions nearly impossible. Police raids on the UDC meant raids on ILP headquarters in England, just as raids on the ICA resulted in raids on Liberty Hall in Ireland.²⁴⁶ The working-class movement’s attempts to distance itself from the wartime resistance movement often proved futile and both branches suffered similar government restrictions.

Events in the United States and England are important to the Irish situation because they offer further reasons for why Atlantic working-class networks crumbled during the outbreak of the war beyond the issue of differing opinions of international socialism’s wartime stance. Also, some of the behaviours that developed in these climates provide a wider context to understand the Irish situation. While the Irish working-class movement was already shifting toward increasingly nationalist objectives, the outbreak of the war certainly accelerated the course. On the surface, Irish socialists attempted to keep labour activism, pacifism, and Irish nationalism separate in order to avoid official reaction, but, much like the anti-war factions of the ILP, they failed to do so. Under the slogan of re-establishing international trade unionism, Connolly attempted to resurrect the now defunct Irish Worker by eliciting the help of the Glasgow socialists. His efforts to revive labour activism were, however, overtaken by wartime concerns. Advertisements pitched the new paper as being ‘all the real news of

²⁴⁵ These elements were cited as mechanisms contributing to imperial indoctrination of youths in Victorian and Edwardian schools. J.S. Bratton, ‘Of England, Home and Duty’, pp 74-93 or Mackenzie, Propaganda and Empire, p. 181.

the war’. The inaugural issue, which ran under the title Irish Work, opened by trying to expose the hypocrisies of the pro-war stance of leading British socialist, Robert Blatchford. The five issues of the Worker that made it to press featured surprisingly little on ‘work’ and more on war-time restrictions. This quickly resulted in the paper’s suppression.

Irish leaders tried to use the pacifist movement in a similar manner to leaders in Glasgow, establishing two fronts. One was based in political pacifist agitation, while the other remained in the trade union realm, with unions threatening the working classes with food shortages and labour surplus if the war continued. Both strategies produced a highly nationalist discourse that made the consequences of war seem intimately connected to the national experience. The language was also highly militant. A Dublin ILP pamphlet distributed outside one of the Irish Neutrality League meetings claimed that the Irish, as slaves of the empire, had no one to fight other than their enslavers. This national position made co-operation with even the anti-war British movement less practical. American socialist anti-war resistance received some attention in the Irish press, but its depiction served to justify the position of the Dublin ILP, rather than call for coordinated transatlantic working-class resistance to the war effort.

The strategies Irish socialists used to generate anti-war support were copied directly from tactics opponents had used against them. Questions of the moral purity of wartime culture and the nature of Ireland’s spiritual course were at the heart of most rallying calls. The Worker attempted to rally opposition against the growing presence of ‘imported soldiers’ in the country by implying that their presence was contributing to increased levels of sexual impropriety amongst Irish women. The paper even called on its former foe, the Vigilance Committee, to lead the charge. In essence, socialists were now taking advantage of the national climate they once criticised. The dialogue

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247 'Look out for the Worker' flyer in 'Irish Government Public Control and Administration, 1884-1921: the Worker' (T.N.A., Dublin Castle Files, CO904, Boxes 159-178).
248 Irish Work, 19 December 1914.
249 For information regarding the suppression of the Worker, please see 'Irish Government Public Control and Administration, 1884-1921: the Worker' (T.N.A., Dublin Castle Files, CO904, Boxes 159-178), pp 1-56.
250 Cecel, Pacifism, p. 603.
252 Worier, 16 January 1915.
253 Ibid, 5 February 1916.
only drove them deeper into national culture, allowing it to dictate the nature of socialist opposition to the war.

British authorities were apparently torn over which was the greatest threat, and saw socialism, pacifism, and Irish republicanism as synonymous. At a meeting of the Irish Neutrality League, for instance, the Dublin Metropolitan Police officer covering the event made sure in his report to identify both James Connolly and Walter Carpenter as 'socialists'. Additionally, he made sure to point out that there were contingents of both the ICA and the ITGWU present. The report of course found itself in a wider file on Sinn Féin and Republican suspects, signalling that socialist republicanism was part of a much broader national revolutionary concern.

This ambiguity was generated, in part, by socialists themselves. The war called for immediate action and socialists recognised the need for a working-class response. The result was that Irish socialists hoped to foster general discontent and militancy first and worried about articulating a clear socialist response later. It was essentially increasing a focus on small socialist objectives, while sacrificing the connection to major socialist goals. This approach may not have been the enlightened revolution the ISRP had attempted to craft in the pre-war years, but it was a revolution nonetheless and socialist leaders were willing to accept it, rather than having to wait out the war.

In the background of this growth of socialist national militancy was a struggling ITGWU. The union, once Dublin's hope to be the heart of the working-class revolution, now struggled to survive as membership dropped and funds decreased. By the end of 1913, the union reported paying out over £3,842 6s 4d in unemployment, travelling and emigration benefits to members, which accounted for 53 per cent of the income raised from union dues collected that year. Even with the 2,000 members added by the year-end, 1913 membership still showed a net loss of 1,200 people. By 1915, 2,500 members had enlisted in the British military, which amounted to half of the overall

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255 Total income reported from union dues was £7,262 4s 5d. ‘Returns to the Registrar of Friendly Societies’ 31 December 1913 (N.L.I., ITGWU papers, MS27034, A21).
256 The increased membership also correlated with the creation of 5 new non-Dublin based branches. As such, the increased membership included largely those from new branches. However, since reports from the Register of Friendly Societies did not stipulate branch membership separately, exact figures from Dublin remain unknown. ‘Returns to the Registrar of Friendly Societies’ 31 December 1913 (N.L.I., ITGWU papers, MS 27034).

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union membership at this time.\textsuperscript{257} The fact that the union’s membership was becoming increasingly transient meant that it could no longer be the primary agent for preaching working-class consciousness.

In this context, the ICA came to the fore. The ICA has a disputed history with various interpretations regarding the organisation’s inception, but its emergence in 1913 is clear.\textsuperscript{258} The concept was not unique and shared roots with labour movements in the mining districts of the American Mid-West, where union militias were common.\textsuperscript{259} The ICA of 1913, however, was not the same militant organisation that became famous for its role in the Easter Rising of 1916. In fact, initially socialist leaders seemed to care very little for the organisation’s well-being and development. In his personal memoirs, the initial military commander of the ICA, Captain Jack White, recalled that despite enthusiastic cheers at the organisation’s inception and regular mass sign-ups at Sunday meetings at Croydon Park, attendants were few and irregular. White recalled feeling that labour leaders simply ‘used me as a useful side-line to keep the men busy when they weren’t doing anything else, and as a good publicity stunt.’\textsuperscript{260} Sure, the minimal


\textsuperscript{258} The actual development of the ICA is recorded from the oral histories conducted in the Bureau of Military History (BMH), along with the autobiographies of Sean O’Casey, Frank Robbins and Captain Jack White. Each of these sources, however, was completed years later and contained contradictions and flaws about the organisation’s inception. Most members of the ICA who gave statements to the BMH cited the history completed by R.M. Fox as the authority on the subject and refused to give further information.

Frank Robbins, \textit{Under the Storvy Plough: Recollections of the Irish Citizen Army} (Dublin, 1977); Captain Jack White, D.S.O., \textit{Misfit: an autobiography} (London, 1930); Sean O’Casey, \textit{The story of the Irish Citizen Army} (London, 1919). The BMH contains ICA participation statements from Walter Carpenter, 24 September 1951(BMH,WS 583, File S.141); Maeve Cavanagh (McDowell), 1 June 1945 (BMH,WS 258, File S.191); Nellie Gifford (Donnelly) 24 May 1949 (BMH,WS 256, File S.1350), Rose Hackett, 26 May 1951 (BMH,WS 546, File S.190); John Hanratty, 18 February 1948 (BMH, WS 96/File No. 139); Martin King, 21 January 1951 (BMH,WS 543 File S. 1970); Thomas Leahy, 10 March 1952 (BMH,WS 660, File S.1837); Dr. Kathleen Lynn, 4 March 1950 (BMH,WS 357 File 166); Seamus McGowan, 26 June 1951 (BMH,WS 452, File S.192); Stephen Murphy, 26 April 1951 (BMH,WS 545, File S.969); Very Rev. Fr. Thomas O’Donoghue, (passed away before signing/verified by Lieutenant Col. Sean Brennan)(BHM, WS 1666, File S.182); James O’Shea, 26 September 1952 (BMH, WS 733, File S.590); William Oman, 7 November 1950 (BMH, WS 421, File S.5174); Frank Robbins 15 September 1951 (BMH, WS 585, File S.176); Marie Perolz (Flanagan) 9 May 1949 (BMH, WS 246, File S.215). R.M. Fox worked with a select group of ICA participants called the ‘Old Guard.’ The Old Guard consisted of Sean Byrne, Walter Carpenter, Maeve Cavanagh, John Hanratty, Martin King, Stephen Murphy, James O’Shea, Seamus McGowan, and George Tully. R.M. Fox, \textit{History of the Irish Citizen Army} (Dublin, 1944). Each source gives varying interpretations on who initially called for the ICA, postulating figures ranging from Captain White, Larkin, Connolly, Captain De Coeur to Thomas O’Donoghue.


\textsuperscript{260} White, \textit{Misfit,} p. 264. 164
reporting of the organisation in the *Irish Worker* and its complete absence from the *Worker* indicate that such sentiments contained a certain level of truth.

By the spring of 1915, this was no longer the case. The ICA, now under the command of James Connolly and Michael Mallin as Chief of Staff, was openly militant and nationalist. The culture of the organisation transformed, with nationalism as its focal point. Even the songs were no longer international socialist tunes, rather they had titles like 'Wrap the Green Flag around me' and 'Sinn Féin Amháin'. This fact does not indicate that the socialist leadership, as some have argued, simply used the organisation as an escape plan from socialism to nationalism. The change in focus was not that far of a leap since working-class leaders had been moving in this direction for quite some time; the ICA just became the new vehicle driving along the path they had already chosen. The reality of bloodshed in France, Belgium, Gallipoli, and elsewhere undoubtedly made the revolution at home a more realistic option. It was a difficult position that troubled members and caused the withdrawal of a number of leaders, including perhaps the most famous, Sean O’Casey. Yet, even those who withdrew remained conflicted, perhaps in reaction to the already muddied waters. For instance, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, a wartime pacifist, withdrew from the ICA when faced with the reality of bloodshed, but remained supportive of the organisation during the 1916 Rising, aiming to mobilise anti-looting squads to defend the honour of the fighters, an action that in the end tragically caused his death.

The transformation of the ICA was somewhat evolutionary, although key elements certainly aided the process. Competition with the Irish Volunteers meant the ICA would need to clearly establish itself if it were to survive. In March 1914, the

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262 Robbins, *Under the starry plough*, p. 46.
265 Francis Sheehy Skeffington would be arrested and taken prisoner by Captain Bowen-Colthurst, who picked him out of a crowd after he saw a number of people approaching him and asking for information on the Rising. He was held at Portobello Barracks alongside Patrick McIntyre, the editor of the anti-Larkinite paper, the *Toiler*. In what was declared part of a mental breakdown, Captain Bowen-Colthurst ordered the execution of all the prisoners. For further information on the imprisonment and execution, please see, ‘Manuscript Sources on the Death of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington’ (N.L.I., Sheehy-Skeffington Papers, MS 33,625) or Leah Levenson, *With Wooden Sword: a portrait of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, Militant Pacifists* (Dublin, 1983). On resignation from ICA, pp 157-59. On detention and execution, pp 222-235.
organisation constructed and passed an official constitution. Despite objections from leaders like Sean O'Casey, the organisation looked to build cordial relations with the Irish Volunteers. The success of the Howth gun-running scheme in July 1914 seemed to indicate that revolution was more likely if co-operation continued. However, when the Irish Volunteers split over the war, leaders of the ICA, particularly Connolly, decided to seize the opportunity and act.

In May 1915, Connolly resurrected another defunct Irish socialist paper, the *Workers' Republic*, which unlike the *Worker* was now printed in Ireland. Unlike the previous 1890s version of the paper, which was dedicated to outlining revolutionary political socialism, this new version focused on teaching tactical military techniques. The first issues of the paper claimed that it was no longer focusing on anti-war propaganda and was instead preparing to lay the foundations for a 'great labour movement in this country.' However, the great 'labour movement' clearly implied an armed national revolution. The paper dedicated its content to lessons on street fighting, guerrilla warfare, ambulance driving, and first-aid. Women too had their own, albeit separate place in this movement. In between cooking class on Monday nights and debating class on Wednesday, women were encouraged to partake in ICA training by joining first-aid classes with Dr Kathleen Lynn. When male members of the ICA marched, women in the ICA were charged with selling republican souvenirs.

Workers who enlisted in the British Army found themselves opposing the new revolutionary working-class movement, and as a result were excluded from the new articulation of a class-based national struggle. They, along with the family members they left behind, were presented with the option of contextualising working-class identity within their wartime service. With Irish labour leaders providing few options for such positions, many were forced to turn away from working-class allegiances. In spite of the criticism however, former British service men became assets to the ICA and the Irish Volunteers. ICA leaders tapped into resources within barrack stations, using sympathetic servicemen as potential weapons smugglers. Both James O'Shea and

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267 *Workers' Republic*, 25 May 1915.
268 These were regular features in the *Workers' Republic* 1915-16 editions and can be found on the last page of each issue of the paper.
269 Adverts for these activities were regularly featured in the Irish Women Workers Union section of the *Workers' Republic*.
270 *Workers' Republic*, 17 November 1915

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Maeve Cavanagh reported that Michael Mallin got weapons out of Richmond and Inchicore Barracks with the help of 'friendlies' stationed there.\(^{271}\) Helena Molony was accused by loyalist women's organisations of partaking in similar ventures by encouraging women working in munitions factories to smuggle weapons out from their workplaces and into Liberty Hall.\(^{272}\)

In the background of the ICA's turn toward radical nationalist militancy was a struggling labour movement barely managing traditional labour demands on wages, work conditions and employment benefits. Adding to these troubles, the 1915 ITUC did not take place due to the stress. On a local level trades councils began clamouring for the nationalist activities to stay relevant in the new Irish struggle. In Galway, where the local trades council was just beginning to grow, its president L.J. Duffy used the burgeoning movement to call on members of the working classes to 'fall into the ranks of the Volunteers'.\(^{273}\) In such cases as these, trade unionism was being introduced to the workers as part of the national struggle.

The participation of the ICA in the Easter 1916 Rising only cemented the equation of labour to the nationalist struggle, and more particularly to Sinn Féin who were portrayed as the primary instigators for the Rising in public discourse. Throughout the Irish regional press, Liberty Hall was no longer identified as the working-class centre it once was, it was now portrayed as 'the headquarters of the Sinn Féin forces.'\(^{274}\) In the international socialist community, socialist partition in the Rising caused significant debate. For those trying to sympathise, it was 'misguided', while for supporters it was a legitimate pathway to working-class liberation.\(^{275}\) The difference of the opinions exposed how the international socialist community was at the very least uncertain of how it should support Ireland's pathway to socialism.

In August 1916, when the ITUC met again, it was the war and the national movement that dominated the debate. The focus proved problematic for British leaders.

\(^{271}\) Witness Statement of James O'Shea, 26 September 1952 (BMH, WS 733, File S.590) and 'Witness Statement of Maeve Cavanagh MacDowell' (BHM, WS 258 File S. 191).

\(^{272}\) Letter to British Authorities from Loyal Irishwomen, 14 September 1917 (T.N.A., Dublin Castle Files, CO904/ 210/ 298-324/NO 20038).

\(^{273}\) Connacht Tribune, 6 June 1914.

\(^{274}\) For examples, please see the Skibbereen Eagle, 29 April 1916; Kildare Observer, 29 April 1916; Donegal News, 29 April 1916; Nenagh News, 29 April 1916; Nenagh Guardian, 29 April 1916; Kerryman, 29 April 1916; Limerick Leader, 1 May 1916.

\(^{275}\) For article using 'misguided' please see Justice, 18 May 1916. For articles of support from the Milwaukee Leader featured in Justice 1 June 1916.
striving to maintain cross-channel connections throughout the war. Scottish labour leaders, in particular, hoped to share a focus on wartime working-class resistance with Ireland, but the country's added element of militant anti-colonial rhetoric made such relationships difficult. Irish Labour leaders played upon working-class fears in order to generate hostilities to British influence in Ireland, which ultimately served nationalist ends, but challenged working-class internationalism. When ITUC and Labour Party leaders drafted a pamphlet entitled 'Why should Ireland starve', which evoked a return to the Famine by claiming 'we want to prevent a reoccurrence of the forties,' British delegate W.E. Hill refused to sign.\(^{276}\) He stated that such propaganda threatened to generate further national antagonism between the Irish and English working-class communities, arguing that:

> It is abundantly clear to me that you would make Irish Labour stink forever in the nostrils of Irish people of all Classes and shades of opinion, to say nothing of the Workers over here who are prepared, though it not be their fight, and though they have fought all they knew to prevent it as long as prevention was possible, to make sacrifice, to lend their aid to one another and to all.\(^{277}\)

Ireland's national focus made its continued relationship with British partners seem almost impossible.

Scottish leaders, however, struggled to continue keeping the relationship with Irish leaders alive. With Dublin leaders focusing on nationalist politics, Scottish leaders instead turned to their allies in Belfast, whose conflicted wartime patriotism, desires for the regeneration of trade union radicalism and delicate sectarian climate hoped for greater points of connection to the anti-war socialist stance. The only problem was that Belfast socialism was at this point clinging to life after the home rule debates had all but killed the movement in the city. The only ILP Belfast branch reporting activities to the Labour Leader in 1914 to 1915 was North Belfast, which through their own admission was behind on dues and clinging to very few 'die-hard' members.\(^{278}\) In spite of the dismal state of affairs, Scottish leaders continued to support the city's movement sending leaders like William Stewart, W.C. Anderson, and James Maxton to speak on

\(^{276}\) 'Why should Ireland starve? Manifesto to the Irish Trade Congress and Labour Party,' 4 August 1914 (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson Papers, MS 17,122).

\(^{277}\) William E. Hill to Patrick T. Daly, undated (N.L.I., Thomas Johnson Papers, MS 17,112).

\(^{278}\) Labour Leader, 4 February 1915.
topics largely related to anti-war socialist resistance without a colonial dimension. The long campaign finally generated some rewards in December 1916, when a new ILP Central branch was established on Victoria Street in downtown Belfast.

The Dublin leadership, however, continued to pull further away from both ILP leaders in Scotland and England. By March 1917, Dublin leaders decided to once again form a separate socialist organisation in the city to augment the political work of the Labour Party. Breaking with traditions of the past, leaders decided to remain independent from any formal affiliations with either English or American socialist parties. Defending the decision to ILP critics, William O'Brien falsely claimed that Dublin had always maintained its socialist independence and, therefore, was justified in its continued course. The position once again divided the Belfast and Dublin-based socialist movements, but more importantly cemented Ireland's assertion that its socialist movement was independent in its history and national in its mission.

Conclusion

The dominance of the Irish nationalist meta-narrative inevitably shaped the direction that socialists took in attempting to mould a working-class identity, but it cannot be blamed exclusively for the outcome. Socialists reacted to working-class manifestations of nationalism in ways that suited their own aims and objectives. In Ireland, when the revolutionary front clearly shifted from labour to nation, socialists followed suit. In this regard, the interests of the working classes helped shape the direction of the revolutionary socialist movement. This course, however, was not unlike the path taken by socialist parties abroad. What Irish socialist leaders did not anticipate was the role national memory and martyrdom would play in the construction of post-1916 narratives of the 1916 Rising. Margaret Skinnider's autobiography concluded with this sentiment. The 'ICA song' she attributed to ICA member, Joseph Connolly, did not mention labour,

For examples of these talks, please see the Labour Leader, 4 November 1915; 6 January 1916; 21 December 1916; or 1 February 1917.

Ibid, 21 December 1916.

Ibid, 8 March 1917.
socialism or the working class, but it did tell England to ‘go be damned.’ Working-class identity, rather than being malleable like other forms of identity, stagnated from having to consistently position itself in relation to republican nationalism.

The Irish working-class expressed greater allegiance to nation over class because socialist propaganda consistently clung to the importance of the nation in formulating working-class identity. While this reaction may have been a reflection of the predominance of a pre-existing identity maintained by the working classes, the strategy offers a potential explanation of how class became consumed by the ‘master narrative’, even at a time when the movement enjoyed its greatest political force.

By 1915, Irish socialism had begun to denote republican nationalism and as a result nationalism became a deadweight that socialists could not shake. The only course the newly-established Irish Labour Party could take was to attempt to shed this militant national narrative by moving further away from the revolutionary socialist line that the party’s leadership once professed. The result was that the Irish Labour Party returned to more industrial concerns, but lost its revolutionary character, particularly of the international variety. As such, the Irish Labour Party should not be accused of standing aside or ‘waiting’ for nationalist politics to advance under Sinn Féin, as it had already obediently taken its position behind the party and the national movement. The Irish working classes who largely linked working-class and national identity in one autonomous category now let nationalism take the dominant position, but this was in part a result of the actions of Irish working-class leaders.

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283 This is a reference to the ‘Labour must wait’ debate outlined in the introduction.
Chapter 3: Religion and working-class identity: Ireland and the Atlantic World

'Socialists are out not only to save the working classes, but the employers, from eternal damnation.'
- James Larkin to a Shop Assistants Union meeting in Cardiff, November 1913

Introduction

If, as Patrick Joyce has argued, socialism truly was 'first about moral and spiritual transformation, and only secondly about social change', Larkin’s above quotation opens an important window to the Irish socialist movement’s underlying spiritual aims. Even if one were to question Joyce on the extent of the importance of religious consciousness for socialism, his assertion at least offers a new perspective on Irish socialist discourse. Was Irish socialism shaped by wider religious transformations? Does religion have something to offer our understanding of working-class radicalism in Ireland? How should we assess the role religious consciousness played in shaping Irish leaders’ formation of an Irish working-class identity?

While each of these questions offer starting points to interrogate the particular aspects of religious culture and its influence on the Irish working-class movement, the general focus on religious dimensions within the working-class movement further contributes to the core argument of this thesis. As outlined in the introduction, the colonial model has resulted in the fusion of Irish religious and national identity as a means of juxtaposing Irishness to Britishness. As will be shown here, Irish socialist leaders used religion within the socialist movement in ways that do not fit exclusively within this colonial model. The integration of religious traditions and language into the Irish working-class movement was about constructing a shared tradition between Irish workers and their Atlantic counterparts. This included, but was not limited to, the British working classes.

Religious language, traditions, and consciousness have been proven to play a key part in the formation of working-class identity across the Atlantic World. The Irish

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1 Justice, 29 November 1913.
2 Joyce, Visions of the people, p. 300.
working-class movement was not an exception to this trend. Wider imperial frameworks, religious institutional power, and individual working-class leaders undoubtedly play a major part in shaping this process. As such, their influence cannot be ignored. Likewise, the colonial debates tracing the changing dynamics of church power and religious identity should not be forgotten, as they offer another dimension to the competing narratives at play. Conflicts arising from these competing discourses and even a desire to integrate working-class identity into this colonial-driven narrative play a key part and are evidenced throughout this chapter.

In spite of all these external factors, the Irish working classes also offer an important contribution to this debate. As many historians of the working-class are quick to point out, most workers did not read Marx. Instead, workers positioned working-class identity within a wider Christian understanding of the world. The working classes were the chosen people, restoring the salvation of humanity through their fight for their fellow working man. As a result, these moral justifications were communicated largely through Christian teaching. The language was a link between traditions of the past and the modern working-class struggle.

What prevents some from addressing the role religion did play in an Irish context is largely the sectarian focus of religious dialogue in Ireland. Nonetheless, class-inspired Christian discourse was employed by members of the working classes across religious lines. It was in fact embraced for its potential to unite workers under a banner of a shared Christian moral tradition. As such, the language was in part employed for its potential to move beyond the boundaries of sectarianism. While this ambitious vision did not always live up to actual experience, even in its failure truths emerge about the nature of the Irish working-class struggle. Not only was the movement spiritual in it aims, but it gave religion an important place within even the most radical versions of Irish working-class identity.

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3 Donal McCarthy, ‘Foreword’ in Robbins, Under the Starry Plough, p. 9.
Irish religions and working-class radicalism

In the aftermath of the 1889 London dock strike, leading Catholic British intellectual Lord Acton proclaimed 'workers were going after other gods!' This fear led him to the conclusion that 'the church must meet them half way'. In order to combat the growth of the perceived socialist threat, the British Catholic Church turned to the doctrine of Social Catholicism, already gaining support in France and Germany. In 1891, Pope Leo XIII had solidified this doctrine with the encyclical that defined his Pontificate; *Rerum Novarum*, more popularly known as 'The Rights and Duties of Capital and Labour'. The document encouraged managers to treat their workers with Christian compassion and condoned traditional trade union activity. However, the key to the document remained its hard-line opposition to socialism in any form.

Likewise, the leaders of the Church of England had placed greater emphasis on the working classes, who they feared were losing the faith due to the depravity of urban life. The outlook generated a dialogue within Anglican churches that focused on the importance of collective salvation, the protection of spiritual environments, and the promotion of Christian philanthropy. These social concerns were further exacerbated by political ones. The debates around disestablishment left a sense of unease in Anglican churches throughout the United Kingdom during the Gladstonian era. Anglican leadership was looking to secure their position in society outside of politics, which was stirring them in the direction of social reformism. With the middle-class intelligentsia promoting scientific teaching and secular education, the church feared that losing

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5 The movement toward Social Catholicism gained strength on the Continent in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War and resulted in three major conferences in Liége in 1886, 1887, and 1890 to discuss plans to deal with the labour and socialist question. Original fears rose from the oppressive religious policies of the French Republic and the Bismarckian Empire. However, as labour began to pose its own challenges to the imperial political framework, the Catholic hierarchy shifted its attention to this new threat hoping to reassert its own political legitimacy in the new imperial-industrial era by serving as an intermediary to radical secular and socialist movements. This process served a two-fold purpose of challenging a potential new secular threat, but also validating an institutional function of the church in the new international arena. Don O’Leary, *Vocationalism and Social Catholicism in twentieth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), p. 8.
political control would diminish its position in the modern world. As a result, the Church of England’s reaction to socialism was varied. A few notable leaders, like Stewart Headlam, promoted Christian socialism as part of the church's new role, while opponents maintained that social reformism would be enough to keep the church alive and the working classes connected to religion. National differences resulted in divergent responses articulated by the Churches of England, Scotland and Ireland. In Scotland, for example, the Great Disruption crisis combined with the increasing number of Irish Catholics filling Scottish cities generated a greater sense of urgency to the campaign. The result was that strong trends of Christian social reformism and Christian Socialism characterised Scottish religion this period.

Irish religious leaders of all denominations, on the other hand, saw socialism as an outside phenomenon, failing to acknowledge the potential such thinking could generate within the island. Much of this insecurity came from the Irish Catholic Church’s shared narrative of persecution under English rule. Unlike the on Continent, where nineteenth-century political critiques focused on shared church and state power, Irish Catholic leaders believed the Catholic Church had firmly planted itself on the side of the Irish nationalist cause and as such fears of challenges from secular Irish revolutionary leaders did not arise to the same extent. Instead, Irish Catholic leaders associated class antagonism and the secular threat with English Protestantism. Church of Ireland leaders, similar to their English counterparts, remained varied in response, but believed Irish industrial development needed to evolve before such questions could be addressed. Irish Presbyterians, on the other hand, blamed English Methodism for socialism in Britain and concluded Ireland had little to fear, which at first comforted them in their decision to avoid the issue.

12 For information on this climate generating in Europe, please see Berger with Conrad, The past as history, p. 123.
The potential threat that socialism posed to Irish religious leaders was soon revealed at the Belfast-held TUC in 1893. It was, after all, at this convention that the TUC passed a resolution requiring all labour endorsed candidates to demand collective ownership as part of their political platforms. It was a clear socialist demand that could impact Nationalist and Unionist politics in Ireland by forcing local trades councils only to endorse politicians who approved of the line.13 With the Irish trade union movement still run largely by British unions, some feared this strand of socialism that had developed within the TUC could take root on Irish soil, particularly in Belfast where, as we have seen in chapter one, British trade unionism was making the strongest advances at this time.

It is therefore perhaps ironic that the most vocal reaction to these developments came from southern Irish Catholic quarters, where trade union activity remained more docile. The month after the TUC in Belfast, a Jesuit priest, Rev. Fr. Thomas Finlay, SJ., delivered a lecture at the opening of the Aula Maxima at St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, entitled 'Socialism, Its Progress and Prospects'.14 Finlay warned the Irish Catholic leadership of the socialist threat already laying siege to Belfast. His concerns reflected his nationalist fears that Ulster Protestants could use class to unite and radicalise Irish workers. The church, he advised, needed to implement proactive measures to curb the spread of working-class radicalism. His recommended antidote was launching a campaign of Social Catholicism starting in Dublin.

Not all Dublin Catholic leaders shared Finlay’s fears, however. Little debate around socialism or Social Catholic teaching took place in the Irish Ecclesiastical Record or the Irish Catholic Bulletin until 1910.15 The Irish Catholic hierarchy was more concerned about the state of Irish Catholicism abroad than potential threats to Irish Catholicism at home.16 Rumours of upwards of three quarters of a million Irish Catholics leaving the

14 Reverend Father Thomas A. Finlay, SJ. ‘Socialism, its progress and prospects’ (lecture delivered 3 October 1893) in Irish Ecclesiastical Record, November 1893, pp 961-78.
15 The Irish Ecclesiastical Record featured a series of articles by Arthur Hinsley of the English College in Rome on Pope Leo’s encyclical and Catholic Church’s role in addressing the social question. These articles, however, focused on Protestantism as being the source of working-class discontent, blaming class tensions on the removal of the sacraments. For articles, please see, the Irish Ecclesiastical Record, November 1891; December 1891; January 1892; September 1892; and October 1892.
16 For examples of articles addressing the Irish Catholic Church in England and America, please see, the Irish Ecclesiastical Record, March 1890; May 1890; July 1890; or October 1891.
church after emigrating to England and Wales proved far more worrisome.\textsuperscript{17} If Irish Catholic workers were turning to socialism, the leaders of the church stubbornly maintained that it had to be in their new environments abroad.

Despite this perspective, the Irish Catholic Church hierarchy did implement some of Finlay’s suggestions. The Catholic Church aimed to keep Irish workers at home and this, of course meant keeping them employed. The Irish Catholic Church thus began embracing industrialisation and modernity in ways that allowed it to exercise control over working-class demands. Finlay, for his part, focused his efforts on the Irish co-operative movement and supporting Irish home industry.\textsuperscript{18} However, he, like many other church leaders, supported church before nation, nation before industry and industry before the working classes. The response was a compassionate outlook towards working-class demands, but the compassion was only there due to a much larger desire to keep the Irish working classes connected to the Irish Catholic Church.

Finlay’s position as lecturer of philosophy and economics at University College Dublin and his membership of the Irish Social and Statistical Society gave him numerous opportunities to keep his warning alive.\textsuperscript{19} In 1899, when he gave a lecture at Maynooth on trade unionism, Dublin’s newest socialist radical, James Connolly, decided to fire back. Connolly’s reply, which featured in the \textit{Workers’ Republic} and was later used as a section within \textit{The New Evangel}, suggested that Finlay had ulterior motives underlining his position on labour. Yet, Connolly refrained from an outright challenge to the Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{20} Connolly’s caution was a strategic decision from a man who knew winning socialist converts would mean presenting a model of socialism that was compatible with a Roman Catholic identity. Although eloquent and well-delivered, Connolly’s critique received little popular acknowledgement. The small readership of the \textit{Workers’ Republic} at the time meant this rebuttal, like many of Connolly’s other pieces, would only realise

\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Irish Ecclesiastical Record}, 1892, p. 700.

\textsuperscript{18} It should be noted that in her study on women’s work in Ireland Joanna Bourke has argued that Rev. Fr Finlay, SJ., and other reformers used the co-operative movement to push women further into the domestic sphere. While this is certainly true, much of this action should be understood in the context of Finlay’s overall understanding of Social Catholicism and his growing fears of class militancy. The maintenance of traditional Christian family structures, he believed, could serve as a clear barrier against wider class threats. For Bourke’s critiques of Finlay, please see Bourke, \textit{Husbandry to Housewifery}, pp 140-1.

\textsuperscript{19} For more information on Rev. Fr Thomas Finlay, SJ., please see Thomas J. Morrissey, SJ, \textit{Thomas A. Finlay SJ, 1848-1940: educationalist, editor and social reformer} (Dublin, 2004).

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Workers’ Republic}, July 1899.
its full value in later years. Nevertheless, for Dublin, Finlay and Connolly’s battle of words remained a small, but significant collision between two men from opposing courts. The clash was indicative of the developing conflict between advanced labourism and the Catholic Church in a race for the hearts and minds of the Irish working classes.

In these early years, this battle reached its most significant proportions not in Dublin, but in Cork. When the 1901 gas strike broke out, Bishop Reverend O’Callaghan instructed the entire Cork Diocese to read his letter warning against ‘socialist infidelism’ and ‘foreignism’ taking hold of the city. The Cork Trades Council used the opportunity to distance themselves from the city’s ISRP branch, which they believed O’Callaghan was targeting. The Council sided with the clergy by attacking the ISRP’s academic leaders, Henry Patrick Horgan and William Gallagher, claiming they were promoting an anti-clerical agenda. Cork’s clergy even began approaching known ISRP members and individually pressurised them to cease involvement with the movement. As a result, membership and subscriptions to the *Workers’ Republic* fell. These factors combined with the financial burdens of the strike resulted in the death of the Cork branch and contributed to the demise of the ISRP as a whole.

Learning from mistakes such as these, the SPI kept a wide berth between its activities and religious leaders. This ensured that religious attacks against the party came not from the church leadership, but mainly from political opponents. Socialists contesting municipal elections in Dublin sparked rumours of socialist atheism rising in the city, but the dialogue remained restricted to the local wards in which elections took place. In 1905, for instance, Thomas Lyng had to include a statement on socialism’s strictly political and economic concerns in his Dublin Royal Exchange Ward flyer. However, such local debates received minimal coverage in the national press, and were thus contained largely to the areas in which they occurred.

Despite such antagonisms, some socialists did receive some good-will benefits from the amicable relationships trades councils maintained with religious leaders. Increased socialist involvement in local trades councils during these years helped.
Trades councils provided religious leaders with a forum where they could support labour's industrial mission without the appearance of supporting working-class radicalism. In 1887, the DCTU had invited Archbishop William Walsh to meetings to discuss how the church and the DCTU could complement each other in the advancement of working-class concerns.\(^{25}\) In 1904, the Very Reverend J. Canon O'Doyle delivered one of the opening addresses to the Kilkenny ITUC by raising concerns about Kilkenny's place within the changing Irish industrial climate. He acknowledged the negative effects of modernity on Kilkenny's working classes, while still asserting the primary focus of the labour movement should be the industrial revival.\(^{26}\) He saw the ITUC as an agent of industrial acceleration and little more. It was not a perfect relationship, but one of shared mutual interests. In general, however, there was an implicit understanding that if the labour movement remained moderate in demands and included the Catholic Church, religious leaders would endorse working-class action.

If the Catholic Church struggled to deal with the emergence of socialism, with some advocating confrontation, others collaboration, and still others ignoring the 'problem' in its entirety, the Church of Ireland addressed the issue in a more forthright manner by adopting a sympathetic stance on the plight of the urban working classes. Its philanthropic missionary activities in urban centres were key to enacting this strategy. The church's intellectual leadership embraced a language of reformism and charity as a means of integrating Christianity into the lives of the urban working poor both in Dublin and Belfast, though Belfast certainly garnered more of the church's attention. The work undertaken by the Established Church of Scotland on inquiries into the social and economic mission of the church reached the pages of the *Church of Ireland Gazette* and its position was at the core of some of the Church of Ireland's domestic missions.\(^{27}\) The Belfast Trinity Mission launched in 1912 and organised by Rev. R. M. Gwynn and Dr Newport White used a Christian language of working-class sympathy, but its motives still remained vested in reformism against radicalism.\(^{28}\)

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\(^{25}\) Introduction to DCTU Minutes, 1887 (N.L.I., Dublin Council of Trade Unions, MS 12,779).


\(^{27}\) *Church of Ireland Gazette*, 9 March 1900.

\(^{28}\) Trinity College Dublin Mission Belfast Minute Book (T.C.D., MUN/Mission Belfast/V/1 1912-1933).
The message, however, was not always clear. During a Dublin University Theological Society debate in early November 1908, the Bishop of Ossary argued that socialism was 'the antithesis of heaven,' while just two weeks later Cannon Mahaffy addressed the St. Peter's Men's Association at the Mansion House telling Christians not to fear socialist teachings, as long as socialists acknowledged the role of Christianity in the new socialist world. 29 Meanwhile, the *Church of Ireland Gazette* printed Reverend Robert Moore Morrow's address to the Coleraine Clerical Union in which he openly described himself as an evolutionary socialist. 30 There was a narrow divide between social reformism and Christian socialism, but those who crossed it and advocated for socialism remained outside of the Church of Ireland's overall policy.

Nevertheless, it was not churches, but preachers who organised the most resistance to the Belfast socialists. Street-preaching or open-air socialist propagandising was a well-established tradition of Atlantic socialist parties. As *Justice* wrote, 'The truest Socialism is preached at the street corner, even if the purest grammar is not always employed.' 31 These meetings tapped into the evangelical tradition, proving that if not the message, then the practices of evangelicalism had a place in the working-class movement. 32 They were spiritual in language and distinctly working-class in character. There was even an air of working-class morality around participation in such meetings. It was an activity that distinguished the working classes from the middle-class agents who would 'come out to the polls to protect their property.' 33 In Belfast, these meetings were used to package the city's socialist movement as part of a new Christian faith. Parties even made sure to host the events on Sundays in areas where local working-class men and women would frequently hear varying religious offerings of local street-

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29 *Irish Times*, 10 November 1908 and 30 November 1908.
30 *Church of Ireland Gazette*, 12 May 1911.
31 *Justice*, 8 June 1889.
32 Evangelicalism in Belfast in particular has been accredited by some historians as being a primary agent of sectarian discord in the working-class movement for its strong association with anti-clericalism. D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, for instance, argued that Presbyterian capitalist leaders actively encouraged the rise of evangelicalism in Belfast for its potential to undermine the radical Presbyterian tradition and separate Catholic and Protestant workers. For evidence, please see D.R. O'Connor Lysaght, 'British imperialism in Ireland' in Morgan and Purdie (eds), *Ireland*, p. 17. Callum Brown draws similar conclusions for evangelicalism in Scotland, but he still acknowledges the role evangelical traditions and thinking played in fomenting labour radicalism. Brown, *Religion and society in Scotland*, p. 134.
33 *National Democrat*, May 1907.
preachers or local church choirs. In essence, they had all the packagings of a new religious movement.

The popularity of evangelical preaching transformed public spaces frequented by the working classes on Sunday into fiercely coveted commodities. The Belfast ILP used the Custom House steps as their major rallying point since the party's inception in 1893. Success, while turbulent, continued to develop with the number of individuals listening to ILP speeches jumping from 3,000 in 1893 to 6,000 by 1900. The increased popularity did not sit well with the city's street-preachers, who were competing for working-class attention and perhaps perceiving the party as a religious threat, given its packaging. The evangelical minister Irvine and former Christian Socialist preacher Arthur Trew began incorporating hard-line, anti-socialist rhetoric into their preaching, which they also undertook on the Custom House steps. In Trew's case, the adoption of such rhetoric was politically motivated. The success of his protégé turned rival, Thomas Sloan, created a tense relationship between the two men fighting for control of the Belfast Protestant Association. Labour leaders, particularly Alex Boyd, hoped to use Sloan to build a bridge between the Belfast Protestant Association and the ILP, a fact that fuelled Trew's animosity towards socialists in the city. There were numerous instances of violent clashes in which ILP speakers were chased away by mobs under the command of evangelical preachers. During the years 1897 to 1906, when the city witnessed an upsurge in sectarian rioting, these events were often represented as simply another case of sectarianism. In reality, however, they constituted an important example of Protestant anti-socialism.

Organised religions did not share Irvine or Trew's zest for out-right resistance against socialism. Instead they took an approach of simply denying the existence of Christian Socialism within the city's borders. In 1890, for instance, John Bruce Wallace complained that Presbyterian leaders were trying to prevent his Christian Socialist message from getting out by removing his paper, Brotherhood, from the reading room of the Belfast YMCA, in spite of his previous tenure as Vice President of that

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34 Sybil Gibbon, Edwardian Belfast: a social profile (Belfast, 1982), p. 22.
35 For first number, please see the Freeman's Journal, 4 September 1893. For second number, please see Purdie, 'Riotous customs', p. 35.
36 Ibid, p. 35.
37 Patterson, Class conflict and sectarianism, p. 42.
organisation. Similarly, when the ILP opened the Labour Institute in England, the Belfast News Letter made a point to highlight the fact that the building was formerly a Wesleyan Chapel, as if the symbolic destruction of faith by the labour movement captured the course that England was now following, with Methodism paving the way.

The idea that Christian Socialism existed only in Methodist communities was contradicted by the growth of the Christian movement in Scotland. The Irish Presbyterian paper, the Witness, went to great lengths to conceal these developments from Ulster Presbyterians out of fear that acknowledging Christian Socialism in Scotland would mean having to acknowledge that Presbyterian leaders embraced the concept; or perhaps, even more unsettling, that Irish Presbyterians living in Scotland were embracing it. Even when the paper decided to conduct an investigation into Socialist Sunday Schools, which by 1906 were growing in fashion in both Northern England and Scotland, it chose Fulham as its case study despite the movement’s Glasgow centre and the paper’s own Scottish circulation. When confronted with English and Scottish Presbyterian ministers’ advocacy of Christian socialism, the paper usurped the religious authority of Ulster Presbyterianism over its British counterparts. It was a way to shelter both Irish Presbyterians in Ireland and Scotland from the radical developments taking place around them.

Ulster Presbyterian leaders could not ignore the developments taking place in Belfast. Thomas Sloan’s increasing appeal among Presbyterian working-class voters made some fear a domestic working-class threat, which they saw as emerging in the name of Ulster Protestantism. Sloan’s campaigns garnered some small, but marked reactions. However, the Witness, chose to focus its wrath not on Sloan, but instead Lindsay Crawford, who they perceived to be the brains of the political campaign and the voice of the working-class agenda. Articles detailing Crawford and Sloan’s public appearances acknowledged the public links of Ulster Protestantism to working-class radicalism, while simultaneously dismissing its validity. The ILP’s support of Sloan was

38 Brotherhood, 29 June 1889.
39 Belfast News Letter, 14 January 1893.
40 Witness, 14 June 1907.
41 For evidence of such public talks please see Rev. A.L. Pooler’s lecture on Socialism delivered to the Young Men’s Association in Downpatrick Cathedral, Belfast News Letter, 25 October 1895.
42 Witness, 15 November 1906.
43 For examples, please see, the Witness, 15 November 1906, 29 March 1907, or 19 April 1907.
only evident in references to William Walker, who they again portrayed as obediently following Crawford's lead. When Agnes Street Preacher, Reverend Simms, endorsed William Walker's North Belfast campaign, the Presbyterian press remained silent on the issue. Simms' endorsement of Walker's campaign was only made public through the *Belfast Labour Chronicle* and Walker's own *Hammer Leaflet* series distributed throughout the city. Simms, like other radical Presbyterian preachers, remained a silenced minority within a religious institution that did not want to see its radical side gain support.

With Presbyterian leaders already suspicious of organised unionism for its potential Anglican influences, Lindsay Crawford's call for a common Protestant union only gave Presbyterian leaders another reason to be suspicious of him and the 100. When Crawford tried to craft a further dialogue including Christian Socialist voices across the Atlantic, it proved too much for Presbyterian leaders to take. Using his editorship of the *Ulster Guardian*, Crawford printed numerous articles on the 'New Theology' of London's Temple Street preacher, D.R. Campbell. In 1907, Campbell was actively working the ILP circuit, preaching his programme as an endorsement for socialism throughout the United Kingdom. However, the *Ulster Guardian*'s reviews were matched by the *Witness*' continual rejection of the 'New Theology's' merits. This represented what was perhaps a unique struggle within the Northern Irish context – a struggle over the validity of British Christian Socialism in Ulster, waged by two forces that shared British and Protestant identities.

At times, frustrations overrode caution among labour sympathisers, leading to more sweeping critiques on the nature of Ulster Presbyterianism. The *Ulster Guardian*, for instance, denounced the dogmatism of Presbyterian ideology by praising Methodism as 'a breadth of fresh air' despite the largely Presbyterian ranks from which the city's

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45 Jackson, 'Unionist politics and protestant society in Edwardian Ireland', p. 850.
46 For examples please see, *Ulster Guardian*, 2 February 1907; 9 February 1907, 30 March 1907; or 27 April 1907.
47 For examples of Campbell's writings and speeches circulated by the ILP, please see 'The New Theology and the socialist movement', 1908 (L.S.E., ILP collection, ILP5/1907/11); 'Primitive Christianity and modern socialism' (L.S.E., ILP collection, ILP5/1907/12); or 'Socialism: an address' (L.S.E. ILP collection, ILP5/1907/13).
48 For examples, please see, *Witness*, 7 December 1906; 18 January 1907; 25 January 1907; 1 February 1907; 15 February 1907; or 15 March 1907.
labour movement was drawn. Overall, however, working-class leaders maintained a belief that Ulster Presbyterian radicalism could prevail if conservative elements within the church would allow such thinking an opportunity to flourish.

Working-class radicalism and the gradual emergence of Christian Socialist thought outside Ulster unnerved many Ulster Presbyterian leaders. Anxiety around these developments directed the course of the church, which chose to shift the faithful away from working-class radicalism. This was also the case within Ulster's Catholic community, as the Catholic nationalist press used home rule and the threat of secular education to combat working-class radicalism.

The Catholic-nationalist paper, the *Ulster Herald*, used home rule and the threat of secular education to steer Ulster Catholics away from working-class radicalism. The violent clashes at the Custom House steps validated the paper's equation of socialism with Protestant violence. The paper augmented these accusations with horror stories about socialism abroad. Tales of socialist attacks on the Vatican hit the press alongside articles conflating socialism to anarchism as a way to blame socialists for the assassination of American President McKinley. The paper attributed the violence to the soulless education of secular socialism already gaining ground in England.

This image of Ireland as a Christian island shielded from English socialism was challenged by the cross-channel campaigns of Catholic organisations. Emmet Larkin has argued that the pamphlets of the 1911 English Catholic Social Guild 'awakened Irish Catholic Social Concerns', but such concerns may have been raised even earlier by developments in England. These included the annual conferences of the Catholic Truth Society in 1907 and 1909 in Preston and Manchester respectively, which held half-day discussions on socialism, emphasising the importance of Social Catholic teaching as an antidote to social problems. The Catholic Truth Society in Ireland did more than acknowledge this 'socialist problem' as English; it developed a course of action for Irish members to actively fight against such developments in Ireland.

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49 *Ulster Guardian*, 9 February 1907.
50 *Ulster Herald*, 24 January 1903 and 10 October 1903.
51 Larkin, 'Socialism and Catholicism in Ireland', p. 70.
53 Ibid, 15 October 1909.
In Dublin, working-class leaders downplayed the growth of anti-socialism coming from religious officials. They took some solace in the co-operation they received from Dublin’s Archbishop, William Walsh, who some believed to be a friendly figure to labour.54 Walsh’s genuine interest in the advancement of nationalism and his focus on the urban poverty surrounding the Archdiocese of Dublin contributed to his support of labour initiatives. Walsh, arguably more than other church leaders, believed a great deal of compassion was needed in order to ensure the stability of class dynamics and Irish industrial development. He embraced his role as arbitrator of industrial disputes and in return socialists praised his efforts in supporting the working classes.55 This image unquestionably contributed to Walsh’s limited desire to suppress socialism even when some clergy were calling on him to do so. Socialists certainly took advantage of the cordial relationship when needed. After James Larkin and James Fearon’s arrest for the ITGWU Cork scandal in 1909, for example, it was to Walsh that Dublin socialists wrote asking for public support for Larkin’s release.56

Outside of Dublin, such cordial relationships did not exist to the same extent. Without a formal party organ, the Dublin SPI had to turn to labour-friendly organs to continue the party’s propaganda. One of these papers was the Navan-based *Irish Peasant*, a nationalist paper whose focus on Irish industry and labourers’ rights made it more appealing to Dublin socialists than many of the city’s other papers.57 The *Irish Peasant* ran labour columns regularly through the editorship of Patrick Kenny and later W.P. Ryan. However, the paper’s radical politics soon sparked the attention of Cardinal Logue who moved to have it suppressed.58 The former editor, Patrick Kenny, retaliated

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54 Morrissey attributed Walsh’s interest in labour to the support in his teachings of Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical. He called Walsh a product of Leo XIII’s teaching. While the spirit of the encyclical could be extracted from Walsh’s treatment to the labour question, the limited educational dialogue generated around Social Catholicism proved otherwise. Nevertheless, as a leading Irish socialist, Adolphus Shields’ approval of Walsh attested to the relationship between the two groups whether or not rooted in Social Catholic theory. Thomas J. Morrissey, S.J., *William Walsh: Archbishop of Dublin, 1841-1921* (Dublin, 2000), pp 188-92.

55 Dublin Fabian society member, Adolphus Shields gave Walsh public accolades for his arbitration role in the 1908 Dublin Coal Masters Dispute. *Irish Independent*, 7 December 1908.


57 Socialist Party of Ireland auditor reports, 30 September 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,683).

58 Writing under the penname, ‘Pat’, Kenny complains of Cardinal Logue getting a local woman, Ms. McCann to press charges against the paper. For more information, please see the *National Democrat*, February 1907 or Maume, *The long gestation*, pp 83-4 and 232.
against Logue’s action with a public campaign bordering on anti-clericalism. Kenny’s efforts even earned him praise within Irish Protestant circles.59 One of the few nationalist papers that would allow Kenny to publish his anti-Logue attacks was Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and Frederick Ryan’s the National Democrat.60 However, the National Democrat also served as the SPI’s unofficial organ after the Peasant’s suppression, making their connection to Kenny’s crusade appear like a direct link.

During the formative period of the labour movement, religious leaders, both Catholic and Protestant, north and south, adopted ambiguous and divergent responses to the perceived ‘threat’ that socialism posed to the working classes, ranging from acceptance and accommodation, to outright hostility. The rise of the ITGWU and the launch of the Irish Worker, however, signalled a new phase, and triggered a campaign of opposition to socialism across religious lines. This was first seen in 1910, when Catholic Rev. Fr. Robert Kane SJ., from Dublin’s Gardiner Street Church, decided to focus his Lenten Lectures on the dangers of labour radicalism and socialism. In response, a newly-returned James Connolly drew parallels between the persecution of Jesuit missionaries and the persecution of socialists by the Catholic Church.61 The debate started gaining traction in areas beyond Dublin, where socialism and labour radicalism did not really exist. As a result, fear of socialism arrived in the Irish countryside before socialism itself. Even as far as Donegal, Jesuit missionary Rev. Fr. Phelan, SJ., began warning workers of growing Irish socialist threat.62 His words of caution were caked in sensational fears of what socialism would mean to the future of Ireland. Rural Ireland, which was relatively untouched by socialist advances, was therefore being educated as to all of the movement’s potential dangers.

It was, however, only in 1912 that most religious leaders began to increase their vocal opposition. England’s Rev. Fr. Bernard Vaughan, SJ., made Catholicism’s incompatibility with socialism the focus of his St Patrick’s Cathedral Lenten lectures in New York.63 Although it was intended as a warning to Irish Americans from across the Atlantic, he made sure its scope included the Irish in Ireland as well and the speech

59 For examples please see, the Witness, 20 September 1907 or Ulster Guardian, 2 February 1907.
60 National Democrat, February 1907.
62 Donegal News, 6 October 1912.
received wide coverage in the Irish press. In tandem, both the Catholic Bishops of Derry and Ferns issued Lenten Pastorals that challenged the growth of working-class radicalism. Reverend Fullerton's 1912 release of *Socialism and the Workingman* warned Catholics to be mindful of the Protestant nature of evolutionary socialist thought. Writing in 1913 in the *Irish Catholic Bulletin*, Fullerton called for the Catholic Workers Guild to guide the course, asserting 'only through the workers themselves can the masses be reached.' The provincial press around Ireland promoted Fullerton's work. *The Derry People* and *Donegal News* did so under the slogan of media bias. The publication of the work, the paper claimed, was necessary as the socialist press in Ireland was receiving more publicity than its Catholic opponents.

In this new environment, members of the Catholic laity began to question the silence of Archbishop Walsh, who was being relatively supportive of the labour movement. Letters poured into Walsh's office from both sides of the socialist question, particularly from traditional labour leaders fearing the advances of new unionism in Dublin. James Kelly, organiser of the Irish Railway Workers Union, and Kevin Kenny wrote to Walsh on several occasions asking him to speak out against the ITGWU. Conversely, ITGWU leaders, P.T. Daly and J.J. Hughes, demanded Walsh to come to the defence of the working classes. Walsh settled, initially, on a policy of silence. He made no objection to the *Irish Worker* publishing articles creatively restyling...

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64 For coverage of Reverend Father Vaughan's speech in the Irish media, please see *Southern Star*, 4 May 1912 or *Freeman's Journal*, 9 April 1912.

65 Larkin, 'Socialism and Catholicism', p. 70.

66 Reverend R. Fullerton, *Socialism and the workingman* (Dublin, 1911).


68 *Donegal News*, 20 May 1911.

69 *Irish Independent*, 23 August 1913.


71 P.T. Daly to William Walsh, 12 November 1912 (D.D.A., William Walsh papers, Laity 377/2); J.J. Hughes to William Walsh, 19 September 1913 (D.D.A., William Walsh papers, Laity 377/3); J.J. Hughes to William Walsh, 11 November 1913 (D.D.A., William Walsh Papers, Laity 377/3). There was also an anonymous letter also signed by 'an annoyed Catholic' alleging that William Martin Murphy approached local Protestant clergy to speak out in defence of the employers. 19 September 1913 (D.D.A. William Walsh papers, Laity 377/3).
Rerum Novarum as a document validating the work of the union and socialism in general, while he wilfully ignored the tirades of the church's anti-socialist members.72

Even during this increasingly tense period, however, opposition to socialism and new unionism within Irish Catholic circles was not universal. When working-class leaders made efforts to bring the church into the movement, some members did accept the offer. In areas where the ITWGU already existed, there was a willingness among religious leaders to take on traditional roles as arbitrators between employers and strikers. For example, during the Wexford strike in 1912, it was Father Thomas Hore that James Connolly privately approached in order to negotiate a settlement to the strike that would be acceptable to both sides.73 Father Hore's efforts earned the support of the local clergy, who until this point had remained cautious of the ITGWU.74 Similarly, before the Kiddie Holiday Scheme was implemented during the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, Archbishop Walsh and Church of Ireland Reverend R.M. Gwynn took part in the Industrial Peace Committee designed to arbitrate the dispute.

These conciliatory actions were, however, taking place against a backdrop of escalating individual opposition to socialism on the part of religious leaders at all levels. For instance, in Dublin Rev. Fr. O'Loughlin of Rathmines Parish and Rev. Fr. Condon of John's Lane Church on Thomas Street, each used Sunday mass to equate socialism to atheism.75 Elsewhere, local priests began foiling ITGWU recruitment through religious coercion. P.T. Daly claimed the local priests in Hollywood, County Wicklow, told parishioners that union officials were 'ambassadors from the devil' and that offering them shelter would result in religious sanction. As a result, Daly was told he had to vacate the room he rented, not because the owner believed the local priest, but because she did not want to be shunned by the community.76 Nora Connolly, in her

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72 For articles in the Irish Worker explaining Pope Leo's encyclical as a justification for the union, please see, Irish Worker, 20 September 1911 or 7 January 1911.
73 James Connolly to Reverend Father Thomas Hore, 30 January 1912 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,670).
74 Reverend Father Thomas Hore to James Connolly, 1 February 1912 (N.L.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,670).
75 For articles related to clerical attacks from F.E. O'Loughlin please see the Irish Independent, 3 September 1913. For Father Condon please see the Irish Worker, 20 September 1913, 4 October 1913, and 11 October 1913.
biography on her father, recalled a priest in Belfast using mass to make an attack on Connolly’s labour activities.77

Nevertheless, it was attacks that invoked both nationalist and religious challenges that proved the most harmful to labour officials. In Sligo, Reverend Dr John Joseph Clancy, Bishop of Elphin, gave an example of this when he not only warned people against the newest version of socialism, developing under the banner of new unionism, but also attempted to package the threat as an international crisis, asserting ‘I should feel bound to warn people of the parish at the present juncture, in the most solemn way of the dangerous encroachments of Socialism, not only in England and Scotland, and in many Continental States, but also in our own country.’78 Anti-labour nationalists did their part to support the coalition of God and country against socialism, feeling an alliance with the church was the best way to turn the working classes against the movement. The Ancient Order of Hibernians took the lead in this respect, though many soon followed suit hoping the church would as well. Nationalists urged followers to listen to the ‘voices of the clergy’ instead of following ‘socialists from England.’79

For its part, the Church of Ireland remained less vocal, in comparison to Ireland’s other major religious institutions, about the rise of the ITGWU and the potential socialist threat in Ireland. However, the fear of the movement’s growing support was still there. The Church of Ireland Gazette instead focused on British labour, a movement it felt more comfortable addressing. The paper praised the British TUC for its increasing integration of religion into its work.80 In Ireland, the paper’s interest in labour radicalism regularly came back to questions of national culture and the place of the Anglican faith in the potential home rule socialist state. It was a warning, but a veiled one. The paper blamed class tensions on the growing economic gap in Ireland, which it attributed to the ‘Americanising’ of Irish life, a problem it believed could be rectified by embracing a more British Christian identity.81 Church of Ireland members began to take it upon themselves to move beyond denominational lines and reach out to Catholics. Writing in the Irish Catholic, Church of Ireland member, William Johnston, called for an alliance

78 Irish Worker, 30 March 1912.
80 Church of Ireland Gazette, 5 September 1913.
81 Ibid, 26 September 1913.
between Catholics and Church of Ireland members against socialism on the grounds that a socialist parliament would spread non-conformity across the nation, a development that would be bad for both religions.

If the formation and growth of the ITGWU prompted an upsurge in anti-socialist feelings among Ireland’s religious, and especially Catholic leaders, such sentiments reached their zenith during the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, when trade union leaders organised the ‘Save the Kiddies Holiday Scheme’. The idea, which was inspired by the Children's Exodus of the 1912 Lawrence Textile Strike, called for the temporary housing of strikers’ children in sympathetic homes outside of the strike area. In Lawrence, a textile town in Massachusetts that experienced a prolonged strike in 1912, the scheme ignited public fury after local police clashed with women attempting to send a group of children to Philadelphia. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a leader of the strike, described the day in her memoir as ‘one of the most infamous days in American labor history’. The media depiction of such police brutality against women and children sparked national outrage and resulted in the establishment of a congressional inquiry into the event and the strike. Strike leaders and socialists received a national forum to air their grievances. It made for a significant propaganda tool, both at home and abroad.

In Dublin the increased press coverage of the Irish scheme did not have the same effect, largely because it moved children out of Ireland and into England without first consulting Irish Catholic leaders. Archbishop Walsh, whose tolerance for labour radicalism ended with the removal of children from his domain, accused the British architect of the scheme, Dora Montefiore, and her American associate, Lucille Rand, of using the money collected for strikers’ families to secretly proselytise Irish Catholic children in England. Despite assertions from the Liverpool Catholic Children’s Aid Committee that the Catholic needs of the children would be adequately attended and a later offer from Countess Plunkett offering to keep children in Ireland housed at her estate, Walsh could not be pacified. He ferociously attacked the scheme. Hoping to exploit the gender divisions within the class movement, Walsh went after Dublin

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83 *Irish Worker*, 25 October 1913; 1 November 1913; 8 November 1912 and William Walsh to Dora Montefiore, 22 October 1913 (D.D.A., William Walsh Papers, Laitly 377/3).
mothers. Playing upon the role of women as spiritual guides in the household, Walsh claimed that women who partook in the scheme were bad Catholic mothers.

Ancient Order of Hibernian leader, John Nugent, capitalised on the distress. Local priests and Ancient Order of Hibernian members went to the docks and train stations in order to prevent women with children from boarding. The group also successfully prevented children from boarding a train to Belfast, claiming the same religious dimension was at stake. The *Irish Worker*'s defence was both figuratively and physically sandwiched between God and nation. The paper responded to the Ancient Order of Hibernians in an article that appeared between a piece comparing the strike to the crossing of the River Jordan and another declaring Larkin to be a modern Irish patriot. However, the strategy did little to deter the escalating hysteria.

These events triggered a fury of anti-socialist discourse across the island. The Irish press did its part to ensure all Irish workers heard religious opposition to socialism. The *Irish Messenger* commissioned the printing of a pamphlet series by Reverend McKenna of Limerick that refuted any claims that socialism and religion could exist harmoniously. The Children of Mary began spreading rumours that Larkin was a Baptist preacher from Liverpool using the labour troubles as a ruse to convert the children of Dublin. The actions of Catholic and Nationalist organisations sparked backlash within the working-class movement as well. Frustrated Protestant leaders began to publically denounce Walsh, claiming his actions reflected all that was wrong with Catholicism.

Unable to find religious allies at home, the *Irish Worker* ultimately looked abroad, printing endorsements from Australian and American Catholics. Irish labour leaders did not always adopt a language of moral superiority, however, and, like their religious opponents, they too deployed spiritual language in their slander campaigns. The *Irish Worker* compared the AOH to the serpent 'maligning the Catholic faith.' The

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86 *Irish Worker*, 4 October 1913.
87 Reverend Lambert McKenna, *Church and labour: a series of Lenten Lectures delivered at the Sacred Heart Church at Limerick, 1913-4* (N.L.I., Irish Collection, IR 282 0941).
89 Yeates, *Dublin 1913*, pp 302-3.
90 *Irish Worker*, 15 November 1913.
91 Ibid, 27 August 1913.
paper further warned readers against purchasing Murphy's papers, the *Independent* or the *Herald*, on the grounds that they were 'immoral literature', a slogan frequently used by the Catholic Church against the socialist press.\(^2\) Flyers began circulating around the city claiming that Nugent's role in the Freemasons put him into contact with René Viviani, a French socialist who called for all the 'crosses to be torn down and driven out of France'.\(^3\) These attacks placed the labour press in a defensive position. The core message of socialism and working-class consciousness became buried within religious and national attacks.

By 1914, Irish working-class leaders regularly had to defend themselves against the assertion that religious identity was incompatible with working-class allegiance. As will be shown later in this chapter, however, the opposition of religious leaders to socialism across denominational lines arguably increased rather than hindered the religious dimensions of the Irish working-class movement. Irish working-class radicals sought to prove that despite the assertions of many religious leaders to the contrary, socialism did exist as part of a Christian ethic, whether that ethic was Catholic, Anglican or Presbyterian.

**The 'spiritual crisis' of the working classes**

The struggles between working-class movements and religious institutions were further exacerbated by fears and misunderstandings, on both sides, around the nature of working-class religiosity and identity. Religious leaders worried about the strength of working-class faith over questions of identity or practice. Working-class faith was seen by a number of religious leaders as weak and easily swayed. This outlook, of course, reflected classist prejudices against working-class character. Members of the working classes were portrayed as individuals whose interests and beliefs were flimsy or easily influenced by external forces. Many religious leaders saw socialism as one of these external dangers. As such, they categorised socialists as part of the great secular threat of modernity influencing working-class faith; socialists were new ageists, secularists,

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Anti-Nugent Flyer, undated (N.L.I., Librarian's Office collection, LOP 114 item 29).
atheists, or all three. As a result, the church took a paternalist approach to the problem, returning to a combination of moral teaching and charitable ventures to safe the workers from themselves.

The attitudes of socialists towards working-class religiosity were just as dismissive, and they bemoaned workers' deference to their religious identity over their allegiance to their working-class identity. This belief too came from a pessimistic outlook of working-class self-determination. Working-class radicals believed that workers were either too ignorant, unquestionably loyal to their churches and leaders, or incapable of individual thoughts on questions of faith. Working-class radicals blamed the stunted growth of class consciousness in Ireland on both Catholic and Protestant identity. Abroad, British and American leaders also blamed Irish religious identity for the failed advance of working-class politics. The English SDF even claimed that Irish Catholic emigration into England was the gravest threat to the advancement of English modernity, class consciousness, and socialism. As we shall see, this shared frustration with the religious identity of the Irish working classes was based on misconceptions, and failed to capture the potential role that religious imagination could have played within the working-class movement. More surprisingly, the shared outlook resulted in similar approaches in how to deal with working-class religious identity. At times, working-class movements and religious institutions treated workers in a similar manner.

Many historians have refuted the idea that the secularisation of the Victorian period had any significant effect on the working classes, associating irreligion largely with the intelligentsia and middle-class radicals. In opposition to this theory, Hugh McLeod has shown that the late Victorian period did see a decrease in church attendance. London churches averaged only around 19 per cent attendance rates per week with 11.7 per cent of adults in poor areas, 13.2 per cent of the working classes, and 16.1 per cent of the upper working classes attending church regularly. McLeod's findings suggest that the absences represented a loss of faith occurring from below. Yet, others have criticised arguments like McLeod's, which are derived exclusively from

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94 Justice, 27 December 1890.  
95 Events such as the great disruption to the Church of Scotland, the growth of non-denominational faiths in England, and the increasing population in urban areas are all listed as further elements shaping the debate. For works related to this debate, please see, Helmstader and Lightman (eds), Victorian faith in crisis.  
statistical analysis. Pointing to an array of economic factors, potential disengagement with the rituals and routines of faith practice, and other exigent factors, historians have argued that the decline in working-class religious participation did not necessarily correlate with a rise of secularist thinking. Identifying whether or not working-class religious practice actually declined in this period is, perhaps, beside the point. What is more important is that most religions reacted to the threat.

The spiritual crisis, whether real or imagined, was a lived experience for many at the time and it led religious leaders towards the working classes. Ireland was not an exception to this trend. In fact, fears of the spiritual crisis were heightened here, due to the belief that Ireland's connection to the Atlantic World exposed it to an attack both from the outside and internally. At first the spiritual crisis, like socialism, was seen as affecting Irish workers beyond Irish shores; it was the souls of the Irish diaspora that many religious leaders believed were in danger. The assumption that emigration drove Irish Catholics away from the church was so widespread that even the Presbyterian newspaper, the Witness, gloatingly reported that emigration caused Irish Catholics to 'shake off the tyranny of the Roman priest.' Resistance to such developments from within Catholic circles came largely through Catholic voluntarism. This practice flourished in English and Scottish cities where numbers of Irish emigrants lived and worked temporarily. By the end of 1914 in Scotland, there were 1,010 parochial organisations in operation with 463 in Glasgow alone. All focused on ensuring the Irish in Scotland remained connected to the Catholic Church and sheltered from working-class radical organisations.

The lived experience of emigration, however, did not always match the myth of spiritual decline. Scotland in 1880s and 1890s had an increase in American-style revivalist preaching. Callum Brown explained that the growing divide between working classes and middle classes within Protestant communities developed over religious interests, with the middle classes retreating to suburban churches and the

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98 Witness, 26 November 1906.
100 Brown, Religion and society in Scotland, pp 116-17.
working classes maintaining their evangelical tradition.\textsuperscript{101} It was not that workers were leaving the faith, they were just not embracing middle-class forms of it. In his study of the Irish in Britain, Steven Fielding asserted that the Irish working classes never left Irish Catholicism. He claimed that Catholicism became an intrinsic part of the Irish identity in England.\textsuperscript{102} Even if Irish Catholics abroad were leaving their faith, Atlantic socialists were clearly not receiving the benefits of their departure.\textsuperscript{103}

Socialists abroad saw Irish Catholicism as an impenetrable identity, with the 'good Catholic feeling' being used to isolate Irish communities from even their coreligionists abroad in order to shelter them from radical influences.\textsuperscript{104} As far as they saw it, there simply was not enough room for working-class solidarity within a group whose allegiances were already claimed by religious and national affinities. As Leon Trotsky pondered in the British socialist press, was the Irish American a man 'who by his religion belongs to Rome, by his nationality to Ireland, by his citizenship to the United States?'\textsuperscript{105} The questioning equated to an indictment of the international revolutionary working-class potential of the Irish. In their defence, Irish socialists claimed the reason for the failure of Irish emigrant workers to embrace socialist theory lay not in the nature of the Irish working classes, but in the Atlantic movement itself. They believed the movement promoted anti-Catholic, anti-Irish sentiments, which only further alienated Irish workers at home and abroad. In their opinion, socialist leaders needed to adopt a more sympathetic approach if they wanted to bring Irish workers into the fold.

Even when those outside acknowledged the existence of radical spiritualism in Ireland, they associated it with radical spiritualist teaching in Britain, thereby downplaying its domestic roots. The American SLP paper, the \textit{People}, glowingly reported on a meeting of the Belfast Theological Society that resulted in 'an overwhelmingly Socialistic sentiment', but presented this as a part of broader

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid, p. 129.
\textsuperscript{102} Steven Fielding, \textit{Class and ethnicity}, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{103} In his article on Irish-American labour radicalism, David Brundage explained how Irish connections to radical labour circles in the United States is an underdeveloped topic, but still gave exception to studies on Irish-American involvement in socialist politics, which he claimed did not receive significant amounts of Irish support. In Denver, he cited potential reasons for this being church outcries against socialism. Brundage, 'After the Land League', pp 10-12.
\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Weekly People}, 5 April 1891.
\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Justice}, 28 April 1900.
developments in England and Scotland. The omission of references to Ireland came from the fact that Belfast's embrace of religion was seen as being fundamentally British and Protestant in nature. In fact, the *People* was able to praise religious consciousness in Belfast because it was not Irish Catholicism. American leaders did not see Belfast socialism as part of Irish socialism, in a similar manner to how they did not see America's significant Irish Protestant population as being part of the Irish-American working classes. In their defence, Donald Akenson has proven that historians of Irish-America have been guilty of the same flawed perspective. Regardless, Irish-American Protestants remained distinct from their Irish-Catholic counterparts, who had clearly claimed authority over Irish identity in America.

The ISF did not do much to correct the flawed perspective. The image of a potential Protestant Belfast socialist movement was not the image that the New York-based SLP had in mind when they thought of Ireland and as such did not take the article as a compliment, but rather as an insult against the headway made in Dublin socialist circles. The ISF, after all, saw itself as a Catholic organisation. It was not out to prove that the Irish could be working-class radicals, it was out to prove that Irish Catholics could be.

The sensitivity ISF leaders showed toward Catholic social views and socialism proved this perspective. In the spring of 1904, De Leon published August Bebel’s ‘Women Under Socialism’ in the *People* with a personal introduction that challenged some traditional Christian religious values around marriage and the church, particularly the issue of monogamy and religious sexual control. Fearing De Leon's stance would alienate Irish Catholics in America and potentially validate the fear mongering propagated by Roman Catholic officials, Connolly responded with his own article entitled ‘Wages, Marriage, and the Church.’ In it, Connolly complained that ‘if a clergyman anywhere attacks Socialism the tendency is to hit back, not at his economic absurdities, but at his theology, with which we have nothing to do.’ De Leon printed Connolly's article in the *People* alongside a personal and scathing reply. De Leon, a man with an academic background, undermined the credentials of a self-educated Irish-

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106 *Weekly People*, 12 April 1891.
Scottish immigrant by questioning his understanding of Marx. The insult was biting. While the debate undoubtedly evolved into a personal tit-for-tat squabble, it also exposed the concern Connolly maintained for Irish-America’s Roman Catholic identity.

Concern with appealing to Irish Catholic identity was part of the reason that Irish-American socialists formed the ISF. The hope was two-fold – to recruit Irish in America and win Irish Catholic support at home. It was a transnational Irish Catholic call. The federation maintained that Catholicism, like other religions, was compatible with socialism; socialists just needed to put some effort into demonstrating this to the Irish working classes. The ISF acknowledged there were differences between Catholicism and the traditions of other Protestant faiths, but they argued these differences were not insurmountable barriers to working-class solidarity, but merely variations that required some slight modifications in approach. Irish Catholicism, they claimed, did not offer the same individualist interpretations of faith; however, it did have a localised element that allowed room to challenge the positions of the Catholic hierarchy. Socialist leaders could not ask Catholics to reconsider their faith, but they could approach local priests in an effort to get them to see that socialism was meant to advance the cause of workers and not steal them away from the church. A perspective that hinted toward the importance of the local church in Ireland, instead of America. Nevertheless, this approach was one-degree removed from the workers, but it suggested that there was hope of Catholics accepting socialism if only they had the approval of their closest spiritual advisors. This position characterised the Harp’s approach to dealing with the hierarchical challenges to socialism. William O’Duane warned readers not to trust the Irish bishops who ‘betrayed the Celts for Anglo-Norman invaders’, instead urging them to trust only their local sagart (priest) who had their working-class interests at heart. Nevertheless, as was shown earlier, despite their best efforts to court local priests, very few reciprocated the affection, particularly in Ireland.

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109 For Connolly’s article ‘Wages, Marriage and the Church’ with De Leon’s rebuttal, please see Daily People 9 April 1904. Connolly wrote an additional response to De Leon that was not allowed in the Daily People and instead printed in the Socialist. For a copy of this article please see the Socialist, June 1904. For further readings on this debate please see James A. Stevenson, ‘Clashing personalities: James Connolly and Daniel De Leon 1896-1909’ in Éire Ireland, (Fall 1990), p. 25 or The Cork Worker’s Club, ‘Connolly-De Leon debate: On wages, marriage and the church’ (August, 1976).

110 Harp, April 1909.

111 Ibid, January 1908.
Even without the priests, ministers or reverends, some Irish citizens did embrace radical, independent forms of religious identity, which sometimes melded religious imagination with socialist thought. Others professed outright non-traditional religious identities. As the 1901 and 1911 censuses demonstrate, in Ireland's urban centres some individuals rejected traditional titles while still asserting religious identities, with some even identifying socialism as their religion. Those who rejected all forms of religious identity accompanied them. Nine individuals described their faith as 'Christian Socialist'. The outright rejection of religious identity, as well as the practice of using non-traditional religious titles to describe religious identities, while small, saw a notable increase from 1901 to 1911, as shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Totals and types of non-traditional religious identities in 1901 and 1911 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnostic</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Thinker</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Religion or None</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationalist</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theosophist</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secularist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Since certain religious groups, like Christian Brethren, did not record a religious identity for children, these figures only reflect individuals over the age of 12.


112 The term 'non-traditional' here refers to all individuals who choose a title that was not from a major Western or Eastern religion. As such, it includes both people who identified as secular or non-religious and those who identified as socialist or philosophers. It does not include individuals who did not report a religious identity by refusing such information but does include those who identified as having no religion.

113 Three other individuals not included in the data provided referenced socialism in their census details. All three listed socialism under occupation. The first is James Connolly (Dublin), who listed his occupation as the national organiser of the SPI with his religious identity as Catholic. The second is Walter Carpenter (Dublin) who listed his occupation as secretary of the Socialist Party of Ireland, with his religious identity as ‘a believer in Jesus Christ, but not affiliated with any church’. The last is Edward Mahoney (Tipperary) whose father listed his occupation as a socialist, with religious identity as ‘St. Mary's Parish’. Mahoney was the last child of six at home.
These figures certainly did not constitute a major religious crisis, but they were enough to raise concerns about the state of religion on the island. Even though the nation overwhelmingly identified as religious, when the results of the 1911 census became public some raised the alarm. The *Kildare Reporter*, for instance, decried that atheism was penetrating Ireland. Maintaining a nationalist stand, the paper blamed the change on British socialist organs that were being allowed to reach Irish shores.\(^{114}\)

The fear was focused predominately on urban areas. Cities like Dublin and Belfast claimed the highest proportion of the small group of national religious radicals. In his work on Dublin, David Dickson even referenced an anti-clerical climate growing in the city by 1891.\(^{115}\) Particular areas in Belfast, mainly close to the city-centre and working-class neighbourhoods hosted most churches willing to address social issues of even host Christian socialist preachers. Donegall Street Congregational Church was where Christian socialist minister John Bruce Wallace placed his hope for Protestant radicalism.\(^{116}\) Another location was Agnes Street, the only place besides Alexander McKeown’s house where it was possible to obtain a copy of Bruce Wallace’s paper, *Brotherhood*.\(^{117}\) Both the Congregational Church on Donegall Street and Bethany Presbyterian Church on Agnes Street hosted labour and socialist events.\(^{118}\) In 1907, the Bethany Presbyterian Church even held a special service preached by Labour MP Arthur Henderson during his ILP recruitment tour in the city.\(^{119}\) It was the Bethany Presbyterian Church minister, Reverend Simms, who became the strongest advocate of William Walker’s campaign. Reverend Ballard’s Christian Socialist preaching at Agnes Street Methodist Church attracted numerous working-class followers, earning the praise of the *Belfast Labour Chronicle*.\(^{120}\)

These churches certainly did not spark a religious revolution in the city. As the map featured in image 3.1 shows, there is little evidence to suggest that these churches even generated a larger presence of religious radicals in their immediate vicinity. Instead, they remained disparate and spread across varying municipal wards throughout

\(^{114}\) *Kildare Observer*, 22 July 1911.


\(^{116}\) The paper could be purchased at 29 Agnes Street. *Brotherhood*, 18 January 1890.

\(^{117}\) Ibid.

\(^{118}\) *Brotherhood*, 8 June 1889 and *Belfast Labour Chronicle*, May 1905.

\(^{119}\) *Ulster Guardian*, 13 April 1907.

\(^{120}\) *Belfast Chronicle*, May 1905 and February 1906.
the city. This distribution also makes suggesting that spiritual radicalism had any direct impact on municipal election contests difficult. While the BUTC preferred to contest wards like Dock Ward, Clifton and Pottinger, it is doubtful that religious radicalism played a part in their decision.

Image 3.1: Belfast 1901: religious radicalism across the city

Since each church’s progressive behaviour fell short of sparking widespread religious radicalism, the religious communities to which these churches belonged simply ignored their more progressive activities. Agnes Street’s activities were noticeably omitted from the Presbyterian press. The Witness, for instance, only acknowledged the church’s mission activities in China and India, activities that more easily fit into a conservative British imperial framework. For its part, the Church of Ireland addressed the radical practices taking place at the St Anne’s Church of Ireland Parish on Donegall Street by reconstructing the church, physically, socially, and doctrinally. St Anne’s had been known for its accommodating approach to working-class needs, such as giving free baptisms to children without assurances from their parents that they would be raised in the Anglican faith. The result was that poor Presbyterian families would bring their
children to the parish simply for baptism, a practice resented by some middle-class Anglicans.\textsuperscript{121} Associating some of the church’s non-traditional practices with the detrimental effects of being positioned near the city’s slums, Trinity College Dublin missionaries, determined to illuminate the importance of Anglicanism in modern society, used the construction of the new St Anne’s Cathedral on the site of the church to focus their work on the Belfast slums. The work augmented the building of the Cathedral by aiming to transform the working-classes into righteous followers of the church, through Christian charity. In practice, this was an attempt to assert the Church of Ireland’s position in modern Belfast and, in the process, to build over the memory of radical Christian practices using the slogan of Christian reform.\textsuperscript{122} It was only fitting that such work was largely undertaken by upper and middle class Trinity-educated students who were not from the city or the working classes. To them, Belfast was ‘modern, materialistic, devoid of cultural traditions.’\textsuperscript{123} The blame was placed on modernity, rather than the workers, and the church would be their saviour.

If the Church of Ireland took forceful measures to ‘save’ the working classes of Belfast from the twin threats of modernity and socialism, the Irish Catholic Church went even further. Indeed, the strength of the Catholic Church’s response to the perceived faith crisis inevitably helped shape the belief among many Atlantic socialists that Irish Catholics would not or could not embrace socialism. The belief was validated by the imbalanced response of the Catholic Church to the perceived Irish spiritual threat. The extent of such Catholic fears was, however, at odds with the reality that most of Ireland’s religious radicals came from Protestant faiths, as can be seen from table 3.2.

\textsuperscript{121} T.W.E. Drury, \textit{The unforgotten men} (Dublin, 1951), p. 151.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid, pp 146-8.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid, p. 139.
Table 3.2: Non-traditional religious individuals from religious families, 1911 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>From 1911</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of Ireland, Irish Church or Episcopalian</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Brethren</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonconformist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of Scotland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Scientist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregationalist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Nevertheless, the fear of losing Irish Catholics to irreligion sprouted throughout Irish Catholic circles, particularly in rural Ireland, where fear of spiritual depravation occurring in the cities framed much of the church’s anti-emigration efforts.

Irish Catholic nationalists, in particular, played upon this position. With the papers consistently decrying the growth of infidelism and heathenism among the working classes, it is not surprising that some middle-class individuals believed such assertions. This perception, however, worked both ways. Upper-class notions of social distinction informed the Catholic Church’s criticisms of urban, working-class irreligion. Religion became part of a narrative that allowed the Irish Catholic middle classes to claim respectability, while they simultaneously made progressive national political demands. The working classes were, at times, absorbed into this narrative, especially when their suffering could be used to support an image of unchristian British rule.

Contrastingly, instances of working-class radicalism that challenged the religious

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124 Senia Peasta, Before the revolution: nationalism, social change and Ireland's Catholic elite 1879-1922 (Cork, 1999); or Margaret MacCurtain, 'Fullness of life: defining female spirituality in twentieth century Ireland’ in Maria Luddy and Cliona Murphy (eds), Women surviving: studies in Irish women’s history in the 19th and 20th centuries (Dublin, 1990), pp 223-63.
authority of the middle classes were more often than not attacked and represented as being outside the bounds of respectable, nationalist Catholic identity.

An event that captured this distinction occurred during the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout. One of the most defining, and violent, events during the strike was Bloody Sunday. The Dublin Disturbance Commission, which was formed in response, was tasked with investigating whether crowds attacked by police on Sackville Street were ITWGU supporters or simply parishioners leaving the adjacent Abbey Street Church after Sunday mass. In order to make this distinction, the prosecutor repeatedly asked middle-class witnesses about 'the class' of people on the street that day. One witness, Mrs Maud Bristowe, stated that the individuals were 'working class people' whom she described as 'not the usual Sunday people.' Her husband, Harry Bristowe echoed her assertions. James McConnell lamented the ensuing violence because there were 'a number of respectable people' coming from mass who were mixed into the crowds containing some of the city's artisans. Similarly, William Flanagan described the crowd as 'not the class that you would expect to see there during Sunday afternoon. They were mostly, to use a vulgar [term], "gutties," and women with shawls.' What these statements shared was an assumption that individuals who would be involved in the strike, the working classes, were not the type to practice religion or at least not the type to practice in a church attended by middle-class parishioners. This belief reflected wider perceptions of working-class religiosity. The working classes, and especially those who took part in radical working-class movements, were perceived as being irreligious or at least from a separate religious community than their middle-class counterparts.

The belief in the feeble state of working-class faith existed across religious lines. Reflecting on the Belfast Mission, Thomas William Earnest Drury recalled that religious deprivation among the working classes was one of the principal motivations for the Belfast mission. When detailing the conditions of St Anne's parish, Drury described the surrounding population as being 'of the poorer and non-church going class; non-church going, not in a sense of hostility towards the church, or active unbelief, but rather of

126 Ibid, p. 102.
127 Ibid, p. 102.
128 Ibid, p. 120.
carelessness and loss of touch with institutional religion, the very class of people which might yet be saved from practical atheism.\footnote{Drury, \textit{The unforgotten}, p. 144.} Drury’s admission that he believed workers to be susceptible to atheism is key. It was not as a result of choice, but of weakness and impressionability. These perceptions indicate that it was not a fear that socialism would inspire workers to question their faith that was sparking church reactions toward the movement; it was a fear that socialism would prey upon working-class religious vulnerability.

Following in long-standing paternalist practice of using charity to mould Irish-working-class identity, the church used charitable works as the antidote to the threat.\footnote{In her work on pauperism in Ireland, Virginia Crossman describes how paternalist motives drove legislative policies toward the poor in Ireland from British rule through the founding of the Free State. Crossman demonstrated how both the British government and later Irish nationalists used poor law boards as political and social tools designed to alter the identity of the lower classes. The same motives can be seen driving the practices of the church in these instances. Virginia Crossman, \textit{Politics, pauperism, and power in late nineteenth-century Ireland} (Manchester, 2006), pp 37-8.} As active agents of the church’s charitable crusade, Irish middle-class women had their views of working-class faith moulded through charitable perspectives, with workers’ religious beliefs being determined by how much benefits they received and from whom.\footnote{Margaret MacCurtain touches upon this subject briefly in her explanation of how Irish middle-class women become the voice of spirituality in 1878. MacCurtain, ‘Fullness of life’, p. 235.} This practice carried over to the working-class movement and explained why middle-class women rushed to charitable work during moments of working-class unrest. As the Irish women’s suffrage paper, the \textit{Irish Citizen}, revealed, working-class moral weakness and the potential to convert workers to the cause of women’s suffrage were at the heart of their charitable crusade. During the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, the Ladies Relief Committee claimed they were there to keep working-class children from developing ‘bad habits’ on the street and getting working-class mothers and children talking about votes for women.\footnote{\textit{Irish Citizen}, 4 October 1913 and 15 October 1913.} While these women may have been advocates of the working-class struggle, this did not erase their opinions that workers were weaker and more impressionable than other classes of people.

Indeed, the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout triggered a sense of chaos that posed as both a threat and an opportunity to leaders of competing movements aiming to influence working-class loyalty. The growing fear of proselytism as one of the impacts of the Kiddie Holiday Scheme, middle-class women rushing to charitable works
in Liberty Hall, and working-class leaders intensifying the movement’s religious credentials were all reactions to the perceived destabilisation of power structures determining working-class interests. There was a level of cynicism in each group’s actions. Each operated on a belief in the working classes’ inability to make their own decisions, to shape their own faith, or, more importantly, to determine their own culture. In effect, they were bringing paternalist approaches to the working-class movement into the working-class struggle. They were treating working-class spiritualism the same way the churches had. The only difference is that these women were doing it under the banner of the working-class struggle. The working-class movement, as we have seen, held similar perspectives. This outlook could account for why the movement was so willing to bring women into the movement to fill this role.

While these practices were arguably removing agency of religious identity from the working classes, these practices do not diminish the reality that some workers did believe the working-class movement was a religious struggle. The movement took a spiritual approach because many believed they were fighting a religious struggle. Radical spiritualism played a significant part in shaping the Irish working-class movement.

Irish working-class leaders and radical spiritualism

Appeals to Christianity and religious sentiments did not always come easily to socialists and labour radicals, many of whom were in continual conflict with religious leaders and, as a result, were situated in opposition to traditional religions. For the most part, socialist leaders maintained a diplomatic approach to the religious question, following the Fabian model of rejecting the formal orthodoxy of Christian churches, while acknowledging the merits of Christian teaching in promoting a wider understanding of socialist principals. However, when religious leaders expressed sympathy with the socialist or radical labour movement, socialists utilised the endorsement to its fullest. In October 1900, for example, at a meeting of the Church Congress in Glasgow, Reverend

133 "Fabians and the Churches", Hammersmith Fabian Society Pamphlet, undated (B.L., George Bernard Shaw papers, MS 50,680).
John Glasse relayed to church colleagues that socialists were not in conflict with Christian teachings, rather they took issue with the church's focus on the metaphysical, sacramental and ecclesiastical over Christ's social mission. In turn, the ILP printed and circulated the speech. The same can be said of Irish socialists. The Belfast Socialist Society's pamphlet listed popular figures who were socialists, six of whom were reverends. John McManus' 1911 election pamphlet for Trinity Ward contained a passage from popular theologian Rev. Fr. William Barry stating, 'Let no man fear the name of socialism'. The perception that some men of God were of their side was a crucial part of socialism's attempt to assure the workers that socialists were not against the whole church, just a few misguided members.

Such actions should not be dismissed as mere political opportunism. There is little question that for some individuals working-class radicalism was a political movement embodying Christian doctrine. The relationship of Belfast's labour and socialist circles to the radical Christian community, described above, was a testament to this fact. Similarly, the original ICA commandant, Captain Jack White, even choose to open his autobiography by asserting that he was guided by the teaching of two men: Christ and Lenin. Other labour leaders like Alexander Bowman and Michael McKeown maintained similar beliefs, maintaining strong Christian working-class identities.

This outlook was not just a feature of Ulster or Protestantism; Irish Catholics also claimed to be moved to socialism by their religious beliefs. Irish-American Elizabeth Gurley Flynn wrote in the Industrial Worker that the spirit of the working-class 'entered into her soul.' Flynn's intellectual conversion and physical crusade for labour rights were rooted in a religious ideal, one that she possessed along with an Irish Catholic identity. James Larkin regularly asserted that his labour radicalism was a product of his Catholic morality, while his first exposure to socialist politics came through Christian Socialist circles. New Kilmainham Labour Councillor, William Patrick Partridge, who converted to Catholicism from Anglicanism, publically asserted at labour events that he

135 Pamphlet from the Belfast Socialist Society, undated (N.L.I., Librarian's Office Collection, LOP 114).
136 Trinity Ward election handbill for John McManus, 1911 (N.L.I., Ephemeral Collection, EPH C124).
137 White, Misfit, p. 7.
138 Industrial Worker, 20 January 1917.
139 O'Connor, James Larkin, p. 8.
was a practicing Catholic and working-class activist, seeing the two as connected and part of his revolutionary working-class identity. According to his brother, Thomas Mallin, 1916 ICA commandant Michael Mallin’s parting wish to his wife Agnes included the request that his children Una and Joseph spend their lives ‘in service to God’ for the good of his soul, thereby indicating how important his religion was to him.

Although some labour leaders went to great efforts to fuse their religion and their socialism together, these dual identities did sometimes clash. Despite his public and written declarations regarding the importance of religion as well as his private correspondences with religious leaders, in private Connolly did reveal some disillusionment with the church. Some other socialist members, like Cornelius Lehane, felt that Connolly’s critiques of the church did not go far enough. He complained that Connolly maintained too much reverence for the church in the face of its opposition to socialism, writing:

> Dr O’Callaghan tried to rouse the City of Cork against our little band, what did Catholic Connolly do? He said, ‘Oh! I’m a Catholic tool’ ‘Socialism has nothing to do with Religion and we are very sorry your lordship is against us.’ What would Quelch have said?

James Larkin maintained a similar deference to religion, even going so far as to refuse, during one of his British speaking tours, to take the stage with a man who had divorced his wife. The English socialist press responded by declaring that Larkin was ‘cowering to Catholic Doctrine’, something they felt symbolised the problems with the Irish socialist movement as a whole. Paradoxically, at the same time that Larkin was asserting his religious convictions, Ben Tillett, the English trade union organiser, was proclaiming to meeting of the Irish Women Franchise League in Dublin that patriotism, Romanism and

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140 Irish Independent news clipping, undated (N.I.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674 (6)1). For information on Partridge’s conversion, please see, Hugh Geragahty, William Patrick Partridge and his times (1874-1917) (Dublin, 2003), p. 18.


142 Quelch is referencing Harry Quelch, leading SDF socialist and editor of Justice. Cornelius Lehane to Patrick Hogan, 5 and 6 February 1904 (N.I.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700/2).

143 In this letter, Connolly claimed he was only posing as a Catholic as he had not practiced his faith in over fifteen years. He explained that he maintained his religious identity, not only to appeal to Irish workers, but also because of his disdain towards the dogmatism of freethinkers. He continued to say he ‘respected the good Catholic more than the average freethinker.’ James Connolly to James Matheson, 30 January 1908 (N.I.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 13,906).

144 This comment was in reference to Larkin’s refusal to speak on stage with a British Socialist Party meeting chaired by Ernest Marklew. Larkin said he could not take part because Marklew was divorced and Larkin as a Catholic could not be seen on stage with him. Justice, 13 December 1913.
Non-Conformity would no longer be used as tools to divide the working classes. The two differing perspectives capture just how religion as a structural force could be lambasted, while religious consciousness as part of working-class identity could be accepted. These leaders may have despised the power of religious figures, but they were not willing to turn against the power of Christian morality as a force capable of igniting working-class consciousness.

One of the major reasons why religious radicalism did not spread across Ireland was the lack of religious leaders promoting Christian Socialist teaching. Ireland had a limited number of preachers who promoted Christian Socialist teaching between 1889 and 1891, but these preachers were largely Congregationalist and worked mainly out of Ulster before moving to England. Reverend John Fordyce of Donegall Street Independent Church worked alongside John Bruce Wallace and contributed on occasion to *Brotherhood.* The Belfast Radical Association credited the work of Reverend J.C. Street in enabling them to start their organisation and honoured his work with the city's working classes before his departure to England. In later years, Presbyterian Reverend Simms and Methodist Minister Ballard served as the voices of Christian Socialism in the city.

These figures were important to the socialist movement, not just for their religious titles, but because of their religious duties as well. Their work enabled them to carry the socialist message beyond the trades halls and docks. They had the ears of entire families. John Bruce Wallace supplemented his paper’s propaganda efforts with his personal religious work in the city, running independent Bible classes, organising open-air services in Clifton Park, giving speeches on social class activism to the Belfast Literary Society. He along with Reverend John Fordyce regularly participated in Belfast Theological Society debates.

Although such direct links with religious leaders helped form the labour movement’s Christian outlook, they were not essential, and working-class and labour leaders were perfectly capable of fusing Christianity and socialism on their own. As the first edition of the *Irish Worker* declared ‘a man can certainly be a Socialist without

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146 *Brotherhood,* 18 January 1890.
147 Ibid, 21 December 1889.
being a Christian, but no man can be a true follower of the poor Carpenter of Nazareth without being (consciously or unconsciously) a Socialist.\textsuperscript{148} This was an assertion that Christian respectability led to a path of socialist ideals. The early-Edwardian BUTC projected a moderated version of this message, operating largely on a Christian understanding of the merits of working-class reform. Many of its organisers openly expressed Christian values and they transferred this message onto the Belfast trade union movement. It was not strictly-speaking Christian socialism; the BUTC drew a distinction between working-class radicalism and the more respectable labour reform movement, but it was an example of Christian values permeating the working-class movement from within.

These Christian practices were used to project an image of respectability onto the movement and to legitimise its place within Edwardian society. They were a link between the traditional and the modern and an elevation of the workingman. They were designed to make working-class demands appear safe and less radical. When delivered alongside traditional labour demands, these tactics worked. The Belfast News Letter made a point to praise the 1893 BUTC procession for its Christian character and 'long array of respectably dressed, intelligent-looking workmen.'\textsuperscript{149} The fashion, like the message, was intentional. These were not men who were using God to breed working-class discontent; they were men who were working within Christian norms to elevate the movement's credentials.

Samuel Monro was the quintessential leader of this movement. His presidential address to the BUTC captured the effort to blend Christianity with trade-union identity. Monro asserted, 'this was the principal they preached - no doctrine of anarchy or revolution- but that all live decently, ought to be able to clothe themselves decently, and to appear as respectable members of society.'\textsuperscript{150} In fact, the maintenance of the movement's Christian core was of such importance to Monro and the rest BUTC that when the DCTU began sponsoring Sunday sporting events under the auspices of the Irish Federated Trades Council, the BUTC sent a circular condemning the practice. It

\textsuperscript{148} Irish Worker, May 1893.  
\textsuperscript{149} Belfast News Letter, 11 September 1893.  
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid, 9 September 1893.  

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eventually disaffiliated from the federation over the issue. In this instance, at least, a Christian ethic trumped working-class solidarity.

The BUTC's more conservative traditional Christian values were not representative of the entire working-class movement, or even the Belfast scene. Other Belfast socialists also preached Christianity of a more radical brand, which reflected their politics. The party's affiliation to the English ILP resulted in a distinct strand of Christian socialist teaching within the movement. Christian socialist speakers from Britain came to the city to advance the cause, while the Belfast ILP also distributed copies of the British Christian Socialist organ, the Labour Prophet, to augment their political message. Underpinning this campaign was the religious activism that certain working-class leaders maintained, such as Alexander Bowman and Alex Boyd, who each worshipped at Donegall Road Presbyterian Church. Bowman, in particular, took an active role in the church, a position that outlived even his duties as an ILP and trade union activist.

This radical blend of Christianity and socialism gradually took precedence over the more traditional religious values dominating the BUTC, largely through the force of its radical membership, in particular William Walker. From its introductory issue, Walker's paper, the Belfast Labour Chronicle, which became the main organ of the BUTC, argued that Christianity and socialism were complementary. The paper maintained this line throughout its existence, giving ample attention to the writings of church leaders who professed measures beneficial to the working classes, as well as developments in the Christian Socialist movement in England. Walker, who even made a point in the 1901 census to list his religion as an 'agno-theist', regularly asserted his Christian identity publicly, in order to assure his supporters that Protestantism had a place in the working-class movement.

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151 BUTC Minute Book, 10 August 1889 (L.H.L., Belfast United Trades Council, Box 1 Book 4).
152 Irish Times, 23 September 1893.
154 For examples, please see, Belfast Labour Chronicle, April 1905; May 1905; September 1905; or February 1906.
155 While in 1911 Walker maintained his religious identity, he changed his children from Church of Ireland to Presbyterian to match the religion his new wife and children from his second marriage. William Walker, Irish National Census 1901 and 1911 (N.A.I. Digital Collections) (http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Antrim/Dock_Ward/Stratheden_Street/937626/) and 209
This is not to say that he eschewed criticisms of institutional religion and the limits of traditional Christianity. Indeed, such criticisms were a frequent feature in the *Belfast Labour Chronicle*. Both Free and Established Churches were the targets of his critiques. Attempting to undermine the language of working-class reformism generated by traditional Christian social teaching, the *Belfast Labour Chronicle* launched scathing critiques designed to claim working-class identity for radical, rather than traditional Christianity. The paper declared:

The workingman was no plaster saint. He might be dirty, foul-mouthed and shiftless, as some said, but he was too much of a man, too much of an Englishman, to tolerate the patronage, the barefaced and impertinent patronage, that was meted out to him by many middle-class Churches, Free and Established.\(^{156}\)

Through such statements, Walker and the paper’s other contributors were offering workers a pathway to escape the church’s grasp without turning against their Christian identity. They were not advocating an abandonment of faith, but articulating a new working-class religion.

The *Irish Protestant* presented a similar message. The paper maintained that religions were losing sight of working-class needs, but argued that churches should make efforts to meet workers. This position was argued largely through Christian socialist teaching. The paper detailed the work of Labour Churches, reported on the teachings of English Christian Socialist minister Stewart Headlam, and praised the revival spreading through Scottish mining districts.\(^{157}\) The implication was that Belfast Protestantism needed to develop a similar radical core. After Crawford’s dismissal from the *Irish Protestant*, he continued to develop this line further within the pages of the *Ulster Guardian*. The paper’s recurring ‘Labour News’ column frequently featured debates on the relationship between socialism and Christianity. The paper made its stance explicit, when it called on Belfast to be more like England and Scotland and to come ‘into line with the Labour forces in the reorganisation of society on a democratic and truly Christian basis.’\(^{158}\) It was calling for the birth of Christian socialism in Ireland.

\(^{156}\) *Belfast Labour Chronicle*, April 1905.

\(^{157}\) *Irish Protestant*, 25 March 1905 and 5 January 1907.

\(^{158}\) *Ulster Guardian*, 2 February 1907.
These striking advances in Christian working-class radicalism did not eliminate the *Irish Protestant* or the *Ulster Guardian'*s strong anti-clerical core. They certainly maintained a mistrust of the Vatican and potential clerical influence in government and education. In order to be fully appreciated, however, these reservations must be compared to the distrust and apprehension the papers also held towards organised Protestant religions. Diatribes against Irish Romanism did not denote an exclusion of Irish Catholics from the working-class narrative, rather they sought the exclusion of church hierarchy. This aspect is important because it explains how the paper could be against Irish ‘Romanism’, while still not being against Irish Catholics taking part in the working-class movement. The *Irish Protestant*, for instance, called for ‘religious prejudices to be put aside’ for the common cause of labour.\(^{159}\) It was organised religions, not religious identity, which working-class leaders feared. A strict distinction between the Catholic Church in Ireland and the Irish Catholic working classes underlined the message. This line of thinking even led the *Irish Protestant* to call for a common Christian alliance between Catholics and Protestant to combat ‘the political power of Irish priesthood’, a concern they believed both religious groups shared.\(^{160}\) It was for this reason that the *Ulster Guardian* gave significant coverage to the suppression of W.P. Ryan’s nationalist paper, the *Irish Peasant*.\(^{161}\) The *Ulster Guardian* argued that Cardinal Logue’s action reflected that ‘Home-Rule would equal Rome-rule’ and that Irish workers, Catholic and Protestant alike, should combat clerical over-reach.\(^{162}\)

To a certain degree, Catholic socialist leaders also acknowledged this position. The *Harp* claimed that it was an irony that Protestant anti-clericalism kept Irish Catholic workers and Irish Protestant workers apart. It was battles against church leaders, the paper quipped, that Catholic socialists spent the greatest amount of time waging. Irish Protestant working-class leaders and Irish Catholic working-class leaders were in essence fighting the same fight against clericalism. The paper noted, however, that

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\(^{159}\) *Irish Protestant*, 14 January 1905.

\(^{160}\) Ibid, 15 July 1905.

\(^{161}\) While the paper was under the control of W.P. Ryan, it is ‘Pat’ or Patrick Kenny that spoke the most on its suppression. As such, he was the figure the paper defended. For further details on this event, please see, chapter two.

\(^{162}\) *Ulster Guardian*, 26 January 1907.
while the battle may have been the same, it was national identity, not religious beliefs, that kept the two movements apart.\textsuperscript{163}

Working-class leaders, both Catholic and Protestant, attempted to rectify this issue by focusing on their shared Christian traditions. After the descent of the 1907 Belfast strike into sectarian violence, for instance, ILP leaders hoped to keep the Christian working-class alliance alive. They did so by actively promoting religiously plural and inclusive images in the hopes of bringing Catholic workers into the movement. It was an opportune time to wage such a campaign given that the ILP in Scotland was facing its own religious challenges from Christian leaders who claimed the ILP was an atheist party. The disputes resulted in religion and socialism being primary features of the party's 1907 campaign. As part of their annual course lecture series, the 1907 summer programme frequently covered the relationship between the church and socialism.\textsuperscript{164} The \textit{Labour Leader} called on contributors of all religions to submit ideas on the policy that socialism should adopt on questions of faith.\textsuperscript{165} This focus on socialist spirituality carried over to the Belfast movement, where Scottish ILP organiser, William Stewart, was still actively recruiting in the city in the aftermath of the strike.\textsuperscript{166} His success led to Belfast ILP leader, H.R. Stockman asserting in the pages of the \textit{Labour Leader} that 'Ireland will soon be known as the island of Saints and Socialists.'\textsuperscript{167} While this dream turned out to be far from the reality, the expression captured the type of religiously plural Christian socialist movement that the ILP was hoping to build.

In Dublin, the relationship between the working-class movement and religion took a different shape, though this had much to do with the types of socialist movements developing there. The ISRP avoided religion altogether, asserting that it was not applicable to the Marxist question. The party instead used the issue of religion to distance itself from the Christian message of the ILP. Discussions on religious topics were prohibited at all meetings.\textsuperscript{168} The \textit{Workers' Republic} even openly criticised Christian socialist teaching, denying that it had any role within the socialist movement.

\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Harp}, September 1909.
\textsuperscript{164} Independent Labour Party Summer Syllabus, 1907 (L.S.E., Independent Labour Party papers, ILP/1907/59).
\textsuperscript{165} \textit{Labour Leader}, 11 October 1911.
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid, 20 September 1907.
\textsuperscript{167} Ibid, 25 October 1907.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Workers' Republic}, 17 June 1889.

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Pointing to its potentially divisive nature, one article asked critically, 'What are we to have Muhammedan Socialists and Buddhist Socialists now?' This position was not based on an explicitly anti-clerical brand of Marxism, however. Instead, the refusal to discuss religion resulted from an acknowledgement among socialists of its importance to the working classes, as well as a fear that organised Catholicism could not easily fit into a Christian socialist narrative. The ISRP did not allow for religious discussion simply because it did not want to have to challenge the Catholic Church.

This fear was perpetuated by an international campaign among socialists to target aspects of Catholicism and Catholic identity. This was clearly manifested in the aftermath of the execution of Spanish anarchist, Francisco Ferrer, an event that sparked international outrage amongst radical groups. Radicals claimed that Ferrer’s death revealed the power the Catholic Church maintained over the Spanish government. Following the execution, George Young of the BUTC proposed a resolution expressing ‘the detestation felt by all civilised men and women for the murderous ecclesiasticism and its militarist allies which are sacrificing victims for their bigotry and are reviving in modern Europe the horrors of the Inquisition.’ Two delegates, Mr Spence and Mr Little, raised concerns with the resolution, arguing that the word ‘ecclesiastical’ should be removed. The amendment, however, was defeated and the BUTC upheld the critique. Such a position in Dublin, however, was not possible. A year later, when the SPI organised a commemorative demonstration for Ferrer’s execution, similar anti-clerical language was aired. In the wake of the meeting, John Mulray moved that SPI headquarters never host such an event again because the lectures had actually injured the party, claiming it was ‘mainly an attack upon religion’. The SPI upheld Mulray’s position. Dublin leaders placed working-class solidarity behind religious identity in their efforts to shelter the Catholic Church from radical critiques. This was both an admission of the importance of religion to Irish working-class culture and an acceptance of its position within the working-class movement. In spite of their assertions to the contrary, they were not beyond religion; they were in fact reverent to its authority.

169 Ibid, 19 August 1899.
171 BUTC Minute Book, 4 November 1909 (L.H.I., Belfast United Trades Council papers, Box 3 Book 2).
172 Minute Book of the Socialist Party of Ireland, 15 October 1910 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 16,270).

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In America, former ISRP leaders, now organising the ISF, were much more willing
to deal with the relationship between socialism and religion openly, a marked
difference from the position taken in Dublin. The party paper, the *Harp*, praised the role
Christian preaching played in defending the workers’ plight in the 1909 IWW McKee
Rocks Strike.\(^{173}\) It began advertising Christian socialist papers regularly on its monthly
reading list. One of Connolly’s own articles even asserted that Christ was ‘the first great
socialist’.\(^{174}\) This fusion of religion and socialism was made easier by the paper’s link to
the SPA, a party closely aligned to the American Christian Socialist movement. The
message also received a boost from the party’s improved access to Christian Socialist
publications thanks to its publisher, Charles H. Kerr. The birth of the *Harp* paralleled an
increase in publicity for the American Christian socialist movement and Kerr’s press was
at the forefront of the transition.\(^{175}\) In 1909, former English SDF member turned
American socialist intellectual, John Spargo, declared that while the Christian Socialist
movement was initially an English phenomenon, the co-operative relationship fostered
between the American Christian Socialist Fellowship and the SPA signified a transition in
the next phase of wider socialist progress.\(^{176}\) The SPA’s decision to bring Catholicism
into this narrative increased circulation of American material dealing exclusively with
the relationship of Catholic teaching and socialism.\(^{177}\)

The ISF used this increased attention to Christian socialism to call for a multi-
denominational embrace of the movement in Ireland. Confronted with Irish divisions
between Belfast and Dublin along with the lack of Irish Protestant involvement in the
United States, the party attempted to carry a broad-based Christian message that fused
Irishness with socialism and that could appeal to both groups. In April 1910, the party
organised a symposium in New York addressing reasons why both Irish Catholics and
Irish Protestants should be socialists.\(^{178}\) The event fit into the current American agenda,

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\(^{173}\) Ibid, September 1909.
\(^{174}\) *Harp*, September 1908.
\(^{175}\) Susan Curtis Mernitz, ‘The religious foundations of America’s oldest socialist press: centennial notes in the
\(^{177}\) Mary Marcy, ‘Why Catholic Workers Should be Socialists’ (Chicago, 1912) (H.C.L., Digital collections)
(http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3;FHCL:9918942). Patrick Cooney, ‘Roman Catholicism and Socialism’
Connecticut 1909. For advertisements referencing Cooney’s work please see *New York Call*, 9 June 1908
or the *Harp*, September 1908. John P. Bourke, ‘Will the Irish Prove False to their historic characteristics’.
For advertisements, please see, *Harp*, October 1908.
\(^{178}\) Flyer for Irish Socialist Federation Symposium, 21 April 1910 (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS
33,718/A (19a).
while still resonating with the new campaign being launched for Connolly's planned return to Ireland.

The ISF's increased attention to religion carried over to the production of the *Harp* in Dublin. The January 1910 issue featured articles on 'the spiritual side of socialism' and 'Christian social democracy' in its inaugural Dublin issue.\(^{179}\) The SPI, which had sponsored the printing of W.P. Ryan's pamphlet, 'Dr Socialism and the Irish Hypochondriac' in 1909, reprinted the pamphlet in the *Harp* over two 1910 issues.\(^{180}\) W.P. Ryan who, seeming to be a product of English socialism, injected a strong focus on religion into the Irish context, albeit with an emphasis on common Christian values over direct Catholic socialist thought, typified the new direction that Dublin socialists were taking.\(^{181}\)

In Ireland, religion became one of the tools used to advocate for the autonomy of an independent Irish Labour Party. Employing the same popular attack slogans used against the British Labour Party in England, Irish leaders within the ITUC argued for the distancing of Ireland from the British Labour Party on the grounds that it was calling for secular education.\(^{182}\) The implication, of course, being that the Irish Labour Party would be more spiritual or particularly more Catholic, a fact that seemed to confirm the fears of the Belfast Protestant working-class leadership.

Adding to their fears was the increasing role religion would play in the working-class movement being pushed in the Dublin-based working-class press. The *Irish Worker* drove the relationship of socialism and religion, particularly Catholicism, even further. The paper directed readers to the emerging Glasgow Catholic Socialist Society under the leadership of Waterford native John Wheatley. It advertised Wheatley's publication, the *Catholic Workingman*, to all of its readers.\(^{183}\) Reaching beyond adults to working-class children, the paper recommended parents give their children copies of the American

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\(^{179}\) *Harp*, January 1910.


\(^{183}\) *Irish Worker*, 6 December 1913.
Little Socialist Magazine, a highly spiritual children’s guide to working-class life and identity. By 1913, the paper was even calling for the development of a Christian Socialist movement in Ireland. The ILP in Scotland sensed the change in the atmosphere in Ireland. The party boasted Ireland was now a ground ‘ripe for conversion’, and Forward called on ILP scout missionaries to arm themselves with American Catholic Socialist pamphlets and head to the Irish countryside. Connolly even wrote an article in Forward that May detailing the differences between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, offering insight into ‘peculiar’ religious strands that existed in Ireland to enable outside socialists to better deal with religious socialist dialogue in Ireland.

Irish socialists took perhaps their biggest step towards reconciling socialism and Catholicism when they attempted to launch an Irish Catholic Socialist organisation in Dublin in May 1913. The Dublin branch of the ILP invited speakers from the Glasgow Catholic Socialist Society to speak at a Sunday meeting in the Phoenix Park. Thomas Kennedy and Thomas Lyng were the architects of the scheme. During his address, Thomas Lyng claimed that the wider umbrella of Christian Socialism, of which Catholic Socialism was a part, enabled followers in cities like Belfast to move past sectarian divides and work towards common Christian demands for workers. The meeting was followed by a series of Sunday lectures from Kennedy and Lyng on the merits of the movement developing in Ireland.

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186 They were advised to carry copies of American Catholic Socialist priest, Reverend Father Hegarty’s ‘Economic Discontent’. Forward, 19 July 1913.
187 Forward, 3 May 1913.
188 It should be noted that the Glasgow society also suffered problems in maintaining active participation within the group. Historians referencing Wheatley’s movement are quick to note the organisation only claimed about 100 members and protests against the group and Wheatley increased in intensity throughout the organisation’s existence. Nevertheless, the formation of the group during these early years still seemed to offer hope to Irish socialist leaders. For further reading on Wheatley and the Catholic Socialist Society, please see, Ian Wood, ‘Irish Immigrants and Scottish radicalism, 1880-1906’ in Ian MacDoughall (ed.), Essays in Scottish Labour History: a tribute to W.H. Marwick (Edinburgh, 1978), pp 65-89; Sheridan Gilley, ‘Catholics and socialists in Scotland, 1900-30’ in Gilley and Swift (eds), The Irish in Britain, pp 212-38; or James Young, ‘The Irish immigrants’ contribution to Scottish socialism, 1880-1926’ in Saothar, 13 (1988), pp 89-97.
189 Freeman’s Journal, 15 July 1912.
190 E.T., Flyer for ILP Dublin Branch meeting, 12 July 1912 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,674 (3)/3).
Fallout from the Kiddie Holiday Scheme caused a setback for the campaign. Dublin's socialists were already suffering the ramifications of challenging the Catholic Church's autonomy and, as such, pushing the concept of a separate Catholic Socialist movement further no longer seemed appealing. Working-class leaders instead returned to a more compromising line. Larkin's 1914 presidential address to the ITUC in Dublin, for example, opened with a message the necessity of religious freedom and respect being supported by the working-class struggle, suggesting that each remain in their own separate domain.\textsuperscript{191} While socialists may have wanted to move away from religion, their political opponents did not. During Walter Carpenter's 1914 municipal contest in the Fitzwilliam Ward of Dublin, Carpenter's opponent, J.M. Gallagher, focused on an emerging trend in Atlantic socialism and kept the issue of children and God alive. Gallagher circulated flyers containing a caption from an Irish-American Archbishop detailing the atheist practices conducted in American Socialist Sunday Schools in New York. The schools, which launched in the Borough of New York in December 1907, were attracting increasing attention especially from Catholic leaders.\textsuperscript{192} Despite the \textit{Irish Worker} and the \textit{Harp} having previously featured advertisements for Socialist Sunday School literature on their reading lists, Walter Carpenter completely denied the flyer's claims. He released a rebuttal stating:

\begin{quote}
I absolutely deny that any Socialist Party would be so lacking in moral responsibility or so foolish as to ask school children, never mind practicing in Catechisms, with such ill-considered and vulgar questions and answers as those contained in the leaflet issued by Mr. Gallagher.\textsuperscript{193}
\end{quote}

While certain practices of American Socialist Sunday Schools were conflated with anarcho-socialist Modern Schools also operating in New York at the time, some of the Bishop's claims were not unfounded. Socialist Sunday School children did recite socialist catechisms. In fact, ILP sponsored Socialist Sunday Schools in England even operated on the 'Ten Commandments' of socialism.\textsuperscript{194} Daily activities paralleled the format of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{192} These schools claimed an average attendance rate of 65-70 children each week between the ages of 6 and 14. \textit{New York Call}, 5 June 1908.
\item \textsuperscript{193} Walter Carpenter's Letter to Constituents, 10 January 1914 (N.L.I., Ephemeral collection, EPH B524).
\item \textsuperscript{194} A.Z. Hazell, 'The red catechism for socialist children' (L.S.E., Independent Labour Party papers, ILP Prints 13/1907/8).
\end{itemize}
traditional Christian services. There were hymns, readings, prayers, and recitations. There was even time set aside in each class to have a student bring the Red Flag up to the chairman’s table, mimicking the presentation of the Eucharist. In place of an ‘Amen,’ every lesson, prayer, and class concluded with a, ‘Hurrah for Socialists!’ The Red Catechism even suggested that instead of calling the class meeting a ‘class’, it should be referred to as a ‘service’. Some of this came from the belief that religious language and practice was a way into working-class culture. All workers, especially children, would have some awareness of Christian teaching and thus these practices took advantage of a common register to make socialism more understandable. It could be argued, however, that these practices went further. Sunday schools were Christian inventions designed to control the reading habits of the young and mould their spiritual minds. Socialists had the same intentions, they were just using different tools and hoping to yield a different political outcome. These schools were not abandoning the faith, they were launching their own.

Carpenter’s complete denial of knowledge of such practices held little weight given that England’s labour leaders were openly claiming 3,200 socialist youth organised in these schools, which placed them seventh in line of the most organised children in the world. The ILP was proud of its success. Carpenter’s temporary amnesia had more to do with the decision of Dublin’s working-class leaders to abandon their prior goal of fusing socialism and Catholicism. After 1914, socialists were no longer looking to build a Christian Socialist movement in Ireland. Instead, they were constructing a narrative of working-class militancy that was heavily vested in a radical spiritual language. This language was not designed to build a long-term movement, but rather, as we shall see, it was used to justify the need for an immediate revolutionary break.

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195 Ibid.
196 Resolution of the National Council’s official recommendation for the conduct of affiliated schools (P.H.M., The Ivy Tribe Collection, Box 4/5/04).
198 Ibid.
199 Mackenzie, Propaganda and empire, p. 200.
200 Socialist Annual, 1907.
Working-class morality and spiritual language

The presence of spiritual language within the socialist movement is often attributed to the socialist intelligentsia. For this reason, such language has been attributed to modernity and the avant-garde. The writings of certain Irish socialists did, undoubtedly, emerge from such a milieu. Thomas O'Brien's class notebook from his educational course work, for instance, contained studies on spiritualism, agnosticism and fin de siècle writing. Historian Stephen Yeo, however, has warned against the over-application of this approach to all understandings of socialist spiritualism. Conversion to socialism, Yeo has shown, was not limited to the middle classes and it would be dangerous to assume that much of this language was simply a product of literary embellishment. This perspective is important in detailing the evolution of Irish Christian working-class language. While such language can be seen in forms of artistic expression including songs, cartoons, or poems, it also existed within simpler expressions of basic demands. Many workers, feeling a sense of injustice, expressed their discontent using a language of morality closely tied to their Christian identity. The result was a highly spiritual dialogue buttressing working-class grievances conducted at both the lower and upper strata of the socialist movement.

Part of this language had its roots in the educational experiences of both labour leaders and the general working-class population. Religious control of national schools across Ireland and England meant that children were taught ethics almost exclusively through a Christian moral compass. The usurpation of Christian language to address questions of justice and moral righteousness was therefore perhaps natural. Religion

201 Greenslade, 'Socialism and radicalism', pp 73-89.
203 Yeo, 'The religion of socialism in Britain', p. 10.
204 Brigit Keegan, 'Mysticism and mystifications; the demands of laboring-class religious poetry' in Criticism, 47, 4 (Fall, 2005), p. 472. For references to the increased Catholic identity and doctrine in Catholic schools in England and Ireland, please see, Mary Hickman, 'Alternative historiographies of the Irish in Britain: a critique of the segregation/assimilation model' in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (eds), The Irish in Victorian Britain: the local dimension (Dublin, 1999), pp 247-249 or David Dickson, Justyn Pyz and Christopher Shepard (eds), Irish Classrooms and the British Empire: imperial contexts in the origins of modern education (Dublin, 2012), p. 1.
205 Keegan argued that religion validated class equality before God and therefore had more appeal for workers trying to point out the hypocrisy of elites restricted the rights of others through economic and social control. Keegan, 'Mysticism in working-class poetry', pp 473-4.
offered a shared language to leaders and the working classes and therefore served as an ideal medium through which the movement’s leaders could connect to their working-class audience.

Many Irish labour leaders, however, were also inspired by the writings of English socialist avant-garde writers and applied their messages to an Irish context. The evocation of these writings enabled Irish leaders to portray the labour campaign both as an intellectually and spiritually noble mission. Limerick trade union leader, Stephen Dineen’s presidential address to the 1906 ITUC revealed this practice. Opening his speech on the paradoxes of modernity, Dineen returned to the teachings of Morris, Ruskin, and Carlyle before asserting:

But with all its [the labour movement’s] deficiencies and sins, I claim that what it seeks to achieve, to be regarded as a great humanitarian and even a Christian movement. The Founder of Christianity - the Carpenter of Nazareth - opposed Himself to the doctrine, prevalent then as now, of the survival of the fittest. So likewise, in the stress and struggle of modern, commercial and industrial life, Trade Unionism interposes on behalf of the weak and the helpless.\(^{206}\)

Dineen’s reclaiming of English ‘ethical socialist’ teaching was manifestly an attempt to bridge the gap between the world of labour reform and Irish spirituality.\(^{207}\) The labour movement, in his eyes, was a way of reconciling Christianity to the modern world.

Dineen’s speech fits into a wider Atlantic narrative. Claiming that socialism or labour was the ‘new gospel’ was not an uncommon practice in other Atlantic working-class movements.\(^{208}\) The working-class struggle itself was depicted as spiritual in nature, and necessary for the transformation of society into a present day kingdom of heaven on earth. The working-class movement was Ireland’s ‘spiritual awakening’ ushered in by the working classes.\(^{209}\) Its ultimate aim was more than labour reform; according to the Irish Worker, it was deliverance, ‘from the robber baron and the robber rule that have turned us into slaves and beggars in a land God gave for us’ - Deliverance oh Lord,

Deliverance or death – deliverance on this island a desert.’ W.P. Ryan even appealed for support for the working-class movement through the slogan of the ‘divinity of humanity’, asserting that Ireland’s future labour state depended on both the ‘soul and mind of the people.’

During the formation of the Irish Co-operative Labour Press, the advert for shares in the *Irish Worker* even called on workers to support ‘the holiest fight that has ever been waged in Ireland.’ Even when reflecting on his disagreements with Bill Haywood’s address to the Irish working classes, discussed in chapter one, Captain Jack White claimed he altered Haywood’s remarks by ‘correcting the theology’ of the workers. Such statements demonstrate that the working-class movement saw itself as an essential part of Ireland’s spiritual evolution into the modern world, and that the working classes were the primary agents of progress and change.

The spiritual language expounded by the Irish socialist movement was consciously and deliberately Christian, with many tropes and concepts derived from the New Testament, especially the Sermon on the Mount. This was in line with other Atlantic socialist movements, and occurred despite the fact that these concepts and images were largely associated with Protestant faiths. Some working-class leaders even acknowledged this outside spiritual influence. At his ITUC presidential address, Larkin retold the story of a priest who suggested to him that Ireland build a wall around the nation to keep out Western influences. Larkin responded to the claim by linking Ireland’s working-class mission to the shared religious mission of the Western World, which walls could not contain.

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210 *Irish Worker*, 17 June 1911.
212 The Irish Co-operative Labour Press was formed in 1913 by the *Irish Worker* in the hopes of expanding the paper and its readership. Subscription sheet for Irish Co-operative press shares, 1913, (N.I.L., Librarian’s Office collection, LOP 114).
215 For references to the worshipping of Mammon in socialist party publications, please see, *Justice*, 23 September 1905; *British Socialist*, 15 February 1912; or Robert Blatchford, ‘God and my Neighbour’ (P.H.M., Clarion Pamphlets collection, Box 27 320.62).
The entire movement was, in effect, presented through a spiritual lens. Political campaigns were portrayed as spiritual endeavours. Strikes were compared to Biblical struggles. The working classes were vested with the power to transform not only their economic condition, but also Irish society as a whole. Even basic trade union demands, like wage increases, were depicted as demands for 'our daily bread'. Spiritual, and especially Christian language, was part of the packaging of socialism and the empowerment of the working classes.

Spiritual language was also a way to clearly define who working classes were and who they were not. Those who were seen as betraying the workers were subject to religious indictments that pushed them outside the bounds of the workers' spiritual movement. Opponents were not only defying the working classes, they were proving 'false to God'. Strike breakers, for instance, were compared to Judas, demonised, or depicted as soulless. Nationalist politicians not seen to be advocating strongly enough for the cause of labour were compared to serpents or Judas. Employers were portrayed as men who 'valued neither country, God, or creed'. Such exclusionary statements were a way to provide workers with a sense of moral and spiritual authority. They were intended to indict the Christianity of those who turned against the cause of the workers and were therefore no longer on the side of Christ. This retribution was possible because such opponents were actually working against the new gospel.

While, earlier noted that some practices within the working-class movement, similar to religious institutions, developed from a paternalist approach to the working classes, this language ventured far from this framework. The language of working-class spiritualism was, fundamentally, about working-class agency and control. It operated on the belief that once converted to socialism, workers could become the agents of their own religious destiny. It offered workers a voice within the movement. The language gave the working classes control of their time, environment, and destiny. The belief was that workers, as the face of Christianity, could regulate Ireland's transition to

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217 For an example please see, Belfast Labour Chronicle, March 1905.
218 For an example of a strike represented as Biblical struggles, please see, Irish Worker, March 1893.
219 For an example, please see, the Irish Worker, 19 September 1913.
220 Irish Worker, May 1893.
221 Irish Worker, 19 September 1913.
222 For examples, please see, Irish Worker, 27 May 1911; 18 October 1913, or 15 November 1913.
223 For examples, please see, Irish Worker, 9 September 1911; 23 September; or 15 November 1913.
224 Northern Whig, 18 May 1907.
modernity. Crawford and his 100 supporters were, for instance, more than working-
class dissidents within the established Orange Lodge, they were the ‘vanguards of
Protestant Democracy’ eradicating Ireland’s anachronism, while simultaneously
preserving true Christianity.\textsuperscript{225} Workers were the active agents driving Ireland’s social
and spiritual destiny as well as their own. The labour struggle was a way for individuals
to spark their own awakening.\textsuperscript{226} Joining the ITWGU and the working-class movement
became a way for workers to ‘work on your [their] own salvation.’\textsuperscript{227} Workers’
autonomy remained the core concept underlining the spiritual message.

The concept of control and working-class autonomy was also what distinguished
socialism from Christian social charity. Initially this distinction was not hostile, rather it
was explained through the failures of Christian charity to alleviate working-class
suffering. Religious figures were simply not doing enough.\textsuperscript{228} As the language of
Christian socialism advanced in its militancy critiques became more biting.
Philanthropists were slated for the insulting guidance they offered to the working
classes. As the \textit{Irish Worker} declared, philanthropists ‘deprive them [the working
classes] of their natural independence. Charity is degrading!’\textsuperscript{229} Through its own
language of Christian working-class morality, the working-class movement aimed to give
workers agency and religious autonomy. It was a working-class Christian venture that
sought to remain distinct from both the middle class and organised religions.

The language of socialist spiritualism, therefore, aimed to distinguish the
working-class as a moral vanguard. It offered back to workingmen and workingwomen
some of the powers stripped from them by structural controls implemented by the state
and church. While the promise for true working-class autonomy came only through
support of the working-class movement, the platform at least challenged the notion
that workers could only achieve control by working within bodies that continued to
disenfranchise them. In this regard the platform was attempting to simultaneously bring
spiritual power closer to the hands of the people, and the working-class movement
itself.

\textsuperscript{225} \textit{Irish Independent}, 13 July 1907.
\textsuperscript{226} NUDL flyer: Belfast Branch No. 13, 30 December 1907 (P.R.O.N.I., Michael McKeown papers,
D3338/G/2/1).
\textsuperscript{227} \textit{Irish Worker}, 4 November 1911.
\textsuperscript{228} \textit{Belfast Labour Chronicle}, April 1905.
\textsuperscript{229} \textit{Irish Worker}, 8 July 1911.
The dialogue aimed at unifying workers on a high spiritual plane. It also functioned as cohesive to the religious divides within the working-class movement. Moving beyond sectarianism was depicted as 'reaching a higher spiritual plane' or enacting a modern 'judgment of Solomon'.\textsuperscript{230} Shared Christian customs and values were used to validate interdenominational solidarity within the working-class struggle. Reverend W.J. Calvin's July sermon to the IOO during the 1907 Belfast strike, for example, implored Protestant workers to fight for Catholic workers on the grounds that they shared a common experience of oppression. As such, working for the common good of all workers regardless of faith was presented as a fulfilment of Protestant values. As Reverend Calvin stated:

> It means fellowship with Jesus Christ and loving all men, even to loving and doing good to our enemies. It means the breaking down of all class distinctions and the removing of all racial barriers, that all men, without class or distinction, with the same burdens and fears, hopes and joys, might meet on common ground and before God the Father and Christ the Son join in one voice in saying, "Our Father which art in heaven." Alas! This beautiful motto has been used for separating men and bolstering up class distinction.\textsuperscript{231}

This language was not restricted to Belfast. In the \textit{Irish Worker}, a contributor using the penname, 'A Protestant Worker' called on Catholic Ireland to awake to the work of God.\textsuperscript{232} Such statements of solidarity suggest how a common Christian spiritual outlook could function as a working-class bond. In many ways, this language was used to construct the working-class movement as a religious movement.

The transformation of labour leaders into spiritual leaders was an important element of this process. In some cases, socialists self-identified as religious leaders. For instance, during the 1907 Belfast Strike at the Twelfth of July demonstrations, Alexander Boyd claimed the term agitator did not bother him, 'because the same thing had been said of Moses and the Apostle Paul.'\textsuperscript{233} In most cases, however, members of the working-class movement demanded that their leaders take on such spiritual roles. After Larkin faced criticisms for stating in one speech in Manchester that he had 'the divine authority' to speak for the Irish working classes, William Patrick Partridge defended his

\textsuperscript{230} \textit{Irish Draper}, October 1906 and \textit{Dublin Trade and Labour Journal}, June 1909.
\textsuperscript{231} \textit{Ulster Guardian}, 20 July 1907.
\textsuperscript{232} \textit{Irish Worker}, 15 July 1911.
\textsuperscript{233} \textit{Northern Whig}, 15 July 1907.
choice of words by asserting that Larkin was indeed on a divine mission. Partridge proceeded to compare Larkin to Jesus Christ: 'Divine may also be applied to the work of such as he, for truly many a poor man, woman and child in Dublin can say to Jim Larkin, "I was hungry and you gave me food to eat; I was naked and you clothed me." These comparisons were intentional, and allowed the working-class movement to justify its actions according to Christian morality without the support of any religious leader. The working-class movement was, in effect, its own new religion.

This was further manifested in the quasi-religious traditions that became a key part of working-class symbolism and action. Labour events were accompanied by banners, hymns, and prayers. In doing this, participants were both communicating and acting out Christian traditions. Some socialist songs were highly spiritual in message. Socialist songs circulated around the Atlantic had titles including, 'The Day of the Lord' and 'The Fatherhood of God.' They were intentionally designed to be played to the tune of traditional Christian hymns and to be sung by workers in a similar fashion to Christian choirs. The message was new, but its form was traditional.

The reliance on traditional religious language and focus also resulted in the reassertion of masculine ideals and culture. Masculinity and working-class spiritualism were consistently linked, but much like the language itself, the relationship between these two concepts evolved as the movement progressed. Samuel Monro’s paternalist approach to women captured the fusion of Christian morality and Edwardian masculinity. Monro’s desires to alleviate the suffering of women complemented church social reform initiatives, and thus further bolstered his campaign to generate an air of respectability around working-class politics. This focus worked because it was shared across religious lines. By 1906, the Catholic Truth Society was even advocating for a greater focus on women and children as a way to curb the growth of socialism and labour radicalism.

\[\text{Irish Worker, 27 September 1913.}\]
\[\text{Irish Times, 12 October 1906.}\]
However, for leaders not seeking the approval of religious authorities and instead aiming to assert their own religious voice, using gender norms was a way to undermine the morality of the middle classes, while also laying the foundation for the workers' own religious movement. It was not an uncommon strategy for fin de siècle writing, which commonly depicted female delicacy in opposition to male violence to depict gendered power structures.\(^{237}\) By adding religious critiques writers were able to not only exploit these power structures, but also capitalise on middle-class Christian values for the benefit of working-class aims. These depictions were common across the Atlantic and therefore were seen as effective propaganda pieces for ignited sympathies across national and even religious lines.\(^{238}\) During the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, for instance, the Daily Herald printed a story detailing acts of violence committed by male RIC officers against Dublin working-class women. They story concluded with an image of two women, one young in her nightgown and another old and blind, falling to their knees to pray to Mary as the police raided their home.\(^{239}\) They used similar imagery to challenge the progressive Christian ideal projected by Jacob's Biscuit Factory, with descriptions of women workers starving at work.\(^{240}\) These depictions even prevailed into later histories with C. Desmond Greaves' history of the ITGWU retelling how a baby received a black eye during the event.\(^{241}\) The lasting legacy of these images capture how powerful they really were. The provocative sexual and religious nature of the image was a means of evoking Edwardian sympathies for the plight of Irish workers across religious lines.

Validating historical claims that women often drew limited power from moral and spiritual ideology, the Irish Worker's 'Women Workers' Column' typified the strategy.\(^{242}\) Delia Larkin regularly undermined the Christian authority of male bosses and foremen by critiquing their treatment of female employees through a religious

\(^{237}\) Cain and Sluga, *Gendering European history*, p. 140.
\(^{238}\) Similar criticisms of the US government's labour policy as being unchristian were used by the IWW and the SPA. For examples, please see, 'Resolution of the Protest of the Socialist Party of America from Greensburg Pennsylvania', 1913 (N.A.R.A., Department of Labor Files, Chief Clerks Files, RG174, Box 54); *Appeal to Reason*, 22 March 1913 or 1 November 1913; *Industrial Worker*, 6 May 1909; or *New York Call*, 26 July 1911.
\(^{239}\) Daily Herald, 3 September 1913.
\(^{240}\) Jacob's brought a libel case against the Daily Herald for this image. The paper stated it came from Dublin sources and was simply reprinted. Irish Times, 1 August 1914.
\(^{242}\) Cullen, *Telling it our way*, p. 414.
The column chastised employers as 'disciples of Judas' or demonised them as serpents undermining the Christian faith of the working classes. Opponents' retorts to this dialogue proved just as scathing. They exploited classist, religious, and sexual fears within Irish society by associating labour leaders with deviant religious and sexual practices. Under the title 'Mormonism and Larkinism', the *Toiler* claimed socialists were promoting polygamy and used female participation in Liberty Hall dances events to suggest that women who engaged in labour politics were also engaging in sexual impropriety.

The intersection of class, gender, and religiosity was not exclusive to women. Male engagement in the socialist movement was also called for through appeals that tapped into both spirituality and masculinity, two elements that exposed the underlying imperial consciousness shaping the movement. They were radicals fighting for both the manhood and salvation of the nation, a concept that mirrored the projection of the Irish nationalist movement. The ISRP's propaganda poster for the 1900 royal visit claimed workers needed to 'deliver themselves to the Promised Land' and 'be true to your own manhood' by protesting the royal visit. George Russell's speech at the Albert Hall in London in the wake of Larkin's arrest also drew on highly spiritual imagery by portraying Larkin as both prophet and martyr, while also asserting that Larkin was a man 'who has lifted the curtain which veiled from us the real manhood in the City of Dublin.' Socialism, in effect, aimed to restore both spiritualism and masculinity through working-class activism. This position, too, faced criticisms from anti-socialist circles. The *Toiler*, for instance, used female incorporation into the labour movement to claim that labour leaders had 'debased Irish manhood' and moved the city away from its truly Christian character by allowing women to take part in the working-class movement.

In the aftermath of the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, this language of socialist spiritualism transformed, and began to focus almost exclusively on militant Christian

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243 For examples, please see, the *Irish Worker*, 2 March 1912 or 9 August 1913.
244 For examples, please see, *ibid*, 26 July 1913 or 27 August 1913.
245 *Toiler*, 4 October 1913.
248 The Royal Visit Propaganda Committee Flyer (N.I.I., Librarian's Office collection, LOP 109).
249 *Freeman's Journal*, 4 November 1913.
250 *Toiler*, 27 December 1913

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rhetoric. It drew more heavily on motifs from the Old Testament turning against the evolutionary spiritual lines of the previous years. The added crisis of the failure of the international socialist ideal with the outbreak of the First World War increased anxiety around the fate of the working-class struggle. Labour’s previous post-millennial emphasis on the attainment of the kingdom of heaven on earth now gave way to a more apocalyptic discourse. Leaders invoked images of blood sacrifice, revolution, and redemption in their narratives of Irish working-class advancement.

Retribution for the Lockout served as a springboard towards more militant discourse. It borrowed concepts from the Christian military culture being advanced as part of the wider imperial project, ones that justified violent action in the name of advancing spiritual righteousness. Writing from Tipperary, Patrick White proclaimed that ‘the four hundred Dublin employers will perish, not in the Red Sea, but by the moans and hunger of the poor, which cries to heaven for vengeance.’ These Biblical images were setting the foundation for the later struggle. The Irish Worker’s staff and general contributors promoted this aggressive spiritual language. In an open letter to Dublin workers, Fred Power called on workers to die fighting, for it was better than to ‘live fighting in hell.’ The fight was not over for many even after the strike’s conclusion. The transformation of the event into a holy sacrifice gave it a much deeper and lasting meaning that continued to grow as the spiritual language of the working-class movement evolved.

After the suppression of the Irish Worker, its successor, the Worker, continued the shift. In early January 1915, the paper remained modest in its tone. Traditional, moderate concepts, such as the assertion that voting Labour would mean upholding the ‘laws of God and man alike’ remained. Yet, by the end of January the paper was featuring poems like ‘Swords or Ploughshares’, which professed:

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252 Irish Worker, 8 November 1913.
253 Ibid, 18 October 1913.
254 The Worker, 9 January 1915.
The breaking of the chains of Labour is the telling factor in the salvation of the world. Labour alone can beat the swords into ploughshares, that we may enjoy a blameless peace. Labour alone dare not despair of fulfilling the dreams of the prophet.\(^{255}\)

The poem, and other statements like it, while intended as a criticism of the war, was in fact attempting to lay the spiritual foundation for labour's destiny. It is important to note that this message was being constructed under wartime censorship restrictions implemented under the Defence of Realm Act of 1914. The delicacy of the language was undoubtedly shaped by this circumstance.\(^{256}\) Nevertheless, it implied that working-class action, in any form, was justified on the basis of Christian principals.

Redemption and sacrifice became the slogans of working-class radicalism. At a joint meeting between the ILP and the Irish Neutrality League, working-class leaders used this concept in order to urge workers not to enlist for the war. Workers were instructed to avoid fighting and to instead 'work and study for the redemption of your class.'\(^{257}\) The fact that the message was delivered in a room filled with members of the Irish Citizen Army ensured that it took on a much deeper meaning. Future Labour Party leader Cathal O'Shannon's description of the Irish Neutrality League as simply a propaganda tool to hide plans for labour's future insurrection reveals this implication. Leaders were suggesting that workers needed to do more than simply resist the war to achieve redemption; they needed to actively work on their own spiritual crusade.\(^{258}\)

With the resurrection of the *Workers' Republic* in 1915, calls for working-class militancy increased and the spiritual language framing the movement was further transformed. Initially, the paper focused its efforts on criticising the religious slogans and imagery used in government-sponsored war propaganda. The paper asserted, for

\(^{255}\) Ibid, 30 January 1915.

\(^{256}\) The paper was flagged by British authorities in Ireland and Scotland. While concerns were raised on the first issue due to its shared qualities with its predecessor the *Irish Worker*, action was not taken by senior officials who deemed the paper initially within the Defence of the Realm guidelines. For a full list of reports, please see, Irish Government *Seditious Literature, Censorship, Etc.: Seizure of articles In various journals and other publications: 7. The Worker, Public Control and Administration, 1884-1921* (T.N.A., Dublin Castle Files, CO 904, Boxes 159-178, Public Records Office, London, England. 1915 CO 904/161) (http://go.galegroup.com/gdsc/browseCollection) (5 September 2015).


\(^{258}\) Cathal O'Shannon typescript on the Rising, undated (N.L.I., Cathal O'Shannon papers, MS 18,775/2).
instance, that 'If Peace can only come by War, Christianity has failed.' Christianity became the common thread to which leaders clung. They were still professing working-class spiritual authority, but now their message was being delivered as an indictment of war instead of the employers. Moving closer to 1916, the focus on spiritual objections to violence gave way to Biblical narratives of a class-based holy war. The British Empire was described as 'Godless,' while the workers' struggle was holy. The paper even evoked images of the Passion, claiming 'God's Poor are crucified on a Cross of Gold.'

This increased militancy was not out of line with developments in other Atlantic socialist parties. While socialists were split over the question of support for the war, many of those who resisted used similar militant Christian language and imagery to depict the horrors of battle. The labour and socialist press across the Atlantic became increasingly apocalyptic. However, one of the consequences of the failed internationalist ideal was a more inward focus on the part of each national movement. The rise in advanced nationalist thinking that occurred simultaneously in Ireland, however, generated some difficult intersections for class and religious language, making nationalism appear to be the core aim for Irish working-class redemption. As a result of this focus, Ireland's working-class spiritual movement appeared to be disconnected from Atlantic trends, even though in reality it was not.

A few writers in particular became the voice of the new apocalyptic, nationalist focused message. Maeve Cavanagh, for example, became one of the working-class movement's most prominent and militant writers. Cavanagh's prose focused on sacrifice, martyrdom, and spiritual redemption. In a poem dedicated to James Connolly, she wrote, 'God's Justice might be doubted so. Nay - Vengeance commeth soon.' This poem featured alongside another of Cavanagh's pieces entitled 'Éire', which concluded with the line 'red blood thrills her veins like wine, Her soul has read God's gracious

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259 Worker's Republic, 29 May 1915.
261 Cavanagh's writing circulated across Ireland the United States. Evidence of this still remains from the collections of her material available in Boston. For these materials, please see, Maeve Cavanagh, A voice of insurgency Dublin 1916 (B.P.L., Irish Collection, ACC 69-1033). Printed copies of her poems and additional materials can be found in her collection held at the national library. (N.L.I., Maeve Cavanagh MacDowell papers, MS. 21,560 ACC 3361; MS. 2161 ACC3361; MS. 21562; and MS 21,563 ACC3361).
262 Workers' Republic, 22 April 1916.
The message was apocalyptic and ominously laid the foundation for the ICA's sacrifice.

The language of radical spiritualism, much like the Rising itself, was hard to erase from the working-class movement immediately after 1916. Instead of turning away from the language altogether, working-class leaders simply tried to set back the clock and return to the Christian socialist tradition of earlier years. It was a difficult transition, but one that former leaders, like William O'Brien, hoped could be achieved successfully. The one aspect that Ireland did not give up was its sense of national exceptionalism. This remained a part of the working-class religious dialogue, perhaps ensuring that Ireland would continue to be presented as different and anomalous within the Atlantic World.

Conclusion

In preparation for the First World War, the American government commissioned a President's mediation commission to deal with potential work stoppages. The US Department of Labor provided a summary for the commission that detailed the underlining causes of social unrest was prepared for committee members. Among the many factors identified, the report pointed to religion as being crucially important, stating: 'The world wants a life for the body and soul – for every body and every soul. This conscience, whether ethical or religious, is a factor. It is enough to leaven the mass. There is an awakening.' In spite of Ireland's particularities when it comes to religion and class, the nation and the labour movement were inherently shaped by this perceived awakening. After early 1914, and especially after the outbreak of the First World War, transformations within the religious language of Irish socialism arguably marked a break with developments elsewhere, not for its increasingly apocalyptic character, but instead for its focus on nationalist militancy. Nevertheless, until this

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263 Ibid.
265 'The social unrest' (N.A.R.A., Department of Labor, Chief Clerks Files, RG174/Box 79/6/613).
point, Ireland’s experience was not out of line with European or American trends. Although Irish Christian socialists existed in relatively small numbers throughout this period, Christian Socialist theories shaped many of Ireland’s early working-class radicals’ behaviours and language.

The rapid transformation and radicalisation of Irish socialism’s religious language after the Dublin Lockout was not straightforward. There were still those few who attempted to cling to post-millennial idealism throughout the duration of the First World War. In 1917, Dublin Socialists even tried once again to create a Catholic Socialist movement in Ireland, inviting the Glasgow socialist William Regan over to address an Irish audience. However, whatever potential these efforts had was crushed by both labour’s defeat and the role that some of the movement’s leaders played in Easter 1916. In Belfast, the ILP used its links with Scotland to try and foment peaceful religious opposition to the war. Forward even called on Christian socialist war prayer services to be held across the two islands to pray for peace. Despite these efforts, the dominance of radical religious discourse throughout this period significantly diminished the potential for any of these movements to gain headway. They became the lost voices within the storm.

Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, religious consciousness remained a key part of the Irish working-class radical movement throughout this period. Ireland’s complex religious environment did not eliminate this trend, it only added to the complicated landscape that working-class leaders had to negotiate. Their own religious values, while often questioned by opposing forces, directly shaped their outlook on how to handle this vexing question. Working-class leaders may not always have succeeded in fusing class and religious identities for the Irish working classes, but they certainly tried. This effort came from a deeply held belief that the labour struggle was spiritual in its vision, in its message and in its practice. For many, it was the new religion for the modern world.

267 Forward, 2 January 1915.
Chapter 4: Racial identities and the Irish working-class movement

‘Foolish and vain indeed is the workingman who makes the color of his skin the stepping-stone to his imaginary superiority.’ - Eugene V. Debs

Introduction

In his autobiography of working-class life, *Dublin Made Me*, C. S. Andrews reflected on how British imperial frameworks shaped his attitudes towards race. He described how through reading British comics such as *Chips, Comic Cuts*, and *Magnet* he absorbed 'the correct British imperial attitudes towards the 'Fuzzy Wuzzies', the 'Niggers', and the 'Indian Nabbobs.' In a similar fashion, Andrews described the 1907 Dublin Exhibition as the manifestation of British imperial attitudes in Irish society. At the time, he claimed, 'all Dublin adopted, of course, British Imperial attitudes towards the lesser breeds and in the Somali village, the natives were exhibited much like zoo animals.' Andrew's post-colonial assertion that Irish attitudes towards race were produced by British imperial frameworks captures the legacy of British colonial rule.

The long-term consequences of these claims have, however, helped to unintentionally absolve Irish society from any guilt arising from the country's racial tensions. In a contemporary context, this position has resulted in the negation of the role that immigration, economic factors, and cultural encounters play in generating racial tensions. Rather than seeing such tensions as emerging from within Irish society itself, it is often claimed that they are the result of the legacy of British colonial rule. Studies on racism against Irish travellers, European settlers, and migrant communities in contemporary Ireland have sought to raise awareness of the continuation of racial discourse into present day Irish society, challenging the assumption that racism ended with British rule. Some, like Robbie McVeigh and Ronin Lentin, have done this, while

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3 Ibid, p. 34.
4 For examples of these works, please see, Micheál Hayes, 'Indigenous Otherness: some aspects of Irish Traveller social history' in *Eire-Ireland*, 41, 3 (2007), 133-61; Micheál McCrón, *Prejudice and tolerance in* 233
still attributing the roots of modern Irish racism to British colonial legacies on Irish culture. Ronan Fanning, on the other hand, has placed greater emphasis on the environment in which Irish nationalism solidified. He has argued that since Irish national identity was formed largely in the nineteenth century, it was prone to racialised constructs of Irishness, leaving modern Irish society with a racialised national framework.

These interpretations touch upon wider debates on Irish culture, its relationship to the British Empire, and the legacy of colonisation. Deconstructing Ireland’s relationship with the British Empire has been at the heart of Irish historiography since its inception and with the recent cultural turn, contemporary studies of Irish culture have opened new perspectives into how the British Empire and British imperialism affected Irish identity beyond its national forms. These include whether Irish working-class identity is subaltern; whether the Irish possess imperial outlooks on race; and whether the Irish offer new perspectives on the complexities of whiteness.

Defenders of the ‘whiteness thesis’, outlined in the introduction, focus much of their attention on outside forces constructing Irish racial identity, whether it be the state, the church or the media. This chapter seeks to break from this perspective by placing agency for racial consciousness with the Irish working classes and their leaders. In doing this, it does not refute claims that the Irish were pushed to the margins or outside the boundaries of whiteness by structural forces, rather it seeks to explore how Irish working-class leaders engaged with concepts of whiteness within the working-class movement.

This chapter will contribute to the debate on the formation of Irish racial identity by exploring how the Irish working-class movement attempted to use a language of race to define the boundaries of Irish working-class identity. In doing so, the intent is not to

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Ireland (Dublin, 1997); Steve Garner, ‘Ireland: from racism without “race” to racism without racists’ in Radical History Review (Spring, 2009), pp 41-56; Jane Hellenier, Irish Travellers: racism and the politics of culture (Toronto, 2000).

5 Ronit Lentin and Robbie McVeigh (eds), Racism and anti-racism in Ireland (Belfast, 2002), p. 18.

6 Ronan Fanning, Guests of the Irish nation (Dublin, 2009), pp 4-5.

7 For examples please see, Howe, Ireland and empire; Howe, ‘Colonized and coloniser’, pp 65-82; Stephen Howe, ‘Questioning the (bad) question: “Was Ireland a colony?” in Irish Historical Studies, 36, 142 (November 2008), pp 138-52; Terence McDonagh, Was Ireland a colony? Economics, politics and culture in nineteenth century Ireland (Dublin, 2005); or Christine Kinealy, ‘At home with the Empire: the example of Ireland’ in Hall and Rose (eds), At home with the empire, pp 77-100. 234
reject colonial consciousness and British imperial influences on Irish culture, rather it is an attempt to supplement these perspectives by exposing the wider Atlantic influences of Irish working-class racialisation. As will be shown, working-class racial frameworks existed within the Atlantic working-class movement and shaped the working-class image projected by Atlantic radicals. Irish labour and socialist leaders used these broader frameworks when crafting their own image of Irish working-class racial identity. As such, they constitute a key element at the root of the processes of Irish racialisation.

Historians of race have noted that the development of racial consciousness can vary based on localism, temporalities, and wider global contexts. Although this chapter will focus largely on national questions and Atlantic influences, it will also consider certain cases when particularly intense racial dynamics were played out on a local level. Such cases demonstrate the plurality and fluidity of racial identities, and warn against any attempt to define the ‘nature’ of Irish working-class racial identity in the singular. Instead, this chapter seeks to understand the processes by which the Irish working-class movement constructed its own vision of racial identity for Irish workers. How it did so was of great significance in shaping Ireland’s connection to the Atlantic World.

The working-class foreigner: ‘Othering’ in the Irish working-class movement

Identifying the ‘outsider’ in Ireland can be difficult due to Ireland’s connection to the British Empire and its significant emigrant population. This task is further complicated due to the fact that, as in other parts of the world, the ‘Other’ depicted within working-class discourse had different manifestations on the local, national and international levels. This phenomenon explains how, on a local level, rural Irish migrants could be portrayed as ‘foreign’ within the Irish labour movement. On a national scale, matters were equally complex as Irish identity and membership of the Irish race were, paradoxically, neither restricted to the island nor open to everyone born within the

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8 David Montgomery, ‘Empire, race, and working-class mobilizations’ in Peter Alexander and Rick Halpern (eds), Racializing class, classifying race: labour and difference in Britain, the USA and Africa (London, 2000), p. 1

9 For further information on this topic, please see, chapter one. 235
nation's borders. Irish working-class racial identity could thus transcend national boundaries, while simultaneously restricting entry to Irish citizens. Complicating this issue further, racial exclusion from Irish working-class identity, as will be seen, could occur as a result of beliefs and patterns of behaviour perceived as opposed to working-class aims. As such, the image of the Irish working-class race captures the intersection of nativist consciousness, imperial frameworks, and working-class morality.

The image of the outsider was therefore crucially important to the articulation of an Irish working-class racial identity. This occurred, however, against a demographic backdrop that contained relatively few actual outsiders. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Ireland's population remained largely Irish. As table 4.1 shows, the few Irish residents who were born outside Ireland came overwhelmingly from the Atlantic World.

Table 4.1 Reported birthplace of Irish residents born outside of Ireland, 1891-1911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Others</th>
<th>American</th>
<th>Scottish</th>
<th>English and Welsh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1891, 1901, and 1911 censuses reveal some changes that were taking place. The size of Ireland’s English, Welsh, and Scottish-born populations increased from 2.16 per cent of the overall Irish population in 1891 to 2.41 per cent in 1901, and again to 2.93 per cent in 1910.\(^\text{10}\) Of these, the most significant rise occurred among Scottish-born residents whose presence in Ireland increased by over 10 per cent from 1891 to 1901, mainly in the Ulster area.\(^\text{11}\) Outside of those from the United Kingdom, American-born residents constituted the next largest group.\(^\text{12}\) Remaining groups came largely from parts

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\(^{10}\) Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1 p. 30, table 25.


\(^{12}\) Ibid, p. 300.

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of the British Empire, particularly India, though, as will be explained, this group tended to be Irish citizens who were born abroad.\textsuperscript{13}

In relation to the overall Irish population, these numbers were minor. The total number of residents born in Continental Europe was 18,905, or approximately 0.4 per cent of the overall Irish population, the number born in Asia was 198, or 0.05 per cent of the population, the number born in Africa was 182, or 0.04 per cent of the population, and finally, the number born in the Americas was 12,763, or 0.29 per cent of the population.\textsuperscript{14} Combined, these groups represent 2.61 per cent of the total population in 1891, 2.96 per cent in 1901, and a mere 3.57 per cent in 1910.\textsuperscript{15} However, even these small figures must be approached with caution. A number of individuals born in foreign parts of the British Empire were in fact children of Irish-born foreign diplomats, civil servants in the colonial office, or British Army members.\textsuperscript{16} Similarly, a number of those born in America, Scotland, England or Australia were children of Irish emigrants returning home, who despite a foreign birth, identified as Irish.

The degree to which foreign birth contributed to the diversity of the Irish population as a whole is therefore negligible. This picture is not entirely uniform, however, as while the Irish countryside remained largely unaffected by the presence of new-comers, Irish cities experienced some small growth. Even here, some were more affected than others, particularly towns and cities that experienced significant population increases during these years. From 1891 to 1901 in Belfast, for instance, the population rose by 51.18 per cent, in Waterford it rose by 37.07 per cent, in Dublin it rose by 24.4 per cent, and in Derry it rose by 22.83 per cent.\textsuperscript{17} The major outlier to this pattern was Cork city, where the population remained relatively steady, only increasing by 1.76 per cent during these years.

As mentioned in chapter one, social historians have shown that Irish urban growth was predominately the result of domestic migration, as many rural workers left

\textsuperscript{13} Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, p. 31, table 26.
\textsuperscript{14} Calculated from real figures provided in Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, p. 31, table 26.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, p. 30.
\textsuperscript{16} The British Colonial Office opened positions to Irish applicants in 1855 and a number of middle-class Irish applicants trained for positions in Dublin private colleges. Ciaran O’Neill, ‘Education, imperial careers and the Irish Catholic elite in the nineteenth century’ in Dickson, Pyz, and Shepard (eds), Irish Classrooms and British Empire, p. 102.
\textsuperscript{17} These figures were calculated using real numbers provided in Vaughan and Fitzpatrick (eds), Irish Historical Statistics. 237
their homes for temporary stays in Irish cities, before emigrating permanently. In addition to these rural migrants, however, Ireland’s cities did host a moderately sized non-Irish born population. As shown in table 4.2, metropolitan centres contained small overall percentages of non-Irish born populations.

### Table 4.2: Major Irish cities with residents of non-Irish birth, 1911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Per cent Population of All Non-Irish Births</th>
<th>Per cent Population from England and Wales</th>
<th>Per cent Population from Scotland</th>
<th>Per cent Population from British Empire</th>
<th>Per cent Population from Other Foreign Nations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>8.04%</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>3.22%</td>
<td>0.32%</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
<td>3.15%</td>
<td>0.38%</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>0.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>11.90%</td>
<td>6.24%</td>
<td>4.05%</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
<td>0.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>2.26%</td>
<td>1.15%</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>0.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Londonderry</td>
<td>3.67%</td>
<td>1.19%</td>
<td>1.86%</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
<td>0.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
<td>1.85%</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
<td>0.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, pp. 30-1.

Belfast and Dublin, for instance, each claimed the highest percentage of residents declaring non-Irish births. While these numbers remained higher than the national average, it is important to note that most of these residents came from the somewhat familiar surroundings of Scotland, England or Wales.

There is some evidence to show non-Irish populations were more prominent in some industries than others. This is particularly evident among foreign-born women. The top occupation for women, for instance, was either teacher or governess. These percentages include totals for county boroughs, which include city centres and surrounding county areas. Since Dublin County and Dublin County Borough are reported separately, these figures were added together before determining percentages. After being converted to percentage, decimals were rounded out to the nearest hundredth place point. Cities were selected based on highest percentages for foreign nationals outside of the United Kingdom. This is excluding 484 seamen who were listed in census totals, but not counted as part of the permanent non-Irish population. Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, p. 32, table 27.

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18 Daly, A socio-economic history of Ireland since 1800, p. 103. For further information, please see chapter one.
19 These percentages include totals for county boroughs, which include city centres and surrounding county areas. Since Dublin County and Dublin County Borough are reported separately, these figures were added together before determining percentages. After being converted to percentage, decimals were rounded out the nearest hundredth place point. Cities were selected based on highest percentages for foreign nationals outside of the United Kingdom. This is excluding 484 seamen who were listed in census totals, but not counted as part of the permanent non-Irish population. Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, p. 32, table 27.
women tended to be single, from Continental Europe, and they often lived with their employer. They were thus trebly isolated from the Irish working-class movement as a result of their gender, national identity, and occupation. For foreign-born men over the age of 20, the leading occupations were general labourer, draper, shopkeeper, and tailor, which were all industries actively targeted by Irish working-class leaders for inclusion in the working-class movement. As such, the presence of non-native Irish in these industries played a more significant part in the working-class dialogue. Even with this fact in mind, it is still important to note that in the most heavily 'foreign' industries in large urban centres, the non-Irish born population still remained marginal.

Despite their absence from the workforce and the population, these outsiders had a disproportionate presence in Irish working-class discourse. One of the more important effects of the limited presence of non-native Irish workers in Ireland was the rather broad connotation given to the term 'foreigner' within the Irish working-class movement. Similar to most Atlantic movements, it was usually used in reference to the global capitalist market. In Irish labour disputes, for instance, the term was used against Irish employers, bankers, and entrepreneurs whether or not they were native to Ireland. Labels like 'foreign adventurer', 'the foreign capitalist', or the 'foreign investor' were all used to imply that the business classes were somehow less Irish. There was an element of truth to these claims, as Irish industry was significantly influenced by the contribution of foreign businessmen. On the surface, these statements reflected a nationalist interpretation of Irish economic problems. On a deeper level, however, they were used to reject modernity, disassociate the Irish working classes from capitalist desires, and distinguish Irish workers from the middle classes with whom they shared a national identity. Due to this, this language reveals more about the image of working-class identity that labour leaders were trying to project than it does about the nature of Irish capitalism. Such statements were part of a broader campaign to assert that Irish workers were the holders of Irish national identity and were fighting to preserve this identity through working-class action; anyone outside of this narrative, therefore, had to be less Irish.

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21 Ibid, pp 32-5.
22 For examples to these remarks in the Irish socialist and labour press, please see, the Dublin Trade and Labour Journal, 3 July 1909; Workers' Republic, 21 October 1899; or Irish Worker, 27 May 1911, 6 April 1912, and 13 April 1911.
Such racialised statements were not ubiquitous, however, and at times labour leaders issued contradictory messages. For instance, when the *Irish Peasant* reported that the SPI stood alongside Sinn Féin in complaining of the exploitation of Irish workers at the hands of foreigners, William O’Brien felt obliged to reply, marking a clear distinction between socialists’ outlook on foreigners. O’Brien admitted to SPI participation in the protest, but asserted that the foreign aspect of it was irrelevant. As he quipped: ‘if one is to be cooked I fail to see any material difference in being served up with Kandee Sauce instead of Yorkshire Relish.’\(^2^4\) Such mixed messages perhaps developed in part from the SPI’s increasing shift, by 1907, into nationalist politics.

This streamlining of Irish racial identity, nationalism, and class critiques did impose limits on the use of a language of racial difference by the labour movement. This was particularly the case where the Irish industrial revival and the nationalist movement worked together to promote native Irish economic growth that was communicated through a language of a common Irish racial struggle. As mentioned previously, this was the arena where labour, the church, and nationalists found most of their common ground.\(^2^5\) As a result, critiques from the trade union movement tended to be more restrained. The *Dublin Trade and Labour Journal*, for instance, ran an article warning workers that ‘Ireland must realise that society is changing rapidly, the capitalist class in Ireland is being re-enforced by the influx of foreign capitalists with their soulless, sordid, money-grubbing propensities.’\(^2^6\) They still deployed foreign scare tactics, but here they were careful to draw a clear distinction between the foreign employer and his Irish counterpart, who were not necessarily branded as foreign due to their class.

One clear benefit to its unapologetic critiques of middle-class nationalist leaders was that the *Irish Worker* did not have to maintain such delicate political commentary as the DCTU. The paper’s criticisms of foreignism in Irish industry were severe. The most frequent form these criticisms took was in regard to employer and employee relations. The paper would make a point to note non-Irish employers’ national identity, when criticising their anti-working-class behaviour. These attacks made radical working-class demands appear more authentic, but they also challenged older conservative trade-

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\(^2^4\) *Irish Peasant*, 7 September 1907.

\(^2^5\) For reference to shared interests of nationalists, church and labour in industrial advancement, please see, chapter three.

\(^2^6\) *Dublin Trade and Labour Journal*, 3 July 1909.

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union mentalities, which asserted that employers and employees had mutual national and economic interests. Employers were Frenchmen, Scotsmen, and Englishmen, identities derived simply from having surnames that sounded 'non-Irish'. For example, during the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, a contributor from Cork claimed that the Employers Federation, formed in opposition to the strikers, was noticeably non-Irish. He wrote:

When one analyses the lists of Dublin and Cork Federation Employers one is struck by the paucity of Irish names in the lists. I marvel at the impudence of Jacob, the Jew, and numerous other aliens who have made fortunes here having the impudence to speak for the trade and commerce of the Irish capital. Scan the lists of the coal combine and count the Irish names.

The paper's female contributors were just as likely to use such language as men. In the 'Women Workers' Column' a contributor described city employers as, 'German Jews, French nondescripts, English ex-hired assassins, and informers like the "Kaiser" Dunne.' This sought to ignite class grievances by appealing to national sentiments. In doing this, however, it was reaffirming that foreigners were more likely to be opponents to the working-class movement.

The identification of employers as foreign, however, did not address the issue of nationalist employers, who shared a racial identity with workers and often supported Irish nationalist aims. In these instances, leaders made provisions dealing with the dilemma of race and nationalism over class:

The worst employers in Ireland are Irishmen. Not only do they pay low wages when industries are in their infancy-this is only natural-but the more powerful they become the worse they treat their employees. We are repeatedly called upon to give a preference to Irish manufacture, even though it may be a little dearer or of lower quality than foreign. We are anxious to help anyone who comes here to start industries, but we are not going to make sacrifices for them unless they in return are prepared to treat us fairly.

The point could have been interpreted as simply a nationalist critique if the writer had not gone on to argue that he would prefer to shop at a business owned by an Irishman.

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27 This nationalist outlook is was the framework dominating older schools of trade union leadership and is characteristic of trade union nationalist leaders like J.P. Nannetti. For further information please see, Maume, The long gestation, p. 237.
28 For examples, please see, the Irish Worker, 16 March 1912; 2 August 1913; or 9 August 1913.
29 Irish Worker, 20 September 1913.
30 Ibid, 27 August 1913.
instead of a Jew, but he would shop at the store owned by a Jew if the Jewish employer treated his workers better. The racialised aspects of these passages were not out of place in a pre-war context dominated by nationalist sentiment. Nonetheless, they are reflective of the barriers working-class leaders were trying to craft around the Irish workers in order to separate them from their employers.

Racial distinctions were not only poised between employers and workers, however. They were also applied within the working-class movement to separate Irish workers from those who were deemed outside the boundaries of Irish racial identity. The focus on native industries preached by the Irish Industrial Association played a part in this process early on as workforces, along with industry, were expected to be free from foreign influence, including workers living within Ireland who were viewed as non-Irish. ‘Irish made’ and ‘made by Irish labour’ were frequent forms of advertisement used in working-class organs, even amongst labour leaders proclaiming an internationalist working-class vision. For example, the Cash Tailoring Company used Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and Frederick Ryan’s paper, the *National Democrat*, to advertise, in bold, that there was ‘No Foreign Labour’ in their company.32 The remark had direct implications for Dublin’s prominent Jewish tailors, and intended to place this manifestly Irish community outside the boundaries of Irish identity. While one could argue that the advert did not reflect the views of Sheehy-Skeffington or Ryan, it should at least challenge the notion that these men were completely detached from racial discourse.33

Feeding this popular dialogue of racial exclusion was the capricious employment conditions in Irish cities that ensured that unskilled workers remained afraid of outsiders taking Irish jobs. This fear led to a belief, shared by working-class communities across the Atlantic, that foreigners were a threat to the Irish working classes. The Irish labour movement perpetuated this fear, hoping that labour agitation in any form would motivate Irish workers to act on working-class concerns. The labour and socialist press generated sensationalised images of the foreign strike breaker to serve as the opponent

32 *National Democrat*, February 1907.
33 In his work on Irish Orientalism, Joseph Lennon used Frederick Ryan and James Connolly as examples of socialists who approach race through an anti-colonial lens. This is not an uncommon approach to radicals in Ireland whose interaction with racial discourse is almost exclusively documented through their critiques of British imperial culture without reflecting on how these men used racial discourse to reinforce racial boundaries. For further information, please see, Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: a literary and intellectual history* (Syracuse, New York, 2004), pp 215, 234-41.
to the Irish worker. For example, during the height of the 1913-14 Dublin Lockout, a
writer to the *Irish Worker* complained about how the remaining supervisors and
workers at Bewley & Drapers Ltd were all Scottish. In a similar manner, the ‘Women
Workers’ Column’ reported that the only individuals still working and receiving a living
wage at Savoy’s were ‘two Germans, a Frenchman, and an Englishman.’ These
accounts implied that a lack of Irish identity correlated to an increased likelihood to
betray the working-class movement and that these non-national forces were working
with foreign capitalists to prevent Irish working-class success. Working-class morality
and behaviours were therefore linked to an inherent national consciousness.

This ‘national core’ of Irish working-class morality was portrayed as being
naturally communal, radical, and progressive, and was positioned against the opponents
of the working-class movement. Adding to this racialised outlook was the idea that
these behaviours were more than social and that they had biological roots. Actions
outside of working-class morality could be passed on from generation to generation,
suggesting that working-class identity had genetic roots. For instance, writing into the
*Irish Worker*, J. Coffey claimed that all men who continued to work on the Dublin
tramcars during the 1913-14 strike ‘branded their children forever.’ Such statements
implied that membership of, or exclusion from, the Irish working-class could be
inherited through blood-lines. This dialogue revealed part of the biological claims
attributed to a working-class identity that were in part used to push individuals outside
the movement.

These fears of foreignness often proved simply to be nationalist-inspired myths.
Since the *Irish Worker* published the names and addresses of alleged strike-breakers
during the 1913-14 Lockout, it is evident that many were in fact Irish, and even came
from the same local communities as strikers themselves. The fact that their decision to
work stood in opposition to the working-class identity that labour leaders were trying to
project was a source of considerable tension. In response, labour leaders grasped on to

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34 *Irish Worker*, 11 October 1913.
36 Ibid, 27 August 1913.
37 For lists and address information for non-union laborers working through the Lockout please see, the
*Irish Worker*, 27 August 1913; 30 August 1913; 27 September 1913; 4 October 1914; 11 October 1913.
There is evidence of workers being recruited from Liverpool, Manchester, and Lancashire. Even in this
case, the retention and recruitment of Irish workers during the strike still remained the primary outlet.
For further information please see, *Irish Times*, 15 November 1913; Yeates, Lockout: Dublin 1913, p. 303
or McCaffery, ‘Jacob’s women workers during the 1913 Lock-out’, p. 125.
those few instances where non-union labourers were foreign workers in order to enhance a clear line of distinction between union and non-union labour.

The use, either alleged or real, of outside labour forces during strikes certainly enhanced the racialised worldview of the Irish labour movement. The only problem with such critiques was that the importation of workforces into Ireland was not as common as in other parts of the United Kingdom. As was addressed in chapter one, the limited attempts to build solidarity between rural and urban workers meant that temporary workforces from rural Ireland could easily be obtained to fill unskilled positions during strikes. When labour forces were needed from outside, they most often came from Scottish and English cities, making their ‘foreignness’ a contested concept both due to Ireland’s position in the United Kingdom and given the fact that these cities contained a significant population of members of the Irish diaspora who were undoubtedly recruited to fill these positions. The connected shipping lines running between Belfast and Liverpool meant it was common to hear of ‘foreign’ Liverpool workers being used as ‘scab labour’ during Irish strikes.38

Yet, even despite the limited extent of their ‘foreignness’, temporary workforces such as these remained physically and mentally separated from the Irish working-class population. This was even the case amongst Ulster Unionist populations, where a shared sense of Britishness did not correlate to an inclusion of replacement English workers into Irish working-class identity. During the 1907 Belfast Dock Strike, for example, Liverpool workers were housed temporarily on a steamer in the docks. These workers got into frequent disputes with the local community when they attempted to venture into the city.39 This physical disconnect only increased perceptions of difference. In response to this, Larkin, a Liverpool native himself, proposed a resolution to the BUTC condemning the importation of ‘hundreds of foreign blacklegs into Belfast for the purpose of trying to smash the men’s union.’40 Larkin’s use of the term foreign reflects both a common part of industrial disputes and the complications of the word in an Irish context.

38 Examples of strikes where workers from Liverpool are brought in to replace Irish workers are the 1890 Cork National Union of Dock Labourers’ Strike, the 1903 Lough Swilly Railway Dispute, or the 1907 Belfast Dock Strike. For evidence of these instances please see, Justice, 19 April 1890; Derry People, 7 December 1903; Northern Whig, 9 May 1907.
39 Or reference to Liverpool labour, please see, Northern Whig, 8 May 1907; 3 June 1907; 26 June 1907 or Ulster Guardian, 1 June 1907.
40 Northern Whig, 7 June 1906.
The othering of English workforces also occurred in contexts beyond strikes. Complaints against the introduction of outside labour into Ireland to replace Irish workforces were common topics for local trades councils. In Drogheda, for instance, in 1892 bakers went on strike over the issue of imported labour.⁴¹ In 1896, the DCTU complained of imported workers from Liverpool being used to fill government contracts.⁴² This anxiety nurtured a distinct sense of difference between Irish workers and British workers, who otherwise could have been seen as sharing a common racial identity.

This outlook only served to further complicate the nature of the outsider. The 'foreign scab' could signify someone from outside the Irish nation or simply someone who did not conform to the narrative generated by the leaders of the working-class movement. Like middle-class Irish bosses, some workers were deemed foreign because they did not fit into the image that Irish working-class leaders were trying to create. These definitions proved highly complex in an Irish context, where working-class identity could both include and exclude Britishness. William Walker's complaints about the description of the English and Scottish as foreigners in Ireland capture the dilemma. Walker regularly asserted that Ireland was part of a movement within the United Kingdom and, more broadly, of an international working-class movement. Yet, his concerns with foreign influences in the Irish working-class movement pose a contradiction to his expansive definitions of Irish working-class identity.⁴³

These instances show that in spite of the absence of a significant foreign population or the importation of a foreign workforce, the racialised image of the 'Other' still permeated the Irish working-class movement. The foreign scab, the foreign business owner, the Irish boss who betrays his race, or even the Irish worker who works against his working-class community were all pushed into a category of an 'Other.' This was a powerful language, but its boundaries were not rigid and, depending on their good, moral behaviour, certain 'Others' could potentially be admitted, or at least tolerated, such as English or Scottish workers or even middle-class members whose politics kept them supportive of working-class reforms. Racial discourse was a tool and something working-class leaders not only condoned, but actively encouraged as a way to mould

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⁴¹ Dundalk Democrat, 6 August 1892.
⁴² DCTU Minutes, 14 September 1896 (N.L.I., Dublin Council of Trade Unions records, MS 12,779) viewed at the Irish Working Class History Museum.
working-class identity. The process reveals the existence of an imperial racial consciousness amongst both labour leaders and the working classes that was present both through Ireland's connection to the wider culture of the British Empire, but also a more extensive network of Anglo-American working-class movements that employed such tactics to solidify white working-class radicalism across the Atlantic World.

Positioning Irish working-class identity in an Atlantic racial framework

One of the obstacles in identifying Atlantic-imperial influences on the Irish working-class movement is that it requires distinguishing influences coming from the British Empire from those of the Atlantic World. Historians have already exposed the existence of imperial racial mentalities within the ILP, the SDF, and the British Labour Party. Undoubtedly, Ireland's complex relationship with the British Empire played a significant role in shaping Irish racial consciousness and the connections maintained between British and Irish labour movements caused this mentality to permeate the Irish movement. Supplementing this was the wider popular cultural forces reaching the Irish working classes. A combination of cheap print materials, the popularity of music halls, and wide-spread interest in industrial exhibitions meant that many of the British imperial 'vehicles of propaganda' identified by John Mackenzie all existed in Irish society. In addition to these influences are, however, the imperial racial hierarchies maintained throughout the wider Atlantic World.

Atlantic socialists projected a white working-class identity as being the core agent of working-class internationalism. This was done in part by establishing a separate Anglo-American network under the umbrella of the wider international movement. This was not always concealed, as Atlantic nations formed separate English-speaking

45 For evidence of cheap literature in Irish society, please see, David Dickson, Dublin: the making of a capital city, p. 391. For music halls in Ireland, please see, Patrick Maume, 'Music hall unionism: Robert Martin and the politics of stage-Irishman' in Gray (ed.), Victoria's Ireland?, pp 69-87. For evidence of industrial exhibitions, please see, John Turpin, 'Ireland's progress: the Dublin Exhibition of 1907' in Eire Ireland, 17, 1 (1982), pp 31-8. For details on how these are used as vehicles of imperial propaganda, please see, John Mackenzie, Propaganda and empire.
associations in order to advance socialism within the white world.\textsuperscript{46} This imperial framework was also communicated through socialist discourse. Concern for socialist advancement was discussed in a language of modernity that was intrinsic to imperial discourse. Socialism’s success hinged on the continued evolution of American or European values, which were equated with modern civilised society.

The distinction between the civilised and uncivilised societies provides a window through which to explore the racial consciousness shaping the working-class movement. Non-European influences in Western culture were treated as potential threats to socialist advancement. In an article on voodoo, for example, the American Socialist Labour paper, the \textit{People}, depicted sexualised images of men and women dancing violently together while naked. The article labelled it modern debauchery. More important than the message was perhaps the packaging of the article; it opened and closed by merging the exotic and uncivilised world with that of the white working classes. The article decried that ‘these sacred practices have been witnessed by whites’, and concluded that these ‘superstitions more or less current among the negroes of Louisiana, under the general name of voodoo, are without a doubt relics of savagery brought by the ancestors of the civilised negroes from Africa.’\textsuperscript{47} These fears of foreign cultural influences penetrating Atlantic working-class communities expose a wider outlook on race, culture, and civilisation. Imperial topographies of society that distinguished between the civilised and the uncivilised had an important place in the working-class movement.

These dialogues, in part, generated from the profile of the socialist movement itself; it was a movement mostly of white European and American males.\textsuperscript{48} Moving beyond just the composition of the movement to the mentality guiding it, Kornel Chang argued that socialist internationalism reflected the values of Anglo-American society, values that sanctioned wider imperial constructions of race. As he argued, ‘this imagining of a transnational working-class community was, however, not a statement of universal solidarity but a racialised vision predicated on white racial unity.’\textsuperscript{49} Other

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Justice}, 22 February 1890.
\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Weekly People}, 5 April 1891.
\textsuperscript{48} For writings on the limitations of Internationalism to European communities and white males please see, MacDonald, ‘Workers of the world unite?’, pp 177-93.
\textsuperscript{49} Chang, ‘Circulating race and empire’, p. 678.
historians have acknowledged this perspective, but were quick to dismiss it as being a product of the limited ideological foundation of socialism at this time. They instead push the responsibility onto Marx, claiming his unclear definition of international society caused working-class leaders to fall back on liberal images of the European state and civilisation.\textsuperscript{50} Whether the blame stems from Marx's lack of clarity or the liberal imperial consciousness moulding socialist leaders' thinking, the experience of the Irish working-class movement largely validates Chang's conclusions that a general belief in the superiority of a white Atlantic culture existed within the radical working-class movement. Irish working-class identity was crafted by leaders through an Anglo-American framework and, as a result, it clung to an image of working-class identity that was Christian, male, and white.

Similar to Atlantic nations, Irish racial boundaries were re-enforced not only through a direct language of race, but through wider discourses of modernity, civilisation, and imperialism that maintained racial distinctions. Working-class rights were associated with the values of equality and humanity championed by nations supposedly at the forefront of civilisation. The interrelated questions of modernity and civilisation were littered throughout the Irish socialist press and were employed frequently in the ITUC.\textsuperscript{51} While these concepts were employed both by Unionists and Nationalist labour leaders, they were most frequently used by the latter to expose the injustice Irish working classes experienced under British rule. At the 1911 ITUC, for instance, D.R. Campbell focused part of his presidential address on the decision of the British government not to extend the programme of feeding school children to Ireland, claiming the policy was 'incompatible with our claim to be a civilised community' and arguing further that the policy condoned the treating of the Irish 'more barbarous than the lowest animal'.\textsuperscript{52} These complaints came with an understanding that the Irish, like the British, were part of a civilised and modern culture and therefore entitled to the benefits awarded to that identity. This link existed largely through the embrace by the Irish of their own whiteness. It was a shared identity that existed through race.

\textsuperscript{50} James Nayall, \textit{Nationalism and international society} (Cambridge, 1990), p. 8.

\textsuperscript{51} For examples of this language, please see, ITUC 1900, p. 35; ITUC 1901, p. 10; 1905, p. 34; ITUC 1914, p. 95; ITUC 1917, p. 10 (N.A.I., Digital Collections) (http://divi.test.roomthree.com/) (6 January 2014).

Irish claims to be part of a wider Atlantic ‘modern’ and ‘civilised’ world were further supported by the Irish labour movement’s overtly masculine language, which fused imperial views of race and gender. Imperial discourse championed masculinity and whiteness as the cornerstones of civilised society. In turn, femininity and non-white identity were associated with the immoral, savage, and weak. The Irish working-class movement’s overt masculine assertions therefore served the dual purpose of affirming the movement’s imperial gender and racial identities. Descriptions of the ITUC as being ‘a great gathering of the sturdy Irish manhood’ tasked with advancing Irish civilisation stemmed from this imperial outlook on the world, in which white masculine virtue remained supreme. Irish labour leaders intentionally employed this language as a means of affirming the position of the Irish working-class movement within this wider Atlantic imperial hierarchy.

The equation of the workers’ cause with the values of civilised society rested on the crafting of difference between the cause of Irish workers and that of the ‘uncivilised world.’ The Irish leadership accepted the superiority of white European and Atlantic values and as such duly positioned themselves within this higher strata of the world order. Irish labour leaders affirmed this position by limiting their discussions of working-class internationalist aims to Atlantic and European constructs of internationalism. Speaking to the ITUC, for example, Belfast labour leader, John Murphy, claimed internationalism was an alliance of all ‘European nations’ because the labour question was ‘practically the same in all civilised countries.’ In the very first issue of the Harp, James Connolly declared that the Irish were an international race. Pointing to the French, Italians, Scandinavians, British, and Danes with whom the Irish mixed, he asserted that the Irish had ‘cousins and blood brothers practically all over Europe.’ As internationalist as the article claimed to be, it still framed internationalism within the parameters of a white European identity. It asserted that the Irish were indeed international, but only in a European sense of the word.

ITUC 1895, p. 11 (N.L.I., Irish Trade Union Congress Records, P3212).
Harp, January 1908.
His biographer, Austen Morgan, did raise this issue in his work. In keeping with the language of the time, Morgan referenced this by noting Connolly’s omission of the non-civilised. Morgan, *James Connolly*, 249.
The Irish labour leadership furthered their claim to higher civilisation by using foreign cultures and values to depict social and economic policies that were contrary to modernity. For instance, at the 1895 ITUC, President James Jolly complained about the lack of technical education available to Irish workers. He did this by asserting that Ireland was falling behind industrialised nations like Germany and England because the nation’s leading university, Trinity College Dublin, held on to a ‘Chinese system of education, which no other progressive people in the world would willingly accept.’ Comparisons like these captured the perspective Irish leaders maintained towards global societies, and the clear limitations they placed on Irish internationalism or working-class racial inclusivity.

Muting these clear dialogues of racial distinction are the counter narratives of inclusivity, which offer tempting counter-arguments to the working-class movement’s imperial racial consciousness. Working-class leaders did indeed identify racial divisions as an obstacle that the Irish working-class movement must overcome. The term ‘race’, however, was often used interchangeably to describe the cultural distinctions that kept racial divisions firmly planted within the nation’s borders. For instance, the ITUC poised itself as a body bringing a ‘divided race’ together. Its debates acknowledged the plurality of Irishness that was defined through racial markers of distinction. Recurring references to ‘race prejudice’ were used to outline the complex set of tensions dividing Irish workers. At the 1901 ITUC, President Alexander Bowman gave a compelling speech on the ability of trade unionism to see beyond race, religion, and political differences. The only problem with this perspective on racial and cultural acceptance was that it did not extend to the attitudes that Irish working-class leaders maintained towards non-Irish races.

The racial division Irish leaders saw plaguing the Irish movement was an internal one that was limited to white Irish males. For instance, the *Belfast Labour Chronicle*

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p. 210. Stephen Howe also upholds this criticism, citing Morgan as a source. Howe claims Connolly did engage with international anti-imperial debates prior to 1914. While Howe’s assertion of Connolly’s isolated Irish focus is refutable given his reliance exclusively on *Labour in Ireland* to draw his conclusions and his omission of Connolly’s interaction in American and Scottish socialist circles, his general point on the differences between Atlantic discourse and that focused on extended parts of the British Empire holds true. Howe, *Ireland and empire*, pp 62-3.


featured an article entitled, ‘Labour and Nationalism’ in which the author called on workers to ‘forget their differences of race, language and colour, and stand shoulder to shoulder’, yet in the same issue, the paper featured two articles on Chinese labour and another on the growing Jewish population in England, each addressing these topics as problematic to the international workers’ movement. Each of these groups, of course, was portrayed as not being party to an international working-class identity and therefore they were not subjected to the same inclusive calls for unity as Irish workers.

It was similar to the way socialist movements used a language of ‘race’ abroad. In the quest for inclusivity, the rallying call of the ‘Irish race’ was most frequently employed as a mechanism to bring the Irish diaspora, both protestant and catholic, into the working-class movement. The ISF was a manifestation of this ideal. Its acknowledgment of racial difference was intended to increase inclusivity into the working-class movement. It was designed to court Irish-American support under a common banner of the Irish race.

When the ISF was established in 1907, it was part of a wave of race federations launching under the wider umbrella of the American socialist movement. As the movement continued to expand, so too did the number of such race federations, making its formation and slogan appear relatively normal for the time. By 1912, the American SLP began compiling data on its race federations and it reported that between December 1912 and March 1914 approximately 30 per cent of the party’s overall membership belonged to an SLP affiliated race federation. As such, the acknowledgement of workers maintaining distinction of racial identity was encouraged to make the American socialist movement more appealing to various ethnic groups.

Ideological disputes over when, or indeed if, cultural distinctions justified separate racial identities proved contentious within socialist circles and when the ISF was initially established, the group’s claim to racial distinction did spark protest from some SLP members. Opponents argued that the ISF was incorrectly applying the function of race federations because the lack of cultural distinction between Irish and American identity negated the body’s purpose. Writing into the *People*, J.A. Stromquist

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62 Flyer for Irish Socialist Federation symposium 21 April 1910 (N.L.I., Thomas Kennedy papers, MS 33,718/A (19a).
63 Chart showing the membership to the Socialist Labor Party and race federation (N.Y.U., Socialist Labor Party papers, PE028 Box 1).
argued that race federations should only exist for nationalities whose primary language was not English. The Irish, he claimed, were only using the banner of race to divide the working-class movement and shift attention away from the socialist movement in America and to instead direct it towards socialism in Ireland.64

In opposition, Connolly defended the body by claiming the legitimacy of an autonomous Irish race was necessary for Irish workers to embrace working-class internationalism. He argued that if the Atlantic socialist community did not validate the autonomy of the Irish race, then they would be guilty of maintaining English colonial control of Irish identity.65 This was a call for the Atlantic to accept the Irish race as autonomous and equal. After Connolly's death in 1916, however, W.P. Ryan provided a different explanation for the body. Ryan argued that the ISF was necessary because 'Irish American politicians had tricked Irish workers into associations which took their money and their time.'66 Ryan's contradictory interpretation of the ISF foundation exposes the puzzling roots of the organisation's assertion that racial recognition was necessary to escape British colonial constraint. The ISF may have been justified for a number of reasons, but certainly race was not one.

The very concept of a federation whose defining element was the uniqueness of the Irish race led to an increased presence of racial discourse within in the federation's paper, the Harp. Articles categorised the Irish as a dispersed, revolutionary, and intellectual race.67 All of these articles, however, had one objective in mind - igniting working-class consciousness among the Irish-American diaspora. Here again, the intent of the language was to generate inclusivity. The ISF discussed Irish racial awareness as a stepping stone to international working-class consciousness. It was preparing Irish workers 'to co-operate with the workers of other races, colors and nationalities in the emancipation of labor.'68 The message, however, was delivered with limits on that inclusivity.

These instances of seeing beyond divisions of race need to be weighed against the more general white consciousness permeating parts of the Irish working-class movement. Irish workers claimed they were fighting a struggle for 'white labour' that

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64 *Daily People*, 23 February 1907.
65 *Harp*, January 1908.
67 *Harp*, January 1908; January 1909; and April 1909.
68 Ibid, January 1908.
was part of a wider Atlantic campaign. This language served to consistently reinforce the idea that the Irish struggle was occurring within a white Anglo-American world by white workers. The Irish movement refused to countenance the idea that they may be on the margins of this white Anglo-American working-class world. Instead, they argued that their rightful place was at its centre.

One of the key ways in which they did this was through the campaign against 'white slavery'. By consistently comparing the conditions of the 'white slave' to those of the 'chattel slave', Irish labour leaders sought to highlight the depraved exploitation of the Irish as white workers. As Roediger has noted, the use of this language was 'not an act of solidarity with the black slave but a call to arms to end the inappropriate oppression of whites.' Indeed, socialists even made clear distinctions between the two groups using the image of the black slave and Asian worker to expose white oppression and justify their demands. Appeal to Reason even claimed that black slaves were better off because they were conscious of their slavery and the root of their oppression. The Irish Worker made a similar claim. A writer to the paper complained about the treatment of workers in Dublin, arguing they were engaged in modern-day 'human slavery'. The author went on to describe their condition as worse than that of African American slaves before the American Civil War due to the fact that at least African American slaves had a head price. These sensational comparisons reveal the racial distinctions drawn between the Irish and other non-white races. In making such comparisons, Irish labour leaders did not necessarily express solidarity with those outside white power structures. In fact, they sought to highlight and enhance the hypocrisy of their own white suffering. In drawing these comparisons, they were bolstering belief in their own whiteness.

When the focus shifted to female exploitation, such claims received added potency, as femininity, in these instances, could be used to point to the hypocrisy of

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69 Roediger, The wages of whiteness, p. 68.
71 Appeal to Reason, 21 June 1913.
72 Ibid, 17 June 1911.
Edwardian liberal values. Employers who used female labour were guilty of the two-fold exploitation of women as a delicate sex and as white workers. For this reason, it is perhaps unsurprising that female labour leaders were the most frequent employers of this language. The 'Women Workers' Column' in the *Irish Worker* frequently employed this discourse. In certain cases, women writing into the column even appropriated whiteness as an identity, with one contributor writing on the oppression of barmaids signing her name as 'A White Slave.'

These assertions were connected to a belief that the Irish labour movement was part of a much broader international white labour struggle, one that was advancing throughout parts of the 'civilised world.' This was made manifest by one contributor to the *Belfast Labour Chronicle*, who complained of the importation of Asian labour into the Rand. In the article he claimed the Irish 'fought in the South African War believing it would be for a country of white labour.' White labour signified a type of solidarity in the labour struggle bonding the working classes of the world. Irish workers saw themselves as part of this wider movement. The fact that racialisation of the Irish may have been employed against them to push them outside of the boundaries of whiteness did not mean that the Irish did not persist in seeing themselves as firmly planted within it. Further evidence that this was a popular belief maintained by the Irish working classes was a speech given by South African labour leader, Archie Crawford at Croydon Park. During the speech Crawford described the differences of race within the working-class struggle by stating:

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73 It should be noted that in his more contemporary study of racism in Irish society, Micheál McGreil found that Irish women maintained higher levels of prejudice against race, class and political beliefs, whereas men did for religion. These findings do not claim that women were necessarily more racialised during this point in time, though certainly a study into this question could prove useful for historical debate. These findings only claim that women were more likely to use this language due to the imperial moral sexual undertones projected through such claims. McGreil, *Prejudice and tolerance in Ireland*, p. 528.

74 For examples, please see, the *Irish Worker*, 2 March 1912; 12 April 1913; or 28 June 1913.

75 *Irish Worker*, 15 July 1911.

76 *Belfast Labour Chronicle*, April 1905.
He had nothing against the black race because they were merely workers the same as their white brothers: they suffered under the same wrongs and had the same battles to fight. But when it came to a question of a common standard of living being established for both that was a different matter. They could not acquiesce in the standard of white men being levelled down to that of a savage black race!

The remark was met with applause. Crawford's logic captures how the working-class movement could preach racial equality through a common labour struggle while still maintain imperial distinctions in race.

This is not to say that such perspectives were universal, however. Irish experiences of racism within the Atlantic World certainly played a part in complicating how the Irish perceived themselves within an Atlantic imperial framework. For instance, following the outbreak of the war, the Workers' Republic featured an article deconstructing imperial projections of Irish whiteness through popular racial imagery normally employed against Black and Asian colonial cultures. The author described how the Irish were portrayed as the proud 'fighting Irish' when they served in the armies of other nations, but the 'dirty Irish' when they choose to fight for their own freedom. Tapping into the racial roots of such phrases, the author described the Irish race as being 'washed with soft-soap' to fit imperial conditions. This racial cleansing was only used to manipulate the Irish into fulfilling their destiny of fighting to 'enslave the blacks, crush the reds and exterminate England's enemies.' The message exposed the conflicting views of where Irish racial identity lay within an imperial framework. Some, including this author, saw the manipulation of racial identity as a way to control Irish national impulses while maintaining the imperial world order.

Weighing against this sense of racial manipulation was, however, a desire on the part of the Irish working-class leadership to justify Irish equality to other imperial nations. In consequence, when many in the working-class movement considered racism and race prejudice as a problem within the wider international working-class movement, they largely focused on anti-Irish racism. Their statements reveal a conflict between their desire for acceptance, and their resentment towards the marginalisation

77 Irish Worker, 25 July 1914.
78 The image of being washed by soap was used as a popular form of visual and verbal advertising of colonial products in nineteenth century Britain. Joanna De Groot, 'Metropolitan desires and colonial connections' in Hall and Rose (eds), At home with the Empire, p. 189.
79 Workers' Republic, 10 July 1915.
of the Irish within an international working-class movement. For example, the *Irish Worker*, featured an article entitled ‘Race prejudice as goad’ that highlighted Irish experiences of racism in America by focusing on the role the American press played in dividing the workforce. Yet, while making this valid observation, the newspaper avoided self-criticism, and failed to confront its own role in propagating racism against individuals pushed to the boundaries of their movement.

In fact, most racial motifs employed by Irish working-class leaders mirrored the language and imagery that historians have cited as examples of anti-Irish racism abroad. This language demonstrates that the Irish working classes internalised a Darwinian concept of race and then employed it through their communication of right and wrong. Moreover, it was projected by working-class leaders with the aim of communicating morality and civilisation, two concepts tied to Atlantic imperial hierarchical divisions of the world order. As the pictures featured in image 4.1 show, the *Irish Worker* used the bestial imagery commonly deployed by publications such as *Punch* and *Harper's Weekly* against the Irish diaspora, to caricature Irish capitalists and members of the Royal Irish Constabulary within Ireland. This was an inversion of an imperial dialogue in an effort to claim that the Irish working classes were more civilised than their oppressors. In their characterisation of the RIC as simian, Irish leaders were appropriating Edwardian imperial value system to the working-class struggle.

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80 *Irish Worker*, 12 August 1911.
81 Examples of these are provided in the following two sections.
83 Sluga, *The Nation, psychology and international politics*, pp 61-83.
In a similar fashion to the evocation of religious language to establish working-class moral authority, racialisation was a way for the working classes to assert morality and declare they were truly civilised. The use of brute physical force to suppress their cause was what substantiated the working-class movement’s claim to be the holder of morality. Violence, a behaviour associated with the uncivilised world, underscored the racial imagery. The critique of violence is in fact what unites each picture in image 4.1. The *Irish Worker* was only asserting that the workers were the true representatives of civilisation and therefore entitled to a privileged position by imperial standards of culture. This was not a rejection of the system, rather it was an assertion that the working classes were the rightful owners of it.

By focusing on how the Irish were the objects of racial prejudice, Irish working-class leaders were able to detract attention from how they projected Irish whiteness. This projection remained firmly rooted within wider Atlantic imperial and white frameworks. Their goal was not universal racial equality, but merely an improved position for Irish workers. As a result, the dialogue surrounding race that emerged within the Irish labour movement was grounded in a self-perceived whiteness and a validation of an imperial hierarchy of race.

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85 Please see, chapter three.
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The presence of this dialogue throughout the Atlantic, of course, does not erase the importance of the British Empire and Ireland’s connection to it. While history has frequently noted how the Irish middle classes used the Empire to advance their own social and economic desires, few have attributed these critiques to the working-class movement. Working-class leaders also recognised the benefits of the British Empire and would openly discuss these advantages as they related to working-class aims. These instances expose not only the willingness to benefit from the Empire, but also Irish leaders’ sense of place within it. In reporting on the Irish hat market, for instance, an article in the *Irish Draper* detailed the growing demand for European top hats in Africa. It did this by proclaiming that ‘the savage people of the world are anxious to array themselves in the garb of civilisation at low prices.’ Irish working-class leaders were more than willing to engage with the imperialist project as it suited their own needs.

Historians have rightly shown that taking advantage of the benefits of Empire did not erase the restrictions the Irish faced within it. Therefore, one should not be quick to use these desires to declare the Irish were equally guilty of taking advantage of the Empire. This was certainly not the intent. The language used to describe these associations, nevertheless, does at least provide a window into how individuals viewed Ireland’s position within the imperial world. The article in the *Irish Draper* drew a distinction between savage and civilised culture, with Irish workers and the Irish nation being firmly planted within the civilised world. This distinction reveals where Irish labour leaders understood Ireland to lie within the hierarchy of nations. They saw themselves as connected to modern civilisation more so than their potential global colonial partners. In many respects, their attitudes reflect those of many ordinary British people who, historians have argued, were guilty of similar forms of indirect support of the British imperial project through their advocacy of the economic benefits of the Empire.

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88 *Irish Draper*, February 1904.
89 Christine Kinealy, ‘At home with the Empire: the example of Ireland’ in Hall and Rose (eds), *At home with the Empire*, p. 78.
90 Joanna de Groot ‘Metropolitan desires and colonial connections’ in Hall and Rose (eds), *At home with the Empire*, pp 167-8.

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Irish working-class leaders’ relationship to the British Empire certainly complicates their interaction with imperial dialogues of race. Instances of anti-colonial language and resistance to the British Empire by nationalist and socialist movement are often cited as examples of Irish radical rejection of racial topographies. Yet, often times within these anti-imperial discourses was the retention of imperial desires and world outlooks. Paul Townsend, for example, has shown Irish nationalist leaders linked the plight of the Irish with that of the Zulu, Afghan and Indian peoples, who were fighting similar struggles against British imperialism. On the surface, these statements seemed to confirm the historical appropriation of an Irish subaltern identity by groups within Irish society. Yet, as Townsend argued, this nationalist language existed within its own imperial framework. Political self-interest was motivating these links. As he argues, the language had a level of ‘condescending safeness’ that exposed how imperial outlooks were maintained even within these overt anti-imperial criticisms. In spite of their public declarations to the contrary, the Irish were, to use Townsend’s words, ‘a self-consciously and thoroughly imperial people.’ His arguments echo those taken by Irish cultural theorists who have been influenced by Spivak and argued that discourses of Irishness function as both ‘oppressed and oppressor’ or both coloniser and colonised.

Both Bruce Nelson and Stephen Howe used Irish nationalist support of the Boer’s during the Boer War to problematise Irish nationalist solidarity with the ‘Other’. The Anglo-Boer War, Nelson has argued, was an Irish alliance with ‘white’ people (the Dutch Boers) in opposition to black Africans, a position that was logical because of the consistent anti-British line maintained by Irish nationalists. Howe went even further arguing that such actions revealed the imperial desires still present within Irish nationalist discourse. These arguments raise questions about Irish socialists’ connection to this national campaign. The ISRP’s participation in the anti-Boer War

91 Paul A. Townsend, ‘Between two worlds: Irish Nationalists and the Imperial Crisis 1878-1880 in Post & Present, 194 (February, 2007), pp 139-74. Similar conclusions of Irish identity as being constructed to Britishness can be found in Kiberd, Inventing Ireland, p. 6 or Miller, Emigrants and exiles, p. 8.
93 Ibid, p. 141.
94 The quotation is taken from Colin Graham, ‘Subalternity and gender: problems of postcolonial Irishness’ in Cleary and Connolly (eds), Theorizing Ireland, p. 158.
95 Nelson, Irish Nationalists and the making of the Irish race, pp 123-9 and Howe, Ireland and empire, p. 57.
protests justifiably connects them into this debate. Images of James Connolly illegally driving a lorry around the city-centre with crowds outside of Trinity College Dublin singing the American *Battle Hymn of the Republic* captured the ambiguous lines between working-class radicalism, nationalism, and Irish imperial consciousness. The crowd transformed an American abolitionist song into a chant calling for ‘the hanging of Joe Chamberlain from a sour apple tree’ to decry British imperialism, while simultaneously waving flags for the Boer Republic in its fight against the Zulu. Irish workers were not ignoring race magnanimously, they were simply identifying with a common narrative of oppression. Racial solidarity with non-white races was secondary to this, making the contradictions of using an abolitionist tune to call for a white alliance perhaps appear less ironic.

The detachment of race as an element of British imperialism is further evidenced in the maintaining of racial hierarchies even in moments of anti-imperial action. In his autobiography, ICA member, Frank Robbins’ recalled training events at the Sunday *aeriochtai*, or outdoor events, in Croydon Park, which replicated the Native American uprisings in the American West. Pretending to be the American Army, the ICA would fight off other sections of the ‘Red Indians’ armed with ‘tomahawks.’ In such moments, the ICA presented itself as the ‘white’ protectors of civilisation and socialism as the force fighting off the ‘uncivilised’, non-white threat. The action takes on even greater meaning when compared to earlier Victorian images of the Irish as Native Americans, linking their savagery and violence to their political campaigns against the English. While the ICA’s actions could be dismissed as simply whimsical fancy oblivious of a highly racialised American problem or attributed to simply an Irish fascination with American culture, such behaviours expose the underlying assumptions

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97 C. Desmond Greaves blamed the Boer War for the distraction away from the cause of labour. The point is worth considering here as socialist parties actively partook in Boer War activities. It raises questions on what was motivating the left to engage in protests that distracted the public from the cause of labor. These questions leave a space for exploring the role of race. Greaves, *The Irish Transport and General Workers Union*, p. 8.


99 Ibid.

100 Robbins, *Under the Starry Plough*, p. 43.

of labour leaders as to where the Irish working-class movement lay within Atlantic racial hierarchies.

If the Irish were portrayed as being outside or on the margins of whiteness abroad, leaders within Ireland certainly felt differently. Through their responses to the Boer War or their discussions of 'white slavery' and civilisation they reasserted Irish claims to whiteness. The promotion of this identity became even more apparent through the representation of other groups perceived to be outside the boundaries of whiteness. The Irish working-class movement played a part in reinforcing racial boundaries within the working-class movement. This process is evident by exploring influences on Irish racial consciousness through the British Empire and the wider Atlantic World. Certainly, the constant reminders of imperial values communicated through British systems played a role in radicalising the Irish working-class movement, but so too did the Atlantic working-class movement as a whole. The imperial values maintained through Atlantic working-class internationalism meant that when the Irish sought refuge from British imperialism by seeking equal admission to the Atlantic movement, they were only exchanging one set of imperial racial values for another. The influence of this culture was further evidenced in the way the Irish working-class movement engaged with other non-Irish groups within their nation.

Anti-Semitism in the Irish working-class movement

Like the Irish, the Jewish populations of America and England have been used by historians as a model to prove the expanding and contracting boundaries of whiteness. As described in the introduction, this thesis argues that both populations were racialised in order to push them outside the boundaries of whiteness. These claims have largely been based on the emphasis on structural forces that employed a discourse of race against both groups to manipulate the boundaries of whiteness. This analysis, however, neglects working-class agency in determining their own racial identity and often neglects the role of working-class movements in re-enforcing white consciousness.

102 For examples, please see, Eric L. Goldstein, The price of whiteness: Jews, race and American identity (Princeton, 2006); or Karen Brodkin, How the Jews became white folks and what that says about race in America (New Brunswick, NJ, 1998).
through a dialogue of class. While the importance of location has been acknowledged by most proponents of the whiteness thesis, an analysis of the dynamics between the two groups in Ireland offers another perspective on this theory. Interactions with Jewish populations reveal how Irish working classes expressed their own racial identity.

The existence of anti-Semitism in Ireland has been documented in a number of works by Dermot Keogh and Andrew McCarthy. They have jointly examined the 1904 pogrom in Limerick to capture the racial tensions developing against the Jewish population. While Keogh has elsewhere been reluctant to attribute guilt for these events to labour and socialist leaders, labour concerns remained a key feature of their joint work. They rooted the hostility in economic and labour questions, more than religious and cultural differences, in spite of the role that religious and cultural organisations played in orchestrating instances of violence against Jewish citizens.

Keogh and McCarthy even traced attacks against Jewish communities in Ireland back to Cork in 1894, arguing that trade union circles were among the initial instigators of the anti-Semitic language and violence. Patrick Maume confirmed this in his work, pointing out that both Cork trade unionist Eugene Creane and Limerick self-styled labour nationalist, Michael Joyce, were openly anti-Semitic. These claims are easily attributed to the Irish nationalist movement. As explained in chapter two, these earlier trade union years were intimately connected to the national struggle and both Crean and Joyce are arguably remembered more for their national politics than their connections to labour. In his individual work, Keogh, ensures to maintain the distinctions between these labour schools. He draws an exception in this behaviour to the radical working-class movement, citing Frederick Ryan's defence of Jewish communities in Ireland as evidence of a more progressive and inclusive outlook.

Ryan's views were not, however, shared by his fellow ISRP or SPI members, making the universal application of his remarks potentially misleading as regards the movement's overall position.

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105 Even in Dermot Keogh and Andrew McCarthy's work where the instigating force for 1904 anti-Semitic violence in Limerick came from a local priest, Reverend Father Creagh, the dialogue around anti-Semitism remained an industrial and economic one. Keogh and McCarthy, *Limerick Boycott 1904*, pp 130-2.
106 Ibid, p. 15.

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Before discussing the discourse that developed, it is important to outline some social and economic transformation in Ireland in relation to the Jewish population residing in the nation at this time. Jewish populations from the Russian Empire, particularly from Lithuania, began arriving in Ireland in large numbers during the Russian pogroms of the early twentieth century. While overall Ireland's Jewish population increased from 285 in 1871 to 5,148 in 1911, much of this increase occurred in Dublin, which contained the country's largest Jewish population, rising from 189 in 1871 to 2,965 by 1911. The most significant increase came between 1891 and 1911, when Dublin's Jewish population increased by 180 per cent. Residents largely congregated into one area in the city, nicknamed 'Little Israel' positioned within one of the city's working-class municipal wards, Wood Quay.

The Wood Quay Municipal Ward was held by nationalist candidates supported by Dublin's working-class Jewish population. Indeed, as Dermot Keogh has argued, Irish Jewish communities remained largely supportive of the Irish nationalist movement as a means of asserting loyalty to Ireland. In the 1902 municipal elections, the ISRP, seeing the working-class make-up of the ward as an opportunity to challenge nationalist dominance in working-class politics, decided to run James Connolly as a candidate. Connolly received the endorsement of numerous local trade union officials, but also hoped to win over the ward’s Jewish population by advertising his internationalist socialist credentials. He turned to the East End London branch of the Social Democrats for an endorsement in the election. At the time, Connolly's allegiance to American Jewish socialist leader Daniel De Leon over the British Social Democratic Federation leader Henry Hyndman increased his appeal amongst London's East End Jewish socialist population, and as a result, they agreed to support his campaign. Boris Kahan drafted an election manifesto for James Connolly, in Yiddish, to distribute to Wood Quay residents.

Manus O'Riordan has hailed this campaign initiative as indicative of progressivist thinking within Irish socialism at variance with the generally negative treatment of

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110 For a map showing the entire area 'Little Jerusalem', Ibid, p. 109.
112 For the original version of the manifesto in Yiddish, please see, 'election handbill' (N.L.I., Irish Large Book, ILB 300 p 11, Item 81). For an English version, please see, 'The municipal elections January 15th 1902' (N.L.I., Ephemeral Collection, EPH C511).
Jewish communities in Dublin and elsewhere in Ireland at this time. The very act of printing the Yiddish manifesto and courting the Jewish vote was the ISRP's affirmation that they were a party beyond anti-Semitism. O'Riordan has even acknowledged and dismissed Connolly's private anti-Semitic remarks about De Leon to his confidant Matheson, arguing that 'it would be a mistake to look too deeply' into such off the cuff anti-Semitism. According to O'Riordan, these were simply insults that were a standard part of the imperial dialogue and therefore not reflective of broader anti-Semitism within the socialist movement. In a further attempt to support his claims, he weighs the remark against the presence of the ISRP's two recorded Jewish members, Barnet and Abraham Volkes, even though both were former members of the London SDF who appear in the ISRP minutes, he admits, only on one occasion.

However, this apparent courting of Ireland's Jewish population by the ISRP was little more than a fleeting attempt to win working-class votes. The next year, in 1903, a municipal election flyer for the same ward referenced Connolly's struggle against his opponent's campaign canvassers who told Catholic voters he was a Jew or an Orangemen and Jewish voters he was an anti-Semite. Connolly refuted these claims, and asserted it was a home rule campaign to disparage his character. While this was certainly true, Connolly and the ISRP seemingly chose to shy away from more overt courtship of Jewish voters, seeing it as potentially damaging to the wider campaign.

Furthermore, this moment of romanticised Irish socialist inclusiveness does not capture a complete picture of the ISRP at the time. The belief that the party was beyond anti-Semitism was questionable, especially given the anti-Semitism professed by some of the party's leading members. In 1901, when the ISRP's William McLoughlin contested North City Ward, a predominately Irish Catholic working-class district with a total of four Jewish families, the party presented a starkly different message. McLoughlin's campaign flyer attacked Home Rule and Unionism for their conduct during the 1900 tailoring trade lock-out by claiming that McLoughlin's opponents were 'equally ready to import Jews and other outsiders in an attempt to starve us into submission.'

115 'Wood Quay Ward: to the electors' (N.L.I., Ephemeral Collection, EPH B133).
stated earlier, while most Irish trades were dominated by Irish-born workers, one of the few trades to have a higher than average proportion of non-native workers was tailoring. Jewish workers, in particular, worked in this trade. As such, the slogan had clear anti-Semitic implications, ones which the ISRP was willing to overlook in this instance.

Perhaps even more evident of the strength of anti-Semitism within the ISRP and the wider Irish working-class movement was the fact that anti-Jewish sentiment continued to be used as a recruitment tool even in the face of reservations aired by party members. The ISRP notebooks, for instance, reference a problem with anti-Semitism erupting in ISRP propaganda. The minutes detail a difference of opinion over the nature of the weekly speeches given by John Arnall, one of the regular ISRP propagandists, whose speech topics 'always dealt with Jewish financiers'. However, William O'Brien noted that Arnall was good at 'drawing a crowd' and further admitted that many Irish workers believed Jewish financiers were responsible for the Boer War. As a result, Arnall was allowed to continue his speeches with ISRP endorsement.

The ISRP thus expressed anti-Semitic language directly. In addition, the party circulated a number of English socialist publications during this period, which, due to the international publicity of the Dreyfus affair and the increasing influx of Eastern European Jewish populations into English cities, regularly incorporated anti-Semitic messages. Therefore, if Irish socialist readers were not receiving these messages directly from Irish leaders, they were getting them from abroad. For instance, the SDF organ Justice, which was advertised by the Workers' Republic at the time, printed an article on the Dreyfus affair in which it stated that 'we cannot deny that the capitalist Jews of France, like the Jew moneylenders of Russia, have done something to aggravate the miserable cry against them.' Even if the author of the article did issue a disclaimer to any potentially offended Jewish comrades by stating the paper was just trying to uncover the root of the prejudice, the underlying anti-Semitism remained clear.

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118 Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, p. 32, table 27.
119Untitled Notebook of the ISRP, undated (N.I., William O'Brien papers, MS 15,674 (2) PT 1 ISRP).
120Justice, 22 January 1898.
The Irish labour movement also played its part in propagating such messages. In the ITUC, E.W. Stewart voted against an amendment on municipal ownership of public works by citing the fear that such bodies would be ‘controlled largely by Jewish financiers who wished to get control of gas, water, electricity, and other undertakings’. The anti-Semitic remark went unchallenged by any other members of the ITUC and was allowed to stand as an unquestioned part of the debate, indicating the level of credence given to such assertions.

Each of these instances captures how the Irish working-class movement excluded Jewish workers from their working-class narrative. In reaction to this exclusion, Jewish workers were forced to craft their own separate working-class identity which, given their limited population in Ireland, naturally extended beyond the nation’s borders. In November 1908, for instance, Jewish tailors and pressers, largely from the ‘Little Israel’ area, established a Dublin branch of the International Tailors, Machinists, and Pressers Trade Union (ITMPTU). The union was already flourishing amongst Jewish tailors in England and was now making significant strides in Dublin, particularly among Jewish female workers. However, the creation of the union caused considerable tension with the Amalgamated Society of Tailors, which represented leading labour and socialist personalities like William O’Brien and William McLaughlin. Adding to these tensions was the fact that SPI member, Walter Carpenter, served as organiser to the new union, placing Dublin socialist and labour circles in delicate territory between the two disputing groups. As the ITMPTU was a British union, being led by British-born organisers, it provoked nationalist sentiments that intersected with the already complicated dynamics of inter-trade competition, religious biases and racism.

Matters came to a head in 1909, when the ITMPU went out on strike, the ITUC and the DCTU withheld public support. During a strike meeting on 18 July 1909 held in Beresford Place, ITMPTU Secretary Henry Miller took to the stage to defend the

123 Walter Carpenter declared no formal religion but came from a Church of Ireland family and was from Kent. Henry Miller was Jewish and from England. ‘1911 Irish National Census’ (N.A.I., Digital Collections) (http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/North_Dock/Caledon_Road/20608/) and (http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/North_Dock/Caledon_Road/20608/) (4 May 2015).
124 The ITMPTU did not participate in the ITUC until 1918. For further information on the strike, please see, Freeman’s Journal, 9 July 1909.
workers' decision, only to be met with cries from Dublin workers who claimed that the 'Jews' Union' was 'starving out the tailors of Dublin.' The dispute was not necessarily out of character for unions competing in similar trades, but the depiction of the union as being Jewish certainly transformed what was a common union struggle into one that had significant racial implications.

For its part, in later years the ITMPTU attempted to neutralise such racial tensions by affiliating directly with the working-class movement sweeping the city. After Larkin's release from prison in 1910, the ITMPTU's secretary Miller tried to tap into the growing working-class consciousness on the island by issuing a resolution of support for the ITGWU. The gesture, however, did little to win over either Larkin's followers or many Amalgamated Tailors in the city. In July 1913, the IMPTU even organised a meeting with Dublin socialists Thomas Lyng and Thomas Kennedy protesting against the branding of the union as being full of 'scab labourers.' Yet hostility remained undiminished, and when Larkin addressed a meeting of the IMPTU, Dublin tailors and socialists Arthur Murphy and William O'Brien demanded an explanation for his behaviour. The pair raised their protest at a meeting of the Dublin Labour Party, which Larkin used as his excuse not to explain his position, asserting that it was a trade union and not a Labour Party concern. Yet Murphy refused to let the issue go, claiming that Larkin was acting against Irish workers. Larkin could not maintain this strategy of avoidance for long, however. The *Irish Worker* attempted to cool tensions in an article asking Irish workers to transfer their anger from Jewish workers on to their employers, pointing out that it was the employers and their capitalist desires that brought the Jewish workers to Ireland in the first place and that, therefore, it was not the Jewish population who should be blamed. The writer concluded by suggesting that Jewish tailors should simply join the Amalgamated Society of Tailors rather than the ITMPTU, only adding further insult to the controversial message.

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126 *Irish Independent*, 3 October 1910.
127 Flyer for meeting at Molesworth Hall, 7 July 1913 (N.I.I., Librarian's Office Collection, LOP 119).
129 *Irish Worker*, 23 March 1912.
In a similar fashion, the 1909 cabinet makers’ dispute with J.F. Kelly & Co. tested the extent of any potential solidarity between Jewish and native Irish workers. Jewish cabinet makers employed at the firm claimed that they were being replaced by Irish workers while out on strike.\textsuperscript{130} In response, the Dublin Cabinet Makers Union argued that the presence of Jewish workers in the trade meant the replacement of Irish workers, which was resulting in increased unemployment. The union made further accusations against the character of Jewish workers and the employers who hired them. In one pamphlet, the union claimed Kilkenny woodworkers would only employ Jewish workers and added that Jewish firms were stamping ‘made in Ireland’ labels on their products even though they were imported.\textsuperscript{131} While arguably a result of inter-trade union tensions, such statements nonetheless affirmed wider anti-Semitic stereotypes, and questioned Jewish national and class loyalty. Not only did the union refuse to acknowledge that Jewish workers in Ireland had the right to demand equal treatment, it also called into question their right to exist in Ireland as workers, because they were not perceived as part of the Irish working-class narrative.

As tensions increased during these labour disputes, so too did anti-Semitic language in the Irish working-class press. The \textit{Irish Worker}, which had previously promoted anti-Semitic stereotypes including the German-Jewish moneylender and Jewish capitalist bosses, now began to take an even more militant tone against Jewish influences on Irish working-class culture. The fear of the Jewish capitalist invasion of Ireland served as the basis for poems featured in the \textit{Irish Worker}, with titles such as ‘Worse than the Jewman’ or ‘The hunt for the Jew’.\textsuperscript{132} The latter even sarcastically remarked that Ireland was alone in its lack of anti-Semitism because the country was simply letting Jews take it over.\textsuperscript{133} Anti-Semitism in the ‘Irish Women Workers’ Column’ was arguably even more apparent, though much of this language connected to the types of hard-line Christian thinking described in chapter three. For instance, when describing the housing conditions of the Savoy girls, Delia Larkin described them as

\begin{flushright}
Flyer from Jewish Cabinet Makers, undated (N.L.I., Librarian’s Office Collection, LOP 114, 60).
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\begin{flushright}
Letter from Dublin Cabinet Makers Unemployed Co. (N.L.I., Librarian’s Office Collection, LOP 114, 62).
\end{flushright}
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Ibid, 16 September 1911 & 21 October 1911.
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Ibid, 16 September 1911.
\end{flushright}
268
living in a 'condemned consumptive house. This place was rented by Solomon, the Jewman.'

By structuring an Irish working-class identity against Jewishness in this way, Irish labour and radical leaders engaged in the very language of racial superiority used against both Irish and Jewish populations in Britain, America and elsewhere. The fact that this occurred in Ireland is important as, to date, it has not been recognised as a racialised society in discussions of whiteness and identity. Racial privilege may not have existed in reality in Ireland, but this fact clearly did not stop a language of racial privilege, based on Anglo-American racial norms, from shaping attitudes towards Ireland's Jews.

Bringing the yellow peril to Ireland

Another element of the Atlantic working-class dialogue filtering into Irish racial discourse was the fear of Asian workforces. Asian stereotypes and racial representations of Asian males, in particular have been evidenced as a significant part of British imperial culture and popular literature. Irish working-class perceptions of Asian culture and identity were moulded by these representations as well. Nevertheless, the fear of an Asian workforce threatening Ireland may seem rather odd considering there is little evidence to suggest that any significant population of Chinese or Japanese nationals lived in Ireland. In fact, census returns for 1911 showed a presence of only 198 residents of Ireland being born in Asia. Again, as explained earlier, most of these individuals were simply Irish citizens born abroad. Nevertheless, the fear of the 'yellow peril' played a part in the Irish labour and socialist experience. The fact that the 'yellow threat' did not actually threaten Ireland, captures the way in which labour understandings of race came from an imperial white framework and could be products of a transnational imagination.

134 Ibid, 2 August 1913.
136 Census of Ireland, 1911: General Report with Table and Appendix [Cd. 6663], H.C. 1912-13, CXVIII.1, p. 32, table 27.
The 'Yellow Peril' consumed American labour circles during the Gilded Age and as a result shaped socialist discourse about racial solidarity and the international working-class struggle. This was not a new practice with the politicisation of the American socialist movement and indeed had roots with the previous transatlantic American new unionist movement, the Knights of Labor, as previously addressed, an organisation with roots in Ireland. While historians have debated the extent to which this language was universal throughout the Knights of Labor, the debate exposes the existence of racialized discourse within these groups even if the ideology was embraced to varying degrees in different locations. The fear of Chinese workers far outlived the actual union and permeated the political discourse of turn of the century socialist parties. As the SPA had the most significant connections to the American labour movement, it was among the more vocal in its opposition to Asian workers. The party asserted that it believed in 'equality of all races and nations', while simultaneously calling for increased restrictions on non-white labour. The SPA paper, The New York Call, glorified the progress made by the 1913 Western Immigration Labor Conference in its decision to extend the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to other Asiatic people including Japanese, Hindus, and Koreans, suggesting that such restrictions offered greater potential to advance the cause of the working classes.

The SLP tried to exploit the racist platform of the SPA and position itself as being more inclusive of issues of race and labour. The People claimed SPA leader George Kirkpatrick's remarks on Asian labour represented some of the 'cringing SPAism'. Of course, this assertion of moral authority came with an indictment of the American working classes whose inability to see beyond race was assumed as natural without proper socialist education. This perspective is revealing given the party's own previous propagation of Asian stereotypes. In a topical discussion on Japanese women,

138 For example of SPA affiliated organs addressing questions of Asian restriction to the United States, please see, Appeal to Reason, 10 May 1913 or New York Call, 15 November 1913.
139 The Issues' (N.Y.U., Socialist Party of America papers, PE 032 Box 1 Folio 8).
140 The extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act to other Asian populations came directly from growing fears of Japanese labour along the West Coast and in Hawaii. For further information, please see, United States Department of Labor Bulletin No. 66, September 1906 viewed at Harvard University Library. For the article on the West Immigration Conference, please see, the New York Call, 15 November 1913.
141 For examples, please see, the Daily People, 29 December 1906, 6 April 1907, and 27 November 1909.
142 Daily People, 29 July 1911.
143 Daily People, 16 February 1907.
the paper featured an article describing them as ‘perfuming a constant foul odor’
further adding, ‘her walk or rather waddle, is so ridiculously awkward and ungainly, that
it would provoke laughter were it not for a pathetic, imploring, ill-treated-dumb-animal
sort of look apparent in those eyes.’\textsuperscript{144} Perhaps even more indicting was an SLP-
sponsored election pamphlet that denounced Sino-American trade agreements by
writing: “‘Trade with China!’ Trade for what? Shall we buy from her the opium-eating,
opium smoking habit and learn to “hit the pipe?” Shall we purchase of her right to live
on vermin? Shall we buy her Joss house and her idols?”\textsuperscript{145} These remarks certainly fell
far from the pedestal of internationalism that the SLP preached, yet they capture the
degree to which racism against Asian immigrants existed across socialist party lines.

It certainly was not a consciousness unique to American socialist dialogue. \textit{Justice} featured a series of articles assessing the nature of ‘John Chinaman’ that played
upon racist views of Chinese incivility and inflated projections of Chinese expansion in
the white world. While couching these articles in the pretext of cultural understanding
in the hope of international solidarity, the articles often concluded that solidarity
between the two races could never be attained. Asserting the inability of British workers
to compete with Chinese labour, the paper declared British workers, unlike Chinese
workers, could not live off a ‘cat-and-rat-and-mouse-and –rice diet.’\textsuperscript{146} Even the Scottish
impossibilist paper, the \textit{Socialist}, used underlying racist assumptions to assess the
nature of the yellow peril. The paper attributed the increased use of Chinese labour in
the Rand to the ‘lower standard of living’ and ‘docile nature’ that made them even more
accepting of wage slavery than white and black labourers.\textsuperscript{147}

The threat was depicted as an Atlantic crisis affecting the working classes and
the working-class movement. Femininity and incivility, two concepts associated with
racialised projections of Asian culture were attributed to the lack of labour
consciousness within this population.\textsuperscript{148} As a result, sexual interactions between white
working-class women and Asian men became threats to white working-class
advancement. On Samuel Gomper’s European tour, he wrote extensively in the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{144} \textit{Weekly People}, 8 May 1891.
\textsuperscript{146} \textit{Justice}, 6 August 1898.
\textsuperscript{147} \textit{Socialist}, June 1905.
\textsuperscript{148} For works detailing these forms of racial projects against Asian males, please see, Joseph Lennon, \textit{Irish
\end{flushleft}
American Federationist about the condition of workers in Liverpool, making sure to note the development of little Chinatown in the city. During the story, Gompers focused on the relationships maintained between white working-class women and Chinese men, stating:

About twenty years ago the first Chinese came into the life of the people of Liverpool apparently unnoticed. Others followed, until there are fully 2,000 of them. They lured young women into their dens, to become finally their victims.\textsuperscript{149}

Gompers followed this warning with a reflection on the children born from these relationships, stating that their mother's intelligence would not be enough to counteract their detrimental Chinese qualities. These children were seen as not only lost to the white working-class race, they were lost to the white working-class movement.

It was the decision of the Colonial Office to sanction the Chinese Labour Ordinance in February 1904 allowing for the importation of greater numbers of Chinese labourers into South Africa that sparked the most significant labour-driven dialogue about 'white' and 'yellow' labour in England.\textsuperscript{150} Opposition to the Ordinance was substantiated on the grounds that opportunities for white workers, largely recruited from the British Isles, were being undermined by employers' ability to recruit non-white labour for lower wages. The dialogue, however, mixed with other dialogues around Asian workforces within the British Isles. The Parliamentary Committee of the TUC along with the London Trades Council held a monster meeting in Hyde Park held on 26 March 1904 to protest against the Ordinance. The event had representatives from socialist and labour bodies occupying 14 platforms, at a cost of £27-17-6 to the British TUC's budget.\textsuperscript{151} Featured on one of those stages was former Cork ISRP organiser, Cornelius Lehane, whose recent break with the SDF resulted in him playing a leading role in the SPGB and as such becoming one of the speakers on the new threat to the British

\textsuperscript{149} American Federationist, August 1909.


\textsuperscript{151} TUC 1904, pp 33, 54, and 55 available at (http://www.unionhistory.info/reports/index.php) (7 November 1914).
Empire: the Chinese labourer. Despite the factional socialist divide, all apparently agreed the yellow peril was a cause where even the most divisive of socialist ideologies could find a common ground.

The British trade union movement took a leading role in bringing the imperial fight largely unfolding in the Empire home to the British Isles. The General Federation of Trade Unions passed a resolution condemning the importation of Chinese labour claiming it was part of a ‘diabolic plot against the white labourer.’ In 1905, the British TUC again passed unanimous resolutions against Chinese labour declaring it was an imperial capitalist plot designed to prevent South Africa from ‘becoming a white man’s country.’ Among the speakers on the topic was, James Sexton, the leader of the NUDL in Liverpool, the union in which Larkin first served his apprenticeship as a labour agitator. In fact, Fred Bower even recalled the Chinese labour campaign being one of the first major issues Larkin took the lead on in Liverpool labour agitation. Bower claimed that for a march of the unemployed National Union of Dock Labourers, Larkin got a hold of a skin product that allowed the workers to change their skin tone to a shade of yellow, which Larkin had marchers apply to their faces and hands. In addition, Larkin made pigtails out of oakum which he had workers pin to their caps for the parade.

In her history of the Chinese labour crisis in South Africa, Rachel Bright linked the interest in Chinese labour in South Africa to the broader white networks maintained by members of the British Empire and America. Bright argued that the importation of Chinese labour into a ‘white colony’ threatened to destabilise the perceived economic power structures maintained through the advances of white labour. It was the looming

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152 The SPBG formed in 1904 after the Finsbury Park SDF branch suffered significant division over the issue of possibilist or impossibilist socialist action. Lehane reported over 40 members breaking from this branch to establish a London based SLP, which would be affiliated to the Scottish SLP established in 1901 with James Connolly’s support. The impossibilists who remained within the Finsbury Park branch because they did not want to join the SLP broke from the SDF in 1904 and formed their party: the SPGB. For a report of this break, please see, Cornelius Lehane to William D. Hogan, 5 and 6 February 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700 (3). For information on the Hyde Park speech see Cornelius Lehane to William D. Hogan 4 April 1904 (N.L.I., William O’Brien papers, MS 15,700 (3).

153 General Federation of Trade Unions, ‘White or Yellow Slaves? Analysis of Division’ (T.N.A., Ramsay MacDonald political papers, LRC literature and papers, PRO 30/69/1828).


156 Bower, Rolling Stonemason, p. 169.

threat of it 'being repeated in other portions of the British Empire' that generated unanimous support for the resolution.158 This dialogue descended from one of foreign labour being used to undercut labour advances into one that positioned white labour against the great Asian threat. Drawing a similar conclusion, Kornel Chang described how racism against Asian labourers during this period exposed how the transnational labour community was 'not a statement of universal solidarity, but a racialised vision predicated on white racial unity.' This process he attributed to the Anglo-American imperial framework that fostered a 'nexus of white supremacy'.159 Attempts to transfer a labour dialogue of white racial solidarity with struggling workers in South Africa exposed the degree to which Irish internationalism remained within the sphere of a white imperial outlook.

Employing a transnational propagandist campaign, William Walker decided to play the 'yellow peril card' in Ireland. The issue of 'coolie labour' provided Walker with a stone to strike at Tory candidates in Ulster without appearing anti-union. The South African labour question was, after all, securely wrapped in questions of empire and labour with the advantage of being removed from Irish politics. It was a fight for the white working man. Walker's paper, the Belfast Labour Chronicle, regularly featured articles on the issue ranging from House of Commons debates to reflections from leading British Labour Party leaders on the danger of the British policy. By September 1905, the paper began featuring a 'Yellow Page' to deal extensively with the issue.160 The articles played upon the concept of white labour privilege within the Rand. While acknowledging that the importation of foreign Chinese labour into the Rand threatened socio-economic conditions of both white and native black labour, the underlying core of each piece continually returned to the potential threat to white labour privilege.

In his 1904 presidential address to the Irish Trades Union Congress, Walker used the opportunity to raise the issue of yellow labour equating the condition of 'coolie labour' to a state of modern day slavery. He did, however, blame the development of this practice on the 'German Jewish financers' running the mines in the Rand.161 Nevertheless, underneath even this gesture of sympathy toward the imported Chinese

159 Chang, 'Circulating race and empire', pp 678 and 680.
workforce in South Africa was a wider affirmation of white working-class solidarity. Walker argued that the use of Chinese labour was only a way to undercut the advances of the working people as demonstrated through the struggles of the white labourer in the Rand.

Walker was not alone in his mission to bring the issue to the ITUC. Councillor Edward McNnes of Belfast proposed the Congress strongly condemn the Chinese Ordinance, taking it even one step further to call for the deportation of Chinese out of South Africa. Combining both anti-Semitism, Asian racism and capitalist critiques, McNnes' remarks capture one of the more glaring moments of Irish racial consciousness and its connection to the British Empire. He was quoted in TUC reports as stating:

> even if the Chinese labourers and their wives could be compelled to return to China, would not, he asked, a new race spring up, the yellow children born of this haphazard arrangement under the flag of freedom? Were they to be compelled to go to a foreign country—China—and leave the British colony in which they had been born? Would they not rather be retained as a fruitful source of profit, out of which the German Jew millionaires could purchase diamonds for their relatives in Park Lane and provide orgies for their remaining satellites in Covent Garden or Monte Carlo? If the Chinese were such a low type of civilisation that they were unfit to mix on equal terms with the present inhabitants of Transvaal, the remedy was to keep them out, as the Australians and Americans were doing.\(^{162}\)

The statement was met with cheers from the general body of the ITUC. Of course, he along with Walker served as two of the three Irish delegates who attended the September 1904 TUC in Leeds where the resolution against the Chinese Labour Ordinance would be discussed, so the act could have been an early gesture to position the ITUC in solidarity with the TUC. Taking place from 23 to 25 May, the ITUC occurred in the wake of the Hyde Park monster meeting. The investment of the British TUC in Chinese labour and more importantly the ability to mobilise mass protests on the issue undoubtedly sparked the interest of Irish labour leaders, but it simultaneously exposed that these concerns were generating from a British-driven agenda.

\(^{162}\) Ibid.
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The campaign captured the link between the Belfast labour school and the British ILP, who were largely pushing through the agenda. While the slogan of yellow labour fizzled in Dublin almost immediately after it was raised by Dublin labour circles, Belfast leaders managed to keep the message alive. The 1906 labour platform endorsed by the Belfast trades and labour council even placed the Chinese Ordinance on the list of questions candidates had to answer before receiving the council's endorsement. The question asked whether they would support legislation endorsing the importation of Chinese labourers into the Rand. It was listed eighth out of eighteen, immediately after a question on the eight-hour workday.¹⁶³

The particular fascination of the Chinese Ordinance for Belfast labour leaders was in part connected to the topic's ability to 'navigate around the peculiarities of Ulster.'¹⁶⁴ According to Emmet O'Connor, the campaign was not racist from the perspective of Walker and labour supporters because it was not intended to be offensive but rather meant to serve as an issue beyond the sectarian discourse implanted in religious and nationalist identity in the city. However, the very attempt to use the campaign and the belief that it would readily serve to cross sectarian lines tapped into the universal imperial white outlook Walker and other labour leaders believed the Irish working classes maintained.

Keeping in direction with the turning tide, Lindsay Crawford's paper, the Irish Protestant, also weighed in on the issue. In reprinting a letter from the editor of the Japanese-Anglo Gazette, which featured in the Daily Mail and captured the underlying imperial racism supporting western liberal opposition to the scheme, the paper engaged in its own imperial dialogue on the subject. The tactic tapped into the framework that Walker hoped would unite the forces of Belfast independent Protestantism, labourism, and radicalism. The letter warned people against misunderstanding the yellow-peril as it applied to Japanese workers by arguing it was not the fault of the Japanese people. Yet, it only made this point by including a point of deference to the West and white culture by claiming Japan 'realises and acknowledges her inferiority to the nations of the

¹⁶³ BUTC Minutes, 11 January 1906 (L.H.L., Belfast United Trades Council Minute Books, Box 3 Book 1).
It was this underlying belief in western, white superiority that was to be the hope for a common vision for the Belfast working classes.

This campaign had its sceptics. In fact, the *Irish Draper* reported on a remark made at the Dublin Industrial Development Association meeting on the arrival of three Japanese citizens to Dublin. The paper warned that fears of the yellow peril in Ireland would lead to nationalists taking up a slogan of foreignism in Dublin, writing ‘no doubt the Sinn Féin crowd will herald these arrivals as a kind of Yellow Peril from the Flowery Kingdom, and as an additional menace to our industries.’ While Belfast labour circles pushed forward with the issue, Dublin moved away fearing such a move would play too much into the racism of Dublin’s nationalist circles.

For those who supported the cause, the campaign actively played into the concept of privileged white identity. Belfast leaderships’ interest in the Chinese Ordinance revealed two key elements in exposing Irish class racial identity. Firstly, leaders believed white identity to be a neutral and acceptable concept to all workers from across national and religious lines, which indicated that whiteness had universal appeal to Irish workers. Secondly, the desire to shift the Irish labour debate to concerns within the broader scope of empire affirms the degree to which the socialist vision was affected by Atlantic perceptions of race and working-class solidarity; to be part of the international working-class movement meant to be supportive of white labour across the globe.

These attacks clearly attempted to construct white labour solidarity through negative depictions of Chinese labour in South Africa. Sensationalised reports detailing acts of criminality and sexual violence mirrored racist dialogues perpetuated in both the English and American media. Focusing on sexuality and morality was part of the framework used to appeal to the ‘pure white’ identity propagated in the Atlantic World. An article in the *Belfast Labour Chronicle* describing an attack on a white family living in the Rand contained a response from a worker who stated: ‘When the danger of having our dear ones criminally assaulted by these filthy syphilitic Asiatics is

165 *Irish Protestant*, 10 June 1905.
166 *Irish Draper*, 1 May 1907.
167 For a local study of the construction of white purity in juxtaposition to Chinese ‘danger’ through a study of local media, please see, Sang Hea Kil, ‘Fearing yellow, imagining white: media analysis of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882’ in *Social Identities*, 18, 6 (November 2012), pp 663 -77.
brought forcibly home to us, we want no argument or statistics in favour of the Chinese Importation Ordinance.\textsuperscript{168} While the paper offered excuses for such violent acts, claiming that the overpopulation of men resulted in acts of immorality, the reports clearly intended to play upon racist imagery and capitalise on racial fears.\textsuperscript{169} More importantly, the paper attempted to use such racist fears to appeal to a collective identity of whiteness in opposition to the ‘Others’.

Returning to the myth of ‘yellow labour’ as a potential strike breaking force, the \textit{Irish Worker} reminded workers that one impact of the Dublin 1913-14 Lockout would be the importation of foreign Asiatic labour into Irish cities by Irish bosses. In bold font, the paper declared: ‘The masters of talk are taking Chinamen and Asiatatics in place of your fellow countrymen. That is, BRINGING FOREIGNERS HERE TO ROB YOU OF YOUR LIVING IN THIS LAND OF YOUR BIRTH!’\textsuperscript{170} The emphasis was clearly intended to tap into racial fears even more than nationalist ones.

While the waving of the yellow flag did not pay off in the way socialists hoped it would in terms of bolstering electoral support or bridging the sectarian divide in labour, it did demonstrate how a transnational labour issue could have significant racial implications for Ireland. The main reason why leaders were willing to attempt to mobilise workers in a common fight against ‘yellow labour’ was because they knew it tapped into a shared racial identity that all workers possessed, or at least had access to through popular culture. They did not need to see Asian workers lined up to take Irish jobs, they simply had to imagine that the threat was real, which was quite easy to do given the popularity of imperial depictions of the great Asian threat in Edwardian popular culture. While the Irish may have seen themselves as racially divided, they were still part of a wider white race, one that like British workers, feared the ‘yellow peril’. The position reaffirmed the fact that Irish socialist and labour leaders were still very much a product of and connected to a vision of a white-led working-class movement.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Belfast Labour Chronicle}, 23 September 1905.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid, 20 January 1906.
\textsuperscript{170} \textit{Irish Worker}, 1 July 1911
\end{flushleft}
Conclusion

In June 1903, the Scottish SLPGB paper, *The Socialist*, ran an article by George Yates called, ‘The imperial drummer’, which chastised the capitalist press for feeding citizens ‘imperial rhetoric’ that made them feel like they were part of a ‘privileged race’. This very same complaint could, however, be applied to many socialists themselves. While constructions of what is foreign were designed in part to generate distrust of the capitalist classes, they only opened a further forum for increasingly exclusionary constructions of Irish working-class identity. Adding to this dilemma was that the Irish colonial experience kept the dialogue of race strictly within the parameters of Anglo-American imperialism. Essentially, in attempting to prove the legitimacy of an independent Irish working-class struggle, Irish labour leaders only legitimised the image of the Irish working classes as being part of the Anglo-American imperial world.

Racial language and notions of white civility shaped the understanding of working-class internationalism. It was a common language in which labour leaders could take a new radical vision of the world and deliver it in a form the workers could apply with a certain degree of self-understanding. Their attempts to legitimise a radical labour movement already challenged aspects of western politics and society, which, in turn, caused leaders to fall back upon pre-established frameworks of civility, racial entitlement and imperial cultural authority.

The danger in an imperial outlook carried along with the practice of generating a language of exclusion is that it can, and in the Irish case did, lead to racism penetrating the Irish labour movement. It may not have been the intention of Irish leaders to promote a racist agenda while bolstering the claims of the Irish race; however, such racialised language easily deteriorated into a language of racial exclusion and racism as a result of labour tensions. Even when these tensions simply remained the products of imagined political construction, they affirmed the place of the Irish working classes within a wider white identity. Labour leaders and socialists established cultural capital and legitimised political dissent by using racial language that was exclusionary and racist as a means of establishing clear parameters around class identity. This enabled leaders

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171 *Socialist*, June 1903.

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to foster a controlled and potentially uniting sense of discontent by crafting an image of what the Irish working classes were and what they were not. While one could dismiss the message of socialist and labour internationalism because of this element, such arguments would fail to appreciate the significant impact a colonised mentality had even on the most revolutionary working-class leaders. Likewise, it would negate the appeal that previously established imperial constructions of race had in reaching potential working-class recruits.

These radicals were trapped within the imperial framework in which their revolutionary ideals were formed. Connolly, perhaps himself acknowledged this with his own admission that Ireland must first prove herself as an intellectual power within the greater international working-class movement before seeking to shape the vision of what internationalism should be. However, doing this meant first promoting a vision of Irish working-class solidarity that was shaped by a larger imperial and highly racial framework. More importantly, it exposed how deeply paralysed by colonisation Irish labour and socialist leaders were even if their visions aimed to move them and the Irish working classes beyond these barriers. As far as the leaders of the Irish working-class movement were concerned, Irish workers were at the heart of, rather than beyond whiteness.

172 Harp, January 1908.
Conclusion

While the working-class movement may have placed socio-economic reforms for the working classes first and foremost, the identity they used to unite those workers was much more expansive. Working-class leaders were crafting a cultural movement that encapsulated national, religious, and racial aspects. As such, working-class identity was about more than just supporting trade unionism or voting for labour politics, it was about embracing a working-class identity as a way of life. There was just one problem with this package – it did not gain a significant level of popular support among the Irish working classes.

In his statement to the Bureau of Military History, Thomas Leahy glowingly recalled William O'Brien and P.T. Daly regenerating the working-class movement in the detention camps where suspected Irish revolutionaries were held in the aftermath of the Easter 1916 Rising. Leahy asserted that their lectures on socialism and trade union radicalism made an impact because most Irish detainees 'never came in contact with so many trade unionists beforehand.'¹ His comments, while intended as a positive reflection on the role the national struggle played in advancing the cause of labour, also unintentionally highlighted the failures of the working-class movement prior to 1917. In his view, it had taken a nationalist revolution for Irish workers to be made aware of the labour movement. Perhaps Leahy, being from England, was unaware of the size and significance of the Irish working-class struggle before his detention. Nevertheless, his former connections to English labour and Irish nationalist circles abroad make his comments even more of an indictment of the Irish working-class movement. Leahy's negation of the Irish working-class movement's success was a reflection of its failure to reach the Irish working classes prior to 1916.

As this thesis has shown, there were a number of reasons for this failure. Struggles between old and new unionist trade union leadership; factional disputes between socialist leaders; religious and national attacks from competing movements are among just a few of these examples. The problem, however, also had more organic

¹ Thomas Leahy, 10/03/1952 (B.M.H., W.S. 660, File S. 1837), pp 24-5.
roots. The failure was in part a product of the imperial frameworks Irish working-class leaders maintained. Even the most radical Irish socialist leaders restricted themselves to Atlantic imperial modes of thinking. Their mental escape from the British Empire brought them only as far as the Atlantic World. Irish radical working-class leaders may have liberated themselves from British colonialism, but they failed to shed the blinders that prevented them from seeing the realities of the Irish working-class experience. This was what caused them to consistently try and push ideals that simply did not match the realities of the Irish working-class experience.

One unintended aspect of the First World War and the Easter Rising was that afterwards this flawed perspective changed. As Emmet O’Connor as shown, the year 1917 marked the beginning of a new period for trade unionism, marked by a rise in syndicalism across the country. The movement successfully brought working-class radicalism beyond Ireland’s urban centres and into the Irish countryside, something which, as this thesis has shown, the Irish labour leadership had been largely unable to accomplish up until this point. The period after 1917 also saw a rise in ITUC activity, with the number of delegates to the conference jumping from 81 in 1916 to 244 in 1920. Irish trades councils spread across country, with new councils emerging in places like Dungarvan, Ballina, and Fermoy. The total number of trades councils that participated in the ITUC also rose considerably, from four in 1914 to 36 by 1920. Female participation in the ITUC also grew. Until 1916, there had never been more than three female delegates at any given conference. The 1920 conference, however, had eighteen female delegates. These developments reflected the extent to which the labour movement had grown physically and mentally. No longer was it the urban-focused, male-dominated body it had been in earlier years.

These successes fostered a spirit of hope, even among those who had dedicated their lives to the cause and watched it almost fall apart during Easter 1916. In October 1917, for instance, William O’Brien boldly declared that the DCTU had a stronger influence, membership and budget than ever before in its previous thirty-one years of

2 O’Connor, Syndicalism in Ireland.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
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existence. His renewed optimism and confidence reflected a wider belief that the working-class movement was approaching a new dawn. The advent of socialism, for which many of these leaders had strived for since their youth, seemed to be on the horizon, but it was coming through the trade union movement.

The increasing strength of Irish trade unionism came, however, at the expense of political socialism. There were a number of reasons for this, both internal and external. The success of the Russian Revolution and the rise of Bolshevism across Europe split the Second International. Many Irish men formerly associated with the Second International watched their hopes for international socialism crumble with the rise of a new militant brand of Communism emerging in its place. The radicalism of their youth was being tested once again as the dissolution of the Second International undercut beliefs that the international community could provide Ireland with any true guidance. The fracturing of international socialism occurred during the escalation of the Irish national struggle. As a result, many staunch advocates of internationalism, like Thomas Johnson and William O'Brien, shifted their focus on to the national struggle and the trade union movement. As this thesis has demonstrated, this process was largely underway prior to 1916, but it was certainly accelerated by the continued unfolding of national and international events.

Those radical leaders who did embrace the communist movement tended to come from the next generation. They were the sons and protégés of the Second International men, those with enough distance from the previous generation to more easily move past its failures. Perhaps, as was the case of James Connolly's son Roddy, this next generation was motivated by a greater desire to advance the movement in the wake of the sacrifices their family members had made for it. Perhaps the revolutionary impulses of many of the older generation did not run as strong in their later years. The main exception to this rule was Larkin who, due his detention in America, had missed the greatest advances made in the national labour movement. By the time he returned to Ireland in 1923, the movement had moved on without him, a development which perhaps contributed to his more militant internationalist working-class line. Regardless, his attempts to establish a communist movement through the Irish Workers League

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7 *New Way*, October 1917.
8 The initial organiser of the Communist Party of Ireland. For more information, please see, Charles Maguire, *Roddy Connolly and the struggle for Socialism in Ireland* (Cork, 2008).
generated little success, while his own difficulties in working with others soon lead to his disaffiliation from the Comintern, making the movement’s claims of internationalism problematic.  

This growing divide between trade unionism and socialism in Ireland arose from the movement’s central paradox, described by Emmet O’Connor as its ‘colonial consciousness’. This thesis has been an attempt to explore this paradox by analysing how, during the early years of the Irish working-class movement, this ‘mental colonisation’ impacted its engagement with the Irish working classes. To demonstrate this it used an Atlantic framework for its scope. While the aim was not to present a scale in which to weigh an Atlantean interpretation against a colonial one, the thesis has shown that at times the Atlantic World played a significant part in shaping the Irish experience.

The purpose was to prove that Irish working-class leaders’ inability to ‘adapt ideas to their own reality’ arose as a result of more than just the process of ‘anglicanisation’ that kept them tied to British modes of thinking. Ireland’s relationship to the Atlantic World also played an important role in this process. Forged through transnational exchange of materials and ideals along with cross-national movements of labour leaders, Ireland’s relationship to the Atlantic World was a continual and core part of the working-class movement’s experience. This relationship shaped how Irish leaders conceived of the working class struggle and the Irish working classes. In short, Britain is not alone to blame for Ireland’s failure to embrace working-class radicalism, as Ireland’s position in the Atlantic World also had a part to play in this outcome.

Ireland looked to liberate itself from England, by reaching out to the Atlantic. The only problem was that the Atlantic did not have the cure. In seeking to liberate themselves from colonial frameworks, Irish working-class leaders ended up being shaped by Atlantic frameworks that were just as imperially minded. They moved from a British to an Atlantic mental colonisation.

This did not bring Ireland beyond imperialism, as this Atlantic network still came with its own implied limitations on working-class identity. The Irish working-class movement employed images and language adopted from across the Atlantic World. In

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9 Emmet O’Connor, *Reds and the green: Ireland, Russia and the Communist Internationals* (Dublin, 2004), p. 3.
10 Emmet O’Connor, ‘Labour and politics’.
11 Ibid, p. 27.
consequence of this the Irish labour movement, like labour movements elsewhere in
the Atlantic world, was motivated by racial, national, and religious values and
entitlements that were drawn from the Atlantic World order. It was predominately a
movement for Christian, white, urban males. The quest for a higher civilisation, the
affirmation of manhood, the declaration of Christian moral authority were all elements
of this identity. Irish working-class radicals and trade unionists alike willfully boasted
that the movement was about striving for manhood, nationality, and working-class
rights, demands that were deserved through the rights of race and God. The articulation
of this idealized working-class identity, however, came with a heavy price: the exclusion
of a significant part of the Irish workforce.

Atlantic connections did not erase British colonial influences. Indeed, as much of
this thesis has shown, Ireland's relationship with Britain played a key part in driving its
desire to reach further into the Atlantic World. Yet, through their quest to move beyond
Britain, Irish leaders still internalised certain images of working-class identity that
allowed them to ignore the realities in front of them. Ireland was not the same as
America, England, Scotland, or Wales and therefore the socialism designed in these
places did not meet the needs of Irish workers. The Atlantic outlook of Ireland's labour
leaders further validated their refusal to change 'socialism to suit Ireland' and instead
allowed them to wait for 'Ireland to change to suit socialism'. In the event, neither the
imperial nor the Atlantic frameworks that shaped their thinking prior to 1917 prepared
them for the changes that Ireland would undergo later in the twentieth century.
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