

Art and the Irish Free State - visualizing
nationhood (1922-1934)

Ph. D.

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William Shortall

Volume 1.

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Summary.

This study is situated where art and politics intersected in the early years of the Irish Free State. Specifically it seeks to:

- Analyse how the Irish Free State harnessed visual art for political purposes between 1922 and 1934.
- Examine how visual art was used to serve different Irish governmental political agendas nationally and internationally.
- Use a political lens to explore how the State used art exhibitions and commissions to assert an Irish sense of national identity, build the nation, and reconcile a divided public after the Civil War.
- Situate Irish visual art in the broader political, social, cultural and economic context of the early development of the Irish Free State.

From its foundation, the Irish Free State government elected to politically and financially support national and international Irish visual arts engagements. These were often associated with larger public spectacles such as Dublin Civic Weeks, World Fairs and International Trade Fairs. This research investigates and documents the events and their associated art exhibitions and commissions to assess the political and cultural expediency of the collaborations.

The period under consideration runs from 1922 until 1934 and spans two different government administrations. It starts with the World Congress of the Irish Race in Paris, held in 1922, when the nascent State recognised the propaganda value of the associated art exhibition in supporting Irish sovereignty within an international forum. Exploring a number of subsequent national and international spectacles, the thesis ends with the Chicago World's Fair of 1933/34 when the Irish art exhibit sought to portray an image of a stable, prosperous and maturing nation. National events are considered in the context of identity formation, reconciliation, nation building and consolidating the fledgling

government. The research tracks the Irish Free State journey from uncertainty in the immediate aftermath of independence, when the nation was unsure if it had a viable future, through its evolution and transformation to stability. It documents this development through a visual art lens and examines how Irish art exhibitions were used as a soft power and cultural diplomatic tool both nationally and internationally. The principle actors are artists and politicians but also include arts organisations, government officials, foreign states, Irish diaspora and citizens. At home, cultural activity was something both sides of the Civil War treaty divide could embrace, and abroad it encouraged the diaspora to reconnect with the motherland through celebrating its visual culture. As the country established itself among the nations of the world, national anxieties are expressed by both government and artists about the specific national image they constructed for both home and global audiences. Nation building and identity formation exposed tensions between the State and other actors who differed on whether to look to the future or embrace the past, between modernism and tradition, and this dialogue is a constant thread. Furthermore, the thesis investigates what it meant to be an Irish artist as the nation decolonised and Irish art de-anglicised. This research is relevant in the current political climate as the current Irish State seeks to use culture, nationally to integrate recent immigrants, and internationally to expand its global footprint.

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Abbreviations

ACA	Academy of Christian Art
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AAU	Irish Amateur Athletic Union
ACSI	Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland
A&C	Arts and Crafts
BEE	British Empire Exhibition
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
COP	Chicago Century of Progress
CRC	Cultural Relations Committee
DATI	Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction
DCGHL	Dublin City Gallery Hugh Lane
DCA	Dublin City Archive
DCW	Dublin Civic Week
DE	Department of External Affairs (used in NAI references)
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DIFP	Documents on Irish Foreign Policy
DMSA	Dublin Metropolitan School of Art (see also NCA)
EMB	Empire Marketing Board
FIN	Department of Finance (used in NAI references)
FOIF	Friends of Irish Freedom
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
IAAF	International Amateur Athletics Federation
IELA	Irish Exhibition of Living Art
IFS	Irish Free State
IFSG	Irish Free State Government
IRC	World Congress of the Irish Race
ITA	Irish Tourist Association
Kew	British National Archives, Kew
MP	Member of [British] Parliament
MS	Manuscript
NAI	National Archives of Ireland

NACA	National Athletics and Cycling Association of Ireland
NCA	National College of Art (see also DMSA)
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NMIAS	National Museum of Ireland archive
PRHA	President Royal Hibernian Academy
RA	Royal Academy
RBAIC	Century of Progress Collection, Ryerson and Burnham Archives, Art Institute of Chicago.
RDS	Royal Dublin Society
RHA	Royal Hibernian Academy
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
RUA	Royal Ulster Academy
TCD	Trinity College Dublin (University of Dublin)
TD	Teachta Dála (member of the Dáil)
TSCH	Taoiseach (Prime Minister) used in NAI references
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin
UChicago	University of Chicago
UIC	University of Illinois at Chicago

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Introduction.

The year 1922 remains hugely significant in Irish politics and society. It saw the birth of the Irish State amid the turmoil and destruction of Civil War. In January of that year, the Irish Free State, unsure if it had a viable future, found opportunity to organise a major exhibition of Irish art in Paris to showcase its culture and identity and re-enforce its legitimate sovereignty. This was the first time the new State harnessed art for political purposes and it heralded both an emerging national and internationalist approach to cultural policy.

This thesis takes the years 1922 to 1934 as its central focus to examine how the State used visual art for political purposes. It explores many national and international engagements between the State and visual art. Ending with the Chicago 1933/34 World's Fair it shows how changing political agendas were reflected in the art exhibited and commissioned, in the relationship between State and artist, and in the disentanglement of political and cultural forces. Politicians and artists showed awareness of the powerful role art could play in defining a shared national identity, in promoting reconciliation and in counteracting negative national stereotypes in British propaganda. Irish visual art would play an important part in presenting positive representations of the Irish Free State at home and abroad. Exploiting soft power and cultural diplomatic policies, exhibitions of Irish visual art and culture, were intended to affirm and reshape narratives about Ireland.

It was particularly important in post-colonial times when the Irish nation needed to decolonise its culture and identity and present its people with a vision of the new State and their position within it. This research explores the role of visual art in this national assignment as the nation found full political expression. It argues that this first decade was a progressive period with Irish art engaging with modernity and the outside world, and

with a more nuanced reading of Irish art of the period, further argues it was one during which a movement, namely an Irish school of art took hold.

In recovering neglected and underrepresented events in Irish art historiography, this research shows that despite much commentary to the opposite, the Irish Government was not apathetic to the visual arts, in the early years of the State.¹

As will be shown, this thesis takes a fresh and pioneering approach by viewing Irish art, in this intensely political period, through the lens of the State for the first time.² State archives hold files (many not consulted until now) on Irish art, their very existence attesting to the politicisation of the engagements. The case study methodology employed allows for the examination of visual art in the nascent Irish state in relation to the broader context of the social, political and economic development of the nation.

In the arc from the Irish art exhibitions in Paris, 1922 to Chicago, 1933, the State's agenda changed from placing a Paul Henry (1876-1958) landscape in a prestigious public French collection to censoring similar works for trans-Atlantic display as the ideology and political imperatives evolved. Similarly, the often neglected 1922 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition had united political support at home, and despite the violence and political differences in the intervening years, the literary and artistic contributions to the *Saorstat Eireann Irish Free State Official Handbook* of 1932 were similarly embraced by both sides of the political divide. Project such as these illustrate the unifying nature of art and culture and, as is argued, its agency in facilitating a peaceful political transition and change of government towards the end of the research period.

¹ Thomas Bodkin, *Report on the Arts in Ireland*. (Dublin: Stationary Office, 1949, 2nd ed. 1953) is often cited in this regard. For example, see, Diarmaid Ferriter, "Arts get left in cold when ministers wear too many hats", *Irish Times*, 10th Jul. 2020. 12. Fintan O'Toole, "Enda Kenny doesn't care about our culture. Thank God the IDA does", *Irish Times*, 3rd Jun. 2016.

S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991). 204-206.

² Catherine Marshall & Peter Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5, Twentieth Century*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Royal Irish Academy, 2014). 2.

Structure.

This thesis includes this introduction, a literature review, four thematic chapters and a conclusion. Primary sources and secondary literature are further referenced where relevant. The thematic layout mirrors phases in the development of the Irish Free State from revolution, through evolution to its transformation to a stable country. This research shows that the State supported and harnessed visual art for political purposes and used it as a pillar to rebuild statehood and for national development during this period.

Chapter one, the literature review, also identifies the central research question on the Irish Free State government's appropriation of visual art for political purposes in the period after Independence. It frames the arguments presented and questions the State's objectives with regards to propaganda, reconciliation, nation building, and identity formation. Theories underpinning these areas of discussion, for instance post-colonialism, soft power and public diplomacy are explored. This chapter includes the evaluation of relevant literature with particular regard to presenting the social, political and cultural research contexts.

Empirical research of primary sources is the principal method used to build the details of each case study. These primary sources – such as archival political material from the National Archives of Ireland, artists' correspondence in the RHA archive, art catalogues, contemporary newspaper commentary and international archives – are detailed. This primary material is critically evaluated to determine its research relevance and it forms the basis to address gaps in the existing historiography. As this research will show coverage of Irish State supported art exhibitions of this period has been sparse and inadequate. Gaps and assumptions are identified within the existing literature, both in terms of empirical research and in relation to theoretical discourse including soft power and Irish identity formation, omissions that this thesis corrects. Critical thinking in this research also proposes that visual art in the 1920s and early 1930s was essential to the decolonialisation

of the Irish visual imagination. Fruitful comparison of the Irish political appropriation of visual art and artists in the 1920s can be made with countries such as Russia and Canada. In particular the Canadian Group of Seven artists were important in the development/ construction of an identity for Canadian art during the same period. This chapter also introduces the State's participation in the Olympic Games art competitions. It situates the research focus within the context of the wider academic community and provides the intellectual context.

Chapters two and three are part of the 'Revolution: Irish art and new political aspirations' phase and examine the disruption and creativity of the early years of Irish independence after the signing of the 1921 Anglo-Irish treaty. They look at how Irish artists engaged with the emerging State and shows how, in the political lens, cultural independence mirrored the political. Compared to literature, visual art has been little referenced in postcolonial studies on Ireland, this research shows how art was employed as a practical and effective mechanism for visual/ cultural decolonialisation. Chapter two, through original research, shows that the nascent State successfully sought and achieved a propaganda value from the first international government sponsored art exhibition held in Paris in 1922. This art exhibition and event is the primary case study referenced in this chapter and it demonstrates that Irish artists were personally and political engaged with the ideals of the emerging State and allowed their art be used for political purposes. The Irish desire to create a political distance from the English or Englishness was reflected in the artists' desires to create a corresponding cultural separation. Although the national Tailteann Games planned for 1922 were cancelled because of the Civil War, the associated State funded Tailteann Art exhibition did take place in the RDS.³ This important cultural moment examined in chapter three was the first national supported exhibition by the new Government and it took place during the Irish Civil War. This chapter explores the

³ This still remains the largest exhibition of Irish art held in Ireland since the foundation of the State.

political implications of the 1922 and 1924 Tailteann exhibitions and their legacy.

However, as this chapter ends in the mid-1920s, the impact of the Irish Civil War on many artists sees their nationalist fervour soften. A less cohesive approach between State and artists starts to emerge and is reflected in individual artists participating in the British Empire Exhibition 1924, despite the Free State Government declining involvement.

Chapter four, titled ‘Evolution: Irish art and the reconciliation of identity’, researches how the Irish Free State harnessed the agency of visual art to support its nation state building project. Geertz states that rarely is the ideology of new nations purely essentialist (‘the indigenous way of life’ rooted in the past culture and tradition) or purely epochalist (‘the spirit of the age’ embracing economic development and modernity).⁴ The State’s use of visual art during the mid-1920s can be viewed within the prism of this discourse. Culture and art was something both sides of the Treaty divide engaged with together. It was viewed as politically non-contentious and the State support of exhibitions such as the Tailteann Games in 1928 and the Dublin Civic Weeks of 1927 and 1929, was about building reconciliation and defining the nation state. The State’s relationship with its diaspora had also changed, no longer was its primary use in putting pressure on the British government to grant Irish independence but it was now viewed as a vital source of tourist and trade revenue. As such, the government supported national and international exhibitions of Irish art to attract international visitors and extend the tourist season. The State’s growing desire to steer Ireland’s direction towards modernization and innovation, while remaining cognizant of its unique heritage and traditions, is reflected in the art created and exhibited. The maturity of the State and its confidence in its place in the world at the end of the 1920s is exemplified by its participation in and support of artists taking part in exhibitions it would have refused to support earlier in the decade.⁵ One such example was the exhibition

⁴ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973, reprinted 2000). 240-243.

⁵ As discussed later the IFSG refused to exhibit in the 1924 British Empire Exhibition.

“Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions” held at the Imperial Gallery of Art, Imperial Institute, London between 1927 and 1931. Another indication of a more pragmatic approach was the State effecting agency over its identity and that of its agricultural produce in the Empire Marketing Board campaign between 1926 and 1933. It negotiated its place within the Empire, for economic advantage, and was unique in having Irish artists, rather than London advertising agencies, design its posters.

Chapter five, titled ‘Transformation: Irish art and projecting modern Ireland’, considers how political control passed from Cumann na nGaedel to Fianna Fail without the much anticipated violence. It is argued that the reconciliation efforts of the previous decade, of which art was a central pillar, was a contributing factor to the smooth transition of power within the State. Stability within the country was largely achieved and conciliatory gestures or questions regarding national identity were resolving. This chapter also provides a more nuanced reading of the perceived lack of support for the 1932 Tailteann Games and art exhibition, the last incarnation of this national initiative, and challenges the common perception that it evidenced a reduction in the Government’s national cultural agenda. The soft power deployed to bring opposing sides of the Treaty together would now be employed in the international arena. Differing forms of Irish cultural expression would be showcased at the first important State supported transatlantic Irish art exhibition held in Chicago in 1933. This exhibition sought to present a mature State, promoting a prosperous, progressive image of Ireland. During preparations for the Chicago exhibition the government came into conflict with artists when they rejected paintings that they no longer believed presented an acceptable image of Ireland on the world stage. In some cases this was a direct challenge to the identity expressed by many artists working in what has been

described as a national style a decade before.⁶ At this period, the authorities wanted no artistic ‘representations of Irish life as emanating from thatched cottages’.⁷ A nuanced interpretation of the State’s support for visual art after De Valera came to power is required to show Irish governments were willing to use modern and progressive images to promote the State in an international context. The complexity of the Free State’s relationship with Northern Ireland was also played out in a further politicisation of this exhibition and the Government’s refusal to exhibit some art works portraying the Six Counties. This is examined to see if it exemplified the State being caught in the Nationalist fervour of that time in Europe, or whether, inclusion would have implied from their perspective recognition of the legitimacy of the Northern Irish state. In any event there were clear tensions between the artists, via Dermot O’Brien (1865-1945), PRHA and the instructions coming from Minister Sean Lemass, in the Department of Industry and Commerce, in terms of subject matter and artistic freedom.

This thesis also evaluates a number of State sponsored Civic publications that could be reasonably described as propaganda, including the 1932 *Saorstat Eireann Official Handbook* and the art works it reproduced, which in many respects embodies that mixture of the traditional and the modern exhibited in Chicago. Similarly, the 1932 Eucharistic Congress reveals some of the same combinations with boastful claims made about broadcasting the Pope live during the week, emphasising the up-to-the-minuteness of the Irish Free State in terms of modern communications and addressing the outside world.

⁶ There is a broad range of literature on Irish art and culture that discusses the existence of an ‘Irish School of Art’, ‘Irish identity’ and the role of the State in relation to same. Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland’s Art, Ireland’s History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007). Dorothy Walker, *Modern Art in Ireland*, (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1997). Fionna Barber, *Art in Ireland since 1910*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2013). S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991). Luke Gibbons, *Transformations in Irish Culture, Field Day Essays*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996). Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*, (London: Harper, 2004).

⁷ RHA O’Brien archive. Letters from Dermot O’Brien to various artists who had works rejected, 19th and 24th May, 1933. This archive is detailed later.

The conclusion, highlights the key assertions presented and draws the research arguments together in a summary and a critical deduction. Art is a functional lens through which to examine how the nascent Irish Free State government attempted to State build and assert a national identity after independence. The State's attitude to culture can be assessed through its harnessing of art for political purposes and the importance of individual politicians, administrators and official bodies to the development of art in this period is identified. The conclusion also identifies the relevance of this research today. Government support of these spectacles provided practical encouragement for artists, built a positive image of Ireland at home and abroad and provided a conduit to build trade and tourism. The current Irish Government initiative 'Global Ireland 2025' which plans to use Irish culture to increase Ireland's global footprint is reflective of the nascent States similar use of visual art and culture.⁸ This research provides an opportunity to learn from past engagements. The research of the Irish Government's use of visual art in this period after Independence, and the recovery of some largely forgotten and under-recorded exhibitions in Irish art historiography, will add to the canon and aid future Irish cultural studies discourse.

It is too unwieldy to list the bibliography solely in alphabetical order. Therefore, it is organised and indexed by individual case studies, in particular, archives, catalogues, and newspapers specific to an individual case study are listed under that event. Secondary texts, general newspaper articles, governmental publications and online material are listed separately.

⁸ See, Leo Varadkar, "Speech of An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, at the launch of Global Ireland 2025", 11th Jun. 2018 at <https://www.gov.ie/en/news/ab133b-speech-of-an-taoiseach-leo-varadkar-at-the-launch-of-global-ireland/> accessed 1/9/19 and "Global Ireland 2025: 'We must serve our artists if we're going to serve our society'", *Irish Times*, 24th Jan. 2019. See full document, Department of the Taoiseach, *Global Ireland, Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025*, (Dublin, Government Publications, 2018), available at, https://merrionstreet.ie/MerrionStreet/en/ImageLibrary/20180612_Global_Ireland.pdf

Chapter 1. Literature Review and Research Environment.

‘Art without politics is superhuman. Politics without art is subhuman. Either without the other is inhuman’.¹

1.1.1 Setting up the central question.

Through their work across time, artists have recorded and expressed all aspects of human life, including the ideas and dreams of the individuals who made it, and the agency and beliefs of the societies that they served. State supported displays and exhibitions reveal how art serves political imperatives as nations develop. This research is situated where art and politics overlap and interrogates how the Irish Free State (IFS) harnessed visual art for political purposes in the twelve years after independence. In the early years of the IFS, visual art events and commissioned art works were often associated with larger public occasions, such as Civic Weeks, World Fairs and International Trade Fairs. The Irish Government sponsored and oversaw the presentation of Irish art at these events for various political purposes.² This thesis identifies, investigates and documents a comprehensive range of spectacles and associated art exhibitions that serve to address the central research question; how did the Irish Free State governments (IFSG) harness visual art for political purposes between 1922 and 1934?

At home these purposes spanned the early government’s efforts in three key areas;

- (i) State building – establishing the State as a viable and stable entity;
- (ii) Identity formation – to give people a positive and formative view of themselves within the new political order and bind them to the new State;

¹ Richard Kearney, “Beyond Art and Politics” in *The Crane Bag*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring, 1977. 10.

² Events for the period of this research are listed in Appendix 1 and are documented and analysed in detail throughout this thesis.

- (iii) Reconciliation - to re-unify the polarised combatants of the Civil War, and to encourage both sides to become national stakeholders.

This soft power and cultural diplomacy used at home was also deployed along with other propagandist activities in the international arena as the independent State asserted its position and identity in the world after 1922. Soft Power is described as the ability of a country or government to get what it wants through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises through the attraction of a country's culture, political ideals and policies.³

Spectacles are large scale public events; those supported by the Free State government included the World Congress of the Irish Race held in Paris in 1922, Tailteann Games 1922/ 24/ 28/ 32, Dublin Civic Weeks 1927/ 29, Eucharistic Congress 1932 and Irish display at the Chicago Worlds' Fair 1933/ 34. The government also sent delegations to important international events, organised by other bodies including the Olympic Games, trade fairs and other foreign events identified as important/ advantageous to the administration's aspirations. The IFSG instigated all the national events listed, it also initiated the Paris exhibition, and although the Chicago spectacle in 1933 was organised by the American Fair's committee, as will be shown, the Irish government was enterprising in its participation. It was regarded as 'leading the way' by exhibiting contemporary art, a decision taken by the Department of Industry and Commerce, no doubt informed by its previous successes in this arena.⁴ Only a participant in the Imperial Art Gallery exhibitions in London and in the Empire Marketing Board (EMB) campaign, the IFSG in these, and all spectacles it participated in, sought to affect agency over the visual art forms and themes used to represent the nation. Throughout this study, local, national and international events

³ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004).

⁴ RBAIC. Series 1 Box 3 00.18. Eleanor Jewett, "Many interesting paintings now to be found in buildings on the grounds of A Century – Irish Free State started trend; Followed by local Association artists", *Chicago Tribune*, undated news clipping but June 1933. See also Anon. "Modern Ireland is Revealed by Display at World's Fair" undated clipping but *Chicago Tribune*, May/June, 1933.

are referred to by their titles and the term spectacle is used as a generic expression for all events.

The time frame chosen for this study is purposeful. During this period there were a variety of art exhibitions held in Europe, America and in Ireland that the State harnessed for political purposes. The period spans two different government administrations, one led by the Cumann na nGaedheal party, which worked between 1922 and 1932 to consolidate and build the new independent state, and the Fianna Fail party, which re-entered constitutional politics in 1927 and undid the remaining constitutional ties of the state with the United Kingdom after they came to power in 1932.

As defined for the purposes of this study, the State includes the Government, all publicly funded bodies, Government Departments, agencies and the Dublin City Council. Other actors involved are the participating artists and the organisers of the public spectacles and exhibitions. Also included are diaspora groups who engaged with their motherland through the viewing, promotion and acquisition of art and art objects, and the foreign states that hosted international Irish art exhibitions. The relationships existing between each of these players is an important factor in understanding the varying agendas of the period and are investigated throughout the thesis.

Excluded from this study are other major IFS events without an associated art exhibition, and large scale public exhibitions undertaken on a commercial and promotional basis by Irish artists without State support. However, some of these will be referenced briefly for comparison purposes, for example, the State declined to participate in the British Empire Exhibition of 1924 although some Irish artists did show art works there in a personal capacity. A substantial privately organised exhibition of Irish Art in Brussels in 1930 should be noted as an important international display of Irish art without IFSG

involvement.⁵ This Brussels exhibition was a bi-laterally organised exhibition by Belgian and Irish promoters. The exhibition is noteworthy in that the Irish artist-organisers included members that were often found on official government committees. Here they sought to emulate the success of State supported events.⁶

The 1932 Eucharistic Congress was the largest spectacle in the history of the State, and although it did not have a specific associated art exhibition, it aligned itself closely with that year's Tailteann exhibition. Direct Government support to the Congress was limited, but as will be shown, it was still a drain on State finances. Government involvement was visually obvious through Irish art and craft commissions as a manifestation of the alliance of the Roman Catholic Church and IFS. This engagement is evidenced from contemporary media reports and the NAI and NLI Congress files and is discussed in chapter five.

Excluded from analysis are IFSG commemorative memorial commissions for narrow party-political reasons. Both Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fáil engaged in celebrating their own heroes once in power. These tended to be localised events, often part of community fundraising endeavours, and the resulting art works were not exhibited in the context of a broader event. Sculptors Albert Power and Oliver Sheppard, in particular, received various commission from both parties.⁷

⁵ The following are the relevant files for the British Empire and Brussels exhibitions:

NAI. TSCH/3/S1967. British Empire Exhibitions, 1924 and 1925. Date: Dec 1922-Jun 1925.

NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/28. British Empire Exhibition file. 1923.

NAI. 92/3/438. General file re the question of Saorstát representation at the British Empire Exhibition (92/3/438). 26 Jan 1924-13 Mar 1925.

Art Catalogues: *The British Empire Exhibition (1924) Palace of Arts*, (London: Fleetway Press, 1924).

Catalogue of the Palace of Arts, British Empire Exhibition, 1925. (London: Fleetway Press, 1925).

NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/44a. Proposed Irish Art Exhibition to be held in Brussels, 1930.

NAI. TSCH/3/S6025. Irish art: exhibition of at Brussels, 1930.

RHA archive file ref 221(1-46)/4B/4 O'Brien's file on Irish art exhibition, Brussels, 1930.

Musée Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, *Exposition D'Art Irlandais 10 Mai – 8Juin 1930*. (Brussels: J.E. Goossens, 1930) – exhibition catalogue.

⁶ The members of the organising committee were Dermot O'Brien, George Atkinson, Thomas Bodkin, J. Crampton Walker and Leo Whelan.

⁷ For example, Power's commissions included statues of Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins and Austin Stack and Sheppard's included Patrick Pearce, Kevin O'Higgins and Cathal Brugha. See Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Expressions of Nationhood in Bronze & Stone: Albert G. Power, RHA*, (Dublin: IAP, 2019) and John Turpin, *Oliver Sheppard 1865-1941*, (Four Court Press, Dublin, 2000).

The central question challenges earlier assertions that the IFSG in the years after independence were apathetic about visual art. This research demonstratively shows that the State engaged with the arts to serve its own ends and that government attitudes to the arts reflected changing ideologies over the period. For the first time in Irish art historical studies this engagement is viewed primarily through the prism of the State rather than the artist.⁸ In the process this research uses both political and art historical archival sources to recover forgotten and inadequately recorded Irish art exhibitions and to identify the key individuals involved.⁹ Other art historical assumptions are questioned, such as the notion that the thatched cottage was the icon of Irish visual art approved by the State and reflected its ‘thatched cottage’ mentality.¹⁰ Testing existing secondary sources, this thesis presents a more nuanced interpretation. The research debates what it meant to be an Irish artist in newly independent Ireland and the role played by the State in this definition. It asserts that a significant number of Irish artists developed a visual art language or aesthetic to represent the independent State and that this formed the basis for the Irish School of Art that existed during the research period. Finally, this first chapter introduces the methodology, political and cultural context and the theory engaged with and relevant, to this research.

1.1.2 Methodology and sources.

The main investigative methods employed in this study are empirical and normative. The primary source materials are the art exhibitions associated with national and international state funded spectacles. Principle exhibitions/ commissions examined are,

- Exposition D'art Irlandais, Paris, January 1922.

⁸ Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5. 2.*

⁹ Discussed later but for example one important exhibition was described as ‘modest’, another is completely ignored and most are only mentioned in passing if at all in Irish art historiography.

¹⁰ Numerous texts cited in this research but for example see, Síghe Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007), 8.

- Aonach Tailteann art exhibitions, 1922, 1924, 1928, 1932.
- Olympic Games arts competitions, 1924, 1928, 1932.
- Empire Marketing Board poster campaigns, 1926-1933
- Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, at the Imperial Art Gallery, London – annually from 1927 to 1931.
- Exhibitions associated with Dublin Civic Week, 1927 and 1929.
- Commissions related to the Eucharistic Congress, 1932.
- Irish art exhibition at the Chicago World's Fair, 1933.
- Various commissioned civic publications.

Each event is treated as a detailed qualitative case study and has been selected by references in Irish art history and general history texts, searches (using finding aids of archives and libraries) and from previous research undertaken by the author.¹¹ Typically each case study has a spectacle, a state supported art exhibition and a political and historical context. For example, as will be shown, the Aonach Tailteann 1924 was funded by the state, had an extensive associated art exhibition, was the first major national spectacle since Irish independence, and presented an Irish Ireland identity that looked to both the past and the future.

In Ireland, primary source material on all the spectacles has in the main been sourced from the National Archives of Ireland (NAI), Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA) archives, the National Library (NLI) and university archives in TCD and UCD. These archives hold programmes, brochures, flyers, ephemera and other details on the various spectacles. Importantly many of these files also contain departmental minutes and correspondence,

¹¹ For example the important art exhibition accompanying the World Congress of the Irish Race, Paris 1922 only became apparent after searches in the National Archives of Ireland and the National Library.

reports and political comment on Irish participation. International archives in Paris, London and Chicago were accessed to gather the material recorded by the host countries.

In Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France holds material relating to the Irish Race Congress in the papers of a French delegate, and a run of the *Irish Bulletin*, an Irish propaganda newsletter distributed in France, including for the period of the Congress.¹² The Archives Nationales hold official French state papers relating to the art exhibition associated with the Congress, including comments on the show and the decision by the French State to purchase a painting by Paul Henry.¹³ That painting is now in collection of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou. The French diplomatic archives in Nantes, Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes, holds the repatriated records from the French Embassy in Dublin including substantial correspondence relating to the Race Congress.¹⁴ It contains exchanges; between the French Dublin embassy and the Foreign Affairs ministry in Paris, and lists discussions on Ireland between this French ministry and the French Interior ministry. It also includes some correspondence with other French embassies, in particular London, about Irish attendees and events of the Congress and it contains daily reports on the activity of the Congress and its participants. An additional uncorrected copy of the art exhibition catalogue is held in the Arte Decoratif archive. Correspondence on the event between members of the Dáil and the organisers are in archives at the NLI and the NAI.

The limited secondary literature that exists on the Congress, which had showcased Irish music, theatre and visual art, has exclusively focused on the political debate and

¹² Bibliothèque nationale de France, (hereafter BnF) Quai François Mauriac, holds a substantial but incomplete run of the *Bulletin Irlandais*. It holds editions starting from 3rd February, 1921 to the 20th July, 1922 and a second series from 12th August, 1924 to 15th May, 1925.

BnF, FRBNF42526455, Archives et bibliothèque Yves-Marie Goblet (1881-1955).

¹³ Archives Nationales, Paris. F/21/4220 Dossier 80.

¹⁴ Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes holds the repatriated records from The French Embassy in Dublin. The correspondence regarding the 1922 Irish Race Congress is in Europe 1918-1929, Irlande, No 1, Z282 Affaires interieures. Juin 1918. Hereafter referred to as Nantes followed by the relevant page number.

manoeuvrings by both sides of the Anglo-Irish treaty divide, in their efforts to gain advantage. It has ignored the cultural aspect of the event, and how this served to bring each faction together during the Congress, thus creating a united front to international audiences.¹⁵

The NAI and Dáil reports are a rich source of information on the political support for, and the recognised agency created by, the Aonach Tailteanns of 1922, 1924, 1928 and 1932.¹⁶

The 1922 Aonach was cancelled except for the Tailteann art exhibition. De Valera's fluctuating position on the event shows how his support for the games was predicated on political expediency. The NLI holds ephemera and programs, handbooks and the art exhibition catalogues.¹⁷ Other relevant material is accessible in the Yeats papers in the NLI and in private collections.¹⁸

Primary sources for the Dublin Civic Weeks 1927 and 1929 include a substantial number of newspaper reports and official publications such as the events handbooks, catalogues and programmes that are generally available including in the NLI and private collections.¹⁹

¹⁵ Available texts on the World Congress of the Irish Race are:

Dermot Keogh, "The Treaty Split and the Paris Irish Race Convention". *Études Irlandaises*, 1987, No. 2, Vol 12, 165-170. Gerard Keown "The Irish Race Conference, 1922, Reconsidered" in *Irish Historical Studies*. Cambridge University Press. Vol. 32, No. 127 (May, 2001). 365-376. K. Daniel, "The scholars and the saboteurs: the wrecking of a South African Irish scheme, Paris 1922" in *South African-Irish Studies*, no. 1 (1991). 162-75. Paul Murray. The Irish Race Congress 21-28 January 1922, in *History Ireland*, Issue 4, Winter 2001, Vol 9. Richard Davis, *The Self-Determination of Ireland Leagues and the Irish Race Convention in Paris, 1921-1922*, (Tasmanian Historical Association Papers 24, 1977). John Brannigan, *Race in Modern Irish Literature and Culture*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). 35-48.

¹⁶ Exemplified by: NAI file - Tailteann Games TSCH/3/S1592 1922-1924.

NAI. FIN/1/293. Estimates 1922/23: Tailteann Games, 1922.

NAI. FIN 1/402. Proposed grant towards expenses of Exhibition of Irish Art.

Dáil Éireann debate. Vol. S2 No. 2. "Aonach Tailteann". 1st Mar. 1922.

Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. S2 No. 15. "Aonach Tailteann", Thursday, 8th June 1922.

¹⁷ NLI. Ephemera. *Aonach Tailteann: 11th to 26th August Dublin* by Tailteann Games (Aug. 11th-26th, 1928: Dublin).

Promotional brochure for 1922 Aonach Tailteann. *Tailteann Games Irish Race Olympics Dublin 6-13 Aug. 1922*, (Dublin: Helys, 1922).

¹⁸ NLI. Yeats Family Papers, 1862-1960, MS 31,078.

¹⁹ Bulmer Hobson, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1927).

E.M. Stephens, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1929 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1929).

Catalogue. *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engraving and Sculpture September 19th-October 15th*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1927).

Catalogue. *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art Dublin Civic Week 1929 2nd to 28th September*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1929).

Pathé news film reels provide first-hand evidence of civic involvement and mass participation in the parades and other activities that took place during these weeks.²⁰ Material in the National Archives of Ireland throws further light on Government support for the municipal event.²¹ Other scholarly investigations of the Dublin Civic Weeks refer minimally to the associated art exhibitions. In comparison, particular attention is focused on the DCW outdoor theatrical pageants.²² These Civic events show that despite economic stringencies the State was willing to finance projects that supported nation building.²³ Between them, the research libraries of the Tate Art Gallery and the Victoria and Albert in London, hold the complete run of the catalogues for each of the five, “Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions” exhibitions, held in the Imperial Art Gallery from 1927 to 1931.²⁴ The Imperial Institute Bulletins for the respective years comment on the exhibitions and were available in the British National Archives.²⁵ The NAI papers show that the Executive Council²⁶ met annually to agree the selection panel for this exhibition, which contained between 11 and 19 Irish art works each year.²⁷

²⁰ “Ireland Through The Ages 1927” at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/ireland-through-the-ages/query/dublin+civic+week> and “Over Sixty 1929” at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/over-sixty/query/dublin+civic+week> and “Irish Military Tattoo 1929” at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/irish-military-tattoo-1/query/irish+military+tattoo>.

²¹ NAI TAOIS/S5515 various memos dated, 9th Sep. 1927, 15th Sep. 1927, 20th Jul. 1929 and 25th Jul. 1929. NAI. DFA/GR/967 - Dublin Civic Week, Sept. 1927 9 - 12 Sept 1927. Memo dated 12th Sept. 1927.

²² Joan FitzPatrick Dean, “Rewriting the Past: Historical Pageantry in the Dublin Civic Weeks of 1927 and 1929” in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua* Vol 13 No. 1. 2009. 20-41. Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014). Paige Reynolds, *Modernism, Drama, and the Audience for Irish Spectacle*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2007).

²³ The *Old Age Pensions Act* 1924 had reduced the state pension by one schilling.

Reducing the wages of Dublin Corporation workers was also discussed – see Dáil debates 23rd Nov. 1927.

²⁴ Five catalogues. *Exhibition of paintings, drawings, engravings and small sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions*, for 1927, 28, 29, 30, 31. All published by Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd, London.

²⁵ *Bulletin of the Imperial Institute*, 1927, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 all published by John Murray, London.

²⁶ The Executive Council of the IFS consisted of the President and senior ministers. Today these would be termed Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and his Cabinet.

²⁷ NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/67, Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, engravings and small sculpture in the Imperial Gallery of Art, London. See also 38/43.

NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Imperial Exhibition of Contemporary Art, 1927: arrangements for Irish participation. Nov 1926-Oct 1930.

NAI. DFA/11/3/34. Title Imperial Conference, 1930: exhibition in the National Portrait Gallery. 1930.

One scheme involving IFSG's direct engagement with Irish artists was the EMB. The purpose of the scheme was to create favourable market conditions in the UK for Empire products from its Dominions, including those from the IFS. Public opinion forced the British Government to rule out the possibility of using tariffs against foreign produce.²⁸ Instead the EMB sought to persuade the masses by appealing to mutuality and Empire loyalty to purchase Empire produce. While the EMB engaged in scientific research, its multifarious publicity campaign, dominated the public's perception of the scheme. This campaign used film, newspaper advertising, and most prominently, a poster advertising scheme. All dominions and colonies featured in this advertising campaign but the IFS was the only country to engage directly with the EMB, to push its own agenda and to have Irish artists commissioned as designers. Other countries EMB posters were designed by English design houses and artists. Files in the NAI show certain tensions between IFS government departments with the EMB as it negotiated how the state and its produce was represented.²⁹ Artist Margaret Clarke's (1888-1961) correspondence in the NLI shows how she negotiated with the EMB and Irish State officials, to produce designs that satisfied both and delivered accurate content and aesthetically agreeable designs.³⁰

The EMB charged itself with producing posters of 'real artistic value. It is thought that visually strong work made a deeper and more arresting appeal to the public than ordinary commercial work. Furthermore, close consultation with each artists ensured designs were consonance with the character of the Board's campaign'.³¹ Chapter four explores, how the State through Irish artists, engaged with the EMB and demonstrates a growing confidence

²⁸ Fearing a rise in prices, the UK electorate had in the 1923 general election rejected proposals to raise tariffs against foreign produce, as proposed by the Conservatives. This proposal was dropped in their next election programme when they were re-elected in 1924.

²⁹ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Empire Marketing Road [sic] - Poster Campaign, 1926.

NAI. TSCH/3/S9386. Empire Marketing Board. May 1926-Nov 1933.

NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Empire Marketing Board: design for marketing of Irish produce. Nov 1926-Aug 1929.

NAI. DFA/1/GR/1022. Agricultural Economics Committee (Empire Marketing Board). 1928.

³⁰ NLI. MS 48,419-48,442. Harry Clarke and Margaret Clarke Papers, 1860-1991.

³¹ British National Archives, Kew. Hereafter Kew. CO.760.22, Publicity Committee Papers 2, paragraph 5. See also Mark Haworth-Booth, *E. McKnight Kauffer a designer and his public*, (London: V&A, 2005). 50.

in the new State projecting an evolving and more complex identity internationally within the context of the British Empire. A great deal has been written in economic and empire historiography on the EMB but little exists on the posters as art work.³² Examples of posters are available in archives in the UK, principally the Manchester Art Gallery and the British National Archives.³³ These archives were also accessed to obtain correspondence between Irish government officials, participating artists and the EMB to determine the commissioning process and the Irish political imperative.³⁴ Posters specific to participating countries are held in those countries archives, including some of the Irish artists' posters in the National Library of Ireland.³⁵ Others are identified through contemporary newspaper accounts.³⁶ There is one existing journal article on Irish Empire Marketing Board poster designs which is challenged, corrected, and augmented with additional research in chapter four.³⁷ The EMB's run from 1927 until 1933, parallels Irish participation in the Imperial Art Gallery exhibitions and they combine to show how the IFSG was asserting its place in the world and effecting agency over its identity in an international arena.

³² Felicity Barnes, "Bringing Another Empire Alive? The Empire Marketing Board and the Construction of Dominion Identity, 1926–33", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 2014 Vol. 42, No. 1, 61–85. David Meredith, "Imperial Images: The Empire Marketing Board, 1926–32", *History Today*, 37, no. 1 (1987): 30–7. Stephen Constantine, "Bringing the Empire Alive: The Empire Marketing Board and Imperial Propaganda, 1926–33" in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, edited by John Mackenzie. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986).

³³ Stephen Constantine, *Buy & Build, The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board*. (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1986). Melanie Horton, *Empire Marketing Board Posters Manchester Art Gallery*. (London: Scala, 2010).

³⁴ Kew. CO 760 1926–1933, Dominions Office: Empire Marketing Board Minutes and Papers.

Kew. CO 956 1926–1939, Colonial Office: Empire Marketing Board: Posters.

³⁵ NLI. Posters available under EMB call numbers in Prints and Drawings and Ephemera Collections – special access only. It holds Margaret Clarke and Sean Keating posters and related letterpress posters.

³⁶ For example see photo of Paul Henry poster, "Dairying in the Free State", *Irish Times*, 3rd Nov. 1926. 9. A number of sources have mentioned that Henry designed a poster but it has not been identified. None reference this source. Newspapers are an important source because the EMB pursued vigorous newspaper campaigns.

³⁷ Mike Cronin. "Selling Irish Bacon: The Empire Marketing Board and Artists of the Free State" in *Eire-Ireland* 39 no. 3&4, Fall/Winter 2004. 132–143. Errors, exemplified by, but not limited to:

Erroneously claims that no files in the Irish National Archives refer to Paul Henry's commission.

Suggests Margaret Clarke was paid substantially less than JH Craig and Paul Henry which as will be shown is untrue.

States that Margaret Clarke eliminated a map of Ireland from her poster to avoid political problems. The map remained a central element as evidenced by existing posters.

States that the IFS was poorly served by the EMB and it is erroneously blamed for the downturn in trade.

Numerous sources in Chicago were accessed, in particular the Century of Progress 1933/34 archives at the Daley Library, University of Illinois at Chicago and the Crerar Library, University of Chicago, for primary material on the Irish art exhibition held in conjunction with the 1933 Chicago Worlds' Fair. These substantial archives contained correspondence between Irish officials; the Irish Consul in Chicago, Daniel J. McGrath, and the organisers. These also included a radio interview and press releases by McGrath.³⁸ The primary Irish source for the Chicago event is the NAI files which contain correspondence from the organisers to the Irish government, inviting Irish state participation, official COP brochures and booklets, interdepartmental correspondence discussing the exhibition and an interdepartmental report on proposed Irish participation.³⁹ These files were compiled by the Department of Foreign Affairs and are the official record of the decision to participate. There is no correspondence in the NAI files regarding the Irish art exhibition for Chicago. The files do contain correspondence on the industry, science and archaeology exhibits and set the context in which the art exhibition took place. Dermot O'Brien was president of the Royal Hibernian Academy from 1910 to 1945 and his papers in the RHA archive are the primary source for the Chicago visual art exhibition detailing the artists and art works selected.⁴⁰ His file on this exhibition is a contemporary record of events and includes; the government's invitation to RHA members to take part in the art exhibition; a list, in

³⁸ A Century of Progress records, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Illinois at Chicago (Hereafter cited as UIC Archive).
 Century of Progress International Exposition Publications, Crerar Ms 226, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library (Hereafter known as UChicago archive).
 UIC Archive. Box 61 Folder 2 1089.

³⁹ NAI. DFA 15/12 (DFA/1/GR/393/183) World's Fair to be held in Chicago 1933 (Centennial Celebration), NAI. DFA/2/36/70 Chicago Exhibition 1933 question of insurance of staff attending and NAI. DFA/10/A/358/1 Expenditure in connection with Chicago fair 1933.

⁴⁰ Although listed as seven items in the RHA O'Brien Archive PDF, all items are in one folder
 RHA220 (1-47)/4A/14. Group of 47 letters etc. pertaining to organizing the exhibition in Chicago.
 RHA220 (48-75)/4A/14. Group of 27 letters etc.
 RHA220 (76-77)/4A/14. Two plans for the hanging of paintings
 RHA220 (78-82)/4A/14. 5 letters to O'Brien
 RHA220 (83-87)/4A/14. 5 official letters pertaining to the organization of the exhibition.
 RHA220 (88-102)/4A/14. Biographical information on Irish artists to exhibit
 RHA220 (103-107)/4A/14. Envelope containing a copy of O'Brien's letter to Conor and 2 newspaper cut-outs referring to refusal of work from Northern Ireland,

O'Brien's hand, of artists considered for participation; clear instructions from the government on the type of art works acceptable and the placing of a government official on the art selection panel. There is substantial correspondence with the exhibiting artists over art works selected and rejected. As President of the RHA, O'Brien took responsibility for all correspondence with the artists and with the Department of Industry and Commerce, which was organising the exhibition on behalf of the State.⁴¹ Secondary material on the Chicago Fair includes Charles Fanning's 2011 extensive essay for the *New Hibernia Review* which focuses on the Irish Village created for the 1934 incarnation of the fair.⁴² Other journal articles and chapters in publications that cover Irish participation in national and international spectacles, also mention the Chicago Fair, but only mention visual art as an aside, if at all.⁴³ By contrast, the outdoor theatrical pageants held in Chicago, like its Dublin Civic Week equivalents, are the subject of detailed research and analysis in secondary sources. The pageants are primarily considered in terms of identity construction for the new Irish State and the discussions of same inform the approach of this research. Two relevant PhD theses identified, have considered Irish involvement in the paradigm of selected World's Fairs including Chicago 1933/34 and extrapolated the views of Irishness being presented, however neither mention the associated art exhibition.⁴⁴

The Olympics Games was an event that the new State was keen to participate in alongside other sovereign nations of the world. Olympic events included visual art and literature up to and including the London games in 1948. These events are pertinent to this research,

⁴¹ At this time, Sean Lemass was the Minister of Industry and Commerce and ultimately responsible for Irish participation in the Chicago World's Fair 1933.

⁴² Charles Fanning, "Dueling Cultures: Ireland and Irish America at the Chicago World's Fairs of 1933 and 1934" in *New Hibernia Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3, Autumn 2011. 94-110.

⁴³ Mairéad Carew, "'The Pageant of the Celt' World's Fair – Irish Archaeology at the Chicago World's Fair, 1933-4" in *History Ireland*, Vol 28., No. 1, Spring 2014. 9-12. 10. Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014). Paige Reynolds, *Modernism, Drama, and the Audience for Irish Spectacle*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2007).

⁴⁴ Caroline R. Malloy, "Exhibiting Ireland: Irish Villages, Pavilions, Cottages, and Castles at International Exhibitions, 1853-1939" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2013). Jeffrey M. O'Leary, "Manufacturing Reality: The Display of the Irish at World's Fairs and Exhibitions 1893 to 1965" (Ph.D. diss, Kent State University, 2015).

however, the Olympic Council of Ireland have no extant records for the period and there are limited files in the National Archives of Ireland, the National Library and other repositories.⁴⁵ In Appendix 2 the thirty six Irish visual artists and six writers who took part in Olympic competitions since 1924 are listed in a table compiled from different sources but primarily from the online Sports Reference databases and the LA84 Sports Foundation Digital Library Collection.⁴⁶ This is presented as the principle source material for this element of the research. Clare A. Culleton, Kevin McCarthy and Richard Stanton are good secondary sources on Free State engagement with the Olympic Games.⁴⁷ As recognised by other scholars, participation in the Olympics heightened a sense of identity and national togetherness, ‘nationalism’ among the public and created ‘fertile territories for propaganda’ for governments to plough.⁴⁸ For the IFSG athletic success outweighed any artistic medal and Jack Yeats’s silver medal in Paris 1924 was ignored in political circles. President of the Executive Council, W. T. Cosgrave’s speech, at the banquet to celebrate the success of the Irish Olympic team at the 1928 Amsterdam Games erroneously lamented that at the Paris Games in 1924, the first that the new State participated in, ‘no Irish

⁴⁵ Email from Olympic Council of Ireland.

NAI. TSCH/3/S5983/22. William T Cosgrave, speeches: Olympic banquet Oct 1928,

NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/104a. (alt. ref. 34/178) Games of the 10th Olympiad to be held at Los Angeles in 1932

NAI. DFA/2/34/178. Olympic Games. Jan 1934.

NAI. 2012/89/19. The Olympic Council of Ireland 1947-1959.

NAI. DFA/6/415/32. The Olympic Games (General) London 1948.

NAI. DFA/6/415/32/7. Irish Participation in the Olympic Games. (1961 file).

NLI. MS 48,297. Newspaper cuttings about athletics and the Gardaí, the Los Angeles Olympic Games (1932)

NLI. MS 48,299 /1. Typescript itinerary for the Los Angeles Games, 1932 (2pp.) ... Report of the Irish Olympic Council, Jan. 1935 (4pp.).

NLI. MS 48,299 /2. Programme for boxing matches between the Irish Army and Civic Guard I.A.B.A. ... the struggle to have an all Irish entry to the Olympic Games, undated [ca. 1940s] (24pp.).

NLI. MS 48,954 /10. Letter from Irish Olympic Council requesting subscription, Apr. 2 1924, and letter from Citizens’ Decoration Committee, the Tailteann Games, appealing for funds, May 16 1928.

⁴⁶ Sports Reference Olympics database at <http://www.sports-reference.com/olympics> (main source) and LA84 Sports Foundation Digital Library Collection at <http://www.la84.org>.

⁴⁷ Claire A. Culleton, “Competing Concepts of Culture: Irish Art at the 1924 Paris Olympic Games”. *Estudios Irlandeses*, Number 9, 2014. 24-34. Kevin McCarthy, *Gold, Silver and Green. The Irish Olympic Journey 1896-1924*. (Cork: CUP, 2010). Richard Stanton, *The Forgotten Olympic Art Competitions. The Story of the Olympic Art Competitions of the 20th Century*. (Victoria BC: Trafford, 2000).

⁴⁸ David Welch, *Propaganda: power and persuasion*, (London: British Library, 2013). 62.

Prior to 1924 Irish athletes represented either Britain or America at the Olympic Games and some are recorded as having replaced their participating country’s flag with a green flag with a gold harp for award ceremonies. See Report “Ireland at an Olympiad” in NLI. MS 48,299/1. Eoin O’Duffy Papers. The IFSG provided a participation grant of £1,000 for each Olympic Games in 1924, 1928 and 1932.

competitor succeeded in getting inside the first three in any event and so Ireland did not succeed in having her Flag hoisted'.⁴⁹

Literature and research on the spectacles discussed have excluded the associated art exhibitions with the exception of two journal articles. These are Mike Cronin's, 'The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition' and Claire A. Culleton's, 'Competing Concepts of Culture: Irish Art at the 1924 Paris Olympic Games'.⁵⁰ The Tailteann art exhibition essay is flawed, narrow in scope, factually incorrect and is challenged in chapter three. Culleton's essay provided a good overview of Irish Olympic engagement more broadly.

In all the exhibitions examined - in particular, the extensive Aonach Tailteann 1922 art exhibition, the important art exhibition associated with the 1922 Paris Congress, the exhibitions held in the Imperial Art Gallery London between 1927 and 1931 - secondary art historical commentary and texts on each are minimal - one Irish art historical reference to the important Paris show, states that 'it seems to have been a modest affair', which is completely refuted by this research.⁵¹

Accessing art catalogues, where they existed, provided the foundation for research on, and analysis of, the individual art exhibitions. Where catalogues were not produced or available, they were recreated completely or in part using contemporary newspapers or archival material. A catalogue was produced for Irish paintings sent to Chicago in 1933 and it was available in the University of Chicago archive; however no catalogue was

⁴⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5983/22. William T Cosgrave, speeches: Olympic banquet Oct 1928. This was despite members of the Banquet Committee having input to the speech and George Atkinson being a committee member. Dr. Pat O'Callaghan won gold in the hammer event in 1928. Mention of Irish art at the Olympic Games in official reports is limited to 'Freight and Insurance on Irish Art exhibits'. See Irish Olympic Council, "Report of the Hon. Secretary", Jan. 1935.

Art competitions are not mentioned in, General Eoin O'Duffy, "Ireland at the Olympic Games from a radio talk" in *Black and White*, Vol. 3, No. 6, June, 1943. 21-24.

⁵⁰ Mike Cronin, "The State on Display: The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition" in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 10/1/2005, Vol. 9, Issue 3, p. 50-71. Claire A. Culleton, "Competing Concepts of Culture: Irish Art at the 1924 Paris Olympic Games" in *Estudios Irlandeses*, Number 9, 2014, pp. 24-34.

⁵¹ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000). 87.

produced from the Irish Arts and Crafts exhibits.⁵² It was possible to fully recreate this display from the shipping records held in the University of Illinois, Daley Library.⁵³

A catalogue for the 1922 Tailteann art exhibition has only recently come to light, forcing earlier commentators to ignore the show or rely on contemporary newspaper reviews and reports of prize winners in the forty-eight categories, for material on the exhibitions.⁵⁴

Different versions of the 1922 Paris exhibition catalogue exists in various sources and it is interesting to see how it evolved to its finished state.⁵⁵ Combining the material from various primary sources enabled the compilation of more complete case studies.

Art events were cross referenced between primary and secondary sources and primary sources are used to confirm the extent of state support involved.⁵⁶ Primary research on the exhibitions uses catalogues, contemporary reports and extant archival records. The art works are assessed with reference to art history reference books, artists' monographs and by accessing public and private collections.⁵⁷ Research also entailed reading individual monographs of artists of that period and using, *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*,

⁵² UChicago archive. Box 2 Folder 13 *A Century of Progress, Exhibition of Irish Art, 1933*. Catalogue, (Chicago: Century of Progress, 1933).

⁵³ UIC Archive. Box 3 Folder 13-59 and Box 6 Folder 13-205.

⁵⁴ Anon. "Irish Art - Today's Exquisite Exhibition – Native Culture's New Era", *Irish Independent*, 15th Aug. 1922. 6 and Anon. "Irish Art at Ballsbridge. The Prize-winners." *Irish Times*, 19th Aug. 1922. 7 and Anon. "Irish Industries Art in Commerce", *Irish Times*, 18th Aug. 1922.

The 1922 catalogue is not referenced in any commentary sourced. Paul Larmour in his book on Irish Arts and Crafts states 'No catalogue for the [1922] exhibition has come to light'. 222. Nicola Gordon Bowe's, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke*, (Dublin: IAP, 1989), states 'no catalogue has come to light'. 145. Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch erroneously deduces that it was combined with the RHA annual exhibition that year, in *Expressions of Nationhood in Bronze & Stone: Albert G. Power, RHA*, (Dublin: IAP, 2019), 70.

⁵⁵ The National Library in Ireland and a private collection hold the updated version, the BnF, the Library of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and the Harry Clarke's papers hold the earlier version.

⁵⁶ For example see

NAI. DE/2/439. Paris exhibition 1922. Irish Race Conference, Paris, France

NAI. FIN/1/402. Tailteann Art Exhibition 1922.

NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/67. Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, engravings and small sculpture in the Imperial Gallery of Art, London.

NAI. DFA 15/12. Chicago Art Exhibition 1933.

⁵⁷ These are listed in the bibliography and include Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007). Fionna Barber, *Art in Ireland since 1910*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2013). S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991). Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*. Theo Snoddy, *Dictionary of Irish Artists 20th Century*. (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1996). Dorothy Walker, *Modern Art in Ireland*, (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1997).

Twentieth Century and Theo Snoddy's, *Dictionary of Irish Artists 20th Century*, (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1996) where no monograph was available. The AAI Volume was detailed with extensive contextual essays, while Snoddy, although very informative was usually a starting point and required other supporting sources. In art historiography sources, the political commentary if there was any, was limited to exploring the politics of individual artists – the State's view and how they harnessed art was not discussed. Contemporary national and international newspaper reports on spectacles and associated art exhibitions of the period were also an important source and are referenced throughout the thesis. Texts by historians, social and cultural commentators are used to contextualise national and international events and query the value systems and the wider cultural attitudes and ideologies of the time.⁵⁸

Political influence on the composition of the various exhibitions is researched by using archival state documents, which at times, explicitly state the reasoning and requirements behind State involvement. This political discourse and the normative or expected outcomes the state anticipated from their investment in the exhibitions are evaluated. These ranged from propaganda, trade, identity formation, national promotion to propagating a politically astute image of the new State at international events, while at home the focus was on identity formation, nation building and reconciliation, national development, and civic and public engagement. All spectacles except Paris, where national liberation was the primary concern, had by-product potential in increasing business, promoting trade or extending the tourist season. Spectators varied at the different spectacles and included a national and international audience often including diaspora groups. The success and consequences of the government achieving its political objectives is difficult to measure but evidence may be derived from official published reports, memos and letters in Departmental files in the

⁵⁸ These are listed in the bibliography and include Luke Gibbons, *Transformations in Irish Culture, Field Day Essays*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996). Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*, (London: Harper, 2004). Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent*, (London: Penguin, 1998).

NAI and from contemporary newspaper reports. As acknowledged in this research, each case study existed in the political and cultural context of the time.

1.1.3 Political and social environment.

This thesis does not aim to be a political history, although many of the major events and national developments of the period form the context and background for the art works and exhibitions, and are discussed. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz put it succinctly, stating that art may or may not appeal to some universal sense of beauty, but to understand an art work requires ‘a knowledge of what those arts are about or an understanding of the culture out of which they come’.⁵⁹ The Irish political context started with the movement for Home Rule and political independence from British Rule in the 19th century and reached a crescendo in the unsuccessful Easter Rising of 1916, the War of Independence ending in 1921 and the Civil War which followed in 1922 and that lasted nearly a year.

J. R. Hill’s (editor) *A New History of Ireland, VII. Ireland 1921-1984* (2003), provides an extensive single-volume political, economic and cultural history of twentieth-century Ireland.⁶⁰ It offers one specific Chapter on visual art by Cyril Barrett, ‘The Visual Arts and Society, 1921-84’ which is a narrative of developments in the visual arts in Ireland to 1984.⁶¹ Although it is weakest on the decade immediately after Independence it is useful to contextualise the research. This chapter taken in conjunction with Eunan O’Halpin’s contribution, ‘Politics and the State, 1922-32’, which is a detailed political history of the period, presents a good starting point for the subject area of this thesis.⁶² Other Chapters provide specific commentary on the Civil War and on literature and music. The more recent publication *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* provides a detailed political recording of

⁵⁹ Clifford Geertz. Art as a Cultural System. *MLN*. 1976; (6):1473. doi:10.2307/2907147. Pg. 1499. Available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/2907147?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

⁶⁰ J. R. Hill, Ed. *A New History of Ireland, VII. Ireland 1921-1984*, (Oxford, 2010).

⁶¹ Cyril Barrett, “The Visual Arts and Society 1921-84” in Hill, Ed. *A New History of Ireland, VII*. 2010.

⁶² Eunan O’Halpin, “Politics and the State 1922-32”, in Hill, Ed. *A New History of Ireland, VII*. 2010.

the period from the Home Rule Crisis of 1912 to the end of the Civil War in 1923, the historical narrative is interspersed with some short chapters and vignettes on culture.⁶³ These are exemplified by Roy Foster's essay 'A Revolutionary Generation' and Terence Brown's 'Culture in the Free State'.⁶⁴ Divided into ten sections, the final section 'Memory and Culture', deals extensively with commemoration and how culture – visual art, sport and popular cultures reflected the century. In this section Róisín Kennedy's essay, 'Visual Culture and the Irish Revolution' is relevant, recording the extent to which some artists were politically engaged. It does not delve into how the State harnessed art for its own purposes, however another of Kennedy's essays, 'The Death of Cúchulainn in the GPO' discusses the State appropriating Oliver Sheppard's (1865-1941) work as a memorial to the 1916 rising in 1935.⁶⁵

Interestingly the *Atlas of the Irish Revolution* is punctuated with reproductions of art works from the period by Irish artists such as Jack B. Yeats (1871-1957), John Lavery (1856-1941), Estella Solomons (1882-1968), Sarah Purser (1848-1943), Harry Clarke (1889-1931), Sarah Cecilia Harrison (1863-1941), Sean Keating (1889-1977) and others. Placing these art works in a contemporary history anthology challenges the reader to interpret them as political. Context, display and title is important for an art work, and works in exhibitions associated with political or public spectacles can resonate with the event's theme in a way that is lost when seen in the neutral space of a public gallery.⁶⁶ Jack Yeats exhibited *The Funeral of Harry Boland* (1922) at the 1923 RHA annual exhibition, but with a neutral or nonaligned title, *A Funeral*, consequently it was ignored by reviewers.⁶⁷ Art work and artists' titles sometimes take on a political significance and were particularly relevant to

⁶³ John Crowley, Donal Ó Drisceoil and Mike Murphy, eds. *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. (Cork: CUP, 2017).

⁶⁴ Roy Foster, "A Revolutionary Generation" in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 116-125.

Terence Brown, "Culture in the Free State" in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 796-799.

⁶⁵ Róisín Kennedy, "Visual Culture and the Irish Revolution" in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 910-916.

Róisín Kennedy, "The Death of Cúchulainn in the GPO" in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 917-920.

⁶⁶ Examples of this in the works of Jack Yeats, John Lavery, Countess Markievicz, Patrick Tuohy, Dermot O'Brien and others are discussed later.

⁶⁷ Róisín Kennedy, "Visual Culture and the Irish Revolution" in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 915.

the Paris 1922 Irish art exhibition discussed in chapter two. The Royal Irish Academy's *Art and Architecture of Ireland Volume 5: Twentieth Century* contains an extensive dictionary of Irish artists considered in this research.⁶⁸ It also contains an essay by Peter Murray, 'Politics in Irish Art 1900-2000', which covers the lead up to and the first decade of independence, and positions the topic in the twentieth century.⁶⁹ This essay is strong on the individual artists involved but again the role of the State in using visual art or funding exhibitions for political purposes is excluded. Art historian, Catherine Marshall in her introduction to this volume says,

The historiography of Irish art to date has been overwhelmingly directed towards the lives and work of individual artists, with little emphasis on the cultural and political environments in which they worked.⁷⁰

This thesis aims to address this dearth and to situate Irish visual art in the political context that existed between 1922 and 1934. This is not to dismiss the research of Irish art historians whose work and publications were essential to completing this thesis.⁷¹ Recent scholarship has taken a more interdisciplinary approach, and building on their insights and understanding, this original research seeks to augment and nuance Irish art historiography. In 1918 the first UK and Ireland general election for the London-Westminster parliament - since the unsuccessful Easter Rising of 1916 - took place. Sinn Féin, who dominated the election in Ireland, refused to take their seats or recognise the legitimacy of the authority of the British government.⁷² Instead, on the 19th January 1919, Sinn Féin MPs, assembled in the Mansion House, as a revolutionary all-Ireland parliament, naming themselves Dáil Éireann. The Irish War of Independence started on the same day, with the killing of two

⁶⁸ Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*.

⁶⁹ Peter Murray, "Politics in Irish Art 1900-2000" in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*. 359-368.

⁷⁰ Catherine Marshall, "Introduction" in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*, 2.

⁷¹ Art historians are fully referenced throughout this thesis and in the bibliography, exemplified by, Fionna Barber, Marie Bourke, Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, Angela Griffith, S. B. Kennedy, Róisín Kennedy, Theo Snoddy, Yvonne Scott, John Turpin ...

⁷² Sinn Féin won 73 out of the 105 Irish seats in the House of Commons. Unionists won 26 seats and the Irish Parliamentary Party won 6 seats.

Royal Irish Constabulary policemen in Tipperary, by Irish volunteers. The British government declared Dáil Eireann illegal in September, 1919. Following a number of violent years, when the British parliament had passed the Government of Ireland Act in May, 1921 – which set out separate administrations for the North and South of Ireland – fresh elections were held.⁷³ Sinn Fein monopolised the results and again bypassed Westminster for Dáil Eireann, forming the second Dáil.⁷⁴ A truce was reached in the War of Independence in July, 1921 and terms were agreed in the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which proposed the partitioning of Ireland into North (six counties remaining under English rule) and South (twenty-six county Irish Free State).⁷⁵ The agreement was signed in London on 6th December 1921, and ratified by a majority in the Dáil on the 7th January 1922. Following this decision, the government was split into two factions, as was the Sinn Fein Party - pro-treaty and anti-treaty.⁷⁶ This split led to the Irish Civil War which started the following June and lasted for nearly a year.⁷⁷ The Pro-treaty side prevailed and the Irish Free State was confirmed. However, the uncertainty caused by these events, fuelled by the initial refusal of Eamon de Valera's anti-treatyites to engage politically, disputes over the border with the Six Counties, assassinations and ongoing reprisals for the Civil War in the early years of the State, left a society unsure if it had a viable future.⁷⁸

The pro-treaty Cumann na nGaedheal political party led by W. T. Cosgrave, in power since 1922, were replaced by a De Valera led Fianna Fail government in 1932.⁷⁹ As is shown

⁷³ At this point the British Government were under international pressure to resolve the conflict. For a discussion on this see Arthur Mitchell, "Making the Case for Irish Independence" in John Crowley, Donal Ó Drisceoil and Mike Murphy, eds. *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*, (Cork: CUP, 2017). 471-478.

⁷⁴ There were now two parliaments, the second Dáil and the British recognised House of Commons of Southern Ireland – which didn't function except to meet British requirements and approve the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

⁷⁵ The War of Independence with England truced on 9th Jul. 1921 and negotiations began 11th Oct. 1921.

⁷⁶ Ultimately the opposing sides would become Cumann na nGaedheal, later Fine Gael (pro) and Fianna Fáil (anti). The current Sinn Fein has no connection with the pre-1923 party. This was determined by the High Court in the Sinn Fein funds case in the 1940s.

⁷⁷ The Civil War started in June 1922 and ended in May 1923.

⁷⁸ Eunan O'Hallpin, "Politics and the State 1922-32", in Hill, Ed. *A New History of Ireland*, VII. 2010.

⁷⁹ The leader of the Government was referred to as President of the Executive Council from 1922 until 1937 when these titles changed to Taoiseach and the cabinet, with the adoption of the current constitution.

throughout this thesis the priority of these governments was to build a stable and secure State. Other nations that achieved independence after WW1 failed to survive.⁸⁰ IFS governments pursued political and economic development to build the State's capital and it also used culture to engage and reconcile its citizens. The peaceful transfer of power between the Civil War parties, following the 1932 general election, was facilitated by the state-building and reconciliation of the incumbent administrations. It is argued in this research, that culture and visual art was used by the State as a vital pillar in this.⁸¹ In addition to the Irish population at home, the diaspora were also an important cohort, who would play a political, economic and reconciliatory role.

William B. Yeats (1865-1939) is most closely associated with the Literary Revival and his poem on the 1916 uprising, *Easter 1916* supplied its epithet, 'A terrible beauty is born'.⁸² In comparison, his brother Jack B. Yeats' contribution of nationalist paintings or prints are less frequently mentioned; this research will seek to position Irish visual art in the political context of a newly independent Free State. Numerous texts reference Jack B. Yeats' connection with De Valera and argue the extent of a nationalist influence in his art.⁸³ None of the texts look at if and how the State harnessed his or the work of other artists for political purposes before 1934. The discussion is invariably about the artist and their

The Office of President was held by Eamon De Valera (1882-1975), 26th Aug. 1921 – 9th Jan. 1922 (Irish Republic), Arthur Griffith (1871-1922), 10th Jan. 1922 – 12th Aug. 1922 (Dáil Eireann), William T. Cosgrave (1880-1965), 6th Dec. 1922 – 9th Mar. 1932 (Executive Council) and De Valera, 9th Mar. 1932 – 29th Dec. 1937 (Executive Council, continuing as Taoiseach until 18th Feb. 1948).

⁸⁰ For example Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan gained independence for a period before being occupied and absorbed again by the Soviet Union.

⁸¹ Many commentators feared that the Civil War might break out again in 1932 between the IRA (anti-Treaty) and the Blueshirts (pro-Treaty). For example see, Anon. "Peaceful election" in *Strabane Chronicle*, 26th Mar. 1932, 6. For a more general discussion on this, see, Barry Sheppard, "A Civil War as a sort of side-show? Partisan politics in the Irish Free State and the Eucharistic Congress of 1932", (24th June, 2019) accessed on 7/09/2019 at https://www.theirishstory.com/2019/06/24/a-civil-war-as-a-sort-of-side-show-partisan-politics-in-the-irish-free-state-and-the-eucharistic-congress-of-1932/#_ednref28

⁸² W. B. Yeats, *Michael Robartes and the Dancer*, (Dublin: Cuala Press, 1920). The poem was written between May and September 1916, but first published in 1920 in this collection.

⁸³ Thomas McGreevy argues that Yeats was a nationalist and republican artist in an early monograph (*Jack B. Yeats: an appreciation and an interpretation*, (Dublin: Victor Waddington Publications Ltd, 1945)). Other historians disagree with this assessment and a number of the essays in *Jack B. Yeats Old and New Departures* edited by Yvonne Scott debate this point. (Yvonne Scott, ed. *Jack B. Yeats Old and New Departures*, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008).

influence and motivation, hence Yeats is regarded as a republican who became disillusioned by the Civil War.⁸⁴ John Lavery is considered pro-nationalist who responded to events and supported the Irish independence movement but who was also disillusioned by the outcome and violence.⁸⁵ Paul Henry is seen as being apolitical and Sean Keating as strongly republican but non-violent.⁸⁶ Countess Markievicz (1868-1927) is portrayed as a hard-line republican, as were artists like Maurice MacGonigal (1900-1979) and Patrick Tuohy (1894-1930) who took part in military activities.⁸⁷

Central to this research is that Irish artists coincided with the State's political aspirations allowing their art work to be harnessed for political purposes. This hypothesis is explored and developed in the following chapters.

Artists are referenced in terms of their personal response to the political ferment that surrounded Independence, the Civil War and its aftermath. There is no mention in the literature of how the political establishment engaged with artists in selecting their art for exhibition. This engagement is evident, from various archival sources, in the exhibitions detailed and discussed in this study. In the Paris exhibition of 1922, papers in the NLI show that the event organisers and the Irish Revolutionary Government selected the works.⁸⁸ Files in the RHA archive contain the written directives from the Minister for Industry and Commerce on the selection committee and criteria for the Chicago 1933 show.⁸⁹ The Aonach Tailteann art exhibition in 1922 was an enormous State funded show, papers in the NAI show the committee was chaired by the Head of the Metropolitan School of Art and contained eight civil servant members from the Department of Agriculture in

⁸⁴ Yvonne Scott, ed. *Jack B. Yeats Old and New Departures*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008).

⁸⁵ John Lavery, *The Life of a Painter*, (London: Cassell & Co., 1940).

⁸⁶ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry: paintings, drawings, illustrations*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007).

Éimear O'Connor, *Seán Keating, Art, Politics and Building the Irish Nation*, (Kildare: IAP, 2013).

⁸⁷ Lindie Naughton, *Markievicz: a most outrageous rebel*, (Newbridge: Merrion Press, 2016).

Patrick J. Murphy, *Patrick Tuohy: from conversations with his friends*, (Dublin: TownHouse, 2004).

⁸⁸ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter Kelly to Plunkett, 23rd Nov, 1921.

⁸⁹ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter to Dermot O'Brien from Dept. of Industry and Commerce, 28th Mar. 1933.

support of the Department's art and industrial education work.⁹⁰ For each of the five exhibitions held at the Imperial Art Gallery, London from 1927-1931, the Executive Council of the State met annually to discuss the event and appoint a committee to select the Irish work and paid the selection and exhibition expenses.

1.1.4 Literature and the state of Irish art.

Closed for the week of the 1916 Easter Rising, the contemporary entry in the St Andrew's School, Pearse Street, Dublin roll-book is 'Poets Revolution', and in an interview in the *New York Times* almost immediately after the insurrection Padraic Colum, noted poet and Irish nationalist, described the combatants in similar terms.⁹¹ This is a common view, that the Irish Cultural Revival, and literature in particular, was the source and inspiration for the Irish independence movement. The *Handbook of the Irish Revival* anthology seeks to record the 'writings of those who shaped the country' and finds them primarily in the Irish Literary Revival, the Gaelic League and in Irish theatre.⁹² It rejects taking an 'exclusive focus on the literary revival', which 'cut[s] off the artistic energies of the period from the political forces that informed them'.⁹³ Visual art is not considered in this volume, however, as this research will show the literary sources establishing 'a lineage with the past' and the idealism that 'ideas could become a basis for practical action' were also served by visual art.⁹⁴ The political forces, the desire for independence and the revolutionary ferment of the early decades of the twentieth century fuelled output in literature, the visual arts and wider cultural nationalism.

⁹⁰ NAI. FIN 1/402. Proposed grant towards expenses of Exhibition of Irish Art. Letter dated 20/7/22 from P. Hogan, Ministry of Agriculture to the Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

⁹¹ Padraic Colum quoted in, Joyce Kilmer, "Poets Marched in the Van of the Irish Revolt", *New York Times*, 7th May, 1916. 3. Three of the seven signatories of the Proclamation of Irish Independence in 1916 were published poets, Patrick Pearse, Joseph Plunkett, and Thomas MacDonagh.

⁹² Declan Kiberd and PJ Matthews, *Handbook of the Irish Revival*. (Dublin: Abbey Theatre, 2015), 25.

⁹³ Ibid, 27.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 25.

Texts records how cultural nationalism in literature and theatre brought like-minded people of radical intent together in the formative years before and after Independence (figure 1).⁹⁵

This study seeks to add visual artists as important contributors in defining statehood and that official events often placed visual art as a central activity, recognising it as a vital pillar, in terms of state building.

W. B. Yeats' poem about John Lavery's revolutionary painting *The Blessing of the Colours* (1921), acknowledges the poets' role,

'This is not,' I say,
'The dead Ireland of my youth, but an Ireland
The poets have imagined, terrible and gay.'

As is documented throughout this thesis, this was also an Ireland imagined and visually represented by its artists and craftspeople in work that mirrored the political aspiration of the independent nation.

The artistic response was in the political post-colonial environment of a newly independent partitioned state. Imperialism\ colonialism has been described as first and foremost 'an act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted, and finally brought under control'.⁹⁶ Further, the history of the natives 'servitude is inaugurated by the loss to an outsider of the local place' and 'whose concrete geographical identity must thereafter be searched for and somehow restored'.⁹⁷ In colonial Ireland this physical loss of the land was reflected in art. Patronage of visual art had declined considerably after the Act of Union of 1801 and further diminished as a result of

⁹⁵ Others closely associated with Independence, include Patrick Pearse (his father was an artist-craftsman) was a writer and an important figure in the Gaelic League, proclamation signatories and poets Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Mary Plunkett, and Lady Gregory and Maud Gonne were important figure in artistic circles. John Lavery hosted and painted the Irish Treaty negotiators in London. Jack Yeats expressed the desire for a national art in a 1922 lecture in Paris. Sean Keating wished to create a room in the new Modern Art Gallery for paintings recording the period. Markievicz studied art and exhibited, Patrick Tuohy fought in the GPO (later became a teacher at the DMSA), Maurice MacGonigal also took part in the Easter Rising.

⁹⁶ Edward W. Said, "Yeats and Decolonization" in Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson and Edward W. Said, *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990). 77.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

the Famine 1845-50.⁹⁸ After the Act was passed, Dublin was no longer a capital city, and many wealthy patrons sold their city houses. Although, the middle-classes acquired some of the vacated townhouses, their capacity to patronise art and artists was limited and ‘local artistic talent coming out of the Drawing Schools was clearly struggling for patronage’.⁹⁹ Limited support to artists was offered through Society of Artists exhibitions and from 1826 in the newly formed RHA.¹⁰⁰

The RIA’s *Art and Architecture of Ireland Volume II: Painting 1600-1900* examines Irish art of the period under various categories.¹⁰¹ This volume’s numerous contributors reason that despite artists practising in Ireland following European developments often mediated through English art practices, there were exceptions to the anglicized representations of Ireland. However, colonial patronage dictated that topographical estate paintings and society portraits dominated output in Ireland.¹⁰² Other ‘[t]hemes of poverty, excessive religiosity, lawlessness and indolence recur throughout Irish art, albeit veiled in good humour’.¹⁰³ While ‘[i]ssues of dispossession, political disaffection, famine and emigration were referred to, if at all, obliquely’.¹⁰⁴ Again, there were exceptions, such as Frederick W. Burton’s (1816-1900) *The Aran Fisherman’s Drowned Child* (1841), Harry Jones Thaddeus (1860-1929) *An Irish Eviction* (1889) and other works by Aloysius O’Kelly (1853-1936), Augustus Burke (1838-1891) and Joseph Mulcahy Kavanagh (1856-1918), although these usually proved difficult to sell to affluent patrons seeking less politically challenging works.¹⁰⁵ William Laffan in the AAI Volume adds that while most Irish

⁹⁸ Anne Crookshank and the Knight of Glin, *Ireland’s Painters 1600-1940*, (New Haven & London: Yale, 2002), 3.

⁹⁹ David Dickson, *Dublin: The Making of a Capital City*, (London: Profile Books, 2014). 305. Dickson notes, that the drop in agricultural prices following the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, caused considerably more aristocrats to abandon their townhouses in Dublin.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. The RHA was established in 1823 and held its first exhibition in 1826.

¹⁰¹ Nicola Figgis, ed. *Art and Architecture of Ireland Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. (New Haven & London: Yale University Press and Royal Irish Academy, 2014).

¹⁰² Crookshank and Glin, *Ireland’s Painters 1600-1940*, (New Haven & London: Yale, 2002), 3.

¹⁰³ Brendan Rooney, “Genre Painting in Ireland” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 100.

¹⁰⁴ Brendan Rooney, “Genre Painting in Ireland” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 101.

¹⁰⁵ Brendan Rooney, “Genre Painting in Ireland” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 102.

landscape reflects the ‘perspective of a privileged class – exploring it solely through a post-colonial prism distorts’, adding that ‘landscapes can indeed be read as images of control – of nature and its inhabitants – the transgressive, too, is occasionally celebrated in Irish landscape art, as in images of poachers by [John] Butts [1727-65] and James Arthur O’Connor [1792-1841]’.¹⁰⁶

Anne Crookshank and the Knight of Glin argue that ‘It was only those Irish artists who lived in England who made a good living’, and even then some like James Arthur O’Connor, now regarded as a leading Irish landscape painter of the time, struggled.¹⁰⁷ Throughout the nineteenth-century, most well-known Irish artists had British patrons and the demand for a romanticised or stereotypical depiction of Irishness prevailed, something many of them had never encountered. Erskine Nicol (1825-1904), a Scottish born artist, who lived and taught in Dublin, and Samuel McCloy (1831-1904) were two artists who specialised in Irish work, much of it sentimental or comprising paddywhackery (figure 2). Nicol is most closely associated with ‘images of stereotypical Irish buffoons carousing or confounded by the simplest of challenges’.¹⁰⁸ Others such as the aforementioned O’Connor, painted scenes in a style that bore little resemblance to the landscape depicted. O’Connor’s painting *The Eagle’s Rock, Killarney* (1831) was described by Col. Grant, in *The Old English Landscape Painters*, as excellent and a superior work and goes on to say ‘it is no exaggeration to declare that [two English painters] Constable might have painted the sky and Crome the remainder’ (figure 3).¹⁰⁹ Irish artists were struggling to free themselves from the artistic traditions of England, and the Irish work exemplified here by O’Connor’s romantic landscape, but also in the estate paintings and portraits, had the feel

¹⁰⁶ William Laffan, “Landscape Painting” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 77.

¹⁰⁷ Crookshank and Glin, *Ireland’s Painters 1600-1940*, (New Haven & London: Yale, 2002). 3, 226.

¹⁰⁸ Brendan Rooney, “Genre Painting in Ireland” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 101.

On occasion, Nicol attempted a more serious representation of the rural Irish figure which asks for empathy as opposed to ridicule. For a broader discussion of Nicol’s nineteenth-century representation of life in Ireland, see Fintan Cullen, “Representing the Irish Emigrant: Humour to Pathos?” in *Visual Culture in Britain*, 2017, Vol. 18, Issue 2. 176-191.

¹⁰⁹ As cited in John Hutchinson, *James Arthur O’Connor*, (Dublin: NGI, 1986). 168.

of England. Landscape painting was predicated on ‘fashionable English and continental lines’ using ‘the model of classical tranquillity associated with Claude Lorraine’ (c1600-82) in contrast ‘to the increasingly crowded, poverty-stricken and sometimes violent reality outside the demesne walls’.¹¹⁰ These were images designed not to frighten away or upset the political sensitivities of their clients.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century Irish art continued to be dominated by a British aesthetic and historian Fintan Cullen rightly asks, ‘whose culture was on display’.¹¹¹ The largest exhibition of art in Ireland in this period was held in the Palace of Fine Art as part of the 1907 Irish International Exhibition held in Herbert Park, Dublin, which mostly displayed art borrowed from English institutions and had little Irish subject matter.¹¹²

Cartoons of Irish life and events in English newspapers and magazines like *Punch* have now become a cliché of racism and inferred colonial superiority. In these cartoons the Irish are often presented as gorillas and pigs (figure 4).¹¹³ Presenting Irish people as simian, drunken, aggressive and racially inferior to the English coloniser, asserted that Ireland is violent, incapable of self-government and reliant on a benevolent England to rule and protect the country. These cartoon prints by Cruickshank, Tenniel, Furniss and others, and paintings by the afore-mentioned Nicol, McCloy and more, all presented an Irish image for an English and Anglo-Irish audience, many of whom avoided Ireland’s poverty, social issues and culture. As an artist Nicol failed ‘to transcend the political attitudes of his British market’.¹¹⁴ Irish landscape artists like O’Connor were also painting for an English

¹¹⁰ Tom Dunne, “Politics in Irish Painting” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 113.

¹¹¹ Fintan Cullen, *Ireland on Show: “Art, Union, and Nationhood”*, (Farnham: Ashgate. 2012), 4.

¹¹² Art was borrowed from civic museums in Liverpool, Nottingham, Leeds, Preston, and Sheffield and from the Royal Collection among others. The Palace of Fine Arts had several exhibitions with nearly 1,500 paintings, drawings, prints and sculptures and over 400 photographs – see Cullen, *Ireland on Show*.

¹¹³ These prints, often seen as seen as a 19th century phenomenon, continued into the 20th century, were ubiquitous and are now seen as cliché – for example see “The Great Postponement. Prime minister. “Trust!” Irish pig. “I’m fed up with trusting.””, *Punch Magazine*, 24th December 1919.

¹¹⁴ Adele M. Dalsimer and Vera Kreilkamp, *America’s Eye: Irish Paintings from the Collection of Brian P. Burns*, (Boston: Boston College Museum of Art, 1996). 13.

market.¹¹⁵ As a result of the ‘assimilation of English cultural norms’ very little of nineteenth-century Irish painting can be categorized as ‘nationalist’.¹¹⁶

In preparation for independence and to present a realistic representation of Irish people as they were, there was a need to establish an Irish-Ireland identity in the country and in its art, and to remove the Englishness engrained with centuries of colonialization. Douglas Hyde addressed this issue in an 1892 lecture, entitled ‘The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland’ given to the Irish National Literary Society in Dublin.¹¹⁷ In his lecture Hyde said, he wanted to avoid ‘West-Britonism’, losing our culture in ‘dress, literature, music, games, and ideas’ and becoming a nation of ‘imitators’.¹¹⁸ In future he wanted the Irish race to develop upon Irish lines to ‘become what it was of yore – one of the most original, artistic, literary, and charming peoples of Europe’.¹¹⁹ Hyde’s primary de-anglicising tool was to recover and restore the Irish language and he would go on to co-found the Gaelic League for this expressed purpose. However, the language shift from Irish to English in the nineteenth century was swift and dramatic. In the period from 1800 to 1891, the number of Irish speakers declined from some three million, mostly monoglot, to the 38,121 Irish only speakers recorded in the census of 1891.¹²⁰ Among the reasons cited for this dramatic loss are, the Great Famine, the education system and the consequent growth of literacy in English, and also included; the urbanization and commercialisation of the country and the role of English in political, legal, and administrative life.¹²¹ This loss of the language mirrored the anglicisation of Irish art. Academic and author Declan Kiberd reasons that it is a tactic of colonialism ‘to deprive a people of their past precisely in order to deny them

¹¹⁵ Crookshank and Glin. 222-224.

¹¹⁶ Tom Dunne, “Politics in Irish Painting” in *AAI Volume II: Painting 1600-1900*. 112.

¹¹⁷ Douglas Hyde, “The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland” in *The Revival of Irish Literature: Addresses by Charles Gavan Duffy, KCMG, Dr. George Sigerson, and Dr Douglas Hyde*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1904) available online at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/32746/32746-h/32746-h.htm> .

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Gearóid, Denvir. "Decolonizing the Mind: Language and Literature in Ireland" in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua* 1, no. 1 (1997). 45.

¹²¹ Ibid.

their future'.¹²² While the State still maintains an aspiration of Irish being the official language, it never approached regaining a pre-eminent status.

A theme running through this thesis examines the hypotheses that Irish artists created a distinctly Irish pictorial language to reclaim the iconography of the nation's landscape, culture and people during the period under discussion. In the literary revival, plays and poetry could represent Irish people and, an aspirational freedom before Independence and a sense of new identity afterwards but it used the language of the oppressor.¹²³ English and continental stylisation dominated Irish art in the nineteenth-century and as will be shown in this thesis, Irish artists developed an Irish style not only to reclaim the landscape, but to counteract the negative stereotypes and to give Irish people a view of themselves that was not that concerned with serving a British sensibility or pandering to a colonial market.¹²⁴ Their work portrayed a stable Ireland, a distinctive people with a unique heritage, often rooted in a tradition that was still extant in an untainted West.

Geertz in his seminal essay *Art as a Culture* notes that people 'characterize art as a language, a structure, a system, an act, a symbol, a pattern of feeling,'¹²⁵ Paintings and other art works selected for exhibition by the Irish Free State were being appropriated 'largely directed to placing it within the context of these other expressions of human purpose'.¹²⁶ Art was exhibited in a context, and once the State was involved that context was political, this is relevant in all the exhibitions discussed. To the viewer attending events such as the 1922 Paris exhibition, in factious times, art interpreting political events, funerals or trials, became an index to the revolutionary era and the atrocities perpetrated by the British. This is true of much of the art work discussed in this thesis - works were

¹²² Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation*, (London: Cape, 1995). 292.

¹²³ For a discussion on the Irish Literary Revival see, John Wilson Foster, *Fictions of the Irish Literary Revival: A Changeling Art*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

¹²⁴ The development of an Irish artistic language is a theme that arises throughout this thesis.

¹²⁵ Clifford Geertz. *Art as a Cultural System*. *MLN*. 1976. 1474.

¹²⁶ Clifford Geertz. *Art as a Cultural System*. *MLN*. 1976. 1474.

selected and exhibited by the State for different political purposes. In discussing art and culture, Geertz queries 'how to place it within the other modes of social activity, how to incorporate it into the texture of a particular pattern of life. And such placing, the giving to art objects a cultural significance, is always a local matter'.¹²⁷ In this instance the Irish Free State also sought to take the local and present it to a diasporic and international audience, to put pressure on Britain, to take the Irish line on independence and subsequent negotiations and as an act of soft power and diplomacy.

Symbolic anthropology studies the way people understand their surroundings, 'webs of significance', that they themselves have created or 'spun'.¹²⁸ The concept of culture Geertz 'espoused was essentially a semiotic one'.¹²⁹ This was complicated for the Irish people emerging from the yoke of colonialism in the 1920s. Years of British rule had anglicised much of Irish culture and art, something that the cultural revival of the early 1900s had sought to redress. Visual art and the creation of an Irish visual language would play its part in decolonising the Irish visual imagination. Geertz stated that people are in need of symbolic 'sources of illumination' to orient themselves with respect to the system of meaning that is any particular culture.¹³⁰ In newly Independent Ireland these sources would be guided away from a colonial past towards an Irish-Ireland identity by its artists, politicians and the culturally engaged.

In 1926 when W. B. Yeats was appointed to Chair the Coinage Committee to select new Irish coins, he pressed the committee for coins with 'certain simple symbols which all can understand as expressions of national products'.¹³¹ He wanted symbols not pictures, and the images were never intended to be realistic, in a strictly mimetic, pictorial sense.¹³² The

¹²⁷ Clifford Geertz. *Art as a Cultural System*. *MLN*. 1976. 1475.

¹²⁸ Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 5.

¹²⁹ Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 5.

¹³⁰ Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 45.

¹³¹ Yeats to Dulac letter quoted in Rob Doggett. "'Emblems or Symbols, Not Pictures": W. B. Yeats and Free State Coinage Design." *Éire-Ireland* 46, no. 1 (2011). 91, 92.

¹³² Doggett. 93.

coins were 'symbolically encoded objects intended to evoke and express a deeper sense of community that exceeds any form of, in his words, "existing knowledge"'.¹³³ Like Geertz, W. B. Yeats' understanding of collective memory, which, he added, "can be evoked by symbols," formed the basis of his understanding of state formation in the cultural realm.¹³⁴

Events like the Paris Race Congress and its art exhibition, the Aonach Tailteanns, the Irish Exhibit at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, presented images of the nascent state with a shared cultural system of meaning, understandings shared by Irish people and the Irish diaspora, to a home and international audience.

1.1.5 Diaspora and other actors.

The Irish State continually engaged with their diaspora through these spectacles. Diaspora studies acknowledge the post-famine Irish as one of the five main historical 'victim diaspora' groups.¹³⁵ The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade published a *Global Irish, Ireland's Diaspora Policy* in March 2015 that states the Irish diaspora comprises emigrants from Ireland and their descendants around the world and those with a tangible connection to Ireland. It estimates that the 'Irish diaspora may total as many as 70 million people. There is no clear evidence to support this figure, but it certainly runs into the tens of millions'.¹³⁶ Today through the Global Irish Network, the State 'use the international expertise of the most influential Irish and Irish-connected people abroad to support our economic agenda'.¹³⁷ This research shows that this was a phenomena since the State's foundation.

¹³³ Doggett. 94.

¹³⁴ Doggett. 103.

¹³⁵ Alex Davis, John Goodby, Andrew Hadfield, Eve Patten, *Irish Studies*, (London: Arnold, 2003). The other 'victim' groups are the Jews, enslaved West Africans, the Armenians and the Palestinians).

¹³⁶ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Global Irish, Ireland's Diaspora Policy*, March 2015.

¹³⁷ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website, <https://www.dfa.ie/our-role-policies/the-irish-abroad/> accessed 24/11/2017.

The extent of the Irish-born diaspora in the 1920s is detailed by historian Terence Bowne in *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002* (2004), as forty three percent, almost one in two of Irish born people were living abroad:

1,037,234 in the United States

367,747 in England and Wales

159,020 in Scotland

105,033 in Australia

93,301 in Canada

34,419 in New Zealand

12,289 in South Africa

8,414 in India.¹³⁸

The Irish Free State government, throughout the period covered by this study, appealed to the diaspora through soft power and diplomacy to participate in and contribute to the burgeoning nation.¹³⁹ The extent of the diaspora and their importance to the State can also be gauged from contemporary newspaper reports. Reports on the Paris event which was specifically focused on the diaspora, quoted their numbers in tens of millions, reports on the Tailteann Games discuss it as attracting emigrants' home for the event and the newspapers consider participating in the Chicago World's Fair in terms of Irish Americans.¹⁴⁰

State papers in the NAI show that the diaspora was always important to successive Irish governments. The revolutionary Dáil spent a great deal of effort in cultivating relations with the Irish diaspora and getting them to connect with the motherland. In the first half of 1921 the government of the self-proclaimed Irish Republic was establishing permanent missions overseas and also sending representatives abroad for short periods. Their goal

¹³⁸ Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*, (London: Harper, 2004). 10.

¹³⁹ As each spectacle is considered in this research the reasons behind the IFS engagement with the diaspora is discussed but initially it was about bring international pressure on England to grant the independence Ireland wanted and later this extended to increasing international trade and tourism.

¹⁴⁰ Anon. "Mecca of the Gael, Race Congress at Paris about to open", *Freemans Journal*, 17th Jan, 1922. 5. "For Chicago", *Irish Press*, 23rd Mar. 1933. 6.

NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Letter from J.J. Walsh, dated 3rd November 1923.

was to gain support for Irish demands to become an independent Republic and to generate trade. ‘The Department of F[oreign] A[ffairs] is kept in close touch with the Trade and Publicity Departments so as to ensure that the best results will be obtained from the co-ordination of the work of our Foreign Representatives’.¹⁴¹ The task for these diplomats was initially propaganda; to raise awareness of the war in Ireland, to enlist international support for the Irish cause and to get members of the Irish diaspora to contribute financially. De Valera writing to Griffith from New York in July 1919, cites three objectives of his American tour as, ‘recognition’ of the Republic, ‘interesting of wealthy men of the race in the industrial development of Ireland’ and ‘the floating of the bond’.¹⁴² At the later spectacles the focus shifted to trade, tourism and generating revenue.

At a time when a nation’s wealth and standing was often determined by its colonies, the new Irish state staked its claim to patriotic colonies of the Irish Race in foreign countries. It made sense for the emerging State to forge strong relationships with the diaspora. The goodwill that emanates from the emotional bonds that connect people to a sense of home place provided the basis for the relationship. By the time the new State took part in its first trans-Atlantic spectacle, the 1933 World's Fair in Chicago, the Irish diaspora in America were seen as an important part of American racial inheritance and as a potential revenue source by the Irish government.¹⁴³ Charles Fanning details the conflict between the Irish diaspora in Chicago with the Irish State when a group of Irish Americans opened a commercial Irish Village at the World’s Fair when it re-opened in 1934.¹⁴⁴ Dealing with the diaspora had become more complicated for the Irish State who wanted to present a

¹⁴¹ NAI. DE 4/4/2, No. 104, Department of Foreign Affairs Report, Dublin, 10 August 1921 written by Riobárd O Breandáin accessed at <http://www.difp.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=104> 30th Nov, 2016.

¹⁴² DIFP - No. 18 UCDA P150/96. Letter from Eamon de Valera (New York) to Arthur Griffith (Dublin), 9th July 1919.

¹⁴³ Earnest Hooton as quoted in Anne Byrne, Ricca Edmondson and Tony Varley, “Introduction” in *Arensberg and Kimball and Anthropological Research in Ireland*, (Ennis: CLASP, 2001). 17.

NAI. DFA 15/12, Interdepartmental Report, “Chicago Fair 1933”, dated 23rd Dec. 1932. 7 pages.

¹⁴⁴ Charles Fanning, “Dueling Cultures: Ireland and Irish America at the Chicago World’s Fairs of 1933 and 1934” in *New Hibernia Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3, Autumn 2011. 94-110.

modern and stable image of Ireland to the outside world and in particular to the Irish American diaspora.

Material from the RHA archive on this Chicago event, show that some Irish exhibits, created a political distance from the Six Counties. Other contemporary exhibited work, discussed in chapter five, re-enforces Mairéad Carew's analysis of the archaeological exhibits, as presenting the racial inheritance of generations of American Irish.¹⁴⁵ The Chicago art exhibition and the archaeological exhibits (which contained contemporary artistic photographs/ film stills) are considered in the contexts of diaspora, identity formation and the rise of nationalism in the 1930s. Other relevant literature here includes Paxton's, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, Overy's *The Inter-War Crisis 1919-1939* and texts by J.J. Lee and Ferghal McGarry.¹⁴⁶

1.1.6 Comparators.

Other nations in the first half of the twentieth century experienced similar dissonance of partition, war, division over sociopolitical goals and chaos as the Irish Free State. Throughout this study the history of the Irish national art narrative converses with other art histories of this period in circulation internationally. The period of the Russian revolution corresponds with the Irish revolutionary period and post-colonial India resonates in disengaging from a common coloniser.¹⁴⁷ The one hundredth anniversary of the Russian Revolution spawned a number of art exhibitions examining its artistic legacy.¹⁴⁸ These

¹⁴⁵ Mairéad Carew, *The Quest for the Irish Celt: The Harvard Archaeological Mission to Ireland, 1932–1936*, (Newbridge: IAP, 2018).

Mairéad Carew, "'The Pageant of the Celt' World's Fair – Irish Archaeology at the Chicago World's Fair, 1933-4" in *History Ireland*, Vol 28., No. 1, Spring 2014. 9-12.

¹⁴⁶ Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*, (London: Harper, 2004), J.J. Lee, *Ireland 1912–1985, Politics and Society*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1989). Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent*, (London: Penguin, 1998). Ferghal McGarry, "General O'Duffy, the National Corporate Party and the Irish Brigade" in Joost Augusteijn, ed. *Ireland in the 1930s: new perspectives*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999). 117-142. Richard Overy, *The Inter-War Crisis*, (Harlow: Pearson, 2010 – revised edition).

¹⁴⁷ Russian revolution of 1917. India achieved independence in 1947.

¹⁴⁸ Exemplified by exhibitions: Royal Academy of Arts, London, "Revolution: Russian Art 1917–1932 11 February - 17 April 2017". Tate Modern, London, "Red Star over Russia: A Revolution in Visual Culture", 8 Nov. 2017 – 18 Feb 2018. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, "India Unboxed", throughout 2017.

illustrated the use of art by the Soviets and in particular agit-prop, ‘an enterprise set up by the Soviet Communist Party in 1920 intended to control and promote the ideological conditioning of the masses’.¹⁴⁹ Such overt control by the State of artistic visual output culminated in the emergence of Socialist Realism, which would come to be defined as the only Russian art style accepted by the Communist regime.¹⁵⁰ This approach was radically different from the approach of the emerging Irish State who supported the exhibition of art created by Irish artists as a personal, visceral and emotional response to events in Ireland’s revolutionary period.¹⁵¹ Unlike Russia there were few state commissions. Consequently, Irish artists provided a range of nationalist images including portraits, history paintings, scenes of everyday life and landscapes. The aspirations of State and artists coincided, allowing the government to appropriate what was being made for political purposes. Ireland has also been used as a reference point to Indian post-colonial culture, however this is usually constructed around literature and in particular cultural connections between W.B. Yeats and Rabindranath Tagore.¹⁵² Art exhibitions held in 2017 to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of India’s independence from Britain focused on ancient Indian art and on recent artistic post-colonial responses specifically created for the commemoration,

¹⁴⁹ The term agit-prop is a combination of the words ‘agitatsiia’ and ‘propaganda’ in the title of the Russian Department of Agitation and Propaganda set up in 1920 by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

¹⁵⁰ Tate Modern exhibition. “Red Star Over Russia A Revolution in Visual Culture 1905-1955”, 8 November 2017 – 18 February 2018, covers Russian art of the period under research, all of it commissioned from artists by the State administration.

¹⁵¹ Very few pieces of Irish art in this research period were official commissions.

¹⁵² See for example Louise Blakeney Williams. “Overcoming the “Contagion of Mimicry”: The Cosmopolitan Nationalism and Modernist History of Rabindranath Tagore and W. B. Yeats.” *American Historical Review* 112, no. 1: 69-100, 2007 and Clare Carroll & Patricia King, eds. *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, (Cork: CUP, 2003) and S.B. Cook, *Imperial Affinities: 19th Century Analogies and Exchanges between India and Ireland* (London, 1993) and Margaret Kelleher, ‘Literary connections: cultural revival, political independence and the present’ in Michael Holmes and Denis Holmes (eds.), *Ireland and India. Connections, comparisons, contrasts* (Dublin: Folens, 1997). 5.

In the Paris exhibition associated with the World Congress of the Irish Race held in 1922, an Irish published edition of Tagore’s book, *Gitanjali* with a preface by his friend Yeats was displayed. This was seen as particularly relevant in the context of the Congress and the discussions on Ireland’s independence. Malcolm Sen, in “Mythologizing a ‘mystic’: W.B. Yeats on the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore” in *History Ireland*, Issue 4, (July/August 2010), Volume 18 states that ‘the Tagore Yeats relationship is iconic of Indo Irish connections, and the Irish poet’s introductory remarks in *Gitanjali* are ‘among the most-cited ... commentary on cross-cultural encounters within the British colonial world’.

there is little discussion on art created at the time of independence.¹⁵³ Today, and more so in the 1920s, outside of revolution and colonialism, Ireland shared few social and cultural characteristics with either Russia or India.

Looking to other Dominions, the artistic output of the Canadian Group of Seven artists as expressers of national identity has previously been suggested as a comparator for Irish artists and the quest to define a national style or school of visual art.¹⁵⁴ This group functioned only during the 1920s and early 1930s; this timespan maps almost exactly the period under research. The Canadian Group of Seven went into the remote Canadian landscape and painted its vast and sparse terrain and were profoundly important in the development of an identity for Canadian art. Nationalism is an essential part of their work and their emergence coincided with the surge of national fervour that came about in Canada following the First World War.¹⁵⁵ Both Canadian and Irish artists presented an environment loaded with history and different to the English and European pastoral landscapes that dominated art in both countries up until this time.¹⁵⁶ The Irish Free State's political situation after independence in 1922 was compared to that of Canada. George Gavan Duffy in a letter to his wife from London, dated 6th December, 1921, after he signed the Anglo-Irish treaty, wrote 'We have all signed an agreement putting us

¹⁵³ Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, "India Unboxed", throughout 2017.

¹⁵⁴ For example see, Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, "The Formation of an Irish School of Painting: Issues of National Identity" in S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (Dublin: NGI, 2003). 28, and Mike Cronin, "The State on Display: The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition" in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 10/1/2005, Vol. 9, Issue 3, p. 50-71. The Group of Seven comprised the painters Franklin Carmichael, Lawren S. Harris, A.Y. Jackson, Frank Johnston, Arthur Lismer, E. H. Mac Donald and Frederick Varley and first exhibited in 1920. Other artists later joined, A. J. Casson, Edwin Holgate, LeMoine FitzGerald and others still were associated with the group, Tom Thomson and Emily Carr.

¹⁵⁵ For a discussion on this Group of artists see Anne Newlands, *The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson: an introduction*. (Ontario: Firefly books, 1995) and Amy Concannon. Ed. *Painting Canada: Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven*. (London: Philip Wilson, 2011).

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, and see Crookshank and Glin on Irish art as already discussed in this chapter. Musée d'Orsay, 14 March - 25 June 2017. Paris international exhibition, *Beyond the Stars. The Mystical Landscape from Monet to Kandinsky* featured a number of Canadian painting by the Group of Seven and an Irish work by Grace Henry. Irish artists and their Canadians counterparts from the Group of Seven showed works together at the Imperial Gallery of Art, London in the 1927-1931 exhibitions.

practically in the position of Canada subject to acceptance by Dáil & Westminster'.¹⁵⁷ The international media had the same interpretation, with the front page of *The New York Times* declaring 'agreement signed giving her [IFS] status like Canada's'.¹⁵⁸ Like many of their Irish counterparts, the Group of Seven were inspired by earlier modernist styles of impressionism/ post-impressionism and painted an emotional subjective response to the observed landscape and this played an important role in Canadians associating their identity with place in the national consciousness. The emergence of national identity in Irish and Canadian art in the 1920s and the affinity of inspiration with landscape as the unifying element, is shared. Political usage of art by both countries is paralleled in spectacles and schemes that they engaged with during the research period, such as in the Imperial Gallery of Art exhibitions in London between 1927 and 1931, posters produced for the EMB and Canadian participation and IFSG avoidance of the 1924 British Empire Exhibition.¹⁵⁹

1.1.7 Theory.

This research is multidisciplinary looking to art history, politics, post-colonialism, culture studies, national identity, soft power and state building. Individual spectacles and art exhibitions often had supplementary objectives such as propaganda, reconciliation and public and cultural diplomacy. The theory and literature behind the purposes, sought by the State from sponsoring these exhibitions, is referenced and considered throughout this thesis. The relationships between artists and officials in organising State sponsored exhibitions is also critical to this research. Whether this is the, 'unhealthy intersection' of arts and politics as described by Conor Cruise O'Brien, or that 'art must be prepared to

¹⁵⁷ Letter from George Gavan Duffy in London to his wife dated 6th December 1921 concerning the Anglo-Irish Treaty he had just signed. This letter appeared at auction in Dublin in 2009. Details at Whytes auctioneers - Auction Date/Lot No.: 14 March 2009/ 1475.

¹⁵⁸ Anon. "Ireland to be a Free State within the British Empire; Agreement signed giving her a status like Canada's; Ulster can stay out; Parliament called to ratify" in *The New York Times*, 7th Dec, 1921. 1.

¹⁵⁹ All of these are discussed later.

abdicate its throne of proud and unprincipled autonomy and to become conversant with the everyday affairs of man - the political' - as suggested by Richard Kearney - has long been argued.¹⁶⁰ As identified by Toby Clark, 'this conflict has reverberated throughout twentieth-century debates on the relationship between art and politics'.¹⁶¹ The quote at the start of this chapter was from an article in the first issue of *The Crane Bag* (1977), concerning the 'relationship between art and politics', disputing the oft proffered view that the creativity of art and the commitment of politics 'are two quite separate areas', and challenging the assumption that the aesthetic and the political are two mutually exclusive areas.¹⁶²

There has been much written on whether Ireland was a colony or just a remote region of a monarchy.¹⁶³ Albert Memmi insisted that colonial differences need not be biological and he stated that real or imaginary cultural differences would do the work in some cases that was done in others by biological ones.¹⁶⁴ For the purpose of this research it only matters that Irish nationalists believed themselves to be colonised by the British and 'Irish culture, at once Western and colonized, white and racially other, imperial and subjugated, became marginal in the sense of existing at the edge of two experiences, with a culture that epitomizes the hybridity, imitation and irony latent in colonial interchanges'.¹⁶⁵ In Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*, he traces the connection between colonialism and culture and reasons that the first postcolonial generation will invariably be strongly nativist in tone and ideology. It is 'as if it were the only choice for a resisting, decolonizing nationalism'

¹⁶⁰ Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Politics and the Poet", *Irish Times*, 21st Aug, 1975. 10.

Richard Kearney, "Beyond Art and Politics", *The Crane Bag*, Vol 1, No. 1, Spring 1977. 11.

¹⁶¹ Toby Clark, *Art and propaganda in the twentieth century: the political image in the age of mass culture*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997). 10.

¹⁶² Mark Patrick Hederman & Richard Kearney, "Editorial II" in *The Crane Bag*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring, 1977, 89.

¹⁶³ There is a multitude of references on this, see these two for example, Luke Gibbons, *Transformations in Irish Culture, Field Day Essays*, (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996) and Stephen Howe, *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁶⁴ Albert Memmi, *Le Racisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), 184.

¹⁶⁵ Colin Graham, "Ireland and the Persistence of Authenticity", in Colin Graham & Richard Kirkland, eds, *Ireland and Cultural Theory*, (London: Macmillan, 1999). 15.

and, as is seen throughout this research this is true of Ireland in the years before and after independence in 1922.¹⁶⁶ Many of the Irish artists who were knowingly part of the decolonizing nationalism, were protestant and part of the British as well as the Irish art scene. They do not obviously conform to Said's view of a nationalist, who would identify with the 'mobilizing force that coalesced into resistance against an alien and occupying empire on the part of peoples possessing a common history, religion, and language'.¹⁶⁷ However as is shown in this thesis, these artists invested in Ireland, its history, language and culture.¹⁶⁸

In the period of the War of Independence and its immediate aftermath, the State deployed propaganda in an effort to persuade the international community that Ireland was a politically independent sovereign nation, and its unique culture underlined this independence. Academic and historian Dermot Keogh states that 'it is impossible to separate the functions of diplomacy and propaganda in [this] Sinn Fein period'.¹⁶⁹ Propaganda to create a political and cultural distance from Britain was the stated objective of the Paris 1922 exhibition.¹⁷⁰ Propaganda is defined as a systematic form of purposeful persuasion that attempts to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of specified target audiences for ideological, political or commercial purposes through the controlled transmission of one-sided messages, which may or may not be factual.¹⁷¹ It is most effective 'when the message is in line with the existing opinions and beliefs of its consumers', such as the coherent group attending the spectacles detailed in this study but

¹⁶⁶ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1993). 274-276.

¹⁶⁷ Edward W. Said, "Yeats and Decolonization" in Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson and Edward W. Said, *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990).

¹⁶⁸ For example the Yeats family members (Lily, William, Elizabeth and Jack), Douglas Hyde, Paul Henry, Lady Gregory, Constance Markievicz, George Russell (AE) ...

¹⁶⁹ Dermot Keogh, *Ireland and Europe 1919-1948*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988). 7.

¹⁷⁰ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Draft letter from Plunkett to De Valera, dated 26th Nov, 1921. NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter from Thomas Hughes Kelly to George Noble Plunkett, 23rd Nov, 1921.

¹⁷¹ Richard Alan Nelson, *A Chronology and Glossary of Propaganda in the United States* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1996). 232-233.

in particular those at the World Congress of the Irish Race in Paris.¹⁷² The propaganda value from Paris, 1922, reinforced and sharpened the attendees' belief in Ireland's right to independence.

The definition/ purpose of a propaganda programme was different at the revolutionary start of the investigative period than at the evolutionary and transformative end when the Irish Free State had been functioning for over a decade. It mellowed to soft power and cultural diplomacy by the Chicago exhibition of 1933. The Irish Free State's thinking and requirements had developed over time, and it sought to gain economic and political advantage, cementing its place in the World.

For a period after the Anglo-Irish treaty was signed, the political situation in Ireland was unstable, and with British armed forces still *in-situ* there was uncertainty as to the country's future. During the Irish War of Independence, and in the unpredictable period that immediately followed, propaganda was an important weapon for the new governing body. The interim state government operated a non-military propaganda campaign to pressurise British forces to disengage from Ireland. The very existence of the Dáil asserted that the Irish Republic was an actual functioning entity. Historian Ian Kenneally, records in his *The Paper Wall: Newspapers and Propaganda in Ireland, 1919-21*, the role of propaganda in the Irish quest for self-government.¹⁷³ Outside the main stream media, the Irish Department of Propaganda published *The Irish Bulletin* from 1919 through 1921.¹⁷⁴ This paper was distributed abroad to diaspora organisations who translated it into the local language.¹⁷⁵ It was then disseminated widely to politicians and newspaper offices in these

¹⁷² David Welch, *Propaganda: power and persuasion*, (London: British Library, 2013). 28.

¹⁷³ Ian Kenneally, *The Paper Wall: Newspapers and Propaganda in Ireland, 1919-21*, (Cork: Collins Press, 2008).

¹⁷⁴ The *Irish Bulletin* was launched by Desmond FitzGerald (Director of Publicity for the Dáil Government) in November 1919, in order to offset the official British accounts of the political situation in Ireland.

¹⁷⁵ This was exemplified earlier in this chapter, when, the *Irish Bulletin* published in French in Paris, outlined the reasons the World Congress of the Irish Race was being held there in 1922. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Quai François Mauriac, holds a substantial but incomplete run of the *Bulletin Irlandais*. It holds editions starting from 3rd February, 1921 to the 20th July, 1922 and a second series from 12th August, 1924 to 15th May, 1925. Similar Bulletins were issued in Italy and South American countries.

countries and media outlets used the *Bulletin* reports in their daily publications. This was an attempt to counter propaganda widely distributed by the British press and to present the Irish republican view.¹⁷⁶

The catalogue for the 2013 exhibition in the British Library, *Propaganda: Power and Persuasion* describes the history of art and propaganda as comprising more than the famous recruitment posters, such as those issued by the British government at the start of the First World War, featuring Lord Kitchener's stern, moustachioed face staring out above the slogan 'Your Country Needs YOU' or Uncle Sam's finger pointing.¹⁷⁷ It traces the roots of art and propaganda back for millennia – arguing that much ancient art that we value today was originally commissioned as a form of propaganda. Toby Clark in *Art and propaganda in the twentieth century* cites Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825) and Francisco de Goya (1746-1828) as among the earliest artists who were motivated by their own political convictions to create propaganda art works.¹⁷⁸ Over history, existing artworks were often appropriated by propagandists, divorcing the work from the artist's intentions and its original cultural contexts. Art may become propagandistic through its function and site, and its presentation in public to a particular audience.¹⁷⁹ This research shows that Irish artists produced work in sympathy, their intentions coinciding with the State's aims, by choice rather than commission, and it was then used by the State for political purposes.

An example from the Cold War period shows that modern art became a weapon deployed by the American government. In 1946, the US State Department - through the newly

¹⁷⁶ A measure of the success of this propaganda newsheet can be gauged by the British producing and distributing counterfeit copies to diminish its impact. This 'attempt to deceive public opinion failed completely and was abandoned' – see DIFP, No. 102 NAI DE 4/4/2, *Dáil Éireann Department of Publicity: History and Progress*, Dublin, August 1921 at <http://www.difp.ie/docs/1921/Publicity-Department-History/102.htm> on 11/12/2017. Diaspora organisation also published and disseminated their own local newsletters - Such as *The Republic*, 20th November 1920 to 3rd June 1922 (41 issues), published and funded by the Irish Republican Association of South Africa; normally 16 pages per issue.

¹⁷⁷ David Welch, *Propaganda: power and persuasion*, (London: British Library, 2013). 78-112.

¹⁷⁸ Toby Clark, *Art and propaganda in the twentieth century: the political image in the age of mass culture*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997). 10.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. 13.

formed Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs - bought 79 modern paintings for \$49,000 as part of an international touring exhibition called Advancing American Art.¹⁸⁰ The paintings were split into two travelling exhibitions and the largest show travelled to UNESCO in Paris and on to Prague, at a time when Czechoslovakia was behind the Iron Curtain. The concept was to refute Soviet propaganda claims, that America was culturally vacuous.¹⁸¹ The exhibition travelled to Prague ‘bearing conferral of full democratic legitimacy by UNESCO’ less than a year before the city fell to Soviet backed communist control.¹⁸² The role of American cultural exports and foreign exhibitions was ‘to demonstrate that the West and the United States was devoted to freedom of expression and to intellectual achievement’.¹⁸³ The fact that it was avant-garde art chosen to represent American culture, much of it abhorrent to US Government officials, further emphasised cultural freedom.¹⁸⁴ Michael Krenn writing about how culture became a propaganda weapon in America's battle against communism during the Cold War in *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit*, details how hundreds of exhibitions of American art were sent abroad.¹⁸⁵ Pre-dating the US government actions post-WWII, the independent Irish government sent Irish art works to the Paris exhibition of 1922, to London exhibitions in the mid-1920s and to Chicago in 1933 for political and propagandist imperatives.¹⁸⁶

During the 20th century, the term propaganda acquired negative connotations, representing the intentional dissemination of false claims to underpin and sustain political actions and ideologies. In an effort to distance itself from ‘the old and ugly term propaganda’ the US

¹⁸⁰ Artists included Romare Bearden (1911-88), Arthur Dove (1880-1946), John Marin (1870-1953), Ben Shahn (1898-1969), Georgia O’Keeffe (1887-1986), Jacob Lawrence (1917-2000) and others

¹⁸¹ For a discussion on this see Taylor Littleton and Maltby Sykes, *Advancing American Art: Painting, Politics, and Cultural Confrontation at Mid-Century*, (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1989).

¹⁸² Jonathan Lahey Dronsfield, “The Paradoxes of Democracy: Postwar American Art and U.S. Foreign Policy”, in *St. Louis University Public Law Review*, 2016, Vol. 35 Issue 2. 311.

¹⁸³ Ibid. 312.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. 303-321.

¹⁸⁵ Michael L. Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit: American Art and the Cold War*, (Chapel Hill & London: North Carolina University, 2005).

¹⁸⁶ Discussed in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5.

adapted the ‘concept of public diplomacy’.¹⁸⁷ This allowed the ‘Americans to continue to condemn those wicked Russians for their propaganda’ and flesh out the new American term with benign meanings.¹⁸⁸ In addition, the public was becoming more wary and sensitized about propaganda. Among editors and opinion leaders, creditability is the crucial resource, and an important source of soft power.¹⁸⁹ Permeating the terminologies used, propaganda, soft power, public and cultural diplomacy, were the political ideologies of countries establishing their place in the world, influencing foreign opinion and gaining an advantage through promoting the validity and creditability of their political stance. This would ultimately translate into power and an economic dividend. This research shows that the IFS used culture and visual art to engage in such diplomacy.

There is substantial literature on major powers like the United States and Russia using visual art for political and propaganda purposes. However, research to date has revealed that very little has been written about the Irish State harnessing visual art in the decade after independence. Richard Arndt, diplomat, academic and author, writing about Cultural Diplomacy, argues during the 1920s in Europe only the Soviets and their satellites, geared for internal and external agitprop, used culture as a tool of propaganda.¹⁹⁰ This research challenges that assumption in the Irish context. It demonstrates that Irish governments came to recognize and use Joseph Nye’s concept of a ‘soft power resource’, in exhibitions of Irish art and culture.¹⁹¹ They understood that these exhibitions could be used as an attractive cultural force with moral authority in the national and international arena, using

¹⁸⁷ Nicholas J. Cull, “Foreword” in Mai’a K. Davis Cross & Jan Melissen, eds. *European Public Diplomacy, Soft Power as Work*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013). Vii.

The term Public Diplomacy was coined by the American academic Edmund Gullion in 1965. He was Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University (and founder of the Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy).

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004).

¹⁹⁰ Richard T. Arndt. *The First Resort of Kings: American cultural diplomacy in the twentieth century*. (Washington: Potomac Books, 2005). 163.

¹⁹¹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004).

it to validate nationalist aspirations, while sharing carefully mediated glimpses of Irish life in promoting the State.

Nicholas J. Cull writing about soft power at work, asserts that there is a lack of research in the European context and that ‘scholarship has focused principally on the United States and its approach to the Cold War’.¹⁹² Despite this, the text cites numerous examples in European folk history and highlights how most European countries have been involved ‘in international cultural relations and cultural diplomacy at least since the end of the First World War’.¹⁹³ This research situates the Irish Free State’s use of art exhibitions in cultural diplomacy as sites where public and academic art histories intersect. A special issue of the *Journal of Curatorial Studies* (October, 2016) sub-titled *Curating Cultural Diplomacy* highlights the allure of exhibitions of visual and material culture to affirm or reshape a narrative about a country.¹⁹⁴ Although this *Journal* focuses on a superpower centric narrative of art exhibition history and international relations, it identifies the need to push existing soft power exhibition scholarship beyond these limits.¹⁹⁵ This thesis responds to this need and contributes to a broader historical narrative in looking at the IFS in the pre Cold War era that dominates existing studies.¹⁹⁶ This thesis agrees with the *Journal* that the uses of art exhibitions in cultural diplomacy has long been used as a means to convey political agendas. While exhibitions may be limited in creating concrete political changes, their cultural diplomatic influence, as described by political scientist Patricia Goff is to

¹⁹² Nicholas J. Cull, “Foreword” in Mai’a K. Davis Cross & Jan Melissen, eds. *European Public Diplomacy, Soft Power as Work*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013). Vii.

¹⁹³ Beata Ociepka, “New Members’ Public Diplomacy” in Mai’a K. Davis Cross & Jan Melissen, eds. *European Public Diplomacy, Soft Power as Work*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013). 50.

¹⁹⁴ Lynda Jessup & Sarah E. K. Smith, Eds. *Journal of Curatorial Studies, Curating Cultural Diplomacy*, Vol. 5 Iss. 3rd October 2016.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. Lynda Jessup & Sarah E. K. Smith, “Editorial” in Jessup & Smith, Eds. *Journal of Curatorial Studies, Curating Cultural Diplomacy*, Vol. 5 Iss. 3rd Oct. 2016. 283-287.

¹⁹⁶ Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).
Peter Biskind, *Seeing Is Believing: How Hollywood Taught Us to Stop Worrying and Love the Fifties*, (New York: Pantheon, 1983).

‘soften, clarify, complicate and provide expanded opportunities for connection’.¹⁹⁷ In the Irish context this was articulated and formalised with the establishment of the Cultural Relations Committee (CRC)¹⁹⁸ in 1949, when Sean McBride as Minister for External Affairs, saw the promotion of Irish culture abroad as important to ‘the material and economic development’ and a help ‘in the economic and political tasks which we have to face’ in Ireland.¹⁹⁹ He added that

whether it be in the field of international politics, foreign trade or tourism, one of the first tasks that has to be achieved is to make the people of other countries interested in our island and to make them feel kindly towards us... the best way to attract tourists from other countries is to interest them in our culture, in our history and in our scenery... show them what we make, how we live and what we have to sell.²⁰⁰

The component parts of public diplomacy and soft power – ‘listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange and international broadcasting’, were well established in the propaganda realm, and are found in the Irish State’s use of spectacles and associated visual art events in the decade after independence.²⁰¹ Each of these is a thread that is explored throughout this research. These diplomacy components and the soft power of culture were also utilised internally by the Irish State in the decade after the Civil War in an effort to win the peace and reconcile and build the nation divided by that war.

Historians, such as Kevin Hora with *Propaganda and nation building: selling the Irish Free State* (2017) and Mike Cronin in his journal articles on the Aonach Tailteann, identify these Games as the first State sponsored project aimed at nation-building and reconciliation.²⁰² Author, playwright and Tailteann Committee member, T.H. Nally,

¹⁹⁷ Patricia M. Goff, ‘Cultural Diplomacy’, in Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine and Ramesh Thakur (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). 419–35. 419. As cited in Jessup & Smith, Eds. *Journal of Curatorial Studies, Curating Cultural Diplomacy*, Vol. 5 Iss. 3, Oct. 2016.

¹⁹⁸ The Cultural Relations Committee was established in 1949 under the auspices of the Department of External Affairs to promote Irish art and culture internationally. It was superseded by Culture Ireland in 2005. The Arts Council which promotes art and cultural nationally was established in 1951, two years later.

¹⁹⁹ Anon. “Ireland Photographed for Exhibition Tour” in *Irish Times*, 29th Dec. 1950. 7. This was a report on the opening of an early CRC organised exhibition.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Cull, 2013. Viii.

²⁰² Mike Cronin, “The State on Display: The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition” in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 10/1/2005, Vol. 9, Issue 3. 50-71. Mike Cronin, “Projecting the nation through sport and

published a history of the Aonach Tailteann in 1922 and this is the main source for details and context on the ancient event.²⁰³ Initially proposed for 1922, this event took the form of re-enacting the mythical Aonach Tailteann as defined by Nally. That the new State should initially look ‘to “tradition”, “culture”, “national character,” or even race – for the roots of a new identity’ was expected and this has been the ‘essentialist’ experience in many newly independent states.²⁰⁴ This is particularly true with new nations, who in the words of Irish academic, Rev. Denis O’Keeffe, often seek, ‘an escape from the inadequacies of the present’ by constructing a mystical past.²⁰⁵ For the new Irish State this was to be immediately realised by re-enacting the Tailteann spectacle.

Theoretical texts on nation building in newly independent countries and on the construction of identity through cultural expression, as discussed in Geertz, *The Interpretations of Cultures*, are pertinent to this aspect of research. This is relevant to the Aonach Tailteanns where modern sports like motorbike racing vied with ancient sports and people in neo-Celtic ancient Irish dress vied for the modern crowds, exemplifying Geertz’s theory on the essentialist/ epochalist dichotomy in the ideology of new nations.²⁰⁶ State-building is an evolutionary social and cultural process that takes time to deliver. In the early years of the Irish Free State it involved political stability, economic development, post-conflict reconciliation, cultural authenticity and national identity as the pillars of a strong and secure state. The latter three pillars, in particular, were underpinned by State supported spectacles and art exhibitions.

culture: Ireland, Aonach Tailteann and the Irish Free State, 1924-32”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 38, No.3 (Jul., 2003). 395-411. Kevin Hora, *Propaganda and nation building: selling the Irish Free State*, (London: Routledge, 2017). 102.

²⁰³ T.H. Nally, *The Aonach Tailteann and the Tailteann Games. Their origin, history, and ancient associations*, (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1924).

²⁰⁴ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 240.

²⁰⁵ Professor of Ethics and Politics at UCD in the 1930s, Rev. Denis O’Keeffe as cited in Bryan Fanning, *Irish Adventures in Nation-Building*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 77.

²⁰⁶ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 240-243.

In the various theories of nation and nationalism, it is argued whether a nation exists prior to national movements or whether the establishment of nations are triggered by these movements. Modernists like Benedict Anderson consider the concept of a nation is a recent and novel construct, a product of the process of modernization, and that essentially nationalism may be explained as ‘imagined communities’.²⁰⁷ He states that communities are real yet imagined in the sense that not everyone in a nation or community knows each other. Anderson argues that nations and nationalism emerged as conscious constructions in the late 18th and early 19th century aided by economic improvements, education, scientific knowledge and communications.²⁰⁸ In particular, mass printing aided communication and helped standardise language, thereby uniting people and helping to create a sense of nationhood. Access to print material allowed members of that particular community or culture to communicate with or know each other indirectly. Anderson and his cohort argue nations and nationalism as a modern phenomenon.²⁰⁹ Irish political and cultural nationalists believed the Irish nation was historic and culturally distinct and it was this distinction that gave them their unique place in the world. Their primordial beliefs are expounded by ethno-cultural theorists like Miroslav Hroch and Anthony D. Smith, as the ‘nation is a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties of all members’.²¹⁰ Hroch focuses on small nations’ nationalism, those ‘in subjection to a ruling nation for such a long period that the relation of subjection took on a structural character for both parties’.²¹¹ In a sequence, reflective of the IFS experience of

²⁰⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (London: Verso, 1983).

²⁰⁸ Education as a driver of the Irish Gaelic Revival and nationalism in late nineteenth and early twentieth century is described in, John Hutchinson, "Cultural Nationalism, Elite Mobility and Nation-Building: Communitarian Politics in Modern Ireland" in *The British Journal of Sociology* 38, no. 4 (1987): 482-501.

²⁰⁹ Others in this cohort include, Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983) and Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*

²¹⁰ Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991). 49.

²¹¹ Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe. A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985). 8–9.

intellectual revivalist organisations and political and military agitation in the early twentieth century, he describes the three phases of a national movement as; ‘Phase A (the period of scholarly interest), Phase B (the period of patriotic agitation), and Phase C (the rise of a mass national movement)’.²¹² Both Hroch and Smith agree on the recovery of symbolic culture as the start of a modern nation-building process such as the collection of information about the history, language, and customs of the non-dominant ethnic group, exemplified in the IFS (that mapped the tenets of the Irish cultural revival), in the recovery of the Irish language, and as highlighted in this thesis, in the renewed interest in Irish legends in literature, art, craft and the re-introduction of the ancient Aonach Tailteann festival.

The smaller Dublin Civic Week spectacles similarly mixed the ancient and the modern, and situated Dublin, the metropolitan capital, in an international context. The Tailteann Games invited international Olympic medal winners to participate with Irish athletes and the DCW exhibited international artists alongside their Irish colleagues. These reflected the State’s desire to assert its cultural independence built on an ancient tradition and its intent on taking its place in the modern world.²¹³

1.1.8 Irish School of Art.

While the main focus of this thesis is on the Irish State appropriating Irish art for political purposes, another theme permeating this research explores how Irish art responded to the new realities pre- and post- Irish independence in 1922. In particular it critically investigates the emergence of a national Irish art style and a school of Irish art.

Efforts to encapsulate twentieth century Irish art/ artists into a school of Irish art has divided writers, critics and historians, and is a topic running through this research.²¹⁴ The existence of an Irish school of art has been debated on style, content, context and was such

²¹² Ibid. 23.

²¹³ Dublin Civic Weeks and the Tailteann Games are discussed elsewhere in this study.

²¹⁴ Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, “The Formation of an Irish School of Painting: Issues of National Identity” in S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (Dublin: NGI, 2003). 23-34.

a school determined by artists depicting distinctive Irish subject matter, such as, neo-Celtic zoomorphic ornament associated with Irish medieval art or traditional Irish symbols, like the shamrock? Was an Irish school restricted to artists producing such an art?²¹⁵

The debate about the existence of an Irish school reached a crescendo at the turn of the 20th century, a time recognised as the heyday of the Irish Literary Revival.²¹⁶ Shortly after the 1899 Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act moved control of the DMSA from London to the Irish DATI, the new Departments first report stated its desire to develop ‘a national School of Art, encouraging local freedom, aiming at distinctive national qualities’.²¹⁷ Irish writing was seen as having ‘an ancient, indigenous literature and still vital folk tradition to call upon’ unlike Irish artists.²¹⁸ The debate centred on how to develop a distinct Irish art. Such an art was required to parallel the political and other cultural independence movements such as the Gaelic League, Irish Literary Revival, GAA and even the Irish Arts and Crafts movement which had distinguished and identified itself as unique through its appropriation of Celtic ornament and Irish motifs such as the shamrock, round tower, harp and Irish wolfhound.²¹⁹

Some argued that exhibitions of the best avant-garde art should be brought to Ireland, against which Irish artists could measure themselves and which might in turn stimulate the development of an Irish school of painting; but others argued that Irish artists should ignore external influences and confine themselves solely to Irish themes and ‘stereotypical images of round towers, wolfhounds and other trappings of the ‘stage’ Irish’.²²⁰ This

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ S. B. Kennedy, “An Irish school of art? Depictions of the landscape in a critical period, 1880-1930” in Carla King, ed., *Famine Land and Culture in Ireland*, (Dublin: UCD Press, 2000). 154.

²¹⁷ DATI, *First Annual General Report of the Department 1900-01*. (Dublin: HMSO, 1901). 25.

²¹⁸ S. B. Kennedy, “An Irish school of art? Depictions of the landscape in a critical period, 1880-1930”. 155.

²¹⁹ It should be noted that although the Arts and Crafts movement in Ireland continued to use Celtic and Irish motifs as sources, individuals such as Harry Clarke, Wilhelmina Geddes, Oswald Reeves and other individuals developed their own internationalist modernist styles. So also the co-operatives like Dun Emer and Cuala used Celtic ornament in a modernist idiom.

²²⁰ For a discussion on this see S. B. Kennedy, “An Irish school of art? Depictions of the landscape in a critical period, 1880-1930” in Carla King, ed., *Famine Land and Culture in Ireland*, (Dublin: UCD Press, 2000). 153-167.

dichotomy continued to be debated by artists and scholars of Irish art after Independence, echoing Geertz opposing forces of essentialism and epochalism, modernism and traditionalism, looking to the future and looking to the past.

Thomas Davis, a Young Irelander revolutionary and one of the pioneers of Irish cultural nationalism in the nineteenth century, wrote two essays in *The Nation* newspaper in 1843 on the need for a national art.²²¹ These articles, seen as the start of the debate on the need for a distinct and national Irish art, are frequently cited in discussions and debate. While Davis recognised and named various Irish artists, he opined that, ‘their work was seldom done for Ireland’.²²² His “Hints for Irish Historical Paintings” challenges Irish artists to paint scenes of Irish history, everyday life and lists 72 suitable topics. These start with ‘The Landing of the Milesians’ and ends with ‘The Lifting of the Irish Flags of a National Fleet and Army’. Sandwiched in between are other Irish historical episodes that he deemed suitable subject matter for Irish art.²²³ He believed it was ‘essential to our civilisation and our renown’ that art be ‘conversant with national subjects’.²²⁴

As early as 1899, George Russell (AE) (1867-1935) artist and writer, was the driving force behind an exhibition of Modern Art held at Lenister Hall, Dublin. He lamented the lack of a national art in a letter to the newspapers the previous year saying Irish artists had failed to find inspiration in ‘traditional Celtic sources as had [Irish] writers’.²²⁵ The 88 works on view included two pastels by Degas, a portrait by Manet, and works by Monet, and Whistler representing impressionism among the French, Dutch and English exhibiting

²²¹ Thomas Davis, “Hints for Irish Historical Paintings”, in *The Nation*, 29th Jul. 1843 available at <https://celt.ucc.ie/published/E800002-027.html>.

Thomas Davis, “National Art”, in *The Nation*, 14th Oct. 1843, text available at <https://www.libraryireland.com/articles/NationalArtThomasDavis/>.

²²² Thomas Davis, “National Art”. 1843.

²²³ Thomas Davis, “Hints for Irish Historical Paintings”. 1843.

²²⁴ Thomas Davis, “National Art”. 1843.

²²⁵ S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, 5,6. The organising committee included Lord Powerscourt, Walter Armstrong (NGI), Walter Osbourne, Sarah Purser, AE, and W. G. Strickland.

artists.²²⁶ AE believed that Irish artists needed exposure to ‘the best of contemporary art from abroad’.²²⁷

In 1901 Sarah Purser in an effort to promote contemporary Irish painting, which she believed was neglected, organised an important exhibition, *A Loan Collection of Pictures by Nathaniel Hone [1931-1917], RHA and John Butler Yeats [1839-1922], RHA*, in the Royal Society of Antiquarians premises in Dublin. Purser believed that it might be possible to find the ‘source’ of an Irish school in the landscapes of Hone and the John B. Yeats’ portraits.²²⁸ In 1949 Thomas McGreevy commented that this two-hander exhibition was the ‘inevitable point of departure of the modern Irish school of painting’.²²⁹ Hugh Lane’s (1875-1915), visit to this exhibition started his ‘abiding interest in Irish art’ and his endeavours to establish a gallery of modern art in Dublin.²³⁰ He immediately commissioned a series of portraits from John B. Yeats.

In 1904, Lane himself, exhibited the collection of modern art owned by James Staats Forbes at the RHA, featuring work by the Barbizon school, Corot and Whistler. In the same year he also organised the first ever exhibition of contemporary Irish art abroad, at the Guildhall in London. In the preface to its catalogue, Lane alluded to an Irish School and the ‘common or race quantities (sic) [that] appear through it’ of Irish artists.²³¹ Lane believed that artists reflected ‘the soul of [the] age’ and consequently there must be common traits and attributes in the art works of Irish born artists. Lane presented this exhibition as a ‘means of forming an Irish School’.²³² Holding the show in London could

²²⁶ Other artists included ‘Corot, Millet and Daubigny, representing the French landscapists, Courbet and Clausen for Realism’ and some English pre-Raphaelites - see Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism*, 6.

²²⁷ Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism*, 5.

²²⁸ S.B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism*, 1991. 6, 7.

²²⁹ Thomas McGreevy, “Fifty Years of Irish Painting 1900-1950” in *Capuchin Annual*, 1949. 497, cited in S.B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism*, 1991. 6.

²³⁰ S.B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism*, 1991. 7.

²³¹ Hugh P. Lane, “Prefatory Notice” in A. G. Temple, F.S.A., *Catalogue of Works by Irish Painters*, (London: Blades, East & Blades, 1904). ix-xi.

²³² NLI. MS 35,822/4 in Sir Hugh Lane and Mrs. Ruth Shine Papers. Letter from Hugh Lane to Lord Dudley, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, seeking the establishment of a role to oversee paintings in Irish official collections and asking to be appointed to it. 22nd May 1904.

be seen as identifying the city at this juncture as the centre of Irish art further sustained by the Irish Literary Society.²³³ Part of Lane's intention in establishing a modern art gallery in Dublin was to also encourage, foster and develop an Irish school of art. His idea was that exemplars of international contemporary and modern masters would stimulate the development of a national art. It must therefore be deduced that Lane did not believe such a school or Irish style of art already existed in the first decade of the twentieth century. The *Art Journal*, 1904 commented on the Guildhall exhibition that is proved there was 'no distinct national movement'.²³⁴

Ellen Duncan organized a show of works by modern French painters, *Works by Impressionist Painters*, at the United Arts Club in Dublin in 1911. At the same venue in the following year, she had the first Cubist pictures on show in Ireland, including works by Picasso in an exhibition titled *Modern French Pictures*.²³⁵

Paul Henry and Arthur Power organised an exhibition, titled *Some Modern Pictures*, in Mills Hall, Dublin in January 1922 with the declared aim to 'see the emergence of an indigenous art that could stand alongside the achievements of the Literary Revival'.²³⁶ Although conceived the previous year the exhibition opened as the Irish Free State came into existence. Henry and Power were dismayed by how low Ireland had fallen in terms of art and wanted to confront artists, 'with the best of avant-garde painting and ideas from abroad'.²³⁷ Writing to the *Irish Times*, Henry and Power, stated that their exhibition

Lane's definition of an Irish artist was very loose and included many such as Charles Shannon (with ten works) and numerous others who had only a tenuous link to Ireland. See Cullen, *Ireland on Show: "Art, Union, and Nationhood"*, 154.

²³³ The Irish Literary Society was founded in London with Charles Gavan Duffy as President, on the 12th May 1892. Evelyn Gleeson was its first secretary. Among its founders were leaders of the Irish literary revival including W. B. Yeats, T. W. Rolleston, Francis Fahy and Douglas Hyde and others. Lane originally planned the exhibition for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair but this never materialised.

²³⁴ Cited in McConkey, 14.

²³⁵ Ellen Duncan was curator of the Municipal Gallery in Dublin and first president of the United Arts Club.

²³⁶ The exhibition ran from 30th Jan. 1922 until the 11th Feb. 1922. S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 55. Henry was also centrally involved in establishing the Dublin Society of Painters, St. Stephens Green in 1920, to exhibit more modern art work.

²³⁷ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 55.

introduced the ‘modern movement in painting’ and ‘stimulated an interest in painting as no Show in Dublin in recent years has done’.²³⁸ Among the thirty or so exhibits were pictures by Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, Vlaminck and Modigliani – but the emphasis was on younger, less progressive, British artists like Harold Gilman and Spencer Gore.

In hindsight Henry said the exhibition marked the beginning of a new era in Irish art. Taken in conjunction with the ‘recent foundation of the Society of Dublin Painters – and of political independence – [he thought] it gave impetus to a younger generation of artists who were not burdened with the baggage of earlier times’.²³⁹ Henry and Power produced four pamphlets to advertise their exhibition (figures 5, 6, 7, 8).²⁴⁰ These reflected the nationalist fervour of the time, invoking Irish heritage and legends and the uniqueness of Irish culture,

we are the legitimate descendants of CUCULAIN and DEIRDRE’ ... ‘LET artists, musicians, writers and men of action, translate into BEING the INTENSE and NATIONAL LIFE that surrounds us’ ... ‘HELP TO CREATE A REVIVAL OF ART IN IRELAND’²⁴¹

Another advised what the development of Irish art in the new State should avoid,

in the Springtime of her national vigour your country lies, like a new field, Waiting To Be Sown ... But round us surges the war cry: “Back to our sources” – “Back to our beginnings”²⁴²

Henry implored Irish people, ‘For your Nation’s Sake – WAKE UP’ and to demand and buy modern Irish paintings and arts and crafts.²⁴³ With exclamations such as, ‘Ireland has freed herself from foreign domination. Will she now free herself from the domination of foreign art?’ - these pamphlets display a nationalistic zeal, not usually associated with Henry, as the new State emerged in 1922.²⁴⁴ Henry was espousing an epochalist view for

²³⁸ Paul Henry & Arthur Power, “Dublin Arts Week” in *Irish Times*, 16th Feb. 1922. 6.

²³⁹ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 55.

²⁴⁰ These pamphlets are in the NGI, Paul Henry archive. NGI. Paul Henry, 1876-1958 / CSIA archive - CSIA CSIA-STR 709.415HEN. They are titled “Dublin Arts Week”, “The Revival of Irish Art”, “We must Create – Not Imitate” and “For your Nation’s Sake – Wake Up!” (Jan. 1922).

²⁴¹ NGI. Paul Henry - CSIA-STR 709.415HEN. “Dublin Art Week” (pamphlet, Jan. 1922).

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ NGI. Paul Henry - CSIA-STR 709.415HEN. Various pamphlets. (Jan 1922).

²⁴⁴ NGI. Paul Henry - CSIA-STR 709.415HEN. “The Revival of Irish Art” (pamphlet, Jan. 1922).

the development of Irish art, rooted in a national style and free of English and continental ‘domination’. His own art would illustrate this call by painting the Irish landscape and people as he saw them, unique, proud and industrious in a style different to the Irish landscapes of the 19th century created under ‘foreign domination’. Henry wanted Irish artists to imbue modernism and Irishness to produce a national art.

Later, Henry, as committee member and Honorary Director of the 1927 Dublin Civic Week art committee, organised its associated art exhibition at the Metropolitan School of Art galleries, discussed in chapter four.²⁴⁵ Among the 160 works, he included Irish artists along with their more famous French and English counterparts such as Modigliani, Pissarro, Nash and John, serving to place Irish art in an international context in Dublin. Contemporary newspapers noted that Irish artists could well hold their own in the ordeal.²⁴⁶ Despite these individual initiatives, the art establishment, most notably the RHA remained unmoved and adhered to its strict academic principles – this was to remain its stance.²⁴⁷

The contribution of renowned French art critic Arsène Alexander (1859-1937), in his introductory essay to the Paris Race Congress Irish art exhibition catalogue, clearly identified an Irish School of Art as existing in 1922.²⁴⁸ This essay is considered more fully in chapter two. Alexander, who had previously identified other movements in art, was familiar with Irish art, had visited Ireland and previously wrote about Hugh Lane’s endeavours to establish a Modern Art gallery in Dublin.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ This exhibition included work by Modigliani, Lhote, Signac, Van Dongen, de Vlaminck, Dufy, Pissarro, Fantin-Latour, Brangwyn, Nash and John and is discussed in detail in chapter four.

²⁴⁶ Anon. “Exhibition of Modern Art”, *Irish Times*, 17th Sep. 1927.

²⁴⁷ Brian Kennedy. “Paul Henry: An Irish Portrait”. *The GPA Irish Arts Review Yearbook*. 1989. 44.

²⁴⁸ Arsène Alexandre (1859-1937) was an important French art critic for writing for *Le Figaro* and was credited with bringing into existence the art terms ‘pointillism’ and ‘Rouen School’. Arsène Alexandre, “École Irlandaise” in *Exposition D’art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]: Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). 5-10.

²⁴⁹ Arsène Alexandre, « L’art de donner un musée » in *Le Figaro*, 20th Mar 1908.

Although Jack Yeats' art would evolve over his lifetime, to a distinctive expressionist modernist style, in his speech to the 1922 Paris Irish Race Congress he is suspicious of modernism. He stated that paintings 'which are scientific and fashionable... are trivial things' and echoing Davis he asserted, 'Ireland is full to the brim of all things that lend themselves best to pictorial memories', and further declared painting from nature as the most valid form for Irish art.²⁵⁰ He repeated these thoughts in an educational pamphlet published by Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail in 1922, *Modern Aspects of Irish Art*, which was designed to be read at Sinn Féin meetings and discussed by those present.²⁵¹ In it, Yeats again lays down his ground rules for a school of Irish art, when he asserts 'the roots of every art must be in the country of the artist'.²⁵² To create such a school he advocated scrapping the largely London artistic traditions that dominated Ireland in the 18th and part of the 19th century and polemically added 'we will scrap all artistic traditions but the tradition of freedom'.²⁵³ As mentioned earlier, Henry in a 1922 pamphlet, also advocated freeing Irish art from foreign domination.

Thomas Bodkin's *Four Irish Landscape Painters* published in 1920 examined the work of George Barrett (1732-84), James Arthur O'Connor (1792-1841), Walter Osborne (1859-1903) and Nathaniel Hone the younger (1831-1917) and essentially reviewed two hundred years of Irish landscape paintings.²⁵⁴ He could have chosen different artists who produced comparable work but the review would have been similar – these artists and their work did not represent a national art.²⁵⁵ In 1932, Bodkin writing in *Saorstát Éireann: Irish Free State Official Handbook*, commissioned by the government to report on national developments of the first ten years of the IFS, stated that this 'distinctively Irish School of

²⁵⁰ Jack B. Yeats, "Ireland and Painting" in *Ár N-Éire, New Ireland*, Vol. IX, No. 11, 18th Feb, 1922, 171-173 and Vol IX, No. 12, 25th Feb, 1922, 189-190. (His speech was serialised over two editions). 172.

²⁵¹ Jack B. Yeats, *Modern aspects of Irish Art*. (Dublin: Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail, 1922). 2-5.

²⁵² *Ibid.* 4.

²⁵³ Jack B. Yeats, *Ár N-Éire, New Ireland*, Vol IX, No. 12, 25th Feb, 1922. 190.

²⁵⁴ Thomas Bodkin. *Four Irish Landscape Painters*. 1920. (Dublin: IAP, 1987 reprint).

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.* xi also pages 14, 51...

Fine Art' had not developed, because of the 'turmoil and misery'.²⁵⁶ Later commentators suggest that this handbook, copiously illustrated by Paul Henry, Sean Keating, Hilda Roberts (1901-82), Maurice MacGonigal, Estella Solomons, Sean O'Sullivan (1906-64) and others heralded the beginning of such a national school.²⁵⁷ Bodkin went on to produce in 1940, *Twelve Irish Artists* conversely as a demonstration of the existence of an Irish school/ style.²⁵⁸ This volume reproduced works by twelve artists and has been variously cited to demonstrate both the existence and non-existence of an Irish school at this time.²⁵⁹ Bodkin was later commissioned by the government to produce a *Report on the Arts in Ireland* (1949) in which he famously chided the State's 'apathy' and for caring and giving less 'for the cultivation of the Arts' than any other country in Western Europe.²⁶⁰ This statement has been widely quoted in Irish art historiography but not questioned; this research will examine the extent to which the State was involved/ worked with native artists until 1934. Ironically when the Taoiseach informed the Dáil that this report was being commissioned from Bodkin, he spoke of the need to encourage art, of the great tradition in Irish art and the need to 'foster, and if necessary to create or recreate, a proper national tradition in art'.²⁶¹

In 1937, two years before he died, the poet WB Yeats visited the Municipal Gallery in Dublin, and reflected on a school of Irish art. He is quoted as saying,

²⁵⁶ Thomas Bodkin, "Modern Irish Art" in Bulmer Hobson, Ed. *Saorstát Éireann Irish Free State Official Handbook*, (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1932). 239-244. 239. This Handbook is considered in a section on civic publications in chapter four.

²⁵⁷ Bulmer Hobson, Ed. *Saorstát Éireann Irish Free State Official Handbook*, (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1932).

²⁵⁸ Thomas Bodkin, *Twelve Irish Artists*, (Dublin: Waddington, 1940). Artists featured are J. Humbert Craig, William Conor, Grace Henry, Paul Henry, Sean Keating, Harry Kernoff, Charles Lamb, Maurice MacGonigal, Frank McKelvey, Dermot O'Brien, Sean O'Sullivan, and Leo Whelan.

²⁵⁹ Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, "Radharc ar gCúl: A Backward Twelve Irish Artists: A School of Irish Painting?" in *New Hibernia Review*, 6, 2. (Summer, 2002). 130-134.

Peter Murray, "Henry, Paul" in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*. 201.

²⁶⁰ Thomas Bodkin, *Report on the Arts in Ireland*. (Dublin: Stationary Office, 1949, 2nd ed. 1953). 9.

²⁶¹ Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. 117 No. 10 Wednesday, 20 Jul 1949. Committee on Finance. Vote 3 Department of the Taoiseach. Accessed at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/1949-07-20/54/> on 07/09/2018.

There were pictures painted by men, now dead, who were once my intimate friends. There were portraits of my fellow-workers ... there, too, were portraits of our statesmen, the events of the last 20 years in fine pictures... Ireland seen because of the magnificent vitality of her painters, in the glory of her passions. For the moment I could think of nothing but that Ireland: that great pictured song.²⁶²

For Yeats, these distinctly Irish works, bore the State a cultural identity 'because of the magnificent vitality of her painters'.

Although not explicitly stated by Kenneth McConkey in *A Free Spirit Irish Art 1860-1960* (1990), his text is predicated on the existence of a distinct Irish school of painting in the twentieth century.²⁶³ He is more assertive in an *Irish Arts Review* essay, stating 'Henry's sense of design infiltrated the painting of other young Irish artists' and that representations of 'Irish peasants' are not 'the boozy layabouts... of an earlier age' but are 'the strong serious contemplative types upon whom the modern Ireland would depend'.²⁶⁴ With these art works from a 'generation of committed Irish artists, a corporate identity was created'.²⁶⁵ This is a point taken up by art historian Brian P. Kennedy who argues that 'a corporate identity' generated by the works of 'artists like Sean Keating, Paul Henry, Maurice MacGonigal, Charles Lamb (1893-1964), James Humbert Craig (1877-1944) and Patrick Tuohy' did not constitute a 'nationalist school of painting'.²⁶⁶ S. B. Kennedy in his scholarly and extensive *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950* argues that Paul Henry 'almost single-handedly forged a school of painting based on the [West and North-west of Ireland] landscape... which, in the hands of Lamb, Craig and McKelvey... approximates to a genuine Irish school of painting' between the wars.²⁶⁷

²⁶² Quoted from a W. B. Yeats speech delivered at the Banquet of the Irish Academy of Letters, 17 Aug. 1937. Cited in Brian P. Kennedy, *A Visual Perspective*, 1994, 151 and McConkey, *Irish Renaissance*, 1986, 19.

²⁶³ Kenneth McConkey, *A Free Spirit Irish Art 1860-1960*, (London: Antique Collectors' Club, 1990).

²⁶⁴ Kenneth McConkey. "Paintings of the 'Irish Renaissance'." *Irish Arts Review* (1984-1987) 3, no. 3 (1986): 19-21.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Brian P. Kennedy, "The Irish Free State 1922-49: A Visual Perspective" in *Ireland: Art into History*, ed. Raymond Gillespie and Brian P. Kennedy, (Dublin: Town House, 1994). 150.

²⁶⁷ S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*. 176.

Academic and historian Mike Cronin's assertion in his article on the Tailteann Art exhibition of 1924, that the 'Tailteann art competition failed to define a national style' or school other than in the arts and crafts is based on his assessment of a segment of this one exhibition.²⁶⁸ His analysis is challenged in this study, primarily on the empirical evidence presented.

Jeanne Sheehy concludes in her wide-ranging survey that the Celtic Revival 1830-1930 failed to produce an Irish school in painting or sculpture or to 'pass on a living tradition in art as it did in literature' on style or subject-matter.²⁶⁹ However, she asserts that the Arts and Crafts movement did produce a cohesive school, drawing 'only in a creative way on Celtic ornament' although it began to fade towards 1930.²⁷⁰ This work in stained glass, in metalwork, and in embroidery was created by talented artists who engaged with external influences ' - the political, literary, and language movements' to express 'the feeling of the times in what they made'.²⁷¹ The State supported exhibitions in this research, invariably included arts and crafts on an equal footing with painting and sculpture.

Two important contributions on the study of cultural identity in Irish art that contribute to the debate on the existence of a national style/ school during the first half of the century, are Hilary Pyle's essay in *Irish Art 1900-1950*, (1975) and Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch's chapter, "The Formation of an Irish School of Painting, Issues of National Identity" in *Paul Henry*, (2003).²⁷² Lynch's suggests that 'a new canon of Irish subject matter' emerged celebrating 'Irish life and landscape' as the basis for a school, led by Jack B. Yeats and Paul Henry.²⁷³ Pyle concurs that both artists were the 'innovators' who also broke down

²⁶⁸ Mike Cronin, "The State on Display: The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition" in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 10/1/2005, Vol. 9, Issue 3. 50-71.

²⁶⁹ Jeanne Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past. The Celtic Revival 1830-1930*. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980). 188.

²⁷⁰ Ibid. 189, 190.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Hilary Pyle, *Irish Art 1900-1950*, (Cork: Rosc Teoranta, 1975). 9-16.

Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, "The Formation of an Irish School of Painting: Issues of National Identity" in S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (Dublin: NGI, 2003). 23-34.

²⁷³ Bhreathnach-Lynch, "The Formation of an Irish School of Painting: Issues of National Identity". 25.

‘the academic style of painting’ but she is ambiguous if any school of art or national style emerged.²⁷⁴ Like Sheehy and Larmour, Pyle identifies the Arts and Crafts movement as a distinctively cohesive Irish school ‘with genuine roots in the past’.²⁷⁵

Art historian Susan Keating, in an essay in Volume 5 of *Art and Architecture of Ireland*, acknowledges the role of Henry’s identifiable Irish landscapes and Jack B. Yeats depiction of ‘many essentially Irish rural and urban scenes’, reasons that the existence of ‘a distinctively Irish school of painting is still debated’.²⁷⁶

The desire and call for an Irish School of Art was couched in terms of the Gaelic League, the Literary Tradition and the cohesive Arts and Crafts School. The IFS politicians and artists saw its identity bound to the national cultural movement and a School of Art would be an important facet to this movement in order to expand the notion of a national culture.²⁷⁷ Art of the period became a reflection of national characteristics in this period of increasing suturing of culture and nation. The debate on national schools of art in Ireland, France and England at the turn of the twentieth century was characterised by cultural progress that favoured modern art in general, which had the effect of putting that nation’s art level with the art of other countries.²⁷⁸ The Irish School was also underpinned by its desire to distinguish its art as, not British. For the IFS and for other countries the ‘concept of schools ca. 1900 appears to mediate between centripetal nationalism and tradition and

²⁷⁴ Pyle, *Irish Art 1900-1950*. 12.

²⁷⁵ Pyle, *Irish Art 1900-1950*. 13. For an extensive view on the Irish Arts and Crafts movement see Paul Larmour, *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland*, (Belfast: Friar’s Bush Press, 1992).

²⁷⁶ Susan Keating, “Painting” in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*. 343.

²⁷⁷ See earlier references in this chapter to Thomas Davis articles in *The Nation* 1843, Paul Henry’s exhibition in Mills Hall in 1922 and Jack Yeats lecture to the Irish Race Congress in Paris the same year. See also, John Turpin, “The Metropolitan School of Art 1900-1923 (Part1).” *Dublin Historical Record* 37, no. 2 (1984): 59-78.

²⁷⁸ S. B. Kennedy, “Chapter One, An Irish School of Painting” in S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen’s University of Belfast, 1991). 4-17.

Mary Anne Stevens, “Innovation and Consolidation in French Painting” in *Post-Impressionism, Cross-Currents in European Painting*, (London: Royal Academy, 1979). 19-25.

Julie Codell, “From English School to British School: Modernism, Revisionism, and National Culture in the Writings of M. H. Spielmann,” *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 14, no. 2 (Summer 2015).

centrifugal internationalism and modernism'.²⁷⁹ This notion of an Irish school that emerged through overlapping institutions such as RHA and DMSA, museums and international and national exhibitions, and critical voices, ultimately sought to raise standards.²⁸⁰

This thesis contributes to the debate on the existence of a school of Irish art in the research period by focusing on three areas. Firstly in this chapter, determine the elements that make an Irish school of art so that what existed can be measured. The second and third areas considered are introduced here and developed in subsequent chapters. Secondly, a number of commentators have characterized art as a language; expanding on this, art works from the leading Irish artists of this period are parsed and analysed to their constituent parts to show the existence of a distinct Irish visual/ pictorial/ aesthetic language with uniquely Irish elements.²⁸¹ Finally, it determines and categorises what artists used these elements and what works were produced to show there was a cohesive response by Irish artists to the political and cultural milieu in which they found themselves.

This thesis contends that for the period under research, an Irish school did exist, in both art and arts and crafts. To fully investigate this requires a clear definition while there is no agreement in existing literature on what constitutes a school. However, there are common traits applied to schools across endeavours such as economics, cinema, music, art and so on, to identify enough constituents to determine what makes a school. It is important also to distinguish between an artistic movement and a school. A movement is a particular style and individual paintings are clearly identifiable as belonging to that group, Cubism is a

²⁷⁹ Julie Codell, "From English School to British School: Modernism, Revisionism, and National Culture". 2005.

²⁸⁰ The exhibitions are discussed throughout this thesis. Institutions often employed tutors regarded as exceptional, exemplified by the RHA who retained William Orpen in painting (who diluted transnational influences), and the DMSA recruitment of the more expansive Alfred Childe to teach stained glass, and Oswald Reeves in enamelling and metalwork.

²⁸¹ Clifford Geertz. Art as a Cultural System. *MLN*. 1976. 1474.
Bodkin in *Four Irish Landscape Artists*. Xi.

good example. Cubist painters existed in many different countries and although originating in the first decade of the 20th century it is a style still used by artists today.

A school on the other hand is a group of artists, economists, musicians ... who may or may not employ a similar style but who share a common origin or teacher, have common aims, beliefs, ideologies, share similar ideas and methods and are typically linked to a single location. Illustrative examples are the Chicago School of Economics, the Frankfurt School of Critical Thinking and the Canadian Group of Seven artists. A school typically exists for a period of time and may be connected to a movement. Clearly it must contain a number of members but this number is variable, one of the most accepted art schools is the Group of Seven which comprised seven artists and operated between 1920 and 1933. They were also connected by location, nationalism and landscape painting.

Irish artists in the newly independent state often travelled to London and Europe for training but most were connected in some way with the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art. Those who trained in London or Belfast were still schooled in the same 'English' system as existed in Dublin.²⁸² A number of prominent artists established the Society of Dublin Painters in 1920 giving like-minded artists an exhibition and discussion forum.²⁸³ Much has been written about the Cultural Revival in the early 1900s in Ireland and how it was an inspiration for the military and political Independence movement. Many Irish politicians were culturally engaged and united with artists in this revival, sharing the common aim of political and cultural independence.²⁸⁴ They existed in the same milieu in touch with the

²⁸² John Turpin, *A school of art in Dublin since the eighteenth century: a history of the National College of Art*, (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1995).

²⁸³ Paul Henry founded the Society of Dublin Painters with Clare Marsh (replaced by Mainie Jellett in 1923), Jack Butler Yeats, E.M. O'Rourke Dickey, Letitia Hamilton, Mary Swanzy and Harry Clarke (replaced in 1922 or 23 by Charles Lamb).

²⁸⁴ For example, Eamon de Valera, *Priomh Aire* (President) (from 1.4.19 to 26.8.21). As a young Gaeilgeoir (Irish speaker), de Valera became an activist for the Irish language. In 1908, he joined the *Árdchraobh of Conradh na Gaeilge* (the Gaelic League).

Arthur Griffith, *Home Affairs* (from 2.4.19 - 26.8.21). He worked for a time as a printer before joining the Gaelic League, which was aimed at promoting the restoration of the Irish language.

Ernest Blythe, *Trade & Commerce* (from 17.6.19). Blythe became director of the Abbey Theatre.

zeitgeist of nationalism and the movement for independence. That artists shared the political aims is discussed throughout this research and was highlighted by the state selecting their art work, voluntarily and independently produced, for exhibit at home and abroad that dovetailed with the official aims of promoting political and cultural sovereignty. Irish artists shared a common aim on the political imperative of a unique and independent state, and as this thesis will show, many such as Paul Henry were involved in reclaiming the iconography of the Irish landscape. Jack Yeats in particular used a distinctive Irish pictorial language. Sean Keating and others expressed their nationalism overtly, and all were united in their aims, training and location. This research will show that artists invested in the state by learning the language, promoting and exhibiting (self-declared) Irish art, and travelling to and painting the west as a primary source of a surviving Irish and Gaelic culture. This political and artistic unison was challenged by the treaty split and ensuing violence with consequences for cohesiveness in the Irish school of art.

Irish academics and art historians already cited such as Fionna Barber, Marie Bourke, Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, Terence Browne, Luke Gibbons, S. B. Kennedy and Dorothy Walker have explored how, in the decade after independence, Irish artists grappled with ‘new ideas and trends in art’.²⁸⁵ Despite this, these writers reasoned that at this time, Irish art existed outside any particular artistic movement. Emma Chambers in her catalogue

Sean O’Ceallaigh, Minister for Irish (from 29.6.20 to 26.8.21). O’Kelly joined the National Library of Ireland in 1898 as a junior assistant to T. W. Lyster, remaining there until 1902, and becoming a subscriber to the Celtic Literary Society. The same year, he joined the Gaelic League, becoming a member of the governing body in 1910 and general secretary in 1915. He was appointed manager of *An Claidheamh Soluis*, which included amongst its editors the revolutionary leaders of Sinn Féin.

Eoin MacNeill, Minister for Industries (1.4.19 to 26.8.21), was an Irish scholar, Irish language enthusiast, Gaelic revivalist, nationalist. A key figure of the Gaelic revival, he was a co-founder of the Gaelic League, to preserve Irish language and culture.

George Noble Count Plunkett, Foreign Affairs (from 2.4.19 to 26.8.21) subsequently ne became the first Minister for Fine Art. In Dublin he studied Renaissance and medieval art among other topics, ultimately graduating in 1884.

Countess Markievicz, Minister for Labour was an artist.

²⁸⁵ Marie Bourke, “Yeats, Henry and the Western Idyll” in *History Ireland*, Vol. 11, No. 2. (Summer, 2003). 29.

essay for the 2018 exhibition “Aftermath: Art in the wake of World War One”, describes how following the First World War, many European artists turned away from avant-garde movements ‘to realism and traditional genres such as portraiture, religious painting and landscape’.²⁸⁶ These artists rendered everyday life with precision and clarity amidst a chaotic economic and political climate. This revival became known as the ‘Return to Order’, a term ‘made famous by the poet and artist Jean Cocteau as the title for a 1926 collection of essays on the subject of classicism in art’.²⁸⁷ Irish artists of the corresponding post-revolutionary period of precarious times, similarly aligned values of Irish life, tradition and place with national identity in a cohesive body of work.

Considering Irish art as a language, prominent works of the leading artists of this period, including Jack Yeats, Paul Henry, Margaret Clarke and Sean Keating and which were officially harnessed by the State are parsed and the components analysed to establish if there was a distinctive Irish aesthetic language. This research probes the State supported exhibitions and determines that Irish artists employed a new Irish aesthetic language, to decolonise the Irish visual imagination. This was particularly evident in the Paris Race Congress exhibition discussed in chapter two.

The most frequently cited source of inspiration in Irish art and culture at this time is the West of Ireland. It raises its head throughout this research beginning with the French government buying an Irish painting of the West from the 1922 Paris exhibition, and ending with the discussion in chapter five regarding the Irish government rejecting\ censoring paintings often associated with the West for exhibit at the 1933 Chicago

²⁸⁶ Emma Chambers, “Aftermath” in Emma Chambers, ed. *Aftermath: Art in the Wake of World War One*, (London: Tate, 2018). 10,11.

²⁸⁷ Simon Martin, “The Return to Order” in Emma Chambers, ed. *Aftermath: Art in the Wake of World War One*, (London: Tate, 2018). 72-79. 72. The artists André Lhote is credited with first appropriating the term in 1919.

exhibition. Its presence permeated Irish art and politics throughout this period and as will be shown it was the scaffolding for the Irish school of art in the 1920s and early 1930s.

1.1.9 The West as a source for national identity.

Over the course of the last century, a narrative has been constructed that essentialist paintings of a rural untainted West of Ireland were viewed as representative of state-sponsored official national art. Art historian Bhreathnach-Lynch cites Paul Henry's 'interpretation of the West as a rural idyll' and his 'thatched cottages' as coinciding 'with the Free State's official construct of Ireland'.²⁸⁸ The Western seaboard, which was untainted by urbanisation and was Irish speaking, had a unique landscape and was regarded by many as the 'real or authentic Ireland' and different from England (figure 9).²⁸⁹

The importance of the West of Ireland in the Irish psyche was rooted in centuries of Irish geo-political history. Many members of the Irish Catholic ruling class were stripped of their lands in Lenister, Munster and Ulster during plantations and as punishment for the Rebellion of 1641 and ordered to move to poorer land west of the Shannon in Connacht.²⁹⁰ Their better lands were offered in the main to Protestants loyal to England. This concentrated the native Irish in the geographically isolated West of Ireland. Remoteness and lack of interest by the British in the poorer West resulted in limited colonial integration compared to the East. The language and native customs consequently survived better there,

²⁸⁸ Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007), 8. For other texts that discuss the essentialist national visual art style at this time see Fionna Barber, *Art in Ireland since 1910*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2013). S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991). Dorothy Walker, *Modern Art in Ireland*, (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1997).

²⁸⁹ Luke Gibbons, *Transformations in Irish Culture, Field Day Essays*, (Cork: CUP, 1996). 23.

Fáilte Éireann today with the Wild Atlantic Way, still continues to promote this rural idyll as the 'real Ireland' where tourists should visit and spend their money.

²⁹⁰ This led to the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland and Act of Settlement 1652 which gave legal force to the confiscation of lands from Irish landowners. This continued the removal of the Catholic ruling classes and their replacement with the Protestant Ascendancy. See, John Cunningham, "Oliver Cromwell and the 'Cromwellian' settlement of Ireland" in *The Historical Journal* 53, no. 4 (2010): 919–37.

ultimately, becoming a primary source for the Irish Cultural Revival of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Evidence from the various exhibitions examined in this research confirms much of the existing literature that the west of Ireland was invested with a cultural capital, bestowed on it as the new state emerged, by Irish writers and artists.²⁹¹ However this study also challenges the dominant historical view which proffers the ‘myth of the west’ as the ‘national ideal’ in De Valera’s Ireland.²⁹² It shows that the veneration of the West was tempered by the State’s desire to prevent showcasing the myriad of social and economic challenges facing the country at this time. This is particularly the case in the Chicago exhibition but also evident in its engagement with the Empire Marketing Board. It raises the question if this identity of ‘Irishness’ was specifically curated for an American and international audience. The direct involvement by the State in selecting artists and art works for the Chicago exhibition and the EMB campaign challenged the concept of artistic freedom. It had the potential to undermine the personal relationships and cultural networks that existed within the larger artistic community of the Free State and the United Kingdom. Yvonne Scott’s essay “The West, as metaphor” in the catalogue accompanying an exhibition of the same title in 2005, is important in looking at the role of landscape, and, in particular, the West of Ireland in the Irish psychic.²⁹³ It explores how Irish artists engaged with this place through art in terms of its cultural importance to the nation. An image of the west was coded as both an icon and an image of real Ireland, untainted Ireland, national and pure, source for art and literature and where the Irish language still survived.

²⁹¹ Landscape as a theme dominates the Irish art works considered in all the exhibitions associated with the spectacles listed in Appendix 1. The west of Ireland is the most frequent place depicted. See also Bhreathnach-Lynch, “The Formation of an Irish School of Painting: Issues of National Identity”, 27.

²⁹² Gibbons. *Transformations in Irish Culture*. 23.

²⁹³ Yvonne Scott, “The West, as metaphor” in *The West as metaphor*, (Dublin: RHA, 2005). 7-52. This text is also used in identifying artists and their roles in an Irish School of Art.

In 1905 Jack B. Yeats went to the West of Ireland, with John M Synge, to illustrate Synge's articles on 'the impoverished areas of Ireland' for the *Manchester Guardian*, after which the Irish way of life and the West would become a theme and an artistic source for the artist.²⁹⁴ A number of Yeats' early exhibitions included 'West of Ireland' in the title as did his 1912 book of forty line drawings and sixteen reproductions of paintings on the area.²⁹⁵ Other artists, contemporaries of Yeats, such as Paul Henry, Charles Lamb, Maurice McGonigal and Sean Keating would, after Yeats, also discover this unspoilt landscape and western light to infuse their paintings.²⁹⁶ William Orpen (1878-1931) visited the West around 1907 and subsequently completed some paintings situated there, namely, *Old John's Cottage, Connemara* (1908), *Sowing the Seed* (1913), *The Western Wedding* (1914) and *The Holy Well* (1916). However, 'according to Keating, Orpen did not have any identification with the West'.²⁹⁷ Although, as a successful artist and influential teacher at the DMSA between 1902 and 1914 Orpen was a role model for many emerging Irish artists.²⁹⁸

Henry settled in Achill in 1910 and, enchanted by its landscape, produced hundreds of paintings. His account of discovering Achill and west of Ireland life and its seminal impact on his artistic output is revelatory of person and place.²⁹⁹ These artists produced a realistic representation of the landscape and of the life of its people in paintings and print, conferred its inhabitants with a right to the ownership of the land they worked, and gave the place

²⁹⁴ Hilary Pyle, *Yeats Portrait of an Artistic Family*, (London: Merrell Holberton, 1997). 170. Yeats provided fifteen illustration for Synge's twelve articles.

²⁹⁵ Jack Yeats, *Life in the West of Ireland*, (Dublin: Maunsell, 1912). In the early 1900s, Yeats held a number of *Sketches of life in the west of Ireland* titled exhibitions in Dublin and London.

²⁹⁶ Henry is recorded as first going to the West of Ireland in 1910, Keating in 1914 and Lamb settled there in 1920.

²⁹⁷ John Turpin, "William Orpen as Student and Teacher" in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 68, no. 271 (1979): 173-92.

²⁹⁸ For a discussion on this see, Ibid and Catherine Marshall, "William Orpen" in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*, 336-339 and Marie Bourke. "A Growing Sense of National Identity: Charles Lamb (1893-1964) & the West of Ireland" in *History Ireland*, Vol. 8, No. 1. Spring, 2000. 30-34. 30.

²⁹⁹ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

preeminent importance. These artists work has been linked in visual terms to the work of Synge and to the Literary Revival.³⁰⁰

Cultural geographer Catherine Nash states that '[t]he celebration of the West as an archetypal Irish landscape was part of an attempt to identify with a landscape which was a confirmation of cultural identity'.³⁰¹ Perceived as both a pool of cultural and racial strength and beauty, its physical landscape provided the greatest contrast to the landscape of Englishness, the West represented and embodied a source of regeneration for the nation.³⁰² Cottage landscapes in Irish art have been described as an examples of 'banal nationalism' – the 'daily inculcation of nationhood by means of an array of barely-noticed signs' - images that are 'clichéd' and 'emptied of critical content such as references to poverty'.³⁰³ This study shows that the representation of cottages, in particular west of Ireland cottages, in Irish art of the 1920s and 1930s is conflicted. This discord is evident between the essentialist presentation, the need to present a traditional image of the nation for a conventional Irish identity such as associated with tourism, and the need to present an epochalist or more modern identity such as when seeking trade and other opportunities. Therefore, none of the tens of thousands of new slated cottages built in the early decades of the twentieth century are present in the tourist poster landscapes.³⁰⁴ Similarly, artists in their 'landscape' paintings invariably included the thatched cottage as this offered the best opportunity of finding a buyer who was usually seeking a familiar image of traditional Ireland. James Crampton Walker commenting on Lady Mabel Annesley's (1881-1959), *Council Cottages*, in his *Irish Life and Landscape* (1926) publication, states

³⁰⁰ Ibid.116.

³⁰¹ Catherine Nash, "Embodying the Nation - The West of Ireland Landscape and Irish Identity", in Barbara O'Connor and Michael Cronin, eds., *Tourism in Ireland: A Critical Analysis*, (Cork, 1993). 86–112. 91.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Tricia Cusack, "A 'Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads': Irish Nationalism and the Cottage Landscape." In *National Identities* 3, no.3 (2001). 221, 222.

³⁰⁴ Anne- Marie Walsh, "Root them in the land: cottage schemes for agricultural labourers" in Joost Augusteijn, ed., *Ireland in the 1930s: new perspectives*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999). 47-66. 47.

Throughout Ireland the thatched cottages, although a great many still remain, are gradually replaced by those designed by local County Councils. Of such Council cottages, though they are not so picturesque as their predecessors, Lady Mabel M. Annesley has succeeded here in making a pleasant picture in a decorative manner without losing the local atmosphere.³⁰⁵ (Figure 10)

Chapter five discusses how the government censored images of thatched cottages and allowed slated cottages in the 1933 Chicago exhibition when it sought to present a modern image and increase trade. For similar reasons, it closely managed the image of Ireland presented in Irish artists' posters for the EMB, and this is discussed in chapter four along with official publications that illustrated both types of cottages depending on the objective or textual context.

This research will show, how presenting a – not always fixed - Irish identity through art and design was carefully choreographed by the Irish Free State. In particular it will present a nuanced and detailed interpretation of the State's attitude to Irish identity portrayed in the visual arts and show how this evolved and matured, during the first Cumann na Ghaedheal government and after De Valera came to power.

Chapter 2. Revolution: Irish art and new political aspirations.

2.1 Introduction.

Chapters two and three examine the relationship between the Irish Free State and visual art at the end of the armed revolutionary period, after the War of Independence, from the signing of the Anglo Irish treaty in 1921 through the Civil War, until the end of 1924.

Academic and author Declan Kiberd in *After Ireland* (2018) argues that the 'insurgents of Easter Week were rebels who knew what they were against (an empire) but needed to be revolutionaries, with a clear sense of the society they wished to create'.¹ One consequence

³⁰⁵ James Crampton Walker, *Irish Life and Landscape*, (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1926). 38, 39.

Annesley, a renowned artist and wood engraver, in this instance took on a standard trope of Irish art.

¹ Declan Kiberd, *After Ireland*, (London: Head of Zeus, 2017), 38.

of this was that a nation building strategy was not pre-defined and would have to emerge as the nascent government started its daily chores against the background of the Civil War. This 'lyric phase of nation building' evident in the aftermath of independence is dealt with in chapter three.² The foundations of nation building, as imagined in the Celtic Twilight,³ shifted into a concrete reality as a result of the Civil War. As identified by Geertz, it was necessary to live in an independent nation rather than merely imagine it.⁴ As Kiberd contends in a phrase borrowed from Salman Rushdie, many artists considered that politically, the 'country had been insufficiently imagined'.⁵ He adds that 'texts produced by Revivalists' offered 'vital hints of a way forward' – this research adds visual artists to these writers. Politicians were learning from their activities in these early years and it was only during the evolutionary phase of the mid-1920s that deliberate and coherent political strategies were formulated. Certainly, in 1922, a governmental cultural policy had not been devised for the arts, but its import was recognised during and after the Irish Revival as having political value particularly in testifying to the unique nature of Irish identity and its independence from its coloniser, Great Britain. It can be argued that the powers believed that culture should/ did serve the political. To examine this hypothesis more closely, art exhibitions at home and abroad planned during the revolutionary period are identified and they will serve to highlight the growing political relationship between the new State and art. One art exhibition in particular has been identified as being of major significance, the Irish Art Exhibition that accompanied the World Congress of the Irish Race, held in Paris in 1922. The Congress itself was a meeting of Irish diaspora groups and individuals from around the world and the agenda featured discussions on the emerging state's relationship

² Ibid, 5.

³ The term Celtic Twilight has been used to describe the Irish Literary and Cultural Revival at the turn of the 20th Century. Literature and art at this time frequently looked to a romantic view of the past and old Irish legends as a source for their art leading to shadowy and dreamy subject matter. W. B. Yeats published a volume of essays titled *The Celtic Twilight* (1893, revised 1902), about mythical beings such as fairies, elves, ghosts and magic.

⁴ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 234

⁵ Kiberd, *After Ireland*. 2017, xi.

with Irish culture and commerce. Its primary aim was to establish a world body for the Irish diaspora to create and sustain a network that would serve the Free State. This exhibition has been recovered here from relative obscurity and its political, propagandistic and artistic significance has been restored.⁶ Irish émigrés and their descendants had become pivotal in bringing international communities to put pressure on the British government to resolve Irish demands for independence. However, post-treaty and with a solution, however imperfect in place, their direct political importance in persuading the English to disengage from Ireland or to lobby other foreign powers to support same, would diminish.⁷ The Paris Congress event invited this diaspora to re-engage with the motherland through direct engagement with leading IFS political and cultural figures alongside a reaffirming sense of shared identity through the viewing of art and cultural objects.

In a similar mode, one of the stated intentions of the 1922 Tailteann art exhibition and the 1924 Tailteann Games held in Dublin was to attract the diaspora home and expand the tourist season.⁸ However, the home audience for these local exhibitions was more important. Political diplomacy and the recognition of the propaganda value of art, as would be demonstrated at the Parisian Congress in 1922, foreshadowed the soft power required for compromise between opposing factions of the Treaty at home. Art and culture re-enforced a common heritage which both sides of the divide could embrace. The Irish War of Independence and its immediate aftermath had, in effect, created a single item agenda for any activity undertaken by the revolutionary Irish government – securing independence from Britain. To this end, as shown in Paris, the IFSG reaffirmed the agency and propaganda value of culture as artists and writers had determined during the Revival in

⁶ The details of the Irish art exhibition associated with the World Congress of the Irish Race held in Paris in 1922 are not recorded in Irish art history texts to date.

⁷ Gerard Keown “The Irish Race Conference, 1922, Reconsidered” in *Irish Historical Studies*. Cambridge University Press. Vol. 32, No. 127 (May, 2001). 373.

⁸ Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*, 95, see also Tailteann Games file, NAI, Dept. Taoiseach, TSCH/3/S1592, M. F. O’Hanlon, American report, 8th Nov. 1923.

manifesting a cultural separation from Britain. The art exhibition in Paris of almost three hundred works of art and arts & crafts visualised and asserted a decolonised image of Ireland.

2.2 Irish Cultural Propaganda, Paris 1922.

The Irish foreign missions, discussed in chapter one, organised gatherings for Irish people in their adopted country and were instrumental in setting up diaspora representative organisations. These meetings were generally referred to as a local Irish Race Congress. Laurence Ginnell for example, the Irish envoy sent to South America, organised an Irish Race Congress on the 29th November 1921 in Argentina, at which The Federation of Irish Institutions was established.⁹ Reports back to the government described how Irish people in Buenos Aires ‘acted [Patrick] Pearse's “Singer” and the “Rising of the Moon” - and we wrote it up before to make propaganda - with excellent results’.¹⁰ An Irish priest ‘preached exactly the right kind of propaganda sermon needed’, and Ginnell himself spoke at the performances.¹¹ The correspondence continued, stating that ‘The whole object was to stir real feeling in the Irish here and teach them the meaning of the Rising etc’.¹² It was the intention of the Irish Republic government to establish Irish diaspora organisations in as many countries as possible, though some countries - through the activities of certain individuals such as Ginnell - were more advanced than others in doing so.¹³

The Department of Foreign Affairs co-ordinated this activity in the various countries and their report of the 10th August 1921 ends by detailing a resolution passed in February 1921 by The Irish Republican Association of South Africa (IRASA) calling for a world Conference of the Irish Race. Delegates at the meeting from many countries ‘would proceed to take such steps as might be deemed advisable to assist the cause of the Irish

⁹ Laurence Ginnell (1852-1923) was an Irish nationalist politician and was appointed Sinn Fein Director of Propaganda in 1919.

¹⁰ NAI DFA ES Box 32 File 216(4), No 120, letter P.J. Little to Robert Brennan, Buenos Aires, 4 December 1921, accessed at <http://www.difp.ie/docs/Volume1/1921/120.htm> 30th Nov, 2016.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Irish diaspora groups functioning at this time and who attended the Congress included, Friends of Irish Freedom in United States, American Association for Recognition of Irish Republic, Irish Self-Determination League in Great Britain, Self-determination for Ireland League of Australia, Similar Leagues in Canada and New Zealand, The Federation of Irish Institutions in Argentina, Irish Republican Association of South Africa

Republic'.¹⁴ This suggestion was deemed 'admirable [by the Department of Foreign Affairs]', was 'being acted upon' and 'it is hoped to bring off the conference in Paris or some other country next January'.¹⁵

2.2.1 Organising the Congress.

Buoyed by the success of its envoys' missions to individual countries, the World Congress of the Irish Race in Paris was to showcase Irish sovereignty and cultural uniqueness. Despite the short period available to organise the congress, detailed preparations started with the aim of opening the event in Paris on the 21st January 1922, a date that would commemorate the third anniversary of the declaration of independence from England and the establishment of Dáil Éireann.¹⁶ Newspapers at the time announced the proposed event and carried commentary, press releases, statements from those involved, as well as describing the extent of the Irish diaspora. This event was described by De Valera as signifying Ireland's 'magnificent culture, the grand things the nation could give to the world', and he further explained that they were striving to achieve the 'ideal of trying to make Irish culture and Irish spirituality play its part in the modern world'.¹⁷ Other Congress delegates spoke of spreading Irish culture, of Irish sport being played in different parts of the globe and funding Irish studies in international universities.¹⁸ In August 1921, the Dáil took a hands-on approach to the event, and started issuing invitations to the

¹⁴ NAI DE 4/4/2, No. 104, Department of Foreign Affairs Report, Dublin, 10 August 1921 written by Riobárd O'Breandáin accessed at <http://www.difp.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=104> 30th Nov, 2016.

The editor of the South African Irish newspaper, *The Republic*, Benjamin Farrington¹⁴ was a driving force in the IRASA, and his newspaper encouraged the holding of the congress.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ For example archives in Pontifical Irish College, Rome. Papers of John Hagan, Irish College Rome (1904-1930). Part Two (1920-1922) shows conference organiser Katherine Hughes wrote to Hagan, in the Irish College, Rome, asking for names of 'outstanding Italian citizens of Irish blood' in order to invite them to the Aonach; likewise persons in Bavaria and Austria who can help her locate Irish there. Typescript letter dated 16th December 1921.

¹⁷ Anon. "Congress Banquet, Mr. De Valera's Address", *Cork Examiner*, 25th Jan, 1922. 5.

¹⁸ Anon. "Olympic Games for Dublin Paris Conference Suggestion", *Irish Times*, 25th Jan, 1922. 6.

congress in the name of the then President Eamon de Valera – who would become the leading anti-treaty figure - and Dáil Éireann.¹⁹

The local Irish Race Conferences that had been held in different parts of the world since 1881 allowed members of the Irish diaspora a means of staying in touch with and providing support to their country of ancestry.²⁰ They were primarily promoted and organised by wealthy Irish-American-based societies such as Clan na Gael and Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF), fundraising organisations aimed at encouraging and assisting Irish political freedom.²¹ Thomas Hughes Kelly (1865-1933) a millionaire Irish-American Catholic businessman and member of the FOIF, was appointed Honorary Secretary of the Paris World Congress of the Irish Race. He had also attended the Irish Race Conference in Buenos Aires in 1921.²² The chief organiser and driving force behind the event was Irish-Canadian author Katherine Hughes – who also used the Irish form of her name, Caitlín Ní Aodha.²³ She had established the Self-Determination for Ireland League across Canada and Newfoundland and held a national convention of this League in Ottawa on the 16th October 1920.²⁴ Hughes is not generally mentioned in contemporary reporting but evidence

¹⁹ Keown, “The Irish Race Conference, 1922, Reconsidered”, 2001. 366.

²⁰ For example Irish Race Conferences were held in Chicago 1881, Dublin 1896, Melbourne, 1919, Buenos Aires 1921, Paris 1922, New York 1916, 1918, 1947 and 1994, and Philadelphia 1919.

²¹ Michael Doorley, *The Friends of Irish Freedom: a case-study in Irish-American nationalism, 1916–21*, in *History Ireland*, Issue 2 (Mar/Apr 2008), Volume 16.

²² The Honorary President of the Congress was the Duke of Tetuan, a Spanish nobleman descended from the O'Donnell family who had fled Ireland in the 1607 as part of the Flight of the Earls. His position was purely symbolic, he had little English and took no meaningful part in proceedings.

²³ Hughes started working for the Government of Alberta in London in 1913. There she joined the Gaelic League, learned Irish and immersed herself in Irish cultural life in the city. For a full discussion on Hughes see: Padraig O'Siadhail, *Katherine Hughes: A Life and a Journey*, (Newcastle, Ontario: Penumbra Press, 2014). See also Dictionary of Canadian Biography at http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hughes_katherine_angelina_15E.html accessed 03/07/2017.

Katherine Hughes was also a journalist for a number of Canadian newspapers and published a number of books including, Katherine Hughes, *Ireland*, (New York: Donnelly Press, 1918) and Katherine Hughes, *English Atrocities in Ireland. A Compilation of Facts from Court and Press Records*. (New York, Friends of Irish Freedom, 1920).

²⁴ Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Katherine Hughes entry quotes an attendance of 25,000 at the event, accessed 03/07/2017. She subsequently travelled to Australia and New Zealand setting up an Irish League in both territories.

demonstrates that ‘Miss Hughes arrived in September [1921] and the entire business of organising the Conference was transferred to her office in Paris’.²⁵

The organisation of the Paris Congress had been somewhat overtaken by the political divisions emerging in Dublin, namely those for or against the proposed Treaty between Ireland and Great Britain, signed in December, 1921. The Irish government tried to manage and control any potential flashpoints for the Congress by focusing the agenda on cultural elements, and by trying to neutralise any conflict before the event began. This was particularly evident in their approach to selecting Irish political participants. Culture, economics and establishing an Irish diaspora world body in itself were principally non-contentious, yet problems arose when the aims and control of this body were being decided. The Treaty and the acrimonious exchanges in the Dáil divided what had been a united Sinn Féin Party with common national and international political objectives. Despite growing tensions, the Cabinet decided to send a delegation to the Irish Race Congress in Paris, stating it should represent the Irish people, not any particular party. The Government (Pro-Treaty) nominated five people and asked De Valera, the anti-treaty leader who had resigned from government, to nominate five others, all to be part of a joint delegation.²⁶ George Gavan Duffy, as Minister for Foreign Affairs wrote to De Valera on 12th January. He explained, that the IRC was ‘mainly of a cultural and artistic character’ and he thought that it was wise ‘to send a delegation representing Ireland [that would] avoid party politics’ and would ‘represent fairly the two parties [sides] in An Dáil’.²⁷

²⁵ Fine Ghaedheal, *Imíeácta Aonaíge na n-Gaeðeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922). VI.

²⁶ UCD archives, Papers of Desmond and Mabel FitzGerald P80 hereafter referred to as UCD-FitzGerald. P80/704 Letter dated 12th Jan. 1922 from George Gavan Duffy, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to de Valera inviting him to nominate four Congress delegates. At this stage de Valera had resigned as President because the Dáil approved the Treaty and he was essentially leader of the oppositional anti-Treaty side.

²⁷ Ibid.

In practice there was an anti-Treaty delegation led by Eamon de Valera and a pro-Treaty delegation led by Eoin Mac Neill.²⁸ As Duffy's letter made clear, all official Irish delegates were designated to attend on the understanding that party politics were avoided. However, as it transpired politics dominated much of the discussion and the majority of the Congress attendees were opposed to the Treaty. This was one of the last times both sides of the treaty divide were engaged in direct discussion before the end of the Civil War in Ireland. In Paris both sides compromised and realised 'that Paris was not the place to air domestic Irish political grievances' so despite much political rancour during the Congress debates, 'the unity of the Irish Race convention was preserved'.²⁹

The World Congress of the Irish Race, also known by its Gaelic title – Aonach na nGaedheal, was opened in the Salle des Fêtes of the Hotel Continental by the Irish envoy to Paris, Sean T. O'Kelly - as planned - on the 21st January, 1922 (figures 11, 12). The Paris Conference, organised at a time of war was now taking place in a time of relative peace. Conceived when the objective had been to secure independence, the conference had the misfortune to convene in a period of high tension just after the Treaty had been signed.³⁰ About 250³¹ people including about 100 official delegates, each representing their national organisations, attended from various parts of the world including Spain, Scotland, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, England, Italy, Java, Newfoundland, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States.³² The Irish delegation included three future

²⁸ Official attendees on the pro-Treaty side were Eoin MacNeill, Michael Hayes, Larry O'Neill, Douglas Hyde and Diarmuid Coffey and anti-Treaty were Eamon De Valera, Countess Markievicz, Mary McSwiney, Donal O'Callaghan and Harry Boland.

²⁹ Dermot Keogh, "The Treaty Split and the Paris Irish Race Convention". *Études Irlandaises*, 1987, No. 2, Vol 12, 165-170. 170.

³⁰ Gerard Keown, "The Irish Race Conference, 1922, Reconsidered" in *Irish Historical Studies*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 32, No. 127 (May, 2001). 376.

³¹ The most accurate figures are the daily activity reports in the diplomatic archives in Nantes. Estimates for attendances at each session, ranges from 150 to 250. Fine Ghaedheal, *Imíeácta Aonaíge na n-Gaedheal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922) – lists 98 official delegates. 98 people also signed a diary on the Monday - in the NLI Brennan papers, others joined later that day and during the week.

³² NLI, Diarmid Coffey, Coffey & Chenevix Trench Papers, MS 46,312 /2 "Minutes of the World Congress of the Irish Race held at Paris during the week ending January 28th 1922" (20pp), [January 1922]. See also

Irish Presidents.³³ Some Canadians and about fifty-five American invited delegates did not attend because they believed that the division over the treaty in Ireland would nullify the Congress. However, when they became aware that Irish representatives from both sides of the treaty divide were in attendance many sent telegrams of support for the Congress and pledged future co-operation in the 'demand for Ireland's full national rights'.³⁴

2.2.2 French political response.

There were two French delegates in attendance and both of these were involved with the Breton separatist movement, including Robert Bengnay, who used the alias O'Benkett – in an effort at gaelicising his name. He had attempted to establish a Sinn Féin Organization in Brittany, with branches in Angers, Brest, and Rennes, with the aim of pressuring the French government to recognize the Irish Republic. It recorded thirty members by April 1920.³⁵ However, the Sinn Féin executive in Dublin ordered Bengnay to cease his activities, stating that he had not been given permission to represent Sinn Féin in France. The second French delegate was Yves-Marie Goblet (1881-1955).³⁶ Goblet was an economist, university professor, political geographer and journalist, born in 1881 in Maine-et-Loire and who died in Paris in 1955. He studied and published on the ancient and contemporary economic history of Ireland.³⁷ Goblet's extensive papers in the BNF holds items relating to the Irish revolutionary period and some material relating to the 1922 Irish

Fine Ghaedheal, *Imíeácta Aonaíge na n-Gaedeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922). 19-22. Delegates had voting rights.

³³ The future Presidents were Douglas Hyde, Sean T. O'Kelly and Eamon de Valera.

³⁴ Ibid. Fine Ghaedheal, *Imíeácta Aonaíge na n-Gaedeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922*.

³⁵ Justin Dolan Stover, "La Bretagne et l'Insurrection de Plaquais 1916", *En Envoy*, revue d'histoire contemporaine en Bretagne, No 7, winter 2016. Available as a pdf at http://enenvoy.fr/eeo_revue/numero_7/brittany_and_the_1916_easter_rising.html accessed 03/07/2017.

³⁶ For details of Goblet see BnF at http://data.bnf.fr/12360567/yves-marie_goblet/ access 03/07/17. He was involved in the Breton regionalist movement and used the pseudonyms Yann Morvran, Louis-Jean-Jacques Goblet and Louis Tréguiz. He taught at the Inter-Allied School of Higher Social Studies, focusing on 'the contemporary Celtic Renaissance', in which he addresses the historical, economic, social and cultural aspects of the 'five Celtic nations'. He was secretary general of the Celtic Club which organized "pan Celtic dinners", including annual banquets in honour St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland.

³⁷ Including as Louis Tréguiz [pseudoname], *L'Irlande dans la crise universelle*, (Paris: Alcan, 1918) and Yves-Marie Goblet, *Le mouvement littéraire en Irlande*, (S.I. 1924).

Race Congress, and reports on various Celtic Congresses that took place between 1917 and 1920.³⁸ At these congresses he was involved in academic exchanges regarding the Irish language and theatre with Irish participants and contributors, such as the writers Douglas Hyde and Lennox Robinson, establishing cultural networks that continued in Paris.³⁹

The Irish delegates in Paris entertained and engaged with a range of European-based Irish scholars. The pro-treaty delegation ‘entertained eminent Celtic and allied studies scholars’ from various countries to dinner on Saturday, 28th January, 1922.⁴⁰ The pro-treaty group also met and engaged with representatives from the International Labour Branch of the League of Nations, who would prove useful in supporting the Free State’s application to join in 1923.⁴¹

The French diplomatic archives file, show that the French were monitoring progress of the event, its planning and organisation in Dublin and Paris. French public officials were instructed not to accept any invitations to attend the Congress.⁴² Venues booked for the various events and delegates attending were recorded with their personal details by French agencies.⁴³ Documents record a request for the export of the art works for the art exhibition.⁴⁴ The French embassy in Dublin informed Paris when delegates departed Ireland and Paris reported back on their arrival, some were followed after arriving in France. The Dublin despatches were interspersed with commentary on the political events

³⁸ Celtic Congress, 1917 in Birkenhead, 1918 in Neath, 1920 in Edinburgh and 1921 in the Isle-of-Man. He also had publications by the main Congress organiser, Katherine Hughes

³⁹ For example, in 1921 Goblet delivered a lecture, “Modern Celtic Studies in Paris”, Hyde on “Some Traits Common to the Celts in the Middle Ages” and Robinson on “The Irish Theatre”, all in *Transactions of the Celtic Congress, 1921*. (Swansea: Beili Glas, 1923). 39, 69, 160.

⁴⁰ UCD-FitzGerald. P80/703 Report on the Irish Race Conference in Paris submitted by Diarmuid Coffey. These are listed as ‘Mr Meillet, Joseph Loth, Ferdinand Lot, Vendrics, Goblet, Hurbert and Sommerfelt.’ Separately they met Professor Marstranlor.

⁴¹ Mr. Albert Thomas, first Director-General of the International Labour Organization, 1919-1932 and Edward Phelan its secretary.

The pro-Treaty group had an audience with the French President, Raymond Poincaré on 30th Jan, 1922.

⁴² Nantes, 143-2. Note pour [for] Monsieur De Peretti De La Rocca [Director of Political Affairs in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs], unsigned, dated 21st Jan. 1922.

⁴³ Nantes, 119, 120.

⁴⁴ Nantes, 125-2.

unfolding in Ireland.⁴⁵ Alongside the concern of the French authorities with the involvement of the French delegates who were Breton separatists, they were also concerned with the possibility of a strong anti-British demonstration emanating from the event ‘on our territory’.⁴⁶ The French embassy in London kept the British authorities informed – the British Government told the French that they were ‘officially ignoring it [the Race Congress]’.⁴⁷ This correspondence shows that the French authorities were only willing to allow the event proceed on the basis that it was ‘essential to obtain promoters serious guarantees as to its exclusively artistic and charitable ends’.⁴⁸ Usefully the file also contains a daily activity report on the Congress.

2.2.3 The Congress agenda and venues in Paris.

The agenda for the IRC was devised by Katherine Hughes, Organising Secretary with modifications by the Dáil delegates before the conference. The final schedule is detailed in Appendix 3.⁴⁹ There were some further modifications to the agenda such as the extension of Congress sessions over five days including, Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, and the art exhibition running for four rather than three weeks.⁵⁰ The main business of the Congress Programme was the establishment of the new diaspora organisation – which was called - Fine Ghaedheal (translated family of the Gael). De Valera was elected President of Fine Ghaedheal, as he had the support of the organisers and the majority of the delegates.⁵¹ There were reports of new anti-treaty delegates arriving during the week from Dublin and

⁴⁵ Nantes, 113-117.

⁴⁶ Nantes, 125-2.

⁴⁷ Nantes, 125.

⁴⁸ Nantes, 125-2.

⁴⁹ The agenda is compiled from these sources: UCD-FitzGerald. P80/703 and NAI DFA ES Box 11 File 77. Diarmuid Coffey, Michael Hayes, Douglas Hyde and Eoin MacNeill, *Report on the Irish Race Conference in Paris*, Feb 1922. <http://www.difp.ie/docs/1922/Irish-Race-Convention-Paris/239.htm> accessed 16/11/2016 which differs slightly from Fine Ghaedheal, *Imieácta Aonaíge na n-Gaedeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922), which is more accurate and agrees with Nantes 155, 170-181.

⁵⁰ The original agenda envisaged the congress finishing after the Friday morning session.

⁵¹ Nantes, 120 states both Thomas Hughes Kelly and Katherine Hughes were anti-Treaty and supported De Valera.

See also UCD-FitzGerald. P80/705. Desmond Fitzgerald’s report on the Congress.

London, further securing De Valera's majority.⁵² The purpose of this newly proposed worldwide organisation was to represent and communicate with Irish abroad and to organise a new congress in Dublin in 1925. Individual country diaspora organisations would become members and pay subscriptions. Its objectives were stated as:

- To assist the people of Ireland to attain to the full their national ideals, political, cultural and economic, and to secure for Ireland her rightful place among the free nations of the earth.
- To foster among the people of the Irish Race throughout the world a knowledge of the Irish language, literature, history and general culture.
- To promote the commerce, trade and industries of Ireland.⁵³

Of interest is the fact that the French reports fail to capture the subtleties of the politicised wording being proposed by both pro- and anti-treaty delegates on the role of the world organisation. This centred on the pro-treaty delegates who proposed 'national ideals' and opposed the anti-treaty delegates who insisted on inserting the word 'full' – the word 'full' being interpreted as support for the anti-treaty republican party.⁵⁴ Indeed with hindsight the squabbling over the wording was only a platform to contest the control of the organisation. Both sides saw advantages to controlling the venture, even though the organisation floundered and was lost sight of in the ensuing Civil War.⁵⁵

On the first Sunday of the week of the Congress, some of the anti-treaty delegates toured Paris in three cars, each bearing the Irish tri-colour flag.⁵⁶ The Parisian Prefecture of the Police was instructed to keep a strong but discrete eye on the event.⁵⁷ They visited places described in the agenda as 'of Irish interest'⁵⁸ including; La Bastille – the scene of the

⁵² UCD-FitzGerald. P80/704. Eoin McNeill's report on the Congress dated 2/2/1922.

⁵³ NLI. Ceannt and O'Brennan Papers, 1851-1953. *Report by a committee into the possible granting of a loan towards the establishment of "Fine Ghaedhail"*, [c. 1922].

⁵⁴ Nantes 174, 175. Keown, "The Irish Race Conference, 1922, Reconsidered". 369,370.

⁵⁵ Keown, "The Irish Race Conference, 1922, Reconsidered". 372. The Dáil would only finance *Fine Ghaedheal* on the condition that it could appoint a member to its executive, a condition that was unacceptable to de Valera.

⁵⁶ Nantes 171, contains a report from the Interior Ministry on the tour.

⁵⁷ Nantes 143 (page 2).

⁵⁸ According to the Nantes Diplomatic archives (Nantes 171); they visited La Bastille, Notre-Dame, the Pantheon, the Irish College, the chapel of the former Convent of the Irish, 15 Rue des Carmes, St Joseph's church and postponed visiting Montmartre cemetery.

popular uprising which overthrew a regime seen as tyrannical, leading to the establishment of a republic and which resonated with the theme of the Race Congress. A number of religious sites were visited - symbolic of the Catholic religion that both Ireland and France shared. The Pantheon was also visited – honouring the French people and nation, and the Irish College based nearby – at this location De Valera made a speech to the students in which he stated that ‘he hoped they would all come back good republicans’.⁵⁹ This was cited later in the Dáil enquiry on the Congress, and viewed as De Valera politicising the event. A trip was organised to Montmartre cemetery to visit the grave of an Irish 1798 soldier Miles Byrne who also fought for Napoleon.⁶⁰ In another public show of solidarity with France, De Valera and other delegates, laid a wreath at the base of the Arc De Triomphe at the tomb of the unknown French soldier.⁶¹ The accompanying inscription was in Irish and French and the event, popular with Parisians, was witnessed by a large crowd.⁶²

Though no international State had officially recognised Ireland, this expedition through the city streets of Paris was presented as an official tour by a European State – signified by the cars, the flags and the locations.

The main venue for the Race Congress was the Salle de Fêtes in the Continental Hotel. It was opened in 1878, and in 1922 it was still the largest, and arguably, the most luxurious hotel in Paris, occupying a whole block, facing the Tuileries Gardens, with stunning views

⁵⁹ The Irish College in Paris was an important Roman Catholic educational establishment for Irish students established in the late 16th Century. It moved to its permanent home on rue des Irlandais in 1775. It is now the Irish cultural centre, the Centre Culturel Irlandais.

⁶⁰ Miles Byrne was born in Monaseed, Co. Wicklow, on 20 March 1780, joined the Society of United Irishmen in 1797. Some newspapers reported that this visit took place as planned, but the French Diplomatic archive said they ran out of time. Other papers concur with these archives reporting the event taking place the following week-end.

⁶¹ Anon. “Many Paris Functions”, *Cork Examiner*, 20th Jan, 1922. 5. This event was also covered positively in the French press for example see, Anon. “Un Hommage des Irlandais au Soldat Inconnu”, *Le Matin*, 30th Jan, 1922. 5. Also “L’hommage des Irlandais au Soldat inconnu”, *Le Rappel*, 30th Jan, 1922. 2.

⁶² The inscription was reported in the press as ‘A Tribute to the unknown soldier of France, from delegates to the Irish Race Congress from Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, South Africa, and other parts of the globe, among whose compatriots the unknown has found many comrades in the Great War 1914:18’. See “Many Paris Functions” in *Cork Examiner*, 30th Jan. 1922. 5.

of the Eiffel Tower. The organiser's administrative offices were in the Grand Hotel, Boulevard des Capucines around the corner from the conference site, off Place Vendôme.⁶³ Occupying a triangular block, it was built in 1862, and in 1922 would have been in competition with the Hotel Continental over which was the most luxurious – many of the attendees also stayed here. Salle Hoche, Avenue Hoche, which runs towards the l'Arc de Triomphe, was the venue for performances of Irish plays on the Friday night and these were followed by a Grand Ball in the same venue. This was another opulent venue, set in a former mansion. The opening reception was held in the Palais D'Orsay hotel, now part of the museum. The final Parisian venue was the Galeries Barbazanges, 109 Rue du Faubourg St Honoré, a large well-known gallery that exhibited contemporary art between 1911 and 1928 which was used for the exhibition of Irish Art which is discussed later.⁶⁴

The congress and exhibition were held in Paris because the nascent Irish State wanted to showcase Ireland's difficulty on an international stage – in a major European capital – and to place their quest for self-determination in a worldwide context. As noted by delegates at an earlier local Irish Race convention, 'the Irish question [is an] international one and not a mere matter of internal English politics'.⁶⁵ The diaspora were being used to bring international pressure, and press reports and propaganda bulletins were issued abroad. The French version of the Irish diaspora propaganda newsletter published as, *Bulletin Irlandais* (issue 138) in Paris just before the Congress on the 17th January 1922 cites the reason for choosing Paris as; 'The Irish Congress chose Paris as a meeting place because the capital of France is at the same time the capital of the civilized world and the centre of Celtic civilization'.⁶⁶ The Republican Government had envoys in Paris since early 1919, when

⁶³ Nantes, 119. The organisers occupied rooms 21, 23, 25 and 187.

⁶⁴ Galeries Barbazanges, a 400 sq. metre space showed the work of avant-garde artists including Picasso, Modigliani, Gauguin, Matisse, Chagall and Dufy.

⁶⁵ NLI. MS 17,650/5/2. Joseph McGarrity Papers, 1789-1971. Letter from the delegates of the Irish Race Convention to the President and Congress of the United States. May, 1918.

⁶⁶ BnF – MFILM JO-67596, 1921/02/03 (N10) – 1925/05/15 (N194), *Bulletin Irlandais*, no. 138, 17th January, 1922.

Sean T. O’Kelly and George Gavan Duffy were based there to lobby the First World War Peace Conference in Versailles for ‘Irish Freedom’ and ‘Irish Independence’.⁶⁷ As noted Catholicism provided another important connection between Ireland and France. Ireland had strong cultural links with the city from the 1800s, with Irish artists and writers basing themselves there for periods.⁶⁸ The Irish artist and designer Eileen Gray, would open her Paris shop in 1922 to showcase and sell her work on the same street that the Irish art exhibition took place, and James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses* was published by Shakespeare and Company in the city that same year.⁶⁹ The quality and scale of the venues used by the Irish Race Congress made a visible statement of aspirational prosperity, pride and ambition. It projected the confidence of the new State as an independent nation on a world stage - and setting an independent Ireland in the heart Europe. Siting the Congress in Paris, to persuade France and other international countries – through showcasing Irish culture, values and ideas - to support their ideals for national sovereignty, was also an early deployment of public and cultural diplomacy by the emerging State.

2.2.4 The Cultural Programme.

In addition to the art exhibition, it was intended to have a full cultural program of Irish music and theatre on show ‘under the auspices of the Minister of Fine Arts’.⁷⁰

Supplementing these displays were ten lectures delivered during the week of the conference by ‘eminent Irish authorities’, recognised experts on the Irish language, literature, culture, music, history, industries, economic, athletics, art industries and visual

Le Congrès Irlandais a choisi Paris comme lieu de réunion, parce que la capitale de la France est en même temps la capitale du monde civilisé, et le centre de la civilisation celtique.

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Quai François Mauriac, holds a substantial but incomplete run of the *Bulletin Irlandais*. It holds editions starting from 3rd February, 1921 to the 20th July, 1922 and a second series from 12th August, 1924 to 15th May, 1925.

⁶⁷ See Laurence Ginnell, *The Irish Republic Why? Official Statement Prepared for submission to the Peace Conference*. (New York: The Friends of Irish Freedom, 1919). Ireland unsuccessfully petitioned the Peace Conference, 1919-20 for self-determination.

⁶⁸ Artists such as Mainie Jellett, Evie Hone and Paul and Grace Henry and writers such as Oscar Wilde, John Millington Synge and James Joyce.

⁶⁹ Eileen Gray opened her shop Jean Désert, at 217 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, Paris, in 1922.

⁷⁰ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter Plunkett to Kelly, 28th Nov, 1921.

art.⁷¹ Each speaker who travelled specifically to deliver a paper was paid £40 expenses by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs.⁷² These were ‘valuable and instructive contributions towards the entertainment of the delegates.’⁷³ Dr. Eoin MacNeill spoke on Irish history and EJ O’Riordan of the Irish Industrial Development Association gave a lecture on the ‘General Economic situation’ in Ireland.⁷⁴ This was followed and supported by contributions on Irish trade and economics, and a proposal ‘for the appointment of a National Electric Board to harness water power and submit proposal to the Government’ was approved.⁷⁵ Art O’Connor⁷⁶ spoke on Irish Agriculture. J.J. Walsh’s⁷⁷ paper on Irish athletics and the Olympic Games was taken as read, due to time constraints, and briefly discussed. The French diplomatic archives record Walsh inviting the French press to a briefing, at which, he informed them that the Aonach Tailteann, the Irish Race Olympics, would take place in Dublin, in August 1922.⁷⁸ The press release is strong on aspirations and rhetoric, stating that the games would put ‘Ireland in its big outstanding position in the World’s athletic Arena’, ‘that the World may know that physically the Irish are the superiors of all men’ and that they would ‘sustain that element of our civilisation epitomised in Cuchulan’.⁷⁹ Although Irish sporting domination would fail to materialise the exceptional expectations also extended to the cultural arena.

⁷¹ Anon. “Literature and Art”, *Freemans Journal*, 19th Jan, 1922. 3.

The speakers were Evelyn Gleeson, Jack Yeats, Douglas Hyde, W. B. Yeats, Rev. Dr. O’Connell, J.J. Walsh, Dr. Eoin MacNeill, Arthur Darley, E.J. O’Riordan and Art O’Connor.

⁷² NAI. DE/2/439. Irish Race Conference, Paris, France; letter from J Bolger, Department of Foreign Affairs, to Michael Collins enclosing statement on moneys paid out. 26th Apr 1922.

W. B. Yeats complained in a letter to Lady Gregory (15th Jan. 1922) ‘I am to get my expenses which means I suppose Railway Fare & a couple of days Hotel bill but not of course [for my wife] Georges’.

⁷³ Fine Ghaedheal, *Imieac̃ta Aonaige na n-Gaedeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922). Vii.

⁷⁴ Ibid. 112. MacNeill was a delegate so did not receive a speaker’s fee.

⁷⁵ This proposal was presented by Mr. Hall Skelton, a New Zealand delegate.

⁷⁶ O’Connor was Minister of Agriculture from 26 August 1921 to 9 January 1922, when he resigned his position after the Anglo-Irish Treaty was ratified.

⁷⁷ J.J. Walsh was Postmaster General at this time.

⁷⁸ Nantes. 179.

⁷⁹ NLI. MS 8429 /38 Art Ó Briain [Brien] Papers. “Tailteann Games or Irish Race Olympics” addressed “To the Delegates at the Irish Race Convention” signed by Seamus Breatnac T.D. [J.J. Walsh], Director of Athletics. 20th Jan. 1922. 2 pages.

Douglas Hyde, speaking on the Irish language, reviewed the work of the Gaelic League. The French diplomatic report on his contribution commented that he was humorous, well received by his audience and that he spoke ironically about the English attitude. He was conciliatory and urged ‘the Irish to forget the evil that has been done to them’.⁸⁰ All the presentations were nationalistic and in-tune with the leitmotif of the Congress in distinguishing Ireland from Britain, portraying the Irish as a gifted race steeped in an ancient history and possessing of a unique culture.

Jack Yeats’ paper on Irish Art was based on his contribution to a series of lectures that were printed by *Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail*.⁸¹ There were forty-eight Cumann lectures in six categories. Jack Yeats’ actual speech delivered in Paris entitled *Modern aspects of Irish art* was subsequently serialised in two issues of *Ár N-Éire* but it is heavily based on his paper for Green’s initiative.⁸² In his paper, Jack Yeats extolled nationalist sympathies claiming that ‘When painting takes its rightful place it will be in a free nation...And there is a country more ready than any other to lift painting into its rightful place, and that is Ireland, this land of ours’ and ‘If we all have a bold ambition for our country she will lead the world in every phase of truth’.⁸³ Yeats was ‘shy’ and this was the only lecture he ever delivered.⁸⁴ He was already a successful artist so what was his motivation to get up on stage and deliver his personal views? In view of the overall aims of the Congress it must be

⁸⁰ Nantes. 170. Hyde’s lecture was the only one commented upon in the French daily activity reports.

⁸¹ Jack B. Yeats, *Modern aspects of Irish Art*. (Dublin: Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail, 1922).

The Cumann was founded by Alice Stopford Green (1847-1929) in 1920 and it commissioned experts to produce a series of papers under various headings: economics, industry, social problems, biographical, historical and artistic. Alice Stopford Green was a writer, Irish historian and senator. These papers were to be read in Sinn Féin clubs, schools or to other groups throughout Ireland for ‘information’ and ‘education’. NLI. Ceannt and O’Brennan Papers, 1851-1953. MS 41,521 /2. Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail, contains a complete list of lectures ready ([Dublin], [c. 1921]) by Alice S. Green.

⁸² It was serialised in *Ár N-Éire*, *New Ireland*, Vol. IX, No. 11, 18th Feb, 1922 and Vol IX, No. 12, 25th Feb, 1922. These are in the Jack B. Yeats papers in the NGI and contain slight manual correction in Yeats’ hand. Brannigan erroneously cites the Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail publication as the actual speech and David Llyod publishes a different version in the *Field Day Review*, 1 2005. The *Ár N-Éire* version is accurate and authenticated by Yeats himself by his annotations.

⁸³ Jack B. Yeats, *Ár N-Éire*, *New Ireland*, Vol. IX, No. 11, 18th Feb, 1922 Vol IX, No. 12, 25th Feb, 1922. See also Jack B. Yeats, *Modern aspects of Irish Art*. (Dublin: Cumann Léigheacht an Phobail, 1922). 4,5.

⁸⁴ Hilary Pyle, *Jack B. Yeats: a biography*, (London: Routledge, 1970). 83.

considered that he undertook the task in support of his own republican views and to promote a national art.

Jack Yeats' talk was followed by the first of two evenings of Irish music, both took place in the Salle de Fetes, Hotel Continental. (See appendix 4 for full music programmes). The music programme was varied, consisting of Irish ballads, hymns and various airs played on a range of traditional Irish musical instruments, fiddle, flute, and whistle. One significant contemporary piece played both nights was the 'two String quartets, dedicated to the memory of Terence McSwiney', composed by an Irish American, Swan Hennessey, who was based in Paris.⁸⁵ McSwiney was god-father to Hennessey's son.⁸⁶ McSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, was imprisoned in London on numerous charges including of being in the possession of a cypher key to decode RIC messages and seditious documents that recognised the jurisdiction of Dáil Éireann. He died on hunger strike in October, 1920 in Brixton Prison, England in protest to the charges brought by the British authorities. His death was widely reported in the international media bringing the Irish political struggle to a worldwide audience. Along with the Easter Rising, McSwiney's death had become 'the definite political expression of early twentieth-century Ireland'.⁸⁷ McSwiney's sister Mary attended as one of de Valera's representatives at the Congress, made the references to her brother in music and art, which is discussed later, more poignant.

Arthur Darley (1873-1929), the chief organiser of the musical evenings, delivered the lecture on Irish music. He stated that Ireland never bowed to a conqueror and after centuries of suffering and persecution still 'gloriously preserved' her life and music and 'she will once more be the land of song'.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ TCD Manuscripts & Archives Research Library 10900/1/1/1-222. Arthur Warren Darley papers. These papers also contain the printed programmes for both evenings – 23rd and 25th Jan. 1922.

⁸⁶ Stated by Hennessey's granddaughter Brigitte – quoted by Marjorie Brennan: "Swan song for one of Cork's revolutionary heroes", in *Irish Examiner*, 31st Oct. 2016. 16.

⁸⁷ Paige Reynolds, *Modernism, Drama, and the Audience for Irish Spectacle*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2007). 116.

⁸⁸ TCD. 10900/1/1/1-222. Darley. 131.

W. B. Yeats' paper on Irish literature, 'Lyrics and Plays of Modern Ireland', spoke of Irish history being transformed in 1916 by lyric poets.⁸⁹ He detailed the Irish Literary Revival and he name-checked Lady Augusta Gregory, Padraic Colum, and James Stephens – and James Joyce.⁹⁰ Yeats stated one of his reasons for attending and delivering his lecture was that he wished 'to identify the Abbey with government propaganda'.⁹¹ His lecture covered the founding of the Abbey and listed dramatists associated with the group, including Lady Gregory and Lennox Robinson, and John M. Synge who he cited as Ireland's greatest playwright, validating them internationally by claiming 'all [were] well-known in London and the USA'.⁹² Yeats also made reference to a nationalist play he wrote with Lady Gregory, *Kathleen Ni Houlihan* published in 1902 and produced that year at the Abbey Theatre.⁹³ The play was 'often cited as a moment when ideas of romantic nationalism radicalised a generation of rebels who would end up in the GPO in 1916' by historians.⁹⁴ However, Yeats denied this suggestion in this lecture as he did in his late poem, *Man and the Echo* (1938).⁹⁵ Furthermore, Yeats defended/ justified Irish authors writing in English (as opposed to Irish), as being 'perfumed with an Irish idiom'.⁹⁶ He was identifying a

⁸⁹ UCD-FitzGerald. P80/706(5) and P80/706(6). Yeats IRC lecture. Summary in French, given by W B Yeats, to Desmond FitzGerald of Yeats' lecture to the Congress on the Irish Literary Revival.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

Joyce was in Paris at this time and Minister for Publicity, Desmond Fitzgerald T.D., used the opportunity when attending the Congress to visit his friend. Therefore Joyce was certainly aware of the event and exhibition. It is not known if he attended.

⁹¹ Kelly, John and Eric Domville, Warwick Gould, Ronald Schuchard, Deirdre Toomey et al. Eds. Yeats, W.B. *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Electronic Edition*. (Charlottesville: InteLex Corp. 2002). W. B. Yeats, Letter to Lady Gregory. 15th Jan. 1922 accessed on 17th Feb. 2020.

http://library.nlx.com.elib.tcd.ie/xtf/view?docId=yeats_c/yeats_c.00.xml;chunk.id=div.el.yeats.pmpreface.1;toc.depth=2;toc.id=div.el.yeats.pmpreface.1;hit.rank=0;brand=default

⁹² UCD-FitzGerald. P80/706(5) and P80/706(6). Yeats IRC lecture.

⁹³ It was proposed to perform *Kathleen Ni Houlihan* during the Race Congress, but W. B. Yeats was ill before the event, and did not respond to a performance permission request. See W. B. Yeats, letter to Lady Gregory. 15th Jan. 1922 in *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Electronic Edition*.

⁹⁴ P.J. Matthews. "Literature and 1916", accessed at <http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/articles/literature-and-1916> on 29/06/17.

⁹⁵ In W.B. Yeats, *Last Poems and Two Plays*, (Dublin: Cuala Press, 1939).

⁹⁶ UCD-FitzGerald. P80/706(5) and P80/706(6). Other Irish writers, such as, Joyce, Synge, Beckett also expressed themselves dis-satisfied writing in the coloniser's language, English. This is discussed later in this chapter and is compared to Jack Yeats defining a new Irish aesthetic language in his prints and art. W.B. Yeats was referring to Hiberno-English, English using the syntax of the Irish language. Lady Gregory was the first to use this form in her 1902 translation *Cuchulain of Muirthemne*, which WB Yeats described in the introduction as 'the greatest book ever to have come out of Ireland in my time'. This unique dialect influenced John M. Synge and he used it extensively in his plays.

poetic dialect only discernible in Irish writers. The French interior reports had noted their surprise that all the proceedings were in English.⁹⁷

Evelyn Gleeson (1855-1944), founder of the Dun Emer Guild art industries, delivered the lecture on Irish Arts and Crafts. The texts of various lectures she delivered in the 1920s are available in the Gleeson papers in TCD's Manuscript library and these reveal her nationalistic outlook.⁹⁸ She espoused the value of handmade items and the educational value of teaching people the skills required. She argued that they lend beauty to 'our dwellings and things of daily use'.⁹⁹ She opined that the arts and crafts must be refreshed 'after generations of enforced ignorance and grinding poverty' and the creations 'must be Gaelic or nothing'.¹⁰⁰ Noting also that 'nations are rated by their knowledge and cultivation of art, we must teach our children ... and weave for Mother Eire a vesture worthy of her'.¹⁰¹ She linked Irish antiquity, Catholicism and craft in her aspiration for the emerging State.

On Friday, 27th January there was an evening of Irish theatre staged for the attendees. Two plays were performed, *The Rising of the Moon*¹⁰² (1907) by Lady Gregory and *The Riders to the Sea* (1903/4) by John Millington Synge.¹⁰³ The former is a short patriotic play, dealing with conflicting loyalties in Anglo-Irish relations; Synge's work is also a one-act play, a tragedy set on one of Aran Islands (Inis Meáin) in the West of Ireland. Both plays were written in English and examples of what W.B. Yeats described, as 'perfumed with an Irish idiom', the play employs a dialect derived from the rural West where people spoke a form of English with sentences constructed in the structure of the Irish language. Synge's

⁹⁷ Nantes, 175.

⁹⁸ TCD MS 10676. Papers of Evelyn Gleeson and the Dun Emer Guild. Articles and lectures by: 10676/5. Papers of Evelyn Gleeson (1855-1944), founder of the Dun Emer Guild.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² *The Rising of the Moon*, is also the title of a patriotic Irish ballad about the 1798 Irish Rebellion that recounts a battle between the United Irishmen and the English Army, by John Keegan Casey (1846-70).

¹⁰³ UCD-FitzGerald. P80/703, copy of agenda prepared by Miss Hughes.

play deals with the island's inhabitants struggle against the brutality of the sea. They were performed by an amateur Irish drama group based in Paris and billed as the 'Dramatic Section of the Irish Club of Paris'.¹⁰⁴

2.2.5 Propaganda and the Art Exhibition.

Congress organisers wrote to Gerard Noel Count Plunkett, Minister for Fine Art in Dáil Eireann,¹⁰⁵ on 2nd November 1921, exploring the possibility of holding an art exhibition in association with the event.¹⁰⁶ The then President of Dáil Eireann (Éamon de Valera) and then Minister for Foreign Affairs (Arthur Griffith), had expressed their wish to the Congress organisers, to have an art exhibition in tandem with the Congress.¹⁰⁷ The show, regarded as 'highly important as propaganda', secured the use of Galeries Barbazanges on Rue du Faubourg St Honoré.¹⁰⁸ Correspondence from Plunkett to De Valera clearly shows that they had previously discussed the exhibition and Plunkett was seeking approval for a budget to fund the show.¹⁰⁹ Plunkett concurs with the organisers on the value of the exhibition and stated 'I know its value for propaganda and I should like the Irish worker to gain some profit by it'.¹¹⁰ For this event, the Free State Government was determined that the display of culture and in particular the visual art exhibition would serve as a significant political component, in its international claim to self-determination and political independence. The art exhibition and other events would echo the ambitions of the foreign

¹⁰⁴ UCD-FitzGerald. P80/703, copy of agenda prepared by Miss Hughes. See also, Anon. "Le congrés mondial irlandais", *Le Radical*, 28th Jan, 1922. 2.

¹⁰⁵ After uncontested re-election to the second Dáil, de Valera moved Plunkett from Foreign Minister to the Fine Arts portfolio (outside of Cabinet) on 26th August 1921. Following Dáil approval for the Treaty to which he was opposed, he resigned his portfolio on the 9th Jan, 1922. The Ministry was then abolished and the small Department of Arts merged with the Department of Education. A separate ministry with responsibility for art and culture was only re-established in 1993.

¹⁰⁶ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter from Katherine Angelina Hughes to George Noble Plunkett, 2nd Nov, 1921.

¹⁰⁷ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Draft letter from Plunkett to De Valera, dated 26th Nov, 1921. De Valera and Griffith were in these roles while the Congress was being planned in 1921.

¹⁰⁸ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter from Thomas Hughes Kelly to George Noble Plunkett, 23rd Nov, 1921.

¹⁰⁹ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Draft letter from Plunkett to De Valera, dated 26th Nov, 1921.

¹¹⁰ Ibid

missions and the Irish Race congresses in their efforts to present the case for Irish people as an independent race.

Exhibit items suggested in correspondence between Plunkett and Thomas Hughes Kelly were,

‘some Laverys, Augustus John’s portraits of the President, Arthur Griffith, Mr. Collins, Dr. ?. Some things from Gerald Kelly and other men. Some things from the Municipal Gallery in Dublin, some Hones etc. I can get some good sculpture. I will get what I want from the Arts and Crafts exhibition – I wrote to Sir John O’Connell a propos this...I am trying to get some Dublin silver – what I want very much is some replicas of the gold ornaments and of the early metalwork and we can present these to some museum here after the exhibition. I can get some fine bindings and other interesting work. Mr. Harry Clarkes work would be admired here...’¹¹¹

Art O’Brien in London was also in communication with Kelly over exhibits and he was particularly keen to have Lavery’s ‘Pictures of modern Irish history’ including ‘the portraits of President De Valera, the five Delegates, Archbishop Mannix, and the pictures of Terence McSwiney’s funeral, the *Blessing of the Colours*, etc’.¹¹² Lavery was enthusiastic in his response and also set about enlisting other artists to show their work.¹¹³ In the midst of the Dáil Éireann split, consideration was given to abandoning the conference and Plunkett wrote to Kelly informing him that, ‘that the proposed art exhibition in Paris is out of the question under present circumstances’.¹¹⁴ However, despite the fervent disagreements over the Treaty, the opposing sides both agreed that the event

¹¹¹ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter Kelly to Plunkett, 23rd Nov, 1921.

¹¹² NLI. MS 8461 34. Art Ó Briain papers, c.1900-c.1945. Letter O’Brien to Lavery. 10th Dec. 1921. There was extensive correspondence between Kelly, O’Brien and Lavery concerning exhibiting at the IRC – see NLI various O’Brien papers MS 8460/47, MS 8427/47 and MS 8461/34.

Archbishop Daniel Mannix (1864-1963) was born in Cork and was highly politicised and frequently came into conflict with both church and political authorities for his republican and anti-British sentiment. He was President of St. Patricks College, Maynooth until 1912 after which he served as archbishop to Melbourne, Australia for 46 years. His Catholicism and pro-Irish Independence stance meant he was a frequent subject for Irish artists.

¹¹³ He canvassed William Orpen, William Leech, Charles Shannon and Ambrose MacEvoy.

¹¹⁴ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter Plunkett to Kelly, December 3, 1921. Two days after the Dáil passed the Treaty, on the 9th Jan. 1922, De Valera and other anti-Treaty ministers, including Plunkett, resigned their portfolios. Griffith became President. Plunkett was not replaced.

should go ahead in Paris, in any event preparations were so far advanced for the Congress that it was impossible to cancel official participation.¹¹⁵

The opening of an exhibition of Irish visual art and arts and crafts at the Galeries Barbazanges on Saturday, 28th January 1922 was the major cultural event of the Congress. This show remained open to the public for one month and cost one third of the budget of the entire event at approximately £2,000.¹¹⁶ Ninety four, mostly contemporary Irish artists, craftspeople and individual societies from all four provinces showed two hundred and eighty one exhibits.¹¹⁷ Divided into over twenty different categories the show included, oil painting, sculpture, fine art prints, pottery, enamels, designs, stained glass, watercolours, illuminations, book bindings, printing and textiles.¹¹⁸ The display was a bold and impressive statement regarding the range, scale and quality of the contemporary visual art and artistic industries being produced. The works on display were owned and lent by the artists and private owners, none were from public collections. It is a testament to the quality of the art works that many are now held in public galleries.¹¹⁹

An American delegate speaking at the Congress, denounced in robust language ‘the falsehoods of British propaganda’ depicting Irish people unfavourably in newspapers and

¹¹⁵ NLI. MS 8461 /34. Art O’Brien papers. “Report from Art O’Brien to S.C I.S.D.L. [on upcoming Irish Race Congress]”, cites both O’Brien and De Valera saying ‘whatever the outcome of the present negotiations may be, the plans for the World Conference should go ahead’.

O’Brien wrote to Kelly in Dec. 1921 that any dispute should not ‘interfere with the programme and the preparation of the World Conference’ in NLI. MS 8460/47. Art Ó Briain papers. Letter dated 10th Dec, 1921. Art O’Brien (he also used Ó Briain) was Dáil Éireann’s first envoy to London. He was honorary secretary of the Gaelic League in London and leader of the small Sinn Féin organisation in Britain. His artistic temperament and wealth allowed him to become a patron of many London-Irish cultural events. O’Brien played a major role in the Irish Self Determination League of Great Britain. See NLI entry, “Introduction Art Ó Briain: a biography” in National Library of Ireland, Collection List No. 150, Art Ó Briain Papers, accessed at https://www.nli.ie/pdfs/mss%20lists/150_OBriain.pdf on 16th Jan. 2020.

¹¹⁶ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Draft letter from Plunkett to De Valera, dated 26th Nov, 1921.

¹¹⁷ When this exhibition was conceived Ireland was not partitioned.

¹¹⁸ *Exposition D’art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue] : Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922.* (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922).

There are two versions of the Art exhibition catalogue, the earlier catalogue in the BnF and the Art Decoratif show that apart from correcting errors the updated catalogue adds 77 exhibits.

¹¹⁹ Art works exhibited by William Conor, Grace Henry, Paul Henry, Nathaniel Hone, Sean Keating, John Lavery, William Leech, Countess Markievicz, Dermot O’Brien, Sarah Purser, Patrick Tuohy, Charles Shannon, Estella Solomons, Leo Whelan, Jack Yeats, John Hughes, Albert Power, Oliver Sheppard exhibited in the exhibition are now in public collections.

books and that ‘every effort should be made to show that the Irish were not the degraded race portrayed by the English’.¹²⁰ The Irish rebel, politician and artist Countess Markievicz,¹²¹ ‘in a stirring patriotic speech ... referred to the hideous caricatures of Irish people by Cruickshank and other artists’ who represent them as apes and baboons while English people are shown as heroes and angels in the same pictures.¹²²

For example, in the 19th century the bulk of depictions of Irish peasantry, ‘whether by native-born or foreign artists, portrayed’ a feckless society.¹²³ Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest* is often read as a postcolonial text, where Prospero and his daughter occupy Caliban’s island, teach him their language and force him into servitude. He is the only human inhabitant of the island that is ‘not honour’d with a human shape’.¹²⁴ This portrayal of the Irish is exemplified by English artist, John Tenniel’s (1820-1914) appropriation of *The Tempest* for a cartoon on colonial Ireland, titled ‘*The Irish Tempest*’ (1870s) (figure 13). Tenniel’s grotesque cartoon depicts a scene from the Shakespearian play where the part of Caliban is played by a horrific, violent and simian Irishman, ‘Rory of the Hills’.¹²⁵ Rory threatens violence on Ireland represented by Hibernia who is protected by England, in the form of Gladstone transformed into a magical Prospero. His wand is titled ‘the Irish Land Bills [1870]’, an act which would control the peasantry and benefit the landlord. Rory also wears a belt with ‘ultra-montane’ emblazoned on it – advocating supreme papal authority. The assertion being made by the cartoon is that Ireland is violent, incapable of self-

¹²⁰ Anon. “Irish Race Congress”, in *Cork Examiner*, 25th Jan, 1922. 6.

¹²¹ Countess Markievicz, born Constance Gore Booth to a wealthy Irish family was an artist, politician and Irish revolutionary. She is best known for her role in the Irish Easter Rebellion of 1916. She studied art in London at the Slade School and in Paris.

¹²² Anon. “Irish Race Congress”, in *Cork Examiner*, 25th Jan, 1922. 6. In particular Markievicz urged ‘using cinema showing real Irish films as a means of counteracting this negative image’. See Perry L. Curtis Jr, *Apes and Angels. The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997, rev. ed.) for a discussion on the representation of Irish people in English periodicals and newspapers.

¹²³ Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, “Jack Yeats: ‘a pure and a mature expression of Irish nationalism in art’” in Yvonne Scott, ed. *Jack B. Yeats Old and New Departures*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008). 58.

¹²⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, play available online at <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/tempest/full.html>

¹²⁵ ‘Rory of the Hills’ is a character from a Charles Kickham poem of the same name, ‘The rough and ready roving boys, Like Rory of the Hill’.

government and reliant on a benevolent England to rule and protect the country from itself. While this cartoon now seems crude and offensive it was only one of a number of such images in papers and in art that presented the Irish as simian, drunken, aggressive and racially inferior to the English coloniser.

This othering of the Irish was still in existence at the time of the Congress when *The London Illustrated News* published an unflattering image of the Congress opening banquet of De Valera, Countess Markievicz, Mary McSwiney, Sean T. O’Kelly and others (figure 14).¹²⁶ This is the least flattering of over twenty contemporary press images sourced in various archives but principally in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and is in stark contrast with the image used in *Le Monde Illustré*, which shows a more professional group of delegates and politicians (figure 15).¹²⁷ The cultural program, and in particular the art exhibition which included six works by Markievicz, was a direct challenge to the previous stereotyping of the Irish in British media (figure 16).

Declan Kiberd and P.J. Matthews in their *Handbook of the Irish Revival* record how for the leaders of the Irish Revival ‘anything English was by definition un-Irish’ and anything of worth had a Gaelic equivalent.¹²⁸ The English Parliament, the Prime Minister, games of soccer and hockey and so on were correlated against the Dáil, Taoiseach, Gaelic football and hurling. Clearly then part of the intention of the exhibition at the Galeries Barbazanges was to differentiate Irish from English art. This was problematic for the visual arts as many leading Irish artists had trained in, were based in and were exhibiting in England. People in Ireland and England looked alike and some landscapes in both countries were similar.¹²⁹ In

¹²⁶ Photograph, *London Illustrated News*, 4th Feb. 1922. 141. It shows De Valera, other delegates and a child sitting in the Hotel D’Orsay in Paris behind a table with bottles of champagne. See, Billy Shortall, “Toast to Irish Diplomacy” in *Sunday Times*, (*Culture Magazine*) 15th Jul. 2018. 14, 15.

¹²⁷ Photograph, *Le Monde Illustré*, 28th Jan. 1922. 58.

¹²⁸ Declan Kiberd and PJ Matthews, *Handbook of the Irish Revival*, (Dublin: Abbey Theatre, 2015). 272, 273.

¹²⁹ In Irish art history the west of Ireland is regarded as unique. For a good discussion on this see Fionna Barber, *Art in Ireland since 1910*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 19-40.

these circumstances how was the ‘propaganda’ of the art exhibition to become a manifesto for Irishness?

2.2.6 The Art Exhibition Catalogue.

The exhibition catalogue included an essay entitled *The Irish School (École Irlandaise)* and was written by one of the leading French art critics of the time. The text affirmed the existence of a unique Irish school. Arsène Alexandre (1859-1937) was the art critic for *Le Figaro* and was credited with coining the art terms ‘pointillism’ and ‘*Rouen School*’.¹³⁰ The essay, and his related *Le Figaro* article referenced the ongoing political upheavals in Ireland and that despite ‘lacking bread and freedom’ Ireland never ‘lacked artistic talent or geniuses’.¹³¹ Alexandre had previously visited Ireland and name checks many places he visited from Killarney to Achill Island to the Giant’s Causeway before commenting that Ireland possess all the inspiration required for its artists.¹³² He describes the political paintings and portraits in the exhibition but he considers Ireland’s landscape as the primary source material for the *École Irlandaise*. He considers this landscape, ‘the flora, the shores, and the horizons’ as being considerably different to its English or Scottish equivalents, singling out Paul Henry’s six exhibited works in particular. The Irish landscape as exemplified by Paul Henry was well represented in the show (figure 17).¹³³ The essay states, that ‘this Irish School of art’ is proof of a separate independent race and ‘as the citizens reclaim their freedom the Irish school recovers its place in the European intellectual movement’.¹³⁴ As a renowned international art critic, Alexandre was a

¹³⁰ *Le Figaro* is the oldest daily morning French newspaper, founded in 1826. It is regarded as a ‘paper of record’.

¹³¹ Arsène Alexandre, “*École Irlandaise*” in *Exposition D’art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue] : Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). 5-10.

¹³² He adds that he had read Cardinal Perraud’s book on Ireland, had experienced ‘the exhilarating music of Augusta Holmes’ and he had been encouraged to go by ‘the poetess, prophetess and warrior’ Maud Gonne. Perraud wrote *Contemporary Ireland* in 1862. Augusta Holmes (1847-1903) was a French composer of Irish descent. Maud Gonne (1866-1953) was an Irish republican and actress who lived at times in Paris.

¹³³ Landscape works by Grace Henry, Eva Hamilton, Letitia Hamilton, Nathaniel Hone, Sean Keating, George Russell, Jack Yeats and others, were on view in the exhibition.

¹³⁴ Arsène Alexandre, “*École Irlandaise*” in *Exposition D’art Irlandais*, 1922. 10.

respected external expert voice, one that could validate the cultural integrity of an Irish nation. Individual artists were known to the critic before the show but he had not seen Irish artists as a group before, it was ‘only his first meeting with this unknown school’ and he looked forward to its progress and the contribution it would make to the world.¹³⁵ Jack Yeats, in his lecture to the Congress, echoed Alexandre call for the Irish School to use landscape as its primary source. ‘The false picture is most often the picture painted not from nature’, that cities were artificial compared to the ‘open country’ and that it was harder for artists living in the city.¹³⁶ Yeats own art evolved from a ‘descriptive art’ into a modern expressionist style in the mid-1920s and he painted both urban and rural scenes, but for now, in his lecture he promoted a traditional and rural idiom.¹³⁷

2.2.7 Irish Art and Sculpture.

Paintings exhibited included portraits of leading Irish political figures who challenged the union with Britain such as Eoin MacNeill by Sadhbh Trinseach (1891-1918) and Arthur Griffith, E. J. Duggan, Gavan Duffy, Michael Collins and Robert Barton, all by John Lavery, an artist that enjoyed a significant reputation in Britain (figure 18). These portraits were painted during the Treaty negotiations in London. Lavery approached the sitters through Art O’Brien and the arrangements were made by Erskine Childers, Secretary to Delegation.¹³⁸ The delegation thanked Lavery ‘warmly’ and were ‘glad’ to sit, they knew they were making history and wanted it recorded. Now in this political arena they and the realised State were on show to the world. Just as the ‘the role of Dáil Éireann was largely symbolic [and] its principal purpose was to assert the existence of a democratically-elected

¹³⁵ Arsène Alexandre, “La Vie Artistique, L’Ecole irlandaise á Paris”, *Le Figaro*, 27th Jan, 1922. 3.

¹³⁶ Jack B. Yeats, *Ár N-Éire*, *New Ireland*, Vol. IX, No. 11, 18th Feb, 1922. 172.

¹³⁷ Hilary Pyle, *Jack B. Yeats: a biography*, 127.

¹³⁸ Tate Britain archive. TGA 7245/220. John Lavery. Typed letter on Dáil Éireann paper, from Erskine Childers, Irish Delegation of Plenipotentiaries, London, regarding John Lavery’s offer to paint portraits of the Irish Delegation. 21st Nov. 1921.

This Tate archive entry coupled with extensive correspondence between Art O’Brien and Lavery in the NLI (MS 8,425/7 Art Ó Briain papers, c1900-c1945) gives a full account of how these portrait sittings were arranged, Lavery’s unhappiness with his earlier De Valera portrait and his desire to paint the signing of the agreement.

Irish Republic', exhibiting portraits of Irish politicians in statesman like poses also asserted Ireland was a nation capable of self-government.¹³⁹

Lavery also exhibited, *Funeral of Terence McSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork* depicting the procession following McSwiney's casket during his requiem mass in London, echoing the homage paid to McSwiney during the music concerts (figure 19). This painting records the carefully stage-managed funeral procession, with a theatrical light shining through the church window illuminating the Sinn Féin tricolour flag, 'the most striking symbol of nationhood', on the coffin.¹⁴⁰ The funeral was the culmination of McSwiney's hunger 'spectacle' which was manipulated through the media to sway worldwide public opinion in favour of Ireland.¹⁴¹ This painting was of little interest to reviewers when it was first shown in the Glasgow Arts Club exhibition in March 1921, as *Southwark Cathedral, London 1920*. This vague title led to the significance of the scene being lost on visitors, one reviewer described the painting simply as 'a detailed study of St George's Cathedral, Southwark'.¹⁴² It had a different political and propagandist impact when exhibited at the show accompanying the political gathering in Paris as, *Funeral of Terence McSwiney Lord Mayor of Cork*.¹⁴³ The relationship between the work and its different titles, its location and audience, affected how the viewer interpreted the work, ranging from a detailed painting of a building or a memorial to a martyr. Its presentation in Paris imbued it with 'a

¹³⁹ Dr Fearghal McGarry, Lecture: "The War of Independence" accessed at <http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/irishhistorylive/IrishHistoryResources/Articlesandlecturesbyourteachingstaff/TheWarofIndependence/> on 20/02/2017.

¹⁴⁰ David Welch, *Propaganda: power and persuasion*, (London: British Library, 2013). 46.

¹⁴¹ Paige Reynolds, *Modernism, Drama, and the Audience for Irish Spectacle*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2007).

¹⁴² Glasgow Exhibition review in the *Aberdeen Journal* (19 March 1921) as cited by Claire Crowley in the National Gallery of Ireland, Blogpost 3, October 27, "A Dark Episode from Irish History", at http://www.nationalgallery.ie/en/Exhibitions/Creating_History/Blogposts/October27.aspx 11/12/2016. The painting was part of the NGI's 2016 main exhibition contribution to Ireland's Decade of Centenaries, *Creating History: Stories of Ireland in Art*, which explores episodes in Irish history from the early fifth century arrival of St. Patrick to the establishment of the Free State.

¹⁴³ "École Irlandaise" in *Exposition D'art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]: Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). Catalogue no. 47.

language, a structure, a system, an act, a symbol, a pattern of feeling' - an index to the revolution and British atrocities.¹⁴⁴

One of the most prominent, overt, national propaganda symbols that asserts national identity is a sovereign country's flag.¹⁴⁵ Today the Irish flag features in every official occasion, national celebrations, military or sporting occasions, making people identify with it.¹⁴⁶ The opening words of the 1916 Proclamation states, 'Irishmen and Irishwomen: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom'.¹⁴⁷ The first Irish tri-colour, was modelled on the French flag and is recorded as having been brought back from France by members of the Young Ireland movement in the 1840s.¹⁴⁸ It was flown over the GPO in 1916, used by the Free State governments and its agencies from 1921 but was only formally confirmed as Ireland's national flag in Bunreacht na hÉireann (Constitution of Ireland) in 1937. Thomas Davis had suggested paintings featuring the Irish flag as suitable subject matter in his 1843 essay on art in *The Nation*.¹⁴⁹ Contemporary newspaper reports described a version of Lavery's second painting, featuring the Irish flag, *Blessing the Colours*, 1921, when it was exhibited in the 1923 RHA annual exhibition, as one of 'two exceptionally striking pictures'.¹⁵⁰ The 'marvellous' flag, and its significance, 'represent[ing] an officer kneeling with the Colours to receive the blessing of the Church' were duly noted. The Belfast-born artist depicts the first blessing of the Irish tricolour by the Archbishop of Dublin, in St Mary's Pro-Cathedral

¹⁴⁴ Clifford Geertz. "Art as a Cultural System" in *MLN*. 1976. 1474.

¹⁴⁵ David Welch, *Propaganda: power and persuasion*, (London: British Library, 2013). 42.

¹⁴⁶ As part of the Ireland 2016 commemorations of 1916, the national flag was presented to all the primary and post-primary school in the country.

¹⁴⁷ The Proclamation of the Republic, also known as the 1916 Proclamation or the Easter Proclamation.

¹⁴⁸ For a history of the Irish Tri-colour see the Department of the Taoiseach website and in particular https://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/eng/Historical_Information/The_National_Flag/The_National_Flag.pdf

¹⁴⁹ Thomas Davis, "Hints for Irish Historical Paintings". 1843.

¹⁵⁰ "Royal Hibernian Academy, Art Exhibition at Ballsbridge", *Weekly Irish Times*, 18th Aug, 1923. 7.

"Royal Hibernian Academy, Interesting Exhibition at Ballsbridge", *Irish Times*, 13th Aug, 1923. 6.

It was hung opposite the other, *Baptism of Christ* by Patrick Tuohy. Both paintings were reproduced in the latter paper on page 9.

(figure 20).¹⁵¹ Given the symbolic function of the flag the viewer sees the new State being baptised. The solemnity and importance of the occasion is heightened by the artist's use of muted tones and limited palette. The moment of consecrating the flag, symbolises both the birth of a nation and the alliance of Church and State at this critical juncture in Ireland's history. In Lavery's painting, the Irish tri-colour, also 'conveys ideas of cohesion and loyalty to the new regime' and within Irish society.¹⁵²

In Jack Yeats' paper on art to the Congress he describes pictures as a method of communication with the viewer that is less complicated than the written or spoken word.¹⁵³ His exhibit *Batchelor's Walk, In Memory*, (1915) communicates an image of Ireland as an innocent sufferer of English atrocities (figure 21).¹⁵⁴ This small history painting recalls an event witnessed by the artist of a flower seller leaving flowers at the spot where English soldiers shot four unarmed Dubliners dead and wounded over thirty in 1914.¹⁵⁵ Yeats sketched the scene and recorded in his notebook, 'where the people were shot on Sunday' and notes the spot near O'Connell Bridge where the flower girl had thrown flowers, writing 'I suppose one of those killed had fallen there'.¹⁵⁶ It is a dark painting, the mood is referential and sombre, with a central figure described by historian Roy Foster as 'a kind of Cathleen ni Houlihan' dominating the scene.¹⁵⁷ The image may be read as Mother Eireann mourning her dead with the boy looking forward expectantly. It gives 'the sense of future renewal after sacrificial death: unconsciously predicting the aftermath of the Easter Rising

¹⁵¹ This work, catalogue no 49 in Paris and titled *La Bénédiction des drapeaux*, is the sketch painting now in the Crawford Gallery, Cork. The finished painting exhibited in the 1923 RHA annual show is in the DCGHL.

¹⁵² Róisín Kennedy, "Art and Uncertainty: Painting in Ireland 1912-1932" in Brendan Rooney, ed, *Creating History Stories of Ireland in Art*, (Dublin: IAP and NGI, 2016). 164.

¹⁵³ J.B. Yeats, *Ár N-Éire, New Ireland*, Vol. IX, No. 11, 18th Feb, 1922. 171.

¹⁵⁴ J.B. Yeats exhibited four works, 83. Bachelors' Walk. En Souvenir, 84. Courses le long du ravage, le soir, 85. La voici! 86. Jour de foire.

¹⁵⁵ On 26 July 1914, a detachment of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, which had intercepted a party of Irish Volunteers transporting arms from Howth, encountered a hostile crowd in central Dublin. The soldiers opened fire, killing four people, and injuring over thirty.

¹⁵⁶ NGI, Y1/JY/1/1/157 - Jack B. Yeats sketchbooks, quoted in R.F. Foster "'The Occupation of Living': Jack B. Yeats and the Irish Revolution" in Brendan Rooney, ed, *Creating History Stories of Ireland in Art*, (Dublin: IAP and NGI, 2016). 256.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

a year later'.¹⁵⁸ It is understandable why Yeats decided to first exhibit this work, completed in 1915, seven years later in this Paris exhibition. The destiny of Ireland, however imperfect, was beginning to unfold from its recent trouble and that message was conveyed in this urban scene.

Earlier Irish political struggles are remembered in Joseph Haverly's (1794-1864) painting of *Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847)*, a major Irish political leader in the first half of the 19th century. O'Connell Street the principle street in Dublin is named after him and it is adorned by a large-scale public monument dedicated to the so-called 'Emancipator'. He campaigned for Catholic Emancipation successfully and throughout the rest of his career sought to repeal the 1800 Acts of Union which bound Ireland to Great Britain.

Other paintings dealt with contemporary Irish struggles such as Sean Keating's (1889-1977) *An IRA Column / On their Guard* (1921).¹⁵⁹ During the truce in the War of Independence, Keating persuaded the North Cork Brigade, a 'guerrilla column', to pose for the painting.¹⁶⁰ It shows a group of proud upright identifiable Irish revolutionaries willing to take on the might of an empire. The revolutionaries are portrayed in a style reminiscent of works-portraying official soldiers in State commissioned art and photography (figure 22).¹⁶¹ They display a heroic, fearless demeanour and a military order that legitimises them as a functioning state army unit.

The logistical difficulties associated with transporting sculptures resulted in only six small exhibits by three sculptors. John Hughes (1865-1941), a well-known Irish sculpture who was living in Italy in 1922, also had connections to Paris.¹⁶² He showed a sensual nude, *La Chanson fin de siècle* (1895), lent by artist, Sarah Purser (figure 23). His stature as an artist

¹⁵⁸ Foster in *Creating History*, 256, 257.

¹⁵⁹ Keating's painting of revolutionaries is, most likely (based on a 1921 completion date), *An IRA Column*, now in the OPW collection.

¹⁶⁰ See Éimear O'Connor, *Seán Keating, Art, Politics and Building the Irish Nation*, (Kildare: Irish Academic Press, 2013), 129-130 for the story behind the painting.

¹⁶¹ For e.g. see British Military official photos at <http://www.eliteukforces.info/gallery/> accessed 17/07/2017.

¹⁶² See, Alan Denson, *John Hughes, sculptor, 1865-1941: a documentary biography*, (Kendal, 1969).

and his connection to Europe made his involvement important. Oliver Sheppard showed two pieces *In Mystery the Soul Abides* (1913) a virtuoso piece in marble and also a bronze titled *Brothers* (1908) (figure 24).¹⁶³ While these works exemplified the virtuosity and skill of Irish sculptors, three busts by Albert Power (1881-1945) celebrated Irish literary achievements and prowess, through portraiture. He displayed sculpture busts of writers W.B. Yeats, Lord Dunsany and James Stephens (figure 25).

Similarly, Dermot O'Brien displayed a painted portrait of playwright Lennox Robinson titled *Robinson Lennox (auteur de 'Patriotes et le Chef Perdu')* (figure 26). The sitter's play *The Lost Leader* is about the possible resurrection or rediscovery of Charles Stewart Parnell, an important late nineteenth century Irish nationalist politician and agitator for Irish Home Rule. Specifying the name of these patriotic plays in the painting's title outlined Robinson's nationalist credentials and marked the portrait with the exhibition's political leitmotif. Patrick Tuohy's (1894-1930) subtle painting, *Young Mayo Peasant*, 1912, (figure 27) blurs the distinction of the political portrait, images of the political struggle for independence with romantic depictions of those that occupy the Irish rural landscape. The subject is a poor but confident youth, he looks directly at the viewer, with his and his country's future laid out before him. This piece, with its rich use of colour and strong composition presents a sensitive representation of a poor Irish youth, also echoed Markievicz's riposte to Cruickshank's art.¹⁶⁴

Some of the exhibited paintings may now be seen as being similar in style and technique to their English contemporaries or that of French realism, and might be read in terms of the

¹⁶³ Sheppard's *In Mystery the Soul Abides* is now in the NGI. It takes its title from an 1852 Matthew Arnold poem titled 'Morality'. *Brothers* as noted later was exhibited at the BEE in London, 1924 and it represented the IFS at the Imperial Art Gallery, London, 1931. Obviously a piece Sheppard rated highly, it was also exhibited at the annual RA and RHA (twice) exhibitions, elsewhere in Dublin and in the exhibition of Irish art in Brussels, 1930.

¹⁶⁴ This work was donated to DCGHL by Joseph Holloway, 6th Sep. 1934.

That Tuohy saw this painting as more than a portrait is evidenced by his entering this in the Genre class in the 1922 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition rather than as a portrait.

exhibitions of European art organised by George Russell, Ellen Duncan and Hugh Lane earlier in the century, or Paul Henry's Mills Hall exhibition, presented just weeks later when attendees returned home.¹⁶⁵ However, the Paris works were distinguished by a proliferation of Irish landscapes and Irish subject matter. In 1922 the exhibition was paid and organised by the IFSG and was part of a national cohesive political undertaking. The choice of artists - and their willingness to participate - echoed the political zeitgeist. Their subject matter was constructed to confirm perceptions of Irish oppression, and the heroism in achieving freedom from same. Several works showcased Ireland's unique and varied landscape, especially in the west. These representations of locations, events and personalities, presented in an international forum, sought to confirm new realities, that art and propaganda were merged to serve the new State's manifesto.

Large crowds attended the art exhibition and it was 'well received'.¹⁶⁶ Following on from the show the *Irish Times* reported that it was proposed to have an Irish room in the autumn Salon in Paris, to have a special Irish exhibit at the World Exhibition to be held in Paris in 1924, and arrangements were 'being made with Mr. Dermot O'Brien P.R.H.A. to have a section allotted to Irish artists in the [upcoming] international art exhibition in Barcelona'.¹⁶⁷ Through the exhibition, the French Government bought Paul Henry's painting, *Village in the West of Ireland*.¹⁶⁸ This was a view of the village of Dooagh, Achill Island and was a typical treatment by Henry of the West of Ireland landscape, a type that

¹⁶⁵ These are discussed in chapter one.

¹⁶⁶ Anon. "Irish Art in Paris in closed, Crowds gather on last day of showing", *The Chicago Tribune*, 28th Feb, 1922. Positive reviews and comments were also carried in the art journal *L'Art et les Artistes* and newspapers *Le Figaro*, *Le Rappel*, *L'Ouest Éclair*, *Le Gaulois*, *La Lanterne*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Matin*, *Le Journal*. In its March 1922 edition, *L'Art et les Artistes*, the important French art journal, gave significant recognition to the Irish art exhibition with an extensively illustrated ten page review. See Yves Marie Goblet, « L'Art Irlandais et L'Exposition Des Artistes D'Irlande » in *L'Art et les Artistes*. 16 Année, Numero 25, Mars 1922. 209-218.

¹⁶⁷ Anon. "Irish Art Continental Appreciation", in *Irish Times*, 20th Apr, 1922. There is no evidence of Irish participation in either the Paris or Barcelona events and no records of these invitations. It is likely that such invitations were lost or not pursued due to the turmoil caused by political instability, the Civil War and its aftermath and the IFSG's failure to re-appoint a Minister for Fine Art.

¹⁶⁸ Anon. "France and Irish Art", *Irish Times*, 9th Mar, 1922. The purchase of this painting is discussed later.

was referred to by Alexandre in the exhibition catalogue essay.¹⁶⁹ Landscape also featured in Keating's portrait of his wife and himself in *Good Evening Miss (Bonjour, Mademoiselle)* (1921). Keating who aligned himself closely with the Irish national movement would come to be seen, unofficially, as the state artist.¹⁷⁰ Much of Keating's work is charged with personal experiences of social and political structures; consequently, as in many of his paintings such as those exhibited in Paris, the personal becomes the political. In *Good Evening, Miss* both figures, are set in an identifiable Irish landscape, with stone walls and a cloudy sky. Both figures are dressed in traditional West of Ireland dress (figure 28). In presenting himself and his wife as characters through costume and setting, Keating clearly identifies himself with an independent Irish people in a distinctive place, thus creating an iconic image of the artist within the new Ireland. The exhibition sought to represent a multi-sided Irish life. While, Lavery exhibited a formidable three quarter length portrait of Cardinal Michael Logue, a keen Irish speaker and supporter of the Gaelic League, William Conor's painting, *The Orange Procession in Belfast*, of a Protestant tradition was also selected.¹⁷¹

As was discussed in chapter one, many of the artists and politicians engaged with, and were participants in the Irish cultural revival of the early twentieth century. They shared a common aspiration for a politically independent and a culturally unique country. That the artists shared this common aim is displayed in the paintings and sculpture exhibited in Paris, and is re-enforced by Alexandre catalogue essay that identifies an Irish School of Art. At this time, by choosing Jack B. Yeats to deliver the lecture on Irish Art and by the French government purchasing Paul Henry's Irish landscape, these two artists were marked

¹⁶⁹ Arsène Alexandre, "École Irlandaise" in *Exposition D'art Irlandais*. 9,10.

¹⁷⁰ Brian Fallon, *Irish Art 1830-1990*, (Belfast: Appletree Press, 1994). 113. Keating was a teacher at the DMSA and would become President of the RHA in 1950.

¹⁷¹ The *Cardinal Logue* (1920) painting is now in the Ulster Museum, NMNI collection. Logue was eighty-years old when he sat for this portrait in which he seems to be challenging the painter by sitting forward and gazing straight at him. There are a number of Conor paintings of Orange processions in the NMNI and other collections, this exact painting has not been identified.

out as the leaders of this school. This was a school defined more by common aims than a common representational style. These aims of nationalism, celebrating the landscape and its inhabitants and recognition of an Irish cultural distinctiveness, were promoted in the Yeats lecture, Alexander essay and in the art on display. This cohesive school of art would continue in this phase until the artists, like the politicians, were challenged by political turmoil that would unfold in the following years.

2.2.8 Acquisition of Irish art for a French public collection.

As already stated, Alexandre endorsed the ‘exceptional’ and ‘independent’ Irish race as expressed through its art.¹⁷² Coverage of the exhibition in the Parisian press was generous, being noted and reviewed in a number of French newspapers and journals.¹⁷³ Léonce Bénéдите,¹⁷⁴ curator of the Musée du Luxembourg ‘inaugurated’ the Exhibition of Irish Art on behalf of the Ministère De L’Instruction Publique et Des Beaux Arts on the 28th January, 1922.¹⁷⁵ Musée du Luxembourg had begun acquiring modern and contemporary art for its collections after 1910, and by 1922, it was among the most prestigious modern galleries in the world.¹⁷⁶ It was the ‘world’s leading contemporary art museum, with prestige and influence to match, and many artists ... dreamed of seeing their work exhibited there’.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² Arsène Alexandre, “École Irlandaise” in *Exposition D’art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]: Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). 5-10.

¹⁷³ Articles appeared in the art journal *L’Art et les Artistes* and newspapers *Le Figaro*, *Le Rappel*, *L’Ouest Éclair*, *Le Gaulois*, *La Lanterne*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Matin*, *Le Journal*.

¹⁷⁴ Léonce Bénéдите (1856-1925) was a French art historian, author, critic and curator. He was director/curator of the Musée du Luxembourg, Paris; he started work here in 1884 and remained until his death in 1925. He published prolifically (catalogues, notices, art histories and articles in the *Gazette des Beau-Arts* and *La Revue de l’Art Ancien et Moderne* as well as elsewhere). He was also President of the Society of Oriental Painters, the Society of Lithographers and the Society of Engravers.

¹⁷⁵ Archives Nationales, Paris. F/21/4220 Dossier 80. Letter from Léonce Bénéдите, Musée du Luxembourg to Ministère De L’Instruction Publique et Des Beaux-Arts (Léon Bérard), 1th Feb. 1922.

¹⁷⁶ Alexis Clark, “The Musée du Luxembourg and Toulouse-Lautrec’s ‘Portrait of Monsieur Delaporte in the Jardin de Paris’ in *The Burlington Magazine*, No. 1368, Vol. CLIX, March, 2017.

¹⁷⁷ Information panel in the Musée D’Orsay where some of the Musée du Luxembourg collection now reside – image with author. See also “Painting” on the Musée D’Orsay website accessed 23/04/2020 at <https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/history-of-the-collections/painting.html>

Bénédite, an important figure in the French art world, was guided through the show by Thomas Kelly.¹⁷⁸ He wrote to his Ministère on the following day, approving of the exhibition, and proposing the purchase of a painting by Paul Henry from the exhibition for the Musée du Luxembourg collection – he wanted to support and encourage the exhibition.¹⁷⁹ He stated in his letter that the painting was five thousand francs but that the artist was willing to accept one thousand.¹⁸⁰

The oil painting bought by the French Government, titled *Village dans l'ouest de l'Irlande* (A West of Ireland Village), painted over 1920/21 (catalogue number 29) was a typical west of Ireland scene.¹⁸¹ The foreground depicts a peaceful inlet with welcoming vernacular thatched cottages and the ubiquitous stacks of turf. There is no indication of the political troubles that had, and continued to beset, the country. The huge sky which dominates the painting threatens, as do the eerily dark hills in the background. Alexandre also found something troubling in Henry's image; citing 'Paul Henry's low cottages gathering like fearful beasts under the immense sky'.¹⁸²

Henry's reply to the correspondence from the Minister's official is appreciative saying 'how grateful I am of the great distinction that the French government attributes to my work of art'.¹⁸³ Correspondence in the Archives Nationales, Paris and in Henry's papers in TCD show that the deal was concluded once Henry granted image rights for the painting to the Luxembourg. Henry's wife and fellow exhibitor, Grace, who was in Paris at this time, delivered the painting to the gallery and Henry further requested that payment be

¹⁷⁸ Archives Nationales, Paris. F/21/4220 Dossier 80. Letter from Léonce Bénédite, Musée du Luxembourg to Ministère De L'Instruction Publique et Des Beaux-Arts (Léon Bérard), 1st Feb. 1922.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Henry discounted his prices throughout his career as his financial situation was continually precarious. The art historian S. B. Kennedy writes that Henry was willing to sell his paintings at almost any price because he was hard pressed financially – see S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*. 2000. 83, 117.

¹⁸¹ *Exposition D'art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue] 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). TCD MS 7434-3 Paul Henry: miscellaneous correspondence and papers. Notice of acquisition from Ministère De L'Instruction Publique et Des Beaux Arts to Paul Henry, dated 1st March, 1922.

¹⁸² Arsène Alexandre, "École Irlandaise" in *Exposition D'art Irlandais*, 1922. 10.

¹⁸³ Archives Nationales, Paris. F/21/4220 Dossier 80. Letter from Paul Henry to Ministry of Public Education And Des Beaux-Arts, 10th Mar. 1922.

made to her.¹⁸⁴ The Musée du Luxembourg was closed after a national museum of modern art was built in the Palais de Tokyo in 1937, and only reopened its doors to the public in 1979. Its collection was dispersed and the Henry painting is now in the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

A painting of a uniquely Irish scene entering an important French collection authenticated Irish art, its recognition helping to achieve the 'propaganda value' sought by the Congress organisers

2.2.9 Irish Arts and Crafts.

Irish artisans were 'closely associated with the revived use of Celtic ornament' and drew inspiration from 'the two great flowerings of art craftsmanship in [Ireland's] past, in the Early Christian era and in the eighteenth century'.¹⁸⁵ Hence the two hundred arts and crafts exhibits 'were on surer ground [than painting] in reconnecting native' work of the period with the skills and designs of insular masterpieces from previous centuries.¹⁸⁶ As discussed in chapter one, many Irish art history commentators have identified that a distinctly Irish School of Arts and Crafts emerged in pre-Independence Ireland, one that was less problematic than fine art categorisation. Many arts and crafts artefacts displayed a coherent style, often derived from so-called Celtic ornament, taking inspiration from Irish legends. Most of the participants had received their training in the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art (DMSA). Much of the output was from a limited number of studios such as Cuala

¹⁸⁴ Archives Nationales, Paris. F/21/4220 Dossier 80.

TCD, Dublin. MS 7434-3 Paul Henry: miscellaneous correspondence and papers. Notice of acquisition from Ministère De L'Instruction Publique et Des Beaux-Arts to Paul Henry, dated 1st March, 1922. The correspondence in Henry's papers is signed by an official Monica Sully?.

It is not clear from the catalogues or exhibition reports if this was a selling show. From the evidence it seems it wasn't so the Henry painting sale may have been agreed at the end of the exhibition. The offer to purchase the painting sent to Henry was dated 1st March, 1922 the week after the exhibition closed (TCD MS 7434-3).

¹⁸⁵ Paul Larmour, *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland*, (Belfast: Friar's Bush Press, 1992). Preface. Vii. Jeanne Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past. The Celtic Revival 1830–1930*. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980). 189,190. Pyle, *Irish Art 1900-1950*. 13.

Specifically Larmour notes 'many of the ornamental forms of the Early Christian period were revived' and 'the superb craftsmanship of the eighteenth century was seen as an achievement to emulate'.

¹⁸⁶ Kiberd and Matthews, 273.

Industries, Dun Emer enterprise, Harry Clarke Studios, An Túr Gloine, Cluna Studios and students of the DMSA. That this School reached a high-point in the 1920s was evident in the work displayed in Paris.¹⁸⁷

In the initial discussion between Plunkett and Kelly on what items to send, it was proposed to include artefacts - or their replicas - from the National Museum of Ireland (in the end these were not included). These ‘gold ornaments and early metalwork’ items, which bore testament to a nation with a unique and ancient heritage, would have sited the contemporary arts and crafts work in the context of a continuum of talented craftspeople since the golden age of medieval Irish art.¹⁸⁸ Reviews, and Alexandre’s catalogue essay noted that Ireland excelled in the decorative arts, including jewellery, stained glass, enamels, book bindings (in this craft Eleanor Kelly is singled out) and embroidery. The work was said to have been ‘impregnated with a spirit of race and yet with a modern focus’.¹⁸⁹

The Irish Revival in its various forms including literature, the language and in the work of the Arts and Crafts movement, led the debates surrounding national identity in the early 1900s. Existing as part of the United Kingdom, Ireland used its arts and crafts to, ‘distinguish its separate cultural and political identity’.¹⁹⁰ Yet the ideological background to the global arts and crafts movement was underpinned by the ideas and writings of the English author, art critic and social reformer John Ruskin. In the mid-1800s he voiced concerns about the inhumanity of machine production and its negative effects on the

¹⁸⁷ Larmour, *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland*. 216. Nicola Gordon Bowe, “The jewel in the crown: The art of stained glass in the Irish Arts and Crafts movement, 1903-30.” in Vera Kreilkamp, ed, *The Arts and Crafts Movement, Making it Irish*, (Boston: University of Chicago, 2016). 123. Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland’s Past. The Celtic Revival 1830–1930*. 175.

¹⁸⁸ NLI. Count Plunkett Papers, 1648-1940. Letter Kelly to Plunkett, 23rd Nov, 1921.

¹⁸⁹ Arsène Alexandre, “La Vie Artistique, L’Ecole irlandaise á Paris”, *Le Figaro*, 27th Jan, 1922. 3. Arsène Alexandre, “École Irlandaise” in *Exposition D’art Irlandais*. 5-10.

¹⁹⁰ Marguerite Helmers and Kayla Rose, “The Spirit of Ireland’s Past: Illumination, ornament, and national identity in public art” in Vera Kreilkamp, ed, *The Arts and Crafts Movement, Making it Irish*, (Boston: University of Chicago, 2016). 27.

worker.¹⁹¹ However, the industrial revolution had less of an impact in Ireland than England, thus the arts and crafts movement in Ireland distinguished itself from its English counterpart by arguing that its craftspersons had retained their links to their Irish traditions and heritage. As argued by Luke Gibbons ‘to engage in cultural activity in circumstances where one’s culture was being effaced or obliterated, or even to assert the existence of a civilization prior to conquest, was to make a political statement’.¹⁹² Lace and embroidery were well established in Ireland long before the arts and crafts movement had started, and there were many centres of production in the country.¹⁹³ There were thirteen exhibits of Irish lace, from various centres, shown in Paris. Stained glass design and production had reached a high point in Ireland by the early 1920s and ‘once again Ireland was becoming known as a centre of Christian art...as Irish stained-glass work received international recognition’.¹⁹⁴ A Dublin glass co-operative named An Túr Gloine, working under the direction of Sarah Purser had started in Dublin in 1903. Its artists included Michael Healy (1873-1941) and Wilhelmina Geddes (1887-1955). Geddes had just completed a prestigious commission from the Duke of Connaught of a First World War memorial window in Ottawa in 1919.¹⁹⁵ She exhibited three stained glass windows, a cartoon and an illustration in Paris. Healy exhibited a window entitled *St. Patrick at Slane*, which would find a home in America (figure 29). There were other exhibits from An Túr Gloine including what the catalogue described as fourteen coloured cartoons from ‘Miss Purser’s Works’.¹⁹⁶ Arguably the most renowned Irish stained-glass artist - both at home and abroad - was also active at this time. Harry Clarke had taken over the family glass business in

¹⁹¹ Paul Larmour, *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland*, (Belfast: Friar’s Bush Press, 1992). 1.

¹⁹² Luke Gibbons, *Transformations in Irish Culture, Field Day Essays*, (Cork: CUP, 1996). 8.

¹⁹³ Lace schools, often as a result of Anglo-Irish philanthropic initiatives, operated in Kinsale, Kenmare, Killarney, Tralee, Youghal, Thurles, Skibbereen, Cork, locations in Dublin as well as at the better known Mountmellick, Carrickmacross and Limerick.

¹⁹⁴ Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*, (London: Harper, 2004). 89.

¹⁹⁵ Nicola Gordon Bowe, *Wilhelmina Geddes Life and Work*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2016). 5.

¹⁹⁶ *Exposition D’art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]*: (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). Meaning they were from An Tur Gloine cooperative artists. See catalogue no. 273.

1921 and already had an international reputation, having had important stained glass commissions, and illustrated books published by major publishing houses in England and the United States.¹⁹⁷ He had twenty five pieces in the Art Industries section in Paris, exhibiting windows, cartoons, black and white as well as colour illustrations and designs for handkerchiefs (figure 30). The *Le Figaro* review regards Clarke as ‘a first-rate designer in fanciful and fantastic illustration’.¹⁹⁸ All the stained glass and cartoon exhibits had religious subject matter except Clarke’s window of *Bluebeard’s Wife* (figure 31). The academic and social commentator Terence Brown’s argument that Catholicism developed ‘as a mark of national distinctiveness’ is borne out by these exhibits.¹⁹⁹ For many craft workers and artists, the church in Ireland (both Catholic and COI) was an important patron as church building programmes expanded across the country from the 1800s and into the twentieth century. Artists sought to expand collaboration with the church through exhibitions.²⁰⁰

The only artists to have work in both the art and art industries sections were Sarah Purser and Jack Yeats. Purser exhibited *Le Petit Déjeuner* (figure 32) completed while she was studying art in Paris in 1881, this everyday scene influenced by contemporary French painting, made a tangible link between the artistic communities of Ireland and Paris.²⁰¹

Yeats’ designs for ten hand coloured prints, two bookplates, twelve posters and a calendar

¹⁹⁷ See Angela Griffith, Marguerite Helmers & Róisín Kennedy, eds., *Harry Clarke and Artistic Visions of the New Irish State*, (Dublin: IAP, 2018).

Stained Glass was revitalised with the appointment of Alfred Child to the DMSA in 1901 after the 1899 Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act moved control of the School from London to the Irish Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. Among his students were Harry Clarke, Ethel Rhind, Catherine O’Brien, Michael Healy and Evie Hone. Child was also involved in the establishment of An Túr Gloine. See, Larmour, “Developments in the Schools of Art” in Paul Larmour, *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland*, (Belfast: Friar’s Bush Press, 1992). 90-104.

¹⁹⁸ Arsène Alexandre, “La Vie Artistique, L’Ecole irlandaise à Paris”, *Le Figaro*, 27th Jan, 1922. 3.

¹⁹⁹ Brown. *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*. 20. The motor tour of Paris also emphasised this – visiting a number of Catholic sites.

²⁰⁰ This is discussed further in chapters four and five with reference to the RHA promoting church and artist engagement (patronage) and the holding of specific ecclesiastical exhibitions.

²⁰¹ Now in the NGI who describe this picture as ‘consistent with paintings of French interiors’ and ‘calls to mind in particular works by Edgar Degas, an artist Purser is known to have admired greatly’. See <http://onlinecollection.nationalgallery.ie/objects/2816/le-petit-dejeuner>

were all printed and published by his sister Elizabeth Yeats' Cuala Press. He also designed a blotter executed by Cuala Industries.²⁰² The arts and crafts co-operatives exhibiting were regular exhibitors at home and abroad and as a statement of their Irish identity gave themselves distinctive names that incorporated the Irish Language, Irish place names or referenced Irish legends.²⁰³

Jack Yeats spent his teenage years in Sligo and, following a period in England, moved permanently to live in Ireland in 1910. From then, he invested himself in Ireland, its history, language and culture.²⁰⁴ Yeats' scholar and biographer Hilary Pyle, traces his awareness of Irish nationalism, to 'witnessing the nationalist fervour' associated with 'the centenary celebrations of the 1798 rising' on his 'annual trip to Ireland in 1898'.²⁰⁵ In the years leading up to 1916 he had attended Irish language classes, political meetings of Sinn Féin, separatist sports meetings in Croke Park and 'nothing would make the artist yield from his vision of a politically free Ireland'.²⁰⁶ Yeats would later meet Eamon De Valera and supported his political viewpoint.²⁰⁷ He provided some literary content to the Cuala Press *Broadsides* under the pseudonyms of Wolfe Tone MacGowan and R. E. MacGowan (the initials for Robert Emmett), appropriating the names of two prominent 18th century Irish nationalists and republicans.²⁰⁸ His brother William Butler Yeats was on the pro-treaty side and later became a senator in the Free State government. For years a

²⁰² *Exposition D'art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]: Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). Exhibit 126.

The blotter was executed by Miss K. Dillon a worker in the Cuala Industries run by the Yeats sisters.

²⁰³ These included the Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland, Cuala Industries (including Cuala Press), Dun Emer Guild, Irish Association of Decorative Art and Tower of Glass Stained Glass and Mosaic works (An Túr Gloine).

²⁰⁴ Jack B. Yeats, was born in London in 1871, youngest child of the artist John Butler Yeats and Susan Yeats (née Pollexfen). From 1879 he lived in Sligo with his maternal grandparents until 1887 when he returned to London but continued to visit Ireland. Jack and his wife Cottie moved to Ireland in 1910 where they remained for the rest of their lives.

²⁰⁵ Hilary Pyle, *Yeats Portrait of an Artistic Family*, (London: Merrell Holberton, 1997), 188.

John M. Synge was a well-known Irish playwright.

²⁰⁶ James White, "Introduction" in *Jack B. Yeats A Centenary Exhibition*, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1971). 13. See also Bruce Arnold, Jack Yeats entry in *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, at <https://www.ria.ie/ga/node/88853> accessed on 17/07/2017.

²⁰⁷ Bruce Arnold, *Jack Yeats*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

²⁰⁸ For e.g. see *A Broadside*, September 1908 with two verses by Wolfe T. MacGowan, Dublin: Cuala Press.

professional illustrator in London, Jack Yeats' designs for the Cuala Press gave him the opportunity to expand on the role of illustrating more widely his preferred theme of Irish life, its people and landscape. Yeats also painted politically motivated pictures such as *Batchelor's Walk, In Memory* discussed earlier. However, his images in the main for Cuala in this exhibition were like those of Henry, iconic images of Irish life and place.²⁰⁹

Yeats' works disseminated positive images of the Irish people, as had been espoused by the Yeats family friend Countess Markievicz.²¹⁰ The Cuala prints had become a distinctive part of Ireland's visual culture. Produced initially with Dun Emer from 1903, then under the Cuala imprint from 1908, they were very popular, relatively affordable and more widely disseminated nationally and internationally than paintings, and therefore, arguably, had more of a cultural and political impact.²¹¹ Prints, such as those produced at Cuala, allowed people establish a connection with parts of the country they never visited. The West of Ireland was out of reach for many urban dwellers and the Irish Diaspora, but print images (along with the oral tradition of storytelling and song), constructed a national identity not limited to an individual's sphere of travel. Yeats prints with images of everyday Irish life reinforced the State as a functioning, vibrant entity. A review of the exhibition in *Le Figaro* refers to Jack Yeats as a 'narrator of popular scenes'.²¹² They depicted a distinctive native people in a functioning society. Yeats' prints fitted the tone and objective of the exhibition. In the art exhibited, painting and sculpture had evoked Irish heroes of political and cultural nationalism, Yeats' Cuala prints of everyday Irish life, as

²⁰⁹ Other political works by Yeats included *A Political Meeting*, 1905, *lying-in-state of O'Donovan Rossa*, 1915, *Bachelor's Walk, In Memory* (1915), *Singing the Dark Rosaleen, Croke Park* (1921), *Communicating with Prisoners* (c.1924), *The Funeral of Harry Boland* (1922), *Going to Wolfe Tone's Grave* (1929). Paris 1922 exhibited Cuala prints designed by Jack B. Yeats included *The Islanders, The Post Car, The Village, The Mountain Farm, The Start and The Finish, Virgin and Jesus, The Child Christ, The Rainbow* and a number of cards and calendars.

²¹⁰ Anon. "Irish Race Congress", in *Cork Examiner*, 25th Jan, 1922. 6.

²¹¹ See Toby Clark, *Art and propaganda in the twentieth century: the political image in the age of mass culture*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997) and David Welch, *Propaganda: power and persuasion*, (London: British Library, 2013) for the impact of print and art prints.

²¹² Arsène Alexandre, "La Vie Artistique, L'Ecole irlandaise à Paris", *Le Figaro*, 27th Jan, 1922. 3.

the review in *Le Figaro* noted, honoured the everyman.²¹³ The Cuala Press was just one of the pre-independence literary and artistic revivalist organisations that visualised an Irish people who the British government/ colonizer had politically failed to represent (figure 33).

2.2.10 The Art of decolonisation.

Illuminated texts, embroidery, letterpress printed and hand bound books, fine tooled bindings, leather work, metalwork, enamels and carpets all crafted by hand in Ireland were on display in Paris (figure 34 and 35). Books from Colm Ó'Lochlainn and the Cuala Press were exhibited as fine examples of letterpress printing and evidence of Ireland's tradition in publishing.²¹⁴ Cuala Press authors included some of the most renowned writers of the revival such as Lady Gregory, John M. Synge and W. B. Yeats – all of whose work featured at the Congress.²¹⁵ W. B. Yeats would win the Nobel Prize for literature the following year. Poets, artists, writers were presenting a view of Irishness in the context of themselves, but in his Congress lecture W.B. Yeats expressed his unease with English being the language of nationalist literature in post-colonial Ireland, excusing Irish authors writing in English, by explaining that they 'perfumed [it] with an Irish idiom', a poetic dialect only discernible in Irish writers.²¹⁶ Similar concerns were expressed by Gregory and Synge through their Hiberno-English plays performed during the Congress while other writers, such as Joyce and later Beckett, also concurred.²¹⁷ These Irish writers were using

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Cuala books available at the Congress included *Kiltartan Poetry Book* by Lady Gregory, *Further Letters* by John Butler Yeats, *The Wild Swans at Coole*, *Four Years* and *Two Plays for Dancers* all by W. B. Yeats. Colm Ó'Lochlainn had two titles on display including one on the well-known Irish composer and inventor of the nocturne, John Field (1782-1837). Ireland tradition in [commercial as distinct from private press] publishing from 1550-2000 is exhaustively documented in the five volume, *The Oxford History of the Irish Book. Volumes 1-5*, completed in 2011. General Editors, Robert Welch & Brian Walker.

²¹⁵ Gregory and Synge plays were performed and W. B. Yeats lectured on drama and literature.

²¹⁶ UCD-FitzGerald. P80/706(5) and P80/706(6). Summary in French, given by W B Yeats, to Desmond FitzGerald of Yeats' lecture to the Congress of the Irish Race, Paris, 1922 on the Irish Literary Revival.

²¹⁷ James Joyce expressed the sentiment, speaking through Stephen Dedalus, in a *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, '[the Englishman's] language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words'. (James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992) – this was Joyce's first novel originally published in 1916. Samuel Beckett

the native Irish language to reconstruct English but Irish itself was lost.²¹⁸ In the literary revival plays and poetry could represent to the native Irish an aspirational freedom before Independence and a sense of new identity afterwards, but it used the language of the oppressor.²¹⁹ So while Anglo-Irish literature is world-famous and celebrated it is not without its issues in terms of identity.

As discussed in chapter one, Irish visual art needed an aesthetic language after Independence, one that reclaimed the landscape, counteracted the negative stereotypes and gave Irish people and international audiences a view of themselves that was not an English construct. It became incumbent on artists to visually represent the new State, one it was constructing for itself. A stable Ireland comprised a competent and self-determining people, with a distinctive and unique heritage, rooted in a tradition that was still extant in an untainted West of Ireland. Keating's *Good Evening Miss* sited the artist in this unique Irish landscape. Henry's works also reclaimed the landscape, visually returning ownership, to its native inhabitants. Unlike much of earlier landscape painting discussed in chapter one, Henry depicted a landscape that had remained unchanged for generations, as he saw it, using the stylistic clarity that he learned in Paris while studying with James McNeill Whistler.²²⁰ Having trained in Paris in the 1890s, he was to become, 'Ireland's first important post-impressionist painter'.²²¹

The individual Cuala prints Yeats created 'were specifically of characters and scenes of rural life in Ireland'.²²² Jack Yeats in his speech to the Congress extolled nationalism in art,

said "I use the words you taught me. If they don't mean anything anymore, teach me others. Or let me be silent." (Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*, London, 1964, 32).

²¹⁸ Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation*, (London: Cape, 1995).

²¹⁹ For a discussion on the Irish Literary Revival see, John Wilson Foster, *Fictions of the Irish Literary Revival: A Changeling Art*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

²²⁰ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*. 2007. 17.

²²¹ Yvonne Scott, Fintan O'Toole. "Modern Ireland in 100 Artworks: 1920 – The Lobster Fisherman at Dusk, by Paul Henry", in *Irish Times*, 6th Dec, 2014.

²²² Angela Griffith, "Impressions: Jack Yeats' approach to fine art publishing" in Yvonne Scott, ed. *Jack B. Yeats Old and New Departures*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008). 113.

‘painting of the future will be national in growth, but international in its speech’.²²³ He did not name ‘the artists who are particularly national in their work’, because to do so would be to omit artists ‘learning... that it is to this our country they belong’.²²⁴ He added that ‘the roots of every art must be in the country of the artist, and no man can have two countries’.²²⁵ In his Parisian exhibits, Yeats displayed his personal observations of the Irish using an authentic Irish pictorial language as markers of a place, time, and of national identity. He gave his Irish characters typical Irish clothes, exemplified by wide brimmed hats and shawls, distinctive Irish features such as concurrent eyebrows, a feature measured by anthropologists as a dominant Irish racial trait, as in his exhibit, *The Post Car* (1908) (figure 36 and 37).²²⁶ The postman’s confident pose and distinctive appearance lends him an air of dignity and it depicts how Irish people had begun to see themselves set in their own place - proud and independent. In other exhibited prints, his west of Ireland landscapes are uniquely Irish and Gaelic, some have stone walls and thatched cottages as in *The Mountain Farm* and *The Village* (figure 38). These images created for Cuala also feature traditional Irish events and vernacular cultural customs such as horse racing on the strand in Sligo, *The Start* and *The Finish* (figure 39). Yeats prints in Paris with images of everyday Irish life reinforced the State as a functioning, vibrant entity. Again, these set pieces are situated in a distinctive national landscape with the Irish flag visible as another potent symbol of Irish independence. Yeats prints of popular Irish scenes, as noted, honoured ‘the everyman’.²²⁷ Although made more than ten years earlier, these Cuala works fitted the nationalist leitmotif of the Paris exhibition, presenting a coherent representation of Irish types, culture and life set in an Irish landscape.

²²³ J.B. Yeats speech (part 2) in *Ár N-Éire, New Ireland*, Vol. IX, No. 12, 25th Feb, 1922. 189,190.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid. (part 1). 172.

²²⁶ Brannigan. 121, citing Hooton and Dupertuis, *The Physical Anthropology of Ireland* and others. Brannigan discusses Yeats use of visual cue of racial identity in his work. 117-130. ‘Physical anthropologists agree that as a population group the Irish show high instances of eyebrow concurrency’. 121. Many of his Irish types display the monobrow, Brannigan list extensive works. See for example *The Post Car*.

²²⁷ Arsène Alexandre, “La Vie Artistique, L’Ecole irlandaise à Paris”, *Le Figaro*, 27th Jan, 1922. 3.

Like Synge's plays, Keating and Henry paintings, Yeats images (paintings and prints) sprung from a lived experience of being in the landscape and observing Irish life. His work reclaimed the iconography of Irish landscape and, as an oppositional figure to simianization, Yeats' gave Irish people a positive view of themselves within an independent postcolonial state. His idealised prints of Irish life for the Cuala Press had a large audience, and sold both in Ireland and internationally to the Irish diaspora. Not only fitting the tone and objective of both the aspirational State before, and the newly Independent State after 1922, these prints continued to be exhibited by the nascent State for over a decade.²²⁸ Widely distributed, the prints created an authentic visual Gaelic expression for the Irish way of life in a new visual language and had an active role in the decolonization of the Irish visual imagination.

2.2.11 The Real Ireland.

The west of Ireland from the 1910s, through literature and art, had become invested with a cultural capital which was recognised and harnessed by the newly emerging state. While there were numerous portraits of mainly Irish nationalist politicians, which as discussed, supported the *raison d'être* for the event, the largest theme in the art exhibition was the rural landscape represented by approximately thirty works.²²⁹ Among the landscape paintings there were images of the midlands, North, and East but West of Ireland locations dominated. Physical loss of the land in colonial Ireland and the aesthetic loss in art was

²²⁸ Yeats Cuala prints were exhibited at the Exposition D'art Irlandais, Paris 1922 and the Chicago Century of Progress, Exhibition of Irish Art, 1933. His prints were exhibited at home at the Aonach Tailteann art exhibitions of 1922, 1924 and 1928. They were also shown at the Arts and Crafts Society exhibitions held in Dublin and various craft exhibitions attended by the Cuala Press in Ireland and abroad from the early 1900s. See Gifford Lewis, *The Yeats sisters and the Cuala*, (Dublin: IAP, 1994).

²²⁹ Thirty works in the painting section and numerous prints in the arts and crafts section.

Exposition D'art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue] : Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922).

being addressed by artists in the IFS, which at this stage, still aspired to a thirty-two county country.²³⁰

The Paris exhibition happened when an image of the ‘real’ West was still being impregnated into the Irish psyche, both home and abroad, as an essential source of national identity. This veneration of the western seaboard as the location of true Gaelic values was in much of Irish nationalist culture. The assumption or assertion in Synge’s plays, Yeats and Henry’s paintings and prints was that they represented something essential, something that was authentically Irish and uncompromisingly Gaelic – a culture that survived and still endured the onslaught of the epochalist age and a pervasive English influence. The western islands with their harsh physical environments, sturdy, self-reliant inhabitants and native traditions, identified them as locations of cultural purity and appropriate symbols of the nation – all of which were embodied in the writing of the Irish Revival and in the art of Keating, Henry, Yeats and others, exhibited in Paris. Economic realities in the West meant emigration and erosion of the politically cherished Irish language, as such, paintings captured a Gaelic culture which in truth was struggling to survive. Political aspirations for Western culture as an exemplar of Irish life persisted for decades while these same politicians realised they had to address the economic realities.²³¹

Examples of Henry’s paintings were used on rail and tourism posters from the 1920s to the 1950s, therefore his images of the Irish landscape became ubiquitous. In hindsight, because of this, many of Henry’s paintings now seem overly familiar and repetitive, but they were fresh and innovative in the 1920s. The paintings exhibited in Paris were important in their

²³⁰ Article 12 of the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty provided for a Boundary Commission to be set up to ‘determine in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants... the boundaries between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland’. Even though the Treaty was signed it was hoped that, showcasing Ireland’s position and desire for a 32 county country in Paris, would continue to pressurise England.

²³¹ Years later, De Valera, during a debate on commissioning Bodkin’s report on the state of Irish art, suggested that art might generate ‘employment of a useful character for the people upon the western seaboard and in districts in the country where our people are living upon a bare subsistence level’, before adding, ‘There is no money in this Estimate for the topic’. (Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. 117 No. 10. Wednesday, 20 Jul 1949). De Valera conflated the artist with his art and the economic reality of the West.

role in reclaiming the iconography of the West and refuting images that characterised the Irish as sub-human, racially inferior, feckless and incapable of self-government, reliant on a benevolent British government to rule and legislate. As well as Henry, Keating and Yeats; works by Eva (1876-1960) and Letitia Hamilton (1878-1964), Nathaniel Hone, Grace Henry (1868-1953), Patrick Tuohy and others refuted such assertions and represented a sensitive sympathetic account of their observations and experience, embodying Irish cultural identity and place. Mirroring the Irish literary revival, Irish people depicted in the art exhibited in Paris were, proud and industrious, and a distance from bucolic characters in knee breeches and tall green felt hats of earlier Irish genre scenes (figure 40). Many of the paintings were created as an emotional subjective response by artists to their landscape, inspired by post-impressionism. These paintings and prints played an important role in associating identity with place in the national consciousness.

2.2.12 Congress legacy.

The 1922 Irish art exhibition in Paris reflected a single-minded political approach of a pre-Treaty government and was devised as a cohesive cultural undertaking, presenting an official grand narrative of Irish cultural history and contemporary artistic endeavour. It was the first time the Irish Republic, as a self-claimed independent state, used art to position itself internationally. Sited in Paris, one of the world's major cities, the art capital of the world and in front of a multinational audience, the new State was making a bold political statement through the art exhibition and its associated cultural events. It sought to promote a politically and culturally independent Ireland, highlight its ongoing unshackling from British administration and to show the State as a home to an industrious and historical race with much to offer to the world.²³² On display was the work of Irish artists that had

²³² The exhibition audience was international (Parisian public), the catalogue was produced in French and notices of the event was carried in Parisian newspapers and art journals, national (Irish delegates), and also a specific overlap of both, Irish diaspora attendees, who were being asked to reconnect with their homeland in the viewing of Irish objects and art.

independently made art that reflected a distinctive vision of Irish culture and in turn visualised the political aspirations of the fledgling Free State. The *Cork Examiner* reported the comments of ‘an eminent [English] art critic’ that by this time many Irish artists in London including well-known painters like Lavery and William Orpen were turning ‘their thoughts back to their own country’.²³³ It concluded that ‘under the Irish Free State there was likely to be a remarkable renaissance in Irish art’. The Civil War and an imperfect solution to Irish Independence forced Irish artists to align themselves with, or to distance themselves from post-Treaty factions. Artistic responses would evolve as political events took new turns and the new State developed. In most historical political commentary on the Race Congress, it is regarded as a political failure – in hindsight that seems to have been inevitable.²³⁴ Yet, the events of the Congress, including the art exhibition, engaged with the Parisian public and were reported positively in newspapers worldwide.²³⁵

Culturally the Irish artists who had participated in the Paris show represented a zeitgeist of Irish nationalism. Many of the painters and sculptors in this art exhibition were members of the Royal Hibernian Academy and/ or the Royal Academy but all eschewed the RHA and RA designation.²³⁶ The Royal title would have been at odds with the leitmotif of the

Aspects of Independence were subject to ongoing negotiation at this stage and there were many unresolved issues, for example, British troops were still present in the State, Britain retained Treaty ports, negotiating the border was an issue and there was a narrative in the newspapers of Britain retaking control.

²³³ London correspondent, “Irish Art Exhibition”, *Cork Examiner*, 19th Jan. 1922. 4. Lavery and Orpen had painted Irish scenes before this.

²³⁴ Political commentary on the Race Congress consider it a failure, for example see Dermot Keogh, 1987. Gerard Keown, 2001. K. Daniel, 1991. Paul Murray, 2001. Richard Davis, 1977. John Brannigan, 2009.

²³⁵ The bibliography contains a list of publications from Ireland, France, England, United States and Australia. For example Anon. “Irish Congress in Paris, De Valera chosen president”, *The Barrier Miner*, 30th Jan, 1922. 1. Anon. “Le Monde des Arts”, *New York Herald*, 29th Jan, 1922. Louis de Meurville, “A Travers les Expositions”, *Le Gaulois*, 24th Jan, 1922. Anon. “Une exposition d’art irlandais”, *Le Temps*, 23rd Jan, 1922. Anon. “Irish Art in Paris in closed, Crowds gather on last day of showing”, *The Chicago Tribune*, 28th Feb, 1922. For exhibition reports see the art journal *L’Art et les Artistes* and newspapers *Le Figaro*, *Le Rappel*, *L’Ouest Éclair*, *Le Gaulois*, *La Lanterne*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Matin*, *Le Journal* – see bibliography for a full list. De Valera, principally, and other delegates engaged in official diplomatic events including laying a wreath at the grave of the unknown French soldier, see Many Paris Functions, *Cork Examiner*, 20th Jan, 1922. 5.

²³⁶ *Exposition D’art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]*: (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922).

Congress and the exhibition's aim to create a political and cultural distance from the United Kingdom and anything Royal.

There was no officially commissioned art, and artists were free to submit their own, at times emotional, responses to the political turmoil.²³⁷ This resulted in divergent works representing Irish themes such as the West, republican military prowess, to commemorating nationalists and nationalism. The arts and crafts works were appropriated to show the continuum of craftsmanship, stemming from a unique legacy, in terms of design and making. The greatness of Ireland's ancient past was revived and was thriving again in a reborn Ireland.

However, the fervour that many of these artists displayed, did not survive long after the exhibition. Lavery's Irish nationalist sympathies were clearly spelled out in his works in the exhibition. He shared in the nationalist aims of other participating artists. He and his wife Hazel, had hosted the Anglo-Irish Treaty delegates at their London home in 1921, and they also travelled to visit the Paris exhibition in 1922.²³⁸ He wrote to Churchill petitioning for Irish independence in 1921.²³⁹ Lavery represented Ireland in the 1924 Paris Olympics but, as Ireland became more politically fragmented and insular, he would go on to represent Great Britain in the Olympics in Amsterdam 1928 and Los Angeles 1932. In the late 1920s Jack Yeats stated that he did not want his paintings being seen 'as a vehicle for expressing something else' and his output of political paintings virtually stopped.²⁴⁰ He described his work as '[only] the memory of a moment ...' and he 'refused' to participate

²³⁷ As already discussed in the works of Yeats, Lavery, Tuohy, Keating, Markievicz ...

²³⁸ London correspondent, "Irish Art Exhibition", *Cork Examiner*, 19th Jan. 1922. 4.

Lavery and his Chicago born wife Hazel, were a celebrity couple in London society where he enjoyed huge patronage from the British establishment. They counted Winston Churchill among their friends and Hazel, herself an artist, taught him to paint.

²³⁹ Re letter to Churchill see John Lavery, *The Life of a Painter*, (London: Cassell & Co., 1940). 208.

²⁴⁰ Other political works by Yeats included *A Political Meeting*, 1905, *Lying-in-state of O'Donovan Rossa*, 1915, *Bachelor's Walk*, *In Memory* (1915), *Singing the Dark Rosaleen*, *Croke Park* (1921), *Communicating with Prisoners* (c.1924), *The Funeral of Harry Boland* (1922), *Going to Wolfe Tone's Grave* (1929).

in later State supported exhibitions.²⁴¹ Two years later, the IFS declined to participate in the British Empire Exhibition of 1924, which featured a small number of Irish artists which is discussed in the next chapter. The Irish artists who did attend, unlike in Paris, used their RHA designation, Lavery in preference used RA as he was a member of both academies. Dermot O'Brien again showed his portrait of Lennox Robinson but on this occasion omitted references to his nationalist plays that were included in the title in Paris – effectively depoliticising the work.²⁴² O'Brien as president of the RHA was designated PRHA. Keating on the other hand maintained his nationalist and republican zeal. He wanted his revolutionary works to form the basis of a national collection of modern history painting.²⁴³ In 1924 he sought leave from his teaching job, to work on this project, but was refused by the Department of Education, who preferred to forget rather than remember recent events.²⁴⁴

Rather than projecting a selective national narrative, the exhibition and cultural programme told a story of richness and breath, of the multiple cultural influences left on the thirty-two counties by succeeding generations, and positions the nation's contribution in wider European culture. Representations of a multifaceted Irish life in art and culture had included nationalist politicians, Catholic religiosity, Irish Landscapes, Anglo-Irish writers, an orange procession, and portraits of the poor and the privileged. Ten years later as the reality of a partitioned country dawned and the State sought to show the national development, made by a stable country since independence, many of these images would be unacceptable.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991). 28. Quoting Yeats' comments to the Daily Express, Dublin 12th Oct, 1929. TCD. MSS 6910-7079. Title: Thomas Bodkin (1887-1961) papers, 1911-1967 – ref 6944/962/986. Letter from O'Brien to Bodkin. 11th Mar. 1927 – Yeats refusal to take part in a 1927 exhibition in London is noted more fully in chapter four.

²⁴² *The British Empire Exhibition (1924) Palace of Arts*, (London: Fleetway Press, 1924).

²⁴³ Kennedy, *Creating History*. 166.

²⁴⁴ Ibid. Keating wanted a room dedicated to these works in the DCGHL.

²⁴⁵ As is discussed in chapter five, pictures submitted to an exhibition of Irish art in Chicago in 1933 were censored by the State.

The events of the Irish Race Congress and art exhibition in Paris were soon overshadowed by the Civil War in Ireland that started the following June and lasted for eleven months. The *Fine Ghaedheal* organisation did not survive. Its funding from the pro-Treaty Government was subject to conditions that were not agreeable to De Valera and there never was another world meeting of the Irish Race.²⁴⁶ Yet at a particular moment in time, the Congress in Paris presented a fractured but united front. At the event's closing lunch, De Valera assured those in attendance, that 'there was no difference on political questions that would not be found in any country' and that statements to the contrary were 'English propaganda'.²⁴⁷ Diarmid Coffey prophetically recorded in his Congress notes when one speaker talked about guns, 'who are those guns going to be used against'.²⁴⁸

The Congress was the first time the Independent Free State displayed art for political purposes. Much of the artwork, such as Clarke's glass, the Cuala embroideries and the art of Yeats, Henry, and Keating signified an independent nation that invested in high art objects and valued the visual arts in its role in how Ireland saw itself. The planning and actuality of the Race Congress and the art exhibition straddled pre and post-independence Ireland. In its wake, the agency and role of visual art in the State evolved from visualising identity and independence to include reconciliation and nation building, as exemplified in the Aonach Tailteanns exhibitions of 1922 and 1924.

²⁴⁶ Local country events continued such as the New York events of 1947 and 1994.

²⁴⁷ Anon. "Many Paris Functions, French Deputy's Tribute to Ireland", *Cork Examiner*, 30th Jan, 1922. 5.

²⁴⁸ NLI, Diarmid Coffey, Coffey & Chenevix Trench Papers, MS 46,312 /4, contemporary handwritten minute from the Congress. See a more sanitised record in *Fine Ghaedheal, Imteačta Aonaíge na n-Gaedeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922). 92.

Chapter 3. The Aonach Tailteann Art Exhibitions 1922 and 1924.

3.1 Introduction - Ancient history remade.

According to legend the original Aonach Tailteann was organised by the Irish High King Lugh in 1896 BC as a Cuiteach Fuait or funeral games to solemnise the funeral rites of his step-mother Queen Tailté. T.H. Nally reconstructed the Aonach Tailteann in his imaginative published history of the event.¹ It was/ is the main source for details and context on the ancient event. In it he states the games

...consisted of athletics, gymnastics and equestrian contests...spear-casting...wrestling, boxing...in fact every sort of contest exhibiting physical endurance and skill. In addition, there were literary, musical, oratorical, and story-telling competitions; singing and dancing competitions...Also, competitions for goldsmiths, jewellers...spinners, weavers and dyers...²

The Aonach was said to have celebrated Irish people's 'ancient greatness in the Athletic World' and inspired 'the far-famed Olympic Games of Ancient Greece'.³ This first national cultural event financially supported and planned by the Free State government was to take place in 1922, took the form of re-enacting the mythical Aonach Tailteann or Tailteann Games. The revived spectacle would include national games, international athletics and art exhibitions. The Games were an annual event until the Norman invasion of 1169 AD – a time identified by some as the beginning of British rule in Ireland.⁴ The re-introduction of the Games was seen to signify Ireland's further disengagement and independence from England.

As Seamus Deane has noted, 'if a tradition ... does not exist, it is necessary to invent it, even if it means building on the ruins of tradition', and so the IFSG reconstructed the

¹ T.H. Nally, *The Aonach Tailteann and the Tailteann Games. Their origin, history, and ancient associations*, (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1922).

² Ibid. 71.

³ Ibid. 61.

⁴ Ibid. 34.

Aonach Tailteann tradition based on Nally's re-imagination of the event.⁵ Like 'the rediscovered traditions' of many revivalist organisations that 'were at best, loosely based on earlier customs' the new Irish State looked immediately to re-enact the mythical Aonach Tailteann or Tailteann Games.⁶ Just as Irish artists and writers of the cultural revival, including John Hughes, Oliver Sheppard, W. B. Yeats, George Russell, Lady Gregory and Padraig Pearse, appropriated Cuchulainn and other ancient Irish legendary heroes of fable and romance in their art work, the new Irish State repurposed the Aonach Tailteann.⁷ The government drew inspiration from the mythologised ancient past articulated in Nally's romanticised recovery of the spectacle. This was also similar to the Gaelic League's recovery of a disappearing language, and the arts and crafts movement in the revival of ancient crafts, and much Irish art seeking authenticity in the Celtic Revival. The first generation liberationists in the postcolonial period are invariably nativist in tone and ideology and the emergence of the Aonach Tailteann after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922 shows this to be true in the embryonic state.⁸ This lyrical approach in culture was also evident in contemporary Irish events, the *Irish Times* reporting on General Mulcahy's oration at Michael Collins' funeral, described Mulcahy as having 'the mind of a poet and the spirit of a [mythical] Red Branch knight'.⁹ Various Tailteann programs casually reference a cast of characters from Irish mythology. For example the *Aonach Tailteann 1928 Souvenir Program* cites, Lugh of the long arm, Queen Tailté, Fionn MacCumhaill, Niall Glúndub, Cuchulainn, Diarmuid and Grainne, Daghdha – 'the great chief and druid of those mystical people, the Tuatha de Danann', and others, with an

⁵ Seamus Deane, *Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Irish Literature, 1880-1890* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1985), 19.

⁶ P. J. Matthews, *Revival: The Abbey Theatre, Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League, and the Co-operative Movement*. (Cork: CUP in association with Field Day Publications, 2003). 27, 28.

⁷ Numerous texts deal with this, see for example, P. J. Matthews, *Revival*, (Cork: CUP, 2003), Seamus Deane, *Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Irish Literature, 1880-1890* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1985), Róisín Kennedy, "The Death of Cúchulainn in the GPO" in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 917-920.

⁸ Said, *Culture and Imperialism*. 276.

⁹ Anon. "General Mulcahy's Oration", *Irish Times*, 29th Aug, 1922. 5.

understanding that their reading audience are familiar with their stories.¹⁰ Important Irish historical and religious figures as well as poets and 1916 Rising martyrs are invoked in the program, such as, Thomas Davis, Saints Patrick and Colmcille, Thomas MacDonagh and Patrick Pearse.¹¹ There are contributions from eminent people and politicians, such as, William T. Cosgrave and Eamon de Valera. Other essays on Irish language, art, ancient Irish gold ornaments, crafts, dance, sports and literature are contained between the program covers – all contributions to the published programs serve to validate and legitimise the State, the current administration, and the Aonach Tailteann itself.¹² Economic nation building is also present with chapters on Irish economics and ‘Ireland for the tourist’.¹³ The Aonach Tailteanns of 1922 (which consisted of the art exhibition only) and 1924, show the nascent State attempting to reconcile opposing Civil War factions and assert a national identity that could be embraced by both sides of the Treaty divide.

Staging the event, offered the new State the opportunity to portray an image of the Irish nation, as modern (by producing an international sporting and cultural spectacle), stable and rooted in tradition, while also acknowledging a unique heritage. Other spectacles - discussed later in this thesis, for instance the Aonach Tailteanns in 1928 and 1932, Dublin Civic Weeks in 1927 and 1929, the Eucharistic Congress in 1932 and civic publications such as *The Handbook of Dublin* and the *Saorstát Éireann Handbook* - re-enforced this concept.

¹⁰ *Aonach Tailteann 1928 Souvenir Program*. (Dublin: Gaelic Press, 1928). 11, 20, 38.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 37, 51.

¹² *Ibid.* Thomas Bodkin, “A nation’s treasure house”, 29-34. L. S. Gogan, “The gold ornaments in the National Museum”, 54-61. M.S. Dudley Westropp, “Irish Glass”, 64-69. F. R. Higgins, “An aspect of Irish literature of to-day”, 51-53. Risteard MacGabhann, “Rinnce na h-Eireann, Irish Dancing”, 45-50.

George Gavan Duffy, “The Irish language and Irish Games”, 35-37. There are also separate chapters on Handball, Hurling and Gaelic Football. All in *Aonach Tailteann 1928 Souvenir Program*.

A similar souvenir program was issued for 1924 with contributions from, William T. Cosgrave, Douglas Hyde, John Lavery, Eoin MacNeill, J. J. Walsh, Oliver St. John Gogarty and others.

¹³ *Ibid.* E. N. Somers, “Irish Economics”, 22-24. Anon. “Ireland for the tourist”, 77-81.

In this thesis the Aonach Tailteanns (also known as the Tailteann Games and the Irish Race Olympics) of 1922 and 1924 are considered together.¹⁴ With the exception of the art exhibition, the spectacle planned for 1922 was cancelled. Planning for 1922 was carried forward to 1924 and the whole scheme was defined and given agency in the political debates and public commentary leading up to the 1922 and 1924 events. The 1922 Tailteann organising committee continued to hold ‘monthly meetings’ until the games of 1924 were in-situ.¹⁵

Holding an Aonach was suggested by the nationalist politician Michael Davitt (1846-1906) as early as 1880s and received general support from Irish cultural movements including the Gaelic Athletic Association.¹⁶ The revolutionary Dáil discussed the matter and a resolution asking the first Irish Free State government to ‘organise an Irish Olympiad to be held in Dublin this year [1922], during which efforts will be made to revive old Irish games’ was passed at the World Congress of the Irish Race in Paris in January 1922.¹⁷ This proposal to the Congress was made by the chief advocate for the Tailteann, J.J. Walsh.¹⁸ In a contribution to the 1928 Tailteann Souvenir Program, De Valera credits the revival of the games to this Congress.¹⁹ Walsh was appointed director of the organising committee by the Government and he started planning early in 1922 to hold the first Aonach Tailteann in August that year. Both sides of the treaty divide supported the event and pro-treaty Walsh put forward the program for the proposed 1922 Games to the Dáil on 1st March, 1922.

¹⁴ Promotional brochure for 1922 Aonach Tailteann. *Tailteann Games Irish Race Olympics Dublin 6-13 Aug. 1922*, (Dublin: Helys, 1922).

¹⁵ For examples of reports on monthly committee meetings see “Aonach Tailteann (Irish Race Olympics)”, *Cork Examiner*, 12th December, 1922, 7 and “Aonach Tailteann”, *Cork Examiner*, 15th January, 1923, 7.

¹⁶ Michael Davitt (1846-1906) was an Irish republican politician and land agitator who founded the Irish National Land League.

Mike Cronin, “Projecting the nation through sport and culture: Ireland, Aonach Tailteann and the Irish Free State, 1924-32”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 38, No.3 (Jul., 2003). 399.

¹⁷ Anon. “Olympic Games for Dublin Paris Conference Suggestion”, *Irish Times*, 25th Jan, 1922. 6. Nantes. 179.

¹⁸ J.J. Walsh was a pro-Treaty TD and a founding member of Cumann na nGaedheal. He served as Postmaster General from 1922 until 1924 and retired from the Dáil in 1927. He was a member of the GAA in Cork.

¹⁹ Eamon de Valera, “An Occasion for National Re-union” in *Aonach Tailteann 1928 Souvenir Program*, (Dublin: Gaelic Press, 1928). 7.

When he sought an instalment of ‘two thousand pounds necessary for the continuance of the organising programme’, it was De Valera who ‘hoping that it will prevent it being a party question’, seconded the proposal.²⁰ This debate on funding for the Aonach Tailteann occurred at the same time as the Dáil was considering funding for *Fine Ghaedheal* after its establishment at the Paris Congress.²¹ While agreement between pro- and anti-treaty politicians on providing financial support for this political organisation was unworkable, and ultimately failed, there was universal agreement on financial support for the events of the Aonach Tailteann.²² The 1922 event was to be seen as a neutral spectacle that people on both sides of the treaty divide could come together to participate in and celebrate. President Cosgrave writing in a 1924 program invoked Thomas Davis, ‘that there is more, much more, in the life of a nation than politics and economics’, and declared that the games give ‘a new impulse to this necessary and valuable form of national life’.²³

This thesis will show that the main benefit of the Aonach was that it offered a forum for reconciliation and tensions inherent in the national project disappeared and dissolved into purely creative ones. Politicians saw art and culture as a form of soft power, which might entice people who felt marginalised in a divided society back into the mainstream and away from violence. They were also saying that this display of Irish culture was where Irish identity began and it would ultimately define the nation. There was no debate on low versus high art; theatre, pageant, sport, painting and arts and crafts, received equal billing in this state sponsored, official version of Irishness, presented as a grand narrative of Irish cultural history.

²⁰ Dáil Éireann debate. Vol. S2 No. 2. “Aonach Tailteann”. 1st Mar. 1922.

²¹ Dáil Éireann debate. Vol. S2 No. 15. “Fine Ghaedheal – report of special committee”. 8th Jun. 1922. Fine Ghaedheal was discussed earlier in this chapter. It was a the short lived diaspora administrative body formed during the World Congress of the Irish Race in Paris in January, 1922.

²² Financial support (£5,000) was offered to Fine Ghaedheal on conditions that a pro-Treaty government representation was appointed to its board. This was unacceptable to De Valera and it remained unfunded.

²³ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Memo, Aonach Tailteann, 1924: A message from the President. Undated. *Aonach Tailteann 1924 Souvenir Programme*. (Dublin: Helys, 1924).

When the Aonach was first proposed, before the Treaty divide and the Civil War, it was to present the state internationally. In 1922 it would serve to announce the rebirth of a state with an ancient and unique cultural past. The sporting and artistic spectacle, compared by some to the Olympic Games, required an up-to-date transport and venue infrastructure that would have enabled the State to display both a modern identity and an ancient past before a national, diasporic and international audience.

3.1.1 National expression curtailed.

With the War of Independence over and the Anglo-Irish Treaty passed through the Dáil, the Free State government started planning for the 1922 Aonach and Walsh received £6,000 from the Dáil to organise the spectacle.²⁴ The Aonach Tailteann organisation was established with offices in Dublin at Middle Abbey Street and Parnell Square but it later moved to 5a College Street.²⁵ A further £10,000 was provided to the GAA to upgrade Croke Park and make it a suitable venue to host most of the events associated with the Games – this was ultimately used to improve facilities and build the Hogan Stand.²⁶

Walsh advised the Dáil that the form of the revived Tailteann spectacle had evolved since 1919 from a programme of events ‘strictly common to the Greek Olympiad, embracing the Gaelic race at home and abroad’ to something ‘far beyond anything attempted at the’ Olympic Games.²⁷ Walsh stated that it had been intended to hold a similar event in tandem with the Paris Race Convention but that it couldn’t be organised in time.²⁸ Exhibiting Ireland in Paris had encompassed a reminder to the world of the Nation’s unique cultural prowess and capacity, through an art exhibition, music and theatre performances and through a number of lectures on aspects of Irish culture. Walsh’s paper delivered in Paris

²⁴ NAI file - FIN/1/379, 1922. Certificate in lieu of vote: Tailteann Games (Grant-in-aid).

²⁵ NAI file - Tailteann Games TSCH/3/S1592 1922-1924. Noted from addresses given.

²⁶ NAI file - Tailteann Games TSCH/3/S1592 1922-1924. Memo from J.J. Walsh to Minister for Local Gov, 22nd Feb. 1922. See also NAI file Estimates 1922/23: Tailteann Games FIN/1/293, 1922, undated note. The GAA received this money on condition that Croke Park was available free to the Tailteann Games.

²⁷ Dáil Éireann debate. Vol. S2 No. 2. “Aonach Tailteann”. 1st Mar. 1922.

²⁸ Ibid. (Dáil 1/3/22)

on Irish sport compensated to some extent for the failure to exhibit Ireland's games and pastimes as revived and supported by the Gaelic Athletic Association.

The Aonach was to be restricted to participants of Irish birth or descent, 'all amateurs of Irish birth, or either of whose parents or grandparents were of Irish birth'.²⁹ The amateur status was not applied to artists exhibiting in the art exhibition, many of whose art exhibits were for sale. Competitions were divided between national and international competitors, but whether the Aonach would remain 'confined to the Irish race', or expand to a fully international competition like the Olympics was a matter which would be decided after the first games.³⁰ De Valera was against any move to broaden it out, saying 'I think we ought to keep them as definitely Irish games' and not compete with the Olympics.³¹ As is shown in this thesis, the State supported Irish participation in art exhibitions at home and abroad, which sited Irish art in an international context and appealed to the diaspora.³²

In various debates and commentary on the Aonach Tailteann it was frequently compared to the Olympics, always with the expectation that the Irish games would be 'far beyond'³³ or 'Ireland's equivalent of the Greek Olympic'³⁴ and 'as a matter of fact the Aonach Tailteann is more than twice as large as the Greek Olympic'.³⁵ While the Aonach had widespread support, Walsh alone seemed determined that it would rival and surpass the international Olympic Games.³⁶ Funding requests were couched in terms of Olympic funding with Walsh citing the French Government voting 'a million francs for the Greek Olympic of 1924', as part of his request to the Minister for Local Government for the Croke Park

²⁹ Promotional brochure for 1922 Aonach Tailteann. *Tailteann Games Irish Race Olympics Dublin 6-13 Aug. 1922*, (Dublin: Helys, 1922), 14.

³⁰ Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. S2 No. 15. "Aonach Tailteann", Thursday, 8th June 1922.

³¹ Ibid.

³² For example, Irish participation in "Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions" exhibitions, held in the Imperial Art Gallery from 1927 to 1931, the Dublin Civic Week art exhibition 1927, Irish Art at the Century of Progress, Chicago 1933...

³³ Dáil Éireann debate. Vol. S2 No. 2. "Aonach Tailteann". 1st Mar. 1922.

³⁴ *Tailteann Games Irish Race Olympics Dublin 6-13 Aug. 1922*, (Dublin: Helys, 1922), 4.

³⁵ Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. S2 No. 15. "Aonach Tailteann", Thursday, 8th June 1922.

³⁶ 'the [1924] Tailteann Games - was bigger even than that year's Paris Olympic Games' see Paul Rouse, "When Ireland's Tailteann Games eclipsed the Olympics" in *Irish Examiner*, 18th Nov. 2016.

improvement grant.³⁷ The ambition for the Aonach was substantial, trophies and ‘over eleven-hundred medals will be needed for winners’ and Walsh believed that ‘medal and statuette-casting industries will be started in Dublin as a consequence of this impetus’.³⁸ As the first government administered post-colonial event at home, it was to have offered Irish citizens a view of themselves and their place within the new State through sport and culture. Irish nationality as construed by territory was now defined, and had been curtailed by partition. However, nationality as defined by culture would not be restricted. Art, sport and culture were represented on an all-island basis.

The sports events planned for the 1922 Aonach included an exhaustive list, from athletics, cycling, hurling camogie, football, yachting, swimming, golf, chess, tennis... to motor cycling and aeroplane racing. English national games - those banned by the GAA - were excluded, sending a clear message that these games were not English, and established a cultural distance from the former coloniser.³⁹ The Tailteann Committee asserted an ancient Irish antecedent for events in the Aonach except motor-cycling and airplane flying which ‘cannot be numbered among the ancient pastimes of Ireland’, they did claim everything else as having a Gaelic heritage, including billiards and golf.⁴⁰ Cultural events consisted of music, literature, dancing and visual art and arts and crafts exhibitions.⁴¹ Walsh had been in contact with the French Olympic Committee who validated the inclusion of art in the games, informing him that the Olympic Committee ‘from the very beginning, [sought] to combine manifestations of Art and Ideas with Athletics...’⁴² Baron Pierre De Coubertin

³⁷ Memo from J.J. Walsh to Minister for Local Government, 22nd Feb. 1922 in NAI file - Tailteann Games TSCH/3/S1592 1922-1924

³⁸ Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. S2 No. 15. “Aonach Tailteann”, Thursday, 8th June 1922.

³⁹ In 1905 the GAA passed Rule 27. It read "any member of the association who plays or encourages in any way rugby, football [soccer], hockey or any imported game which is calculated or injuriously affect our national pastimes, is suspended from the association." Rule 27 was deleted in 1971.

⁴⁰ Aonach Tailteann, *Tailteann Games, 1924. Revival of the ancient Tailteann games Dublin 2nd-18th August, 1924. Souvenir programme*. (Baile Átha Cliath: Aonach Tailteann, 1924).

⁴¹ Dáil Éireann debate. Vol. S2 No. 2. “Aonach Tailteann”. 1st Mar. 1922 and promotional brochure *Tailteann Games Irish Race Olympics Dublin 6-13 Aug, 1922*. (Dublin: Helys, 1922).

⁴² Cited in “Aonach Tailteann” in *Cork Examiner*, 14th Nov. 1922. 7.

added 'The Olympic games of 1924 should show that Literature and Art have become part of the Olympic celebration, thus completely fulfilling the ancient tradition'.⁴³ Artists and athletes would be treated equally. The newspaper report adds that the Tailteann already included art and that the 'promotors of the French Olympic... extend[ed] their programme to compete in attraction with that of Aonach Tailteann'.⁴⁴

The Irish Civil War started in May 1922 and on the 7th July 1922 the American team for the Aonach pulled out, 'owing to the situation in Dublin', and Walsh reported to the Government the following week that a number of other diaspora teams were not prepared to travel.⁴⁵ It was decided to postpone the event proposed for 6th -13th August, 1922, this date had been chosen because the original games were held in August and the following week saw the annual Royal Dublin Horse Show. This was a key event in the city's social calendar since the 1860s, and it was hoped crowds coming for one event would also attend the other. There was some opposition to postponing the games. Denis McCullough wrote to Minister of Finance, Michael Collins 'surprised to learn that there was a certain opinion in the Government in favour of postponing the Games'.⁴⁶ He opined that 'this would be a very grave mistake'. He believed it should go ahead irrespective of financial considerations because of its appeal to Americans, 'kudos to our Nation' and it 'would be the very best propaganda that could be done'. He also thought that the games 'would certainly distract the mind of the Country from other matters and be a solvent for many little minor troubles'.⁴⁷ However, despite opposition from some corners, the event was cancelled.

⁴³ Ibid. Charles Pierre de Frédy, Baron de Coubertin (1863-1937) was a French educator and historian, founder of the International Olympic Committee, and its second President. He is known as the father of the modern Olympic Games.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Tailteann Games, 1922-1924. Rialtas Sealadach na hÉireann.

⁴⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Tailteann Games, 1922-1924. Letter from McCullough to Michael Collins., Minister of Finance, 12th July 1922. Denis McCullough (1883-1968) was a business man and prominent Irish nationalist political activist in the early 20th century.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

3.1.2 Aonach Tailteann Great Exhibition of Irish Art 1922.

One Aonach Tailteann event did proceed in 1922 - the art exhibition held in the RDS. The committee moved the exhibition's dates forward to coincide with the Horse Show and placed advertisements in the newspapers announcing that the 'Aonach Tailteann Great Exhibition of Irish Art' will be held during the Show (figure 41).⁴⁸ The Government granted most of the funds required for the exhibition, smaller amounts were provided by the RHA and The Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland.⁴⁹

Patrick Hogan, Minister for Agriculture wrote personally to the Department of Finance seeking the necessary grant. He assured them of the art exhibition's educational value and that it would be 'representative of every aspect of the Department's work for Art Education in Ireland'.⁵⁰ To guarantee this he confirmed that the Exhibition Committee 'was chaired by George Atkinson (1880-1941), Head Master of the Metropolitan School of Art, and... include[d] eight members of the Department's staff'.⁵¹ This extensive State involvement in the committee was to ensure that a breadth as well as quality of art production was exhibited.

The Tailteann Games report that Walsh presented to the Dáil in June 1922 stated every effort would be made to include all artistic practices, 'Arts - the Arts department is providing for 47 different sections and will easily eclipse anything hitherto attempted'.⁵² In the end the catalogue shows there were 48 classes and 2,163 exhibits of Irish paintings and

⁴⁸ Advertisements, *Irish Independent*, 19th Jul, 1922, 4, and other papers.

⁴⁹ NAI file FIN/1/402. Memos between the Department of Agriculture and Dept. of Finance, 20th and 24th Jul. 1922 – agreeing a grant of £250 for the exhibition. £50 each was provided by the RHA and the Arts and Crafts Society. See also Saorstát Éireann. *Appropriation Accounts, 1922-23*. Dublin: Stationary Office, 1924. 60.

⁵⁰ NAI. FIN 1/402. Proposed grant towards expenses of Exhibition of Irish Art. Letter dated 20th Jul. 1922 from P. Hogan, Ministry of Agriculture to the Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

⁵¹ Ibid. George Atkinson chaired various meetings. Artists involved on the committee were Percy Oswald Reeves, Nassau Blair Browne, Oliver Sheppard, Jack B. Yeats, Colm Ó'Lochlainn, Paul Henry, Evelyn Gleeson, Dermot O'Brien and Lucius O'Callaghan and Arthur E. Moran also attended. See "Irish Art Exhibition, to be opened at Ballsbridge" in *Irish Times*, 19th Jul. 1922. 4.

⁵² Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. S2 No. 15. "Aonach Tailteann", Thursday, 8th June 1922.

arts and crafts, and the exhibition was extensively advertised and reported in newspapers.⁵³ This still remains the largest exhibition of Irish art and design in the history of the State, deserving its ‘Great Exhibition of Irish Art’ moniker.⁵⁴ By comparison the two largest regular national exhibitions at this time, the 1922 RHA annual exhibition showed 286 works, including oils, works on paper, miniatures and sculpture while the periodic Arts and Crafts exhibition held in 1925 had 422 exhibits in thirty-three categories.⁵⁵ The 1922 Tailteann Art exhibition was over three times larger than these two shows combined. It included all their sections and added an additional eight categories.

Divided into two groups, A. Drawing and Painting with 8 classes, and B. Arts and Crafts and Art Industries with 40 classes, it featured approximately 300 artists, craftworkers and craft organisations. Painters were as diverse as the modernist Mainie Jellett (1897-1944) to the more academic RHA president Dermot O’Brien, and the Arts and Crafts categories ranged from stained glass to crochet.⁵⁶ Historian Mike Cronin writing about the 1924 exhibition, but equally applicable in 1922, stated that ‘[T]he Aonach Tailteann and its art competition were attempts by the government to create a feeling of consensus in the Irish population and to encourage an identification with the new State’.⁵⁷ The Government, with eight civil servants on the selection committee, had no need to attach conditions to the funding provided for the exhibition.⁵⁸ The primary aim of the exhibition was to show the extent of creativity in the Irish race. On visiting the show, Walsh expressed ‘himself very pleasurably surprised with the success which had attended this part of the discarded

⁵³ *Exhibition of Irish Art in the Industries Hall of the Royal Dublin Society Ball’s Bridge Dublin :: August 1922 Catalogue*, Dublin: Browne and Nolan, Ltd., 1922.

Advertisements, *Freemans Journal*, 5th Aug 1922. 3.

⁵⁴ The art exhibition was advertised as such in newspaper by the Tailteann art committee. See for example Advertisements, *Irish Independent*. 19th Jul, 1922. 4.

⁵⁵ *Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland Seventh Exhibition*, (Dublin: Maunsell & Roberts, 1925).

Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts. Catalogue 1922, (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1922)

⁵⁶ *Exhibition of Irish Art in the Industries Hall of the Royal Dublin Society*, 1922.

⁵⁷ Mike Cronin, “The State on Display: The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition” in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 10/1/2005, Vol. 9, Issue 3. 50.

⁵⁸ NAI file FIN/1/402. Memos between the Dept. of Agriculture and Dept. of Finance, 20th and 24th Jul. 1922.

Aonach Tailteann scheme'.⁵⁹ He added that he had 'no idea that such a fine thing' would materialise from the exhibition. It was described as 'a remarkable success' and 'been filled with interested visitors every hour of each day'.⁶⁰

Newspaper reports record that the exhibition was popular and well attended noting attendances by eminent figures such as Horace Plunkett, Maude Gonne McBride (who helped at the Donegal stall) with Mrs. Despard and others.⁶¹ Reports cited the success of the exhibition as further proof of 'the crying need for the erection of a picture gallery suitable to the Irish capital'.⁶² This can be understood as a clear reference to the inactivity by the State to building a home for the Lane bequest.⁶³ Overall visitor numbers to the Horse Show were down, as might be expected with the Civil War as a backdrop, however the 'success' of the Tailteann art exhibition 'induced' the organisers to open it for an extra day.⁶⁴ President of the Dáil, Arthur Griffith died before the exhibition opened on the 12th August, 1922 and his photograph hung on a banner in the art exhibition area and the show closed on the Wednesday afternoon as a mark of respect.⁶⁵ The nascent Free State government was being associated both politically and visually with the art exhibition.

Art exhibits were either entered for competition in the various classes or just for display. Exhibits could be offered for sale. A large number of exhibits, in and out of competition, were 'not for sale', therefore artists showed work not only for financial benefit but to fulfil

⁵⁹ Quoted in Anon. "Irish Industries Art in Commerce", *Irish Times*, 18th Aug. 1922. 7.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Anon. "Irish Art Exhibition Centre of Interest for Many Visitors", *Evening Herald*, 16th Aug. 1922. 1. Exhibitors are all listed under individual names. A number of these belonged to A&C co-operatives such as Cuala Industries, Dun Emer Guild, The Craftworkers, various Home Industries, Cluna Studios, Columbar Studios... While most were Dublin based there were a number of home industry groups from outside the capital such as the Irish Lace Co in Donegal, and it was to one of these that McBride attended.

⁶² Anon. "Irish Art - Today's Exquisite Exhibition – Native Culture's New Era", *Irish Independent*, 15th Aug. 1922. 6 and Anon. "Irish Art", *Irish Times*, 16th Aug. 1922. 10.

⁶³ See, Augusta Gregory, *Sir Hugh Lane's French Pictures*, (London: The Chiswick Press, 1917).

⁶⁴ Anon. "Irish Art Exhibition", *Irish Times*, 19th Aug. 1922. 8.

55,160 visitors attended the Horse Show in 1921 compared to 37,252 in 1922.

⁶⁵ Anon. "Dublin Horse Show", *Weekly Irish Times*, 19th Aug. 1922. 1.

the State's wish that every aspect of artistic art production in the State was exhibited.⁶⁶

Such a large well-advertised exhibition indicated that despite the ongoing Civil War, day to day Irish life continued, one element of the Aonach was realised and the Government was still in control. The Tailteann competition medals were not produced for 1922, so RDS medals were awarded instead. Unlike the Paris exhibition earlier in 1922 where political portraits dominated, the selection for display at the Tailteann during the Civil War avoided inflaming or alienating the republican side. The portraiture class included only two political portraits; Terence McSwiney a martyr to both sides of the treaty divide and the recently deceased Arthur Griffith (figure 42).⁶⁷ The art and culture presented was national and nativist, and deemed acceptable to all. Rural landscape scenes, such as two images of *Sheephaven Bay* by James Humbert Craig and *Landscape* by Paul Henry, dominated the painting classes with the west coast featuring prominently further embedding the rural west as the source of Irish identity.⁶⁸

The medals in the Genre class were awarded to Jack B. Yeats and Sean Keating both of who exhibited political paintings that overtly referenced the War of Independence.

However they weren't partisan and recalled a time of Irish political unity. Yeats won the class with *Approaching Rosses Point, Early Morning*, a work that would have easily fitted in the Landscape and Seascape class. This interchangeability of exhibits was noticeable across all the painting classes. Yeats other work included *Singing the Dark Rosaleen*, *Croke Park* (1921), which depicts the singing of a patriotic ballad at the Gaelic football

⁶⁶ *Exhibition of Irish Art in the Industries Hall of the Royal Dublin Society Ball's Bridge Dublin :: August 1922 Catalogue*, Dublin: Browne and Nolan, Ltd., 1922.

⁶⁷ *Arthur Griffith* by Joseph Maurice McCarthy cat. No. 7 and *Terence McSwiney* by Miss Hugh C. Charde cat. No. 92. The silver medal in portraiture was awarded to Ernest Forbes for *Professor G. W. de Tunzelman*, cat no 69 and the bronze to Estella Solomons for *The Rev. Father Patrick Dinneen*, cat no 104.

⁶⁸ See full list of 1922 Tailteann art exhibition prize-winners (48 categories) in appendix 6. There were over 250 entries in the landscape and seascape class where Ernest Forbes with *Fitzwilliam Square* cat no 198 and E. M. O'Rourke Dickey with *The Mourne Mountains*, cat no 228 were the medal winners. Humbert Craig showed 6 landscapes and Henry 1 work but Henry also exhibited *The Storm* in the Prints and Drawing Class. Priced at 31 pounds 10 schillings *The Storm*, now in the NGI, is an extensive finished drawing and not a sketch.

grounds that had become famous for the Black and Tan massacre of Bloody Sunday less than two years earlier (figure 43).⁶⁹ His largest and most expensive exhibit was *Tráig Bán* a painting of a west of Ireland kelp gatherer. Pyle records in her Yeats catalogue raisonné that this work was known by its anglicised title *Thraw Bawn*, but here it was exhibited by its Irish name in a Gaelic script.⁷⁰ Yeats final exhibit in this class was his now well-known, *Before the Start* (1915), of a west of Ireland race meeting populated by distinctive Irish people.⁷¹ Keating exhibited four paintings in the genre class, *Pleadráca in Árann* (Paradise in Aran) and three revolutionary paintings. *Men of the West* (1915) won second in its class, featuring distinctive Irish types as armed revolutionaries (Keating used himself and his brother as models) in traditional dress. Pre-dating the Easter Rising, this painting is regarded as setting ‘the tenor of national painting... Irishmen were proud and not afraid to fight, resolute and determined’.⁷² Eimear O’Connor, Keating’s biographer, notes this work as his ‘first deliberately political statement’ painted as a ‘demonstration of his nationalism... with a belief in the need for violence in the cause of freedom’.⁷³ He later came to repudiate such violence following his experience of the Civil War.

Selected by the committee dominated by government officials, these works served to illustrate a turbulent past when Irish people were united in the fight for independence, in contrast to the Civil War raging outside the exhibition hall. Keating used Irish translations

⁶⁹ On Bloody Sunday at Croke Park, 21st Nov. 1920, 14 people were killed and hundreds more wounded when British Forces opened fire on the crowd attending a football match. Earlier that day the IRA had shot and killed 15 British intelligence agents working and living in Dublin.

⁷⁰ Hilary Pyle notes that Jack B. Yeats records the Irish name in a Gaelic script beside the English title *Thraw Bawn*. Yeats recorded the art exhibition as *Dublin Aonach*. See Hilary Pyle, *Jack B. Yeats: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings*, (London: Deutsch, 1992). 123. The painting was priced at £315.

Jack B. Yeats also designed five of the exhibited Cuala Press prints.

⁷¹ This painting is in the NGI collection. See, Marie Bourke, *West of Ireland Paintings at the National Gallery of Ireland from 1800 to 2000*, (Dublin: NGI, 2014). 32.

⁷² Brian P. Kennedy, “The Irish Free State 1922-49: A Visual Perspective” in *Ireland: Art into History*, ed. Raymond Gillespie and Brian P. Kennedy, (Dublin: Town House, 1994). 150.

Keating’s remaining entries were *Men of the South* (1921-22) and *On the Run* (1922).

⁷³ Eimear O’Connor, *Seán Keating, Art, Politics and Building the Irish Nation*, (Kildare: Irish Academic Press, 2013). 121, 122. See this book for more details on these and other works by Keating.

for a number of his exhibits and won the Prints and Drawing class with *Dainra*.⁷⁴ Both Yeats and Keating eschewed their RHA and ARHA designations in this exhibition. As noted, all the participating artists did this at the Paris Race Congress exhibition, however, at the 1922 Tailteann this political statement was less uniform with most other artists choosing to retain their appellation.

Representations of Catholicism was in evident in a number of pieces; Albert G. Power won both sculpture classes with *Marble head of the most Rev. Dr. Mannix* the Irish born archbishop of Melbourne and *Marble relief of Madonna and Child*. Estella Solomons won the portraiture bronze medal for *The Rev. Father Patrick Dinneen*. Designs for churches dominated the architecture classes which reflected the ongoing programme of building by the Catholic Church, the ‘new church, Newport, Co. Mayo’ by architect R. M. Butler won the 1922 Architectural Design award.⁷⁵

Harry Clarke took first place in the stained glass class, ‘one of our most promising art industries’, where he exhibited *Queens* in nine panels, a *Midsummer Nights Dream* and two religious works, Wilhelmina Geddes took the runner-up spot in this category.⁷⁶ Clarke exemplified artists’ commitment to the exhibition, he wrote to Thomas Bodkin saying, ‘I’m going hard for the Tailteann Games Art Exhibition and I wonder would the great man lend me *Queens*?’⁷⁷ *Queens* is ‘an extremely important series of nine cabinet panels’, each

⁷⁴ George Atkinson received the bronze medal for *Mezzotint Engraving*, cat. no 582, Keating had two other works in this class *Suine Iaraida* and *Caiteam Aimrere*, cat nos. 558-561.

⁷⁵ *Exhibition of Irish Art in the Industries Hall of the Royal Dublin Society Ball’s Bridge Dublin :: August 1922 Catalogue*, Dublin: Browne and Nolan, Ltd., 1922.

St. Patricks, Newport is now regarded as an important Irish arts and crafts church building.

⁷⁶ Anon. “Irish Art”, *Irish Times*, 16th Aug, 1922. 10.

⁷⁷ NLI. MS 48,423/1/13. Harry Clarke and Margaret Clarke Papers, 1860-1991. Letter Clarke to Thomas Bodkin, 31st May, 1922.

The ‘great man’ was Laurence Waldron (1858-1923), Governor of the artist’s alma mater Belvedere College, stockbroker, Nationalist MP and Senator and Governor of the National Gallery of Ireland. He was also a patron of Clarke and commissioned the *Queens* panels in 1917. Based on a poem by J. M. Synge, in which the author compares various *Queens* (good and bad) to his lover. Clarke’s piece provides an extraordinary view of womanhood. The panels form a visual narrative, referencing from the poem art historical figure such as *Venus with a Mirror* (Titian), *A Lady in Fancy Dress* (Gheerhaert), *Mona Lisa* (Da Vinci)... all in Clarke’s signature symbolist and decadent ornamentation.

approximately 5x15cm (figure 44). As well as being positively reviewed in the Irish press two panels from this work were reproduced in colour in the internationally distributed *The Studio*.⁷⁸ It was among Clarke's most accomplished work and this exhibit helped achieve the IFSG ambition, for the 1922 Tailteann show, to demonstrate Irish art's exceptionalness. Ethel Rhind (1877-1952) took the prize for mosaic and Beatrice Campbell for decorative sculpture, Henry Emery was a prize winner for stone carving, Evelyn Gleeson's Dun Emer Guild and the Yeats' sisters, Cuala Industries, were prize winners in a number of categories. What is obvious from this short overview is that leading artists and craftspeople from all provinces of Ireland, and from both sides of the treaty divide participated.⁷⁹ At this stage, with the Civil War ongoing for just over a month, it hadn't yet taken its full toll on the State or on the relationships that artists and culturally engaged politicians had forged during the earlier decades of the twentieth century, as already discussed.

As part of the art exhibition there was a noteworthy display of the new Irish Stamp designs. J.J. Walsh as Postmaster General had inaugurated a competition, in February 1922, to design stamps for the nascent State. There was a prize of twenty-five pounds for each design accepted. The designs were required to be 'symbolical in character, and the inscriptions must be in Gaelic characters'.⁸⁰ Including the stamp designs in the exhibition created a direct link between visual art and design and the everyday world of the viewers. Four designs were accepted and these, along with other entries submitted, were displayed in the Tailteann Art Exhibition. In total the 'Postmaster General has lent some 18 cases of

⁷⁸ Thomas Bodkin, "The Art of Mr. Harry Clarke" in *The Studio*, November, 1919. 45-51.

A. C. "Genius in Stained Glass, Exhibition in Dublin of the Works of Mr. Harry Clarke. Synge's "Queens" on Glass", in unidentified (*Irish Times*) and undated clipping in NLI. MS 39,202 /A. Harry Clarke Papers, 1916-1931.

For a detailed discussion on the *Queens* panels see Bowe, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke*. 73-80.

⁷⁹ Still today most cultural events operate on an all-Ireland basis such as hurling, Gaelic football, Rugby, Hockey... Similarly many artists and writers exhibit and self-identify as Irish.

⁸⁰ Anon. "Free State's Stamps. Government Wants Designs." *Irish Times*, 2nd Feb. 1922.

the designs sent in for stamps'... a 'truly amazing variety'.⁸¹ The winning designs were by James Ingram, Lily Williams, John J. O'Reilly and Millicent Grace Girling (figure 45). Ingram's design was the first stamp used in the independent Free State, it came into circulation on the 6th December 1922, to mark the first anniversary of the Anglo-Irish Treaty with England. Deep green, in a frame of a Romanesque arch and Celtic/zoomorphic ornamentation, it controversially featured a map of Ireland without designating the border, 'the image had political as well as symbolic importance'.⁸² This caused a furore because it was seen at the State claiming the Six Counties, however, rather than repent, the Aonach Tailteann of 1924 used a similar map on the cover of its printed program (figure 46). This re-enforced the aspirational political and territorial aims of the Irish State and visually stated that culture was not partitioned on the island. This desire for an all-Ireland territory was further manifested through art and sport being representative of the thirty-two counties at the games.⁸³ Speaking at a reception for the 1924 Aonach in front of international guests, media and Irish politicians, Tim Healy, Governor-General expressed his 'hope and expectation that before long the barriers that separated a small portion [of the Irish Free State] would disappear and dissolve' and he added there 'was no boundary question where sport [and culture] was concerned'.⁸⁴ President Cosgrave missed the opening of the 1924 Tailteann because he was in London at talks to determine the Irish Free State boundary with the Six Counties. As will be shown in chapter five, this desire for

⁸¹ Anon. "Irish Art Exhibits, Attractive Display At Ballsbridge...Postal Stamp Designs", unattributed and undated newspaper clipping attached to exhibition catalogue in NLI, LO 6143, *Exhibition of Irish art in the industries hall of the Royal Dublin Society Ball's Bridge Dublin: August 1922*.

⁸² Brian P. Kennedy, "The Irish Free State 1922-49; A Visual Perspective" in R. Gillespie & Brian P. Kennedy, eds. *Ireland Art into History*. (Dublin: Town House, 1994). 134, 135.

⁸³ The 1922 Aonach art exhibition catalogue index of exhibitors shows that exhibitors were broadly spread across the country with a substantial six county representation.

At the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics, where Irish competitors were represented in athletics, literature and art competitions, the team threatened to pull out because they were asked to march behind a banner which said "Irish Free State" which signified 'a truncated Ireland'. The banner wording was replaced with "Ireland". See Report "Ireland at an Olympiad" in NLI. MS 48,299/1. Eoin O'Duffy Papers.

⁸⁴ Anon. "Welcome Home, Remarkable Speeches at Aonach Banquet, Prince Ranji's Inspiring Message", *Sunday Independent*, 3rd Aug. 1924. 7.

a culturally united Ireland would be challenged in other cultural events and exhibitions of the 1930s.

The other three stamps came into circulation the following year, Williams' design featured a cross similar to the 12th-century Cross of Cong with shamrocks around it, Girling's a shield decorated with the emblems of the four provinces - again representing the whole island and O'Reilly's design of *An Claidheamh Soluis*⁸⁵ (translated as the 'Sword of Light' and also the name of a journal edited by Padraig Pearse) within a mandorla (a shape associated with Christian art) and a Celtic-revivalist zoomorphic design. All stamps had Éire in Gaelic font, although Éire was not the official name of the country until the 1937 Constitution was enacted, but in this context, it declared a Gaelic identity for an international audience. These stamps symbolised Irish nationalism as catholic and an ancient nation with a distinctive cultural identity. Walsh was also the Minister responsible for having the imperial red post boxes painted green throughout the country.⁸⁶ Across all areas of his responsibility he reflected the Government's comprehensive and coherent approach to implementing a national identity, but most particularly with the recovery of the ancient Tailteann Games in a modern incarnation. Though evident in the 1922 Tailteann art exhibition it received a fuller expression in the 1924 complete spectacle. Other national symbols of Irish identity followed in the following years, Irish passports (1923), official government seals (1924) and coinage (1928). W. B. Yeats, Chairman of the Free State Coinage Design Committee declared in the Senate that stamps and coins were 'the silent ambassadors of national taste'.⁸⁷ The secular and modernist coin designs were different and are noted later.

⁸⁵ *An Claidheamh Soluis* translates as The Sword of Light.

⁸⁶ The post-boxes were painted green but the Imperial cypher of the English monarchs remained.

⁸⁷ W. B. Yeats, Coinage Bill, 1926 – Second Stage. Seanad Éireann debate - Wednesday, 3 Mar 1926 accessed at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/1926-03-03/3/> on 22/10/2018.

The 1922 art exhibition may have given J.J. Walsh the belief when addressing an international conference on future Aonach Tailteanns in August 1922 to say, the ‘Aonach Tailteann was one feature of life in which religion or politics played no part... typical of that ideal unity which every true friend of this country held dearest to his heart’ and ‘the games had done more to unify the nation than anything that has happened in the modern history of Ireland’.⁸⁸ This conference was attended by delegates from, Argentine, Australia, Canada, Chile, England, Scotland, Wales, U.S.A. and Newfoundland and a large number of Irish Council members including artist George Atkinson RHA and craftswoman Mollie Gill.⁸⁹ It was held to reassure international countries and home delegates that despite the 1922 postponements, the complete Tailteann event would take place in the future and that the Free State government was in control of events. Walsh was correct when he said that religion had no role and there was limited involvement from the Catholic hierarchy in 1924. However, in the 1932 incarnation of the games, as will be shown in chapter five, the roles of both notables and politicians were replaced by the clergy.

This 1922 exhibition, the earliest and largest Irish Free State sponsored art exhibition on Irish soil, displayed composite parts of official Irish identity. It presented an independent people and an ancient nation within a tradition of Aonach Tailteanns going back to pre-colonial times. It demonstrated that the distinctiveness of artistic skills and unique culture from the earlier Aonachs was still extant in the State. The artistic output was multifarious and reflected the political aspiration for an all-island nation. The art work depicted figures from Irish history, religious and cultural life.⁹⁰ The nation on show was dominated by the

⁸⁸ Anon. “Tailteann Games Over-seas Representatives Confer. Next Year’s Scheme”, *Freemans Journal*, 8th Aug. 1922. 5.

⁸⁹ Anon. “Tailteann Games Over-seas Representatives Confer. Next Year’s Scheme”, *Freemans Journal*, 8th Aug. 1922. 5. In the 1932 Tailteann Games, priests and Catholicism would play a more prominent role – discussed in chapter five. Mollie Gill worked for the Cuala Press. She was politically active and had been a member of Cumann na mBan and was the first president of Cumann Camógaíocht na nGael, camogie’s ruling body from 1923 to 1941.

⁹⁰ For example there were portraits of Arthur Griffith, Terence McSwiney, (two of) Jack B. Yeats, George Russell, Archbishop Mannix, Father Dineen, E.R McClintock Dix and Mrs. Thomas Concannon [Helena].

unique landscape of the west of Ireland, the essential source of an Irish-Ireland identity. Again, the art industries exhibits were shown as a continuation of the crafts from early medieval Ireland (c. AD 450-1200), which in turn drew on prehistoric Celtic traditions. Bells exhibited in 1922, ‘from the celebrated foundry of Mr. M. O’Byrne’ for two Dublin churches, were noted in a newspaper report as ‘noble works with a wondrously fine, round, resonant, musical tone’.⁹¹ These bells as noted in the 1924 Souvenir Program, were made in a continuum with ancient Irish bell-makers ‘whose names we know ... MacCecht, Laebhan, and Fortchern who were “experts at shaping” bells for churches’ – there was no doubting the ancient lineage.⁹²

Cultural nationalism as exhibited in the Aonach Tailteann showcased a unique, all-island Irish identity and the 1924 spectacle would further substantiate it, by reaching across borders to claim through its diaspora what Irish athletes had achieved internationally, not only validating the Free State’s uniqueness but its place in the world. Unlike partitioned Irish territory, cultural nationality was fully realised and all-island.

3.1.3 Publicising the Aonachs, Promoting Irish culture.

Walsh, by organising a press conference to announce the Tailteann games during the Paris Congress, raised awareness of the event among the Irish diaspora. Like the Paris art exhibition this was to encourage the Irish abroad to re-engage with the motherland through culture, but unlike Paris it demanded that they visit the Free State to be part of this national event.

This association with the diaspora became more apparent in the first full incarnation of the Games in 1924. That the spectacle was recovered from its inauspicious start was almost entirely due to J.J. Walsh’s tireless promotion of the event since 1922 including hosting the

⁹¹ Anon. “Irish Art Exhibits, Attractive Display At Ballsbridge...Postal Stamp Designs”, unattributed and undated newspaper clipping attached to exhibition catalogue in NLI, LO 6143, *Exhibition of Irish art in the industries hall of the Royal Dublin Society Ball's Bridge Dublin: August 1922*.

The bells were for churches in Foxrock and another near Multifarnham.

⁹² *Aonach Tailteann 1924 Souvenir Programme*. (Dublin: Helys, 1924). 151.

monthly planning meetings. Without him commentators believe it would not have happened.⁹³ The NAI and other archives holds numerous congratulatory notes to Walsh on the success of the 1924 event from politicians and others, many indicating surprise on the success.⁹⁴ James McDowell, Managing Director of the *Freemans Journal* writes regretting not producing a supplement on the Aonach Tailteann.⁹⁵ Despite the lack of this supplement, it was extensively covered in the media, including the *Freemans Journal*. Chief Justice at the time, Hugh Kennedy writing as 'one of the doubting Thomases', acknowledged the success of the Tailteann Games.⁹⁶ Notwithstanding its naysayers or doubters the games were extensively promoted. A 1922 promotional brochure (figure 47), with a cover featuring an image of a Celtic warrior in an interlaced border, announced that 'Dáil Eireann warmly commended the proposal [for the games] of its first President Éamon De Valera...', that this world event would unify the Irish race and it extols the nationalist and sporting attributes of the games' Director, J.J. Walsh.⁹⁷

In addition to Walsh's promotions in Paris, the Dáil sent an emissary, M. F. O'Hanlon, to North America to garner support and produced a number of promotional brochures for the 1924 spectacle.⁹⁸ The 1923 report of O'Hanlon's trip to America stated the American games committee hadn't met for two years.⁹⁹ He had meetings with representatives of the Irish diaspora across the country, including; forty GAA clubs in New York, various County Associations, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, The Knights of Columbus, Amateur Athletic Union of the U.S.A., Friends of Irish Freedom, The Irish Republican

⁹³ Anon. "Galaxy of Genius *Evening Herald*, 4th Aug. 1924. 2. See comments from General Mulcahy and Lord Glenavy to this effect.

⁹⁴ NAI TSCH/3/S1592. Tailteann Games 1922-1924 – various correspondence.

⁹⁵ NAI TSCH/3/S1592. Letter from James McDowell to W.T. Cosgrave dated 5th August, 1924.

⁹⁶ UCD P4/1817-18, Hugh Kennedy Papers, letter from Kennedy to Walsh, 25th Aug 1924.

⁹⁷ Promotional brochure for 1922 Aonach Tailteann. *Tailteann Games Irish Race Olympics Dublin 6-13 Aug. 1922*, (Dublin: Helys, 1922).

⁹⁸ Michael F. O'Hanlon (1890-1967) was an Irish politician (Seanad Éireann from 1925 to 1936), farmer, journalist and company director.

⁹⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592 1922-1924. Aonach Tailteann (American Committee) Report from M. F. O'Hanlon, November 8th, 1923. Three typed pages.

Party, The Drama Guild of the Oranges, all of who were ‘anxious to assist in every way’.¹⁰⁰ Murray Hulbert, Mayor of New York City agreed to act as Chairman and other eminent Irish Americans joined the Tailteann American Committee.¹⁰¹ O’Hanlon reported that he was travelling to eleven cities, including three in Canada, then back to Ireland and there were no financial problems.¹⁰²

He further stated that the press, particularly the Irish press in America, was supportive and ‘the Publicity Drive will come in good time’. Shipping, he reported, was ‘particularly satisfactory’ – The White Star Line ‘are issuing a special booklet in connection with Irish bound passenger traffic for next summer’, the Cunard Co. published a special ‘Irish number of their magazine “The Cunardor”’, ‘the “United States Lines” are talking up the matter energetically’. ‘Altogether between leaflets, pamphlets, booklets’... ‘not less than a quarter million will have a connection with the Aonach Tailteann’.¹⁰³ O’Hanlon expected that ‘close on 100,000 visitors will reach Ireland from the American Continent next summer’ ... ‘they will leave a lot of money in Ireland’ ... ‘deserving of the best the country can give’, but he worried that division among the Irish Race in America and the cancellations of the games in 1922, would act negatively.¹⁰⁴ Overall he reasoned that this event would create ‘possibilities of big trade developments with Ireland’ because some of America’s leading business-men ... will be found in Ireland next summer’.¹⁰⁵ Walsh in a letter to Cosgrave, saw the same opportunity, to turn the visitors ‘into great advertising agents’ for the new State.¹⁰⁶ As demonstrated throughout this thesis, the IFSG were well

¹⁰⁰ NAI. O’Hanlon report. 1923.

¹⁰¹ Such as Mr Doheny, President of Mexican Petroleum Co. who acted as treasurer and chairman of the Finance Committee.

¹⁰² NAI. O’Hanlon report. 1923. American participants would pay their own organisation and travel costs associated with attending the Aonach Tailteann.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Tailteann Games, 1922-1924. Letter from Walsh to WT Cosgrave, President, 3rd Dec 1922.

aware of the soft power dividend from cultural events and art exhibitions, using them to promote trade as well as the country.

The advertising brochure produced for the 1924 event was a collaborative effort between the Aonach Tailteann, RDS, the Hotels and Restaurants Association and the railway companies.¹⁰⁷ In a nod to an encroaching and increasing modernist agenda within the government, the brochure was produced by one of Ireland's first professional advertising agencies.¹⁰⁸ It reproduced twenty-eight photographic images of Irish tourist locations variously described as enchanted lands, romantic and glorious. Interestingly the border is ignored and Donegal is included with the Six Counties in the tourist section. Shipping companies advertised timetables to Ireland and the railways would get tourists to their final destination.¹⁰⁹ The Aonach clearly sought to unite an Irish people home and abroad through engaging with the sporting and cultural events. The requirement was for the locals to attend and the diaspora to engage with their homeland by their physical presence, the first time they were invited to do so by the Free State. Walsh earmarked 100,000 brochures mainly for the States and Canada and a revised edition of another 100,000 were planned to target 'foreigners visiting the British Empire Exhibition [an event that the Free State otherwise avoided] and other fruitful channels'.¹¹⁰

The brochure, through its international distribution, clearly addressed a tourism potential and the possibility of an economic dividend. The games themselves although generously funded by the Department of Finance struggled to break even and there was much correspondence between the Department and the Tailteann Committee over funding.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ *Visit Ireland, Tailteann Games & Dublin Horse Show* – Aug 1 to 18 1924, (Dublin: McConnell's Advertising Service, no date given but 1923).

¹⁰⁸ McConnell's Advertising Service was founded in 1916.

¹⁰⁹ *Visit Ireland, Tailteann Games & Dublin Horse Show* – Aug 1 to 18 1924, 15-25.

¹¹⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Letter addressed on official Aonach Tailteann stationary A Chara from J.J. Walsh, dated 3rd November 1923.

The British Empire Exhibition in 1924 is discussed later in this chapter.

¹¹¹ For example see among others NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Tailteann Games, 1922-1924 and NAI. TSCH/3/S8970 - Aonach Tailteann, 1928.

Little weight was given in these conversations to the wider intangible economic benefits that would feature prominently in later spectacles – growing the government’s soft power, wider diplomacy and creating a favourable image of the nation.

Promoting the games abroad in 1924 also involved getting foreign luminaries to attend, to generate publicity and legitimacy. These ‘guests of the nation’ were specially invited international celebrities, ‘representatives of men in Science, Literature, and Arts from different countries’.¹¹² They were invited and hosted on behalf of the government by W.B. Yeats, the 1923 Nobel laureate for literature and Oliver St. John Gogarty, an Olympic Games medallist.¹¹³ Although the invitations issued in Yeats’ name and he proposed many of the guests, as he outlined in a letter to James Joyce, he didn’t have the final say on who was selected.¹¹⁴ Yeats invited Joyce to ‘stay with us’ in our house for the Tailteann Games and with regard to the visitor committee, he ‘had a special meeting summoned to urge upon them to send you an official invitation to come as a guest of the Nation’.¹¹⁵ He expected his recommendation would be rejected, citing the ‘horror’ anticipated from some committee members at his suggestion, such as, ‘the Marquis McSwiney, Chamberlain to the Pope’.¹¹⁶ The letter’s postscript confirms his intuition, ‘Yes the Committee did all but unanimously decide not to send you an official invitation’. Yeats had more luck proposing

¹¹² NLI. MS 31,078. Yeats Family Papers, 1862-1960, TS draft for invitation to Tailteann Games. See also, *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Unpublished Letters (1905-1939)*. “[William B. Yeats] WBY’s draft invitation to certain proposed ‘Guests of the Nation’ for the first Tailteann 1924”.

Gogarty won a bronze Olympic medal for *Ode to the Tailteann Games* in the mixed literature competition in Paris 1924.

¹¹³ The committee included, W B Yeats Chairman, Oliver St J. Gogarty Vice-Chairman, J. McLaughlin and J.W. Maddock were Honorary Secretaries and Marquis MacSwiney as an advisor.

¹¹⁴ *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Unpublished Letters (1905-1939)*. Letter from William B. Yeats to James Joyce, dated, 1st Jul. 1924.

¹¹⁵ Yeats explains his late invitation in his letter to Joyce, ‘At first the Committee only intended to invite people of other nationalities but at the last moment they decided, for more or less political reasons, to invite Lavery and Shaw’. Thereby leaving the door open to invite other Irish luminaries.

¹¹⁶ *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Unpublished Letters (1905-1939)*. Letter from William B. Yeats to James Joyce, dated, 1st Jul. 1924. Marquis McSwiney was a Cumann na nGaedheal supporter and devout Catholic, the ‘Marquis’ title was a Papal award. Joyce had left the Catholic religion and the Catholic authorities looked disdainfully at his literature.

Ezra Pound who received an official offer to attend.¹¹⁷ Guests consisted of ‘representatives of other States, Oriental princes, famous litterateurs, architects, sportsmen, and politicians ... [who mingled with] prominent members of the Saorstad Government and leading professional, literary, artistic, and commercial Irishmen’.¹¹⁸ Two hundred and fifty people attended a dinner, in the guests’ honour, at the Metropole restaurant. This celebration was reported in the newspapers and Yeats’ papers in the National Library of Ireland has a table plan and seating arrangement for all attendees.¹¹⁹ Among ‘the guests’ in attendance were Hon. R. Erskine of Marr (a Scottish nationalist political activist, writer and Scottish Gaelic language campaigner), the Marquis of Bute, Sir Thomas Lipton, John and Lady Lavery (artists), Edward Lutyens (architect), Mr. Ezra Pound (poet), Mr Augustus John (artist), Mr John McCormack (singer), Mr. John Devoy (well-known Irish-American rebel and publisher)¹²⁰, G. K. Chesterton (writer), Commander C. B. Fry (English politician and cricketer), Senhora and Magalhaes de Azeredo (Brazilian author, diplomat, journalist and chair of the Brazilian Academy of Letters), Monsignor W. H. Nolens (a Dutch author, politician – Minister in the Dutch Parliament and a Roman Catholic priest), the Swedish ambassador to England...¹²¹ Other attendees at the dinner included numerous Irish politicians and national representatives from the arts such as George Atkinson RHA (Headmaster Dublin Metropolitan School of Art), Dermot O’Brien (President RHA), writers Lennox Robinson, James Stephens (a 1924 Tailteann medal winner for literature),

¹¹⁷ *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Unpublished Letters (1905-1939)*. Letter from William B. Yeats to Ezra Pound, 17th Jun. 1924. The Yeats letters (1905-1939) also contain correspondence with other invited guests.

¹¹⁸ Anon. “Galaxy of Genius. Brilliant Visitors Entertained By Aonach Tailteann Council”, *Evening Herald*, 4th Aug. 1924. 1.

¹¹⁹ NLI. MS 31,078. Yeats Family Papers, 1862-1960.

¹²⁰ John Devoy (1842-1928) was an Irish rebel leader who spent most of his life in the United States where he published the *Gaelic American*, a New York weekly newspaper. He is one of the few people to have been involved in the rebellion of 1867, the 1916 Easter Rising and the Irish War of Independence. He was pro-Treaty. For a full account of Devoy see Terry Golway, *Irish Rebel: John Devoy & America’s Fight for Ireland’s Freedom*, (Newbridge: IAP, 2015 New Revised Edition).

¹²¹ See Appendix 5 for a full list of invited guests.

The organisers supplied the newspapers with lists of these important visitors and their titles indicating them as people of note.

Susan Mitchell, W. Denis Johnston and others. Holding and reporting such events emphasises the importance of artists to the Tailteann and placed Irish artists in an international cultural milieu (figure 48). The guests of the nation attended numerous functions and were given front row seats at Tailteann events. The attendance of these guests, a hybridity of Irish nationalists, former British colonisers and international luminaries, attracted interest from the media and on the street ‘crowds outside the Metropole waited to see the visitors arrive’.¹²² The games were to reflect the Irishness and uniqueness of the new State and the Irish people were happy to share this view of themselves with a world audience - an audience that came to Ireland and provided a view of internationalism and modernism to an Irish public. Invitations to and participation by international artists Augustus John and John Lavery (who was both Irish and international), architect Edwin Lutyens, and numerous established international writers further validated how Irish art and culture as central to the Aonach. People from Irish public life home and abroad who had supported the treaty were prominent such as Denis McCullough and John Devoy. A newspaper report “Flashes of Native and Foreign Jeux d’esprit” described the ‘magnificent hall in the Metropole’ and the ‘gorgeous attire of the Oriental potentates and the members of their suites, the decorations worn by the diplomats, and the beautiful toilettes of the ladies blended in a magnificent scene’.¹²³

Anti-treaty supporters were not in attendance. De Valera and other anti-treatyites had recently been released from jail, partly at the request of J.J. Walsh, to prevent their supporters from disrupting Tailteann events.¹²⁴ De Valera, seeking political opportunity from the situation, did a U-turn on his earlier support for the 1922 Aonach Tailteann calling for ‘dignified protest by non-co-operation’ on the grounds that participation in 1924

¹²² Anon. “Irelands Guests. Visitors from many lands. Banquet Speeches. Faith in the future”, *Irish Times*, 4th Aug, 1924. 5.

¹²³ Anon. “Flashes of Native and Foreign Jeux d’esprit”, *Evening Herald*, 4th Aug. 1924. 1.

¹²⁴ NAI TSCH/3/S1592. Letter from J.J. Walsh to W.T. Cosgrave dated 27th May, 1924.

NAI TSCH/3/S1592. Letter from J.J. Walsh to W.T. Cosgrave dated 10th July, 1924. Marked ‘Very Urgent’.

implied full freedom had been achieved.¹²⁵ This was a soft political opposition. Despite the neo-colonialism of the opening banquet, the anti-treaty objections were designed not to alienate the international audience at home or abroad, and there was no active opposition or protests at the events. The *Cork Examiner* reported that De Valera's "boycott" availed nothing'.¹²⁶

De Valera writing in the program for the 1928 Aonach Tailteann, by which time he was again supporting the games, saw the soft power and public diplomacy benefits in the 1924 events, and that although the 'circumstances ... are not those envisaged by its founders ... the Aonach [was] ... of inestimable national value, unifying our people in sentiment and endeavour, and giving them, ... a just sense of pride in the heritage which they share in common'.¹²⁷ Given the extensive participation by members of the GAA in the 1924 games, from both sides of the treaty divide, and participation by artists whose loyalties were to the anti-treaty side as well as to the government, it can be safely assumed that many anti-treatyites attended and enjoyed the games.¹²⁸ One function of the Aonach was to build bridges and it appeared in many ways to have done so.

3.1.4 Lyrical Nation Building.

The lyricism of the Celtic and Literary Revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that was carried into the early years of nation building by the Free State administration was exemplified by the State's tireless promotion and investment in the Tailteann Games. It sought to appropriate the past to underpin the present and point to a modernist future and a distinctive ancestry. This lyrical reworking sought to recover an ancient Irish culture in the creation of a new state. In 1922, with the War of Independence

¹²⁵ Anon. "Tailteann Games President de Valera's Statement", *Sinn Féin*, 9th Aug. 1924. 6.

¹²⁶ Anon. "The Tailteann Games", *Cork Examiner*, 5th Aug, 1924. 4.

¹²⁷ Eamon de Valera, "An Occasion for National Re-union" in *Aonach Tailteann 1928 Souvenir Program*, (Dublin: Gaelic Press, 1928). 7.

¹²⁸ Participating artists like Keating and MacGonigal supported De Valera's republicanism but with over 500 artists and crafts-people in the exhibition it was inevitable that many others held similar views.

ended and the Civil War not yet a reality, the planned Aonach was about a lyric Nation Building. However, the 1924 event, after the vitriol and destruction of the odious Civil War, saw the nation moved out of the mists of the Celtic Twilight and into the discordant reality of a fractured people in a partitioned country. The concept of building a nation, and its associated ideologies, had shifted.

The 1924 Aonach would take place just over a year after the Civil War ended, which had left substantial casualties, structural damage to property and a bitterness among the population that would simmer for generations. Therefore, this spectacle had all the original ambitions of the 1922 Aonach. However, it now acquired the additional imperatives of offering a forum for reconciliation between both sides of the conflict and establishing an image of a peaceful, competent and secure State. The 1924 games enabled the national and international media to report on a non-violent society rather than one at war with itself. As a new country it had developed the modern sporting and transport infrastructure required to host a modern Olympic-like event. Although based on an ancient traditional festival, it reflected other international cultural phenomena. Newspaper reports stated that ‘No capital in Europe could have given a more splendid spectacle’¹²⁹ and ‘everything [is] working in perfect order’.¹³⁰ The Paris art exhibition in 1922 utilised images of a country that had suffered atrocities and was ready to take on the might of an empire, now with the English colonial administration exiting and exited, it was politically important to portray an image of a peaceful stable state and a country capable of organising a major modern international event. The 1924 Tailteann Games projected to home and international audiences that Ireland was a capable functioning state with an ancient lineage and culture. The Nation

¹²⁹ Anon. “Welcome Home, Remarkable Speeches at Aonach Banquet, Prince Ranji’s Inspiring Message”, *Sunday Independent*, 3rd Aug. 1924. 7.

¹³⁰ Anon. Article 10 - no title, *New York Times*, 3rd August, 1924, 26.

wasn't being born or invented, but was recovering its rightful place as an ancient, yet progressive, culturally elite, capable of asserting its national identity.

3.1.5 National Identity, Art and Culture in the 1924 Aonach Tailteann.

The 1924 opening parade took place in Croke Park. The entourage gathered off Clonliffe Road and walked up Jones Road into the stadium where 30,000 spectators had gathered including the 'guests of the nation'. In hosting an external array of peers of the realm and other eminent authorities the State sought to validate the games and cultural events both nationally and internationally. It also recalled earlier Great Exhibitions such as the 1907 Irish International Exhibition held in Herbert Park, a British Empire event which comprised buildings called palaces, presided over by the Lord Lieutenant and the Marquess of Ormonde and which enjoyed a visit from the royal family. The neo-colonial element of the Tailteann was reflected in newspaper reports, referring to the guests as 'worthies', and W. B. Yeats as a 'west Briton'.¹³¹ This was a term associated with the nation losing its Irish culture.¹³² W. B. Yeats engaged publically with the Tailteann, organising the banquet and generally immersing himself in the cultural events. However in private correspondence he was less enthusiastic. In a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell he refers to the impending strike, 'just heard that all Hotel employees & unskilled municipal workers are about to strike upon the edge of our Tailteann celebration I feel that all such political excitements should be encouraged'.¹³³ He referred to his distinguished visitors as 'distinguished strangers' in other correspondence.¹³⁴

On the day of the 1924 opening two police bands (Dublin Metropolitan Police and Civic Guard) performed and four military aeroplanes flew overhead, symbols of the State's

¹³¹ *The Leader*, 9 August 1924, 8. (NLI microfilm)

¹³² Douglas Hyde, The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland in *The Revival of Irish Literature*, 1904.

¹³³ W. B. Yeats, Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 25th Jul. 1924 in *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Electronic Edition*. Accessed at <http://library.nlx.com.elib.tcd.ie> on 17th Feb. 2020.

¹³⁴ W. B. Yeats, Letter to L. A. G. Strong, 7th Aug. 1924 in *The Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats. Electronic Edition*. Accessed at <http://library.nlx.com.elib.tcd.ie> on 17th Feb. 2020.

security and modernism. This also reassured an uncertain public after the War of Independence, and the Civil War which ended the previous year and had curtailed the 1922 Aonach.¹³⁵ ‘Queen Tailté’ and her entourage arrived in Celtic revivalist costumes with two Irish wolfhounds and entered the stadium (figures 49 and 50).¹³⁶ The Parade proper began and displayed symbols of the tenets on which the State would build and claim legitimacy for a Nation emerging from insurgency. As well as the security of the fly-over, other principle pillars of the nascent State on show included veterans of Irish ‘Gaelic’ sports, signifying the Gaelic Athletic Association revival and cultural renewal. Art was represented by ‘three [high profile artists] representatives of the Royal Hibernian Academy of Arts, including the President (Mr. Dermot O’Brien), and two of the senior members, Mr Nassau Blair Browne and Mr. Alexander Williams, in their robes’.¹³⁷ They paraded along with competitive athletes, emblematic of an energetic young state united with its diaspora carrying flags of their adoptive countries, costumed Irish dancers signifying traditional Gaelic culture and the more problematic “tail” of motor-cyclists wheeling their machines’ taking up the rear.¹³⁸ Music took its place ‘rendered under the direction of Mr. Vincent O’Brien’ and helped to generate mass participation by the audience, thus taking public ownership of the event.¹³⁹ Walsh’s opening speech reminded people that the Aonach Tailteann happened when ‘our nation enjoyed complete freedom’, and Irish athletic and cultural talent bound ‘together the different clans, educating them in racial pride... and inspiring them with a love of the Homeland’.¹⁴⁰ Walsh was speaking of the past to the

¹³⁵ Civil War ended May 1923 but that acrimony and uncertainty still existed is well documented in John Crowley, Donal Ó Drisceoil and Mike Murphy John Borgonovo, eds, *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*, (Cork: CUP, 2017). See Chapter IX “After the Revolution”, 748-835.

¹³⁶ The part of Queen Tailté was played by actress Nancy Rock in 1924 and 1928.

¹³⁷ O’Brien was President of the RHA, Browne was an RHA trustee and secretary and Williams was its most senior member having joined as an ARHA in 1884.

¹³⁸ For extensive coverage of the Opening of the Aonach Tailteann see Anon. “The Tailteann Games. Great Parade at Opening”, *Irish Times*, 9th August, 1924. 7.

¹³⁹ Ibid. Vincent O’Brien (1871-1948), was well-known Irish composer. He was organist and choir director of, St Mary’s Pro-Cathedral, Dublin from 1903 to 1946. His many students included, John McCormack, Margaret Burke-Sheridan and the writer James Joyce.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. “The Tailteann Games. Great Parade at Opening”, *Irish Times*, 9th August, 1924. 7.

present, to the nation and its diaspora who the government wished to unite, but he also had in mind the opposing factions in the Civil War and the role sport and culture might play in reconciliation. He concluded saying the dream, almost single-handedly realised by Walsh himself, of restaging the Aonach had been achieved, ‘and the Capital of Ireland welcomes thousands of children of the ancient Irish race to her bosom’.¹⁴¹ Although he opposed the holding of the games in 1924, De Valera echoed Walsh’s sentiments in his later comments on the 1924 event.¹⁴² Mass attendance by audiences at the opening ceremony, events in the Phoenix Park and the Industrial Pageant of Irish manufacturers engendered a sense of togetherness and civic pride. There was an opening weekend concert and a competition for shops displays of Irish goods. The railway companies ‘brought thousands of [visitors] to the various city termini’ on special excursions for the Aonach Tailteann and a small number of events were staged outside the capital.¹⁴³ Newspaper reports were positive and spoke of ‘enthusiasm’¹⁴⁴ and the ‘festive spirit [on the] thronged thoroughfares of the city’.¹⁴⁵ Cruise O’Brien writing in the *Irish Independent* promised the visitor to the art exposition in Ballsbridge ‘a fine exhibition’ and to ‘the native [that] his manly breast will expand with pride’.¹⁴⁶

The athletic events took place over two weeks. The national games achieved average attendances in week one but attendances were much better for the international athletics in week two. This was largely due to Olympic participants and medal winners from that year’s Olympics travelling to Dublin from Paris on their way home.¹⁴⁷ The Aonach

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Eamon de Valera, “An Occasion for National Re-union” in *Aonach Tailteann 1928 Souvenir Program*, (Dublin: Gaelic Press, 1928). 7.

¹⁴³ Anon. “In Festive Mood, the Tailteann Feeling in Dublin”, *Irish Independent*, 5th Aug, 1924. 8. On the same page the paper cites over 13,000 additional train passengers travelling to Dublin for the Aonach. Most events were staged in Dublin City and suburbs but Rowing was held at the Marina, River Lee, Cork and Motor Boating at Athlone.

¹⁴⁴ Anon. “The Tailteann Games”, *Cork Examiner*, 5th Aug, 1924. 4.

¹⁴⁵ Anon. “Tailteann Games Big Holiday Attraction”, *Freemans Journal*, 5th August, 1924. 7.

¹⁴⁶ Cruise O’Brien, “Hosting of Artists and Craftsmen A Fine Exhibition’ *Irish Independent*, 5th Aug 1924. 6.

¹⁴⁷ Twenty three medal winners from the 1924 Paris Olympics competed in that year’s Tailteann Games, the most famous was the American athlete Harold Osborne. He won gold in Olympic decathlon and high jump.

Tailteann coincided (either by accident or, most probably, design) with the end of the Paris Olympics allowing the international participants at these games to also take part in Dublin. The 1924 Tailteann Games with 5,000 competitors was bigger than that years Paris Olympics.¹⁴⁸ America topped the Tailteann medals table with Ireland in second place. While the media expressed disappointment with Ireland not winning, it does highlight the impact of Irish emigrants on American culture and the State taking back ‘ownership’ of these migrants and their offspring.

Free to attend, the motor-cycle racing and aeronautical displays in the Phoenix Park were the most popular events with the largest attendances. These two free events, not claimed as either ancient or Gaelic, embellished the event with modernity. It featured new technology, speed and excitement - blending Irish culture into the international modernist age. These events attracted a mass audience to their glamour and modernism, again emphasising Geertz’s assertion that rarely is the ideology of new nations purely essentialist or purely epochalist.¹⁴⁹ It also reflected the State’s desire to assert its Independence as culturally ancient but also to be part of the modern world, signified most prominently in 1923 by joining the League of Nations. However complex, the Irish Free State was forging an identity, distancing itself from its former colonizer and taking its place in the world. The art exhibition, important to and promoted by the Government, was a prominent element in the 1924 scheme. The value of art exhibitions having been proved in earlier events.

3.1.6 Aonach Tailteann 1924 Art Exhibition.

Historian Mike Cronin has written an extensive journal article on the 1924 Tailteann Art Competition in which he considers the Aonach and its art exhibition as ‘attempts by the government to create a feeling of consensus in the Irish population and to encourage an

¹⁴⁸ Paul Rouse, “When Ireland’s Tailteann Games eclipsed the Olympics” in *Irish Examiner*, 18th Nov. 2016.

¹⁴⁹ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 240-243.

identification with the new state'.¹⁵⁰ It questions how far the 'artists of the Free State had progressed in the creation of an Irish national style' and if an Irish school of art existed.¹⁵¹ He usefully compares Irish art at that time to the Canadian Group of Seven, as exemplars of a national style and school of art, who 'sought to represent ideas of Canada and of Canadian nationalism through images of the country's landscape'.¹⁵² Cronin's consideration of the substantial and important 1922 Tailteann art exhibition is limited to noting that it 'did proceed'.¹⁵³

The art exhibition was much larger than the competition element, which was the exclusive focus of the *New Hibernia Review* article.¹⁵⁴ There were 383 exhibits in 'Group A, Drawing and Painting', 259 of these were entered for competition. Cronin's exclusion of the entire 1922 Tailteann art exhibition and the 'not for competition' 1924 paintings is problematic, particularly, in an examination that seeks to survey and analyse Irish art in terms of emerging themes and styles of the art on display and to determine if there is evidence of a national style or school.¹⁵⁵ The broader analysis of these early Tailteann art exhibitions undertaken in this thesis includes all art exhibited in 1922 and 1924 and yields a more comprehensive and accurate assessment on 'the state of Irish art' in the early 1920s. It also provides an augmented answer to the question on the existence of a national style/school.¹⁵⁶ Focusing on 'for competition' exhibits in 1924 resulted in landscapes and other works shown that year by Paul Henry, Sarah Purser, Leo Whelan (1892-1956), Eva

¹⁵⁰ Mike Cronin, "The State on Display: The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition" in *New Hibernia Review / Iris Éireannach Nua*, 10/1/2005, Vol. 9, Issue 3. 50.

This chapter re-examines a number of points made in this article. As an historian, Cronin is an important source of information in relation to locating the Aonach Tailteann in the IFS nation building scheme. However, he is not an art historian, and using this lens his analysis of the 1924 Tailteann art exhibition is reevaluated.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 51.

¹⁵² Ibid. 52.

¹⁵³ Ibid. 61. As already stated the 1922 Tailteann Art exhibition is the largest exhibition of Irish art ever held in the country.

¹⁵⁴ There were 1,597 art works, 383 in 'Group A paintings and drawings' the focus of Cronin's article.

¹⁵⁵ There were 732 exhibits in Group A - Drawing and Painting in 1922.

¹⁵⁶ Cronin, "The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition". 51.

Hamilton, Dermot O'Brien, J. Humbert Craig, Frank McKelvey, Charles Lamb and other important artists being excluded from analysis. Cronin concludes that there was no evidence of an Irish school or style largely because he deduces, artists who were central to Irish art in that period Jack Yeats, Henry, Lavery, Lamb... were absent, 'given the complaints about artists who were not represented in the [1924] exhibition, such as Lavery and Henry' and 'the omission of such painters as Lamb and Henry'.¹⁵⁷ However, all of these artists, did exhibit in 1924.

The Dáil debates on the 1922 art exhibition and its desire to include all classes of artistic production, the personal commitment to the project by the Minister of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, the Government's financial and human investment on the art committee all sought to present an exhibition to 'eclipse anything hitherto attempted'.¹⁵⁸ Organisers of the 1924 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition, included two civil servants from the DATI, J. R. Clark and Charles Green, as well as representatives of the NGI, National Museum, RDS and a number of artists from the DMSA, the RHA and the ACSI. John R. O'Connell of the ACSI chaired the exhibition committee. Henry and Jack Yeats also influenced the exhibition composition as organising Committee members, and Lavery was a competition judge in various art classes. It is possible that artists involved in organising and judging were excluded from entering the competition.¹⁵⁹

Both the 1922 and 1924 Tailteann art exhibitions present extensive evidence of the scope, style and development of Irish art.

Cronin states that it appeared in the decade leading up to Independence that 'a national style was indeed emerging - one that depicted a distinctive Irish subject matter, one that was grounded in an acquaintance with the art of the Celtic past' - and these were exemplified

¹⁵⁷ Cronin, "The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition". 67.

¹⁵⁸ Dáil Éireann debate, Vol. S2 No. 15. "Aonach Tailteann", Thursday, 8th June 1922.

¹⁵⁹ Artist organisers, Lavery, Henry, Oliver Sheppard, Dermot O'Brien, only showed work 'Not for Competition' and Nassau Blair Browne and George Atkinson did not take part.

by works of ‘such leading figures as Jack Yeats, Sean Keating, Harry Clarke, and Charles Lamb’.¹⁶⁰ Examining the art competition he deduces that neither the government, ‘nor the artists who entered the Tailteann art competition in 1924, managed successfully to foster a national style’, reasoning that the development of a national style was lost in the conflicts before and after independence.¹⁶¹ George Russell’s (AE) criticism of the much smaller and unrelated RHA 1924 annual exhibition, as not being ‘representative of national art’, is cited as being indicative of the Tailteann competition ‘show[ing] few positive signs of developments’.¹⁶² The Cronin article erroneously stated that there were thirty-two categories for competition when in fact there were fifty.¹⁶³ Despite the largest category being landscape painting with 122 entries, it states ‘what is most noticeably absent is the type of landscape painting that was so powerfully employed by the nationalist painters of the Group of Seven in Canada and in the images of Henry and company that would dominate Irish art in the 1930s’.¹⁶⁴ Another AE review of the 1924 Tailteann art competition in the *Irish Statesman* is also a major source in the *New Hibernia Review* article.¹⁶⁵ However, AE’s review encompasses the entire exhibition, and his disappointment is with the absence of dead painters and paintings by ‘living notables Sir William Orpen and Ambrose McEvoy’ and although acknowledging his involvement Jack Yeats didn’t send a painting.¹⁶⁶ However, this review finds much to admire in works by Tuohy, Keating, Margaret Clarke, O’Brien, Purser, Power O’Malley, in Lavery’s painting *The Red Rose*, described as being ‘the work of an accomplished craftsman’ and in Geddes’ glass panels, *Legends of St. Colman* (figure 51).¹⁶⁷ AE reserves his strongest praise for

¹⁶⁰ Cronin. “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”. 56.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 70.

¹⁶² Ibid. 65.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 66.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ NLI. MS 39,202/ D. Harry Clarke papers. News clipping, Y. O. (George Russell), “Pictures at Ballsbridge” in *The Irish Statesman*, 16th Aug. 1924. 728.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. See also Nicola Gordon Bowe, *Wilhelmina Geddes Life and Work*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2016). 49-53.

Harry Clarke, whose ‘influence is obvious in many pictures and drawings on the walls’.

Clarke exhibits included, *St. Agnes’ Eve*, a stained-glass window created in a spiritualist language, ‘rich with silvery lights, points of rose, mysterious monstrosities of blue and purple gloom, through which wander the jewelled creatures of his imagination’ (figure 52).¹⁶⁸

Charles Lamb, another of ‘Henry’s company’, is described as ‘appearing at the Tailteann exhibition with a single work as a non-competitor’.¹⁶⁹ This ‘omission’ of Lamb and Henry is regarded as serious, resulting in the Tailteann art competition failing to define a national style, deducing that Irish artists, unlike the arts and crafts exhibits, had by ‘the time of the [1924] Tailteann art competition, failed to produce a clearly identifiable national style’ or school.¹⁷⁰ In the 1924 Tailteann exhibition, Paul Henry was represented with a large oil titled *Landscape*,¹⁷¹ painted during the 1920s when Henry was at the height of his powers.¹⁷² He exhibited a similar work, one of two entries, in 1922.¹⁷³ Charles Lamb had seven entries in 1924,¹⁷⁴ not the one ‘single work’ as cited by Cronin (figure 53). Lavery’s, *The Red Rose* was the most expensive work on show, the *Irish Times* also considered it the ‘big thing of the collection’ and showed ‘the artist at his best’ (figure 54).¹⁷⁵ The *New Hibernia Review* article states that this failure by artists and the Cumann na nGaedheal

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. Clarke’s *St Agnes’ Eve* and Geddes *Legends of St. Colman* (exhibited in 1924 and also singled out in Russel’s review) are now with slightly different titles, central pieces of the DCGHL public collection. In 1923, Harold Jacob of Jacob’s biscuit factory commissioned a window, depicting Keats’ poem *The Eve of St Agnes*. Clarke responded by illustrating fourteen key scenes conveying the drama of the poem topped by two decorative lunettes. See also Jessica O’Donnell “A Gorgeous Gallery of Poetic Pictures: Harry Clarke, Harold Jacob and John Keats’s *The Eve of St Agnes*” in Angela Griffith, Marguerite Helmers & Roísín Kennedy, eds., *Harry Clarke and Artistic Visions of the New Irish State*, (Dublin: IAP, 2018). 47-72.

¹⁶⁹ Cronin, “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”. 67.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 67, 70. As already stated Lamb and Henry exhibited ‘not for competition’.

¹⁷¹ *Aonach Tailteann, Exhibition of Irish Art 1924 Catalogue*. Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1924. Catalogue number 191. *Landscape*.

¹⁷² Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, 2007. 64.

¹⁷³ *Exhibition of Irish Art in the Industries Hall of the Royal Dublin Society Ball’s Bridge Dublin :: August 1922 Catalogue*, Dublin: Browne and Nolan, Ltd., 1922. Exhibits number 378 & 594.

¹⁷⁴ Cronin, “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”, 67. Lamb’s seven entries were catalogue numbers 60. *Portrait of a Connemara Girl*, 61. *Portrait of a Western Girl*, 62. *Portrait of two Colleens*, 63. *Portrait of a Connemara Woman* – in the Portraiture class. 259. *Connemara Woman*, 260. *A Crossroads Dance*, 261. *The Peasants’ Prayer* in the Genre class.

¹⁷⁵ Anon. “Irish Artists, The Exhibition at Ballsbridge, A Fine Collection”, *Irish Times*, 6th August, 1924. 7. Catalogue number 276. *The Red Rose*. Priced at £800.

government in the 1920s was only rectified after the change of Government in 1932 when ‘Henry, Lamb, and others was co-opted by the Fianna Fáil government, and other entities’, exemplified by using their images on railway posters.¹⁷⁶ Henry’s first railway poster promoting Ireland was issued in 1925.¹⁷⁷ Cronin notes that the Canadian Group of Seven’s repositioning ‘the landscape into a postcolonial setting is central to the emergence of a Canadian nationalist and non-British conception of identity’, depicting ‘a specifically national and Canadian landscape’ in a ‘national style’.¹⁷⁸ Something that is implied Irish artists failed to achieve, and the Free State government didn’t support in the 1920s. This doesn’t reflect the personnel and financial investment by the IFSG into, and co-operation of Irish artists in the 1920s with, the Tailteann Games and other exhibitions in Dublin and Paris and London.¹⁷⁹ It also fails to reflect the correlation of the aims of artists with politicians on the construction of a politically and culturally independent state and the careful selection of Irish art works for display in each example described. Works, like those displayed in Paris and at these Tailteann art exhibitions, were selected because they were recognised as presenting a unique Irish identity and landscape. These works emphasised how central contemporary Irish art was in visually decolonizing the visual imagination and in (re)connecting Irish people with the ‘west’ and true Gaelic values as already discussed. The IFSG was more active in supporting art exhibitions at home and abroad than their Canadian counterparts, and unlike Canada, they were centrally and critically involved in artists’ designs promoting Ireland – such as those for the Empire Marketing Board poster campaigns.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 70.

¹⁷⁷ Paul Henry’s most successful and best known poster, *Connemara*, for the London Midlands & Scottish Railway Company was issued in 1925. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*. 2007. 60. This is discussed again in chapter four.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 53.

¹⁷⁹ Included here are the numerous exhibitions discussed throughout this thesis.

¹⁸⁰ The hands off approach of the Canadian State to involvement in the EMB and at a series of exhibitions in London is noted in chapter four. As acknowledged later in this chapter they positively engaged in the 1924 British Empire Exhibition.

Contemporary newspaper articles report on the complete exhibition, rather than the competition sub-set.¹⁸¹ Cronin is right to say Jack Yeats did not exhibit any oil paintings in 1924, but he fails to acknowledge, as the newspapers did, that five of his illustrations, printed by his sister Elizabeth's Cuala Press, were displayed by Cuala.¹⁸² As at the Paris Race Congress and the previous Aonach show, these images represented a mix of native customs and a distinct independent people in their own unique surroundings. A newspaper reporter that noted Yeats absence 'except for Cuala Press work', assured his readers that 'it was not the fault of the committee' and asked if it was 'his own waywardness?'¹⁸³ Yeats' prints for his sister's press first appeared in the Dun Emer Catalogue in October 1907 and his last print designs for Cuala were in 1925. He stopped producing designs for prints because by this stage, he said in a letter to his brother W. B. Yeats, this work was 'becoming a drag and a loss to me in my reputation'.¹⁸⁴ He worried that people would think the Cuala prints were one-off works of art and diminish the value of his originals. This explains why Cuala prints exhibited under Jack and Elizabeth's names at the 1922 IRC art exhibition, were exhibited by and credited solely to Elizabeth in the 1924 Tailteann exhibition and catalogue.

Yeats' prints, Lamb, Henry, Margaret Clarke and other paintings showed proud west of Ireland types set in an unmistakable West of Ireland landscape. Many other genre paintings, not in the landscape class, were also set in a Western landscape. For the purposes of the organisers and the participants, it didn't matter in terms of national identity or a national style if works were entered for competition once they were displayed and

¹⁸¹ Comments on the competition are limited to listing prizes

¹⁸² Jack Yeats prints in 1924 were; Evening, 327. The Start, 328. The Finish, 329. The New Ballad, 330. The Tinker, 1319. As already noted he was a prize winner in the 1922 Genre painting class.

¹⁸³ Cruise O'Brien, "Hosting of Artists and Craftsmen A Fine Exhibition", *Irish Independent*, 5th Aug, 1924. 6. The absence of Beatrice Elvery and George Russel (AE) were also noted in this article.

¹⁸⁴ Letter from Jack B. Yeats to W. B. Yeats dated 31st Oct. 1925. Cited in Gifford Lewis, 170. He relented and supplied a few designs for the series of a Broadside published in 1935 and 1937, but effectively he no longer supplied Cuala after the mid-1920s. Editions of older designs continued to be printed. See also Hilary Pyle, *The Different Worlds of Jack B. Yeats*. (Dublin: IAP, 1994). 283 and Griffith, "Impressions: Jack Yeats' approach to fine art publishing" in *Jack B. Yeats Old and New Departures*. 117.

consumed by the viewer. Other members of what are referred to as ‘Henry and company’, such as Keating, MacGonigal, Tuohy, Margaret Clarke, Humbert Craig, Sarah Purser, Lamb, McKelvey all exhibited Irish nationalistically-themed images (figure 55).¹⁸⁵ A newspapers review singles many of them out as ‘among the leading artists whose work is exhibited’.¹⁸⁶

The process for establishing the Aonach Tailteann event that began in earnest in February 1922 and resulted in its full implementation in 1924 was then scheduled as quadrennial like the Olympics.¹⁸⁷ The 1922 art exhibition belongs to and should be evaluated with its 1924 compatriot when considering, ‘the creation of a national style’ and the existence of a school of art.¹⁸⁸ The 1922 exhibition is under-represented in Irish art historiography, principally because most accounts of the Tailteann schemes simply regard the event planned for 1922 as cancelled, postponed or a victim of the Civil War.¹⁸⁹ These same commentaries regard the 1922 planned event as eventually taking place in 1924. The catalogue for the 1922 art exhibition is a primary source and this thesis is the first time a study of the Aonach Tailteann art exhibitions has referenced it. As already stated earlier commentators relied on contemporary newspaper reviews and reports of prize winners in the forty-eight categories as source material on the exhibitions.¹⁹⁰

Taking a limited view of any country’s artistic output for a particular period will inevitably lead to a misdiagnosis about the agency of its art. The development of a national style and school of Irish art was evident at the time the Anglo-Irish treaty was signed and found its first post-Independence expression in the Paris 1922 exhibition. This development was

¹⁸⁵ Cronin. “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”. 66.

¹⁸⁶ Anon. “Irish Artists. The Exhibition at Ballsbridge. A Fine Collection”. *Irish Times*, 6th Aug 1924. 7.

¹⁸⁷ The Games also ran in 1928 and 1932.

¹⁸⁸ Cronin. “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”. 51.

¹⁸⁹ For example see Paul Rouse, “When Ireland’s Tailteann Games eclipsed the Olympics”, *Irish Examiner*, 18th Nov. 2016 and Cronin. “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”. 61.

¹⁹⁰ For example, Anon. “Irish Art - Today’s Exquisite Exhibition – Native Culture’s New Era”, *Irish Independent*, 15th Aug. 1922. 6 and Anon. “Irish Art at Ballsbridge. The Prize-winners.” *Irish Times*, 19th Aug. 1922. 7. Op. Cit.

further demonstrated by the art works on display in the 1922 and 1924 State supported Tailteann art exhibitions. In defining a School of Art in chapter one we saw that a common aim or purpose by members is a cornerstone of such a group. This cohesiveness was on view in Paris in 1922 when the exhibiting artists were united together with Irish nationalist politicians in showing work that culturally distanced Ireland from Britain at a time of national uncertainty. Consequently, the Parisian show was strong on political portraits and paintings and scenes of a functioning State populated with a distinctive Irish type. With the Civil War raging during the 1922 Tailteann show, and the event still fresh in the memory in 1924, artists were exploring what it meant to be an artist at a time of political division. Artists maintained a collegiate cohesiveness and for the most part avoided exhibiting divisive political paintings and portraits in the Tailteann exhibitions. In Paris all artists had eschewed their RHA designations, Yeats and Keating continued this practice in the 1922 Tailteann exhibition. However, in 1924, Yeats didn't exhibit a painting and all RHA members including Keating used their RHA appellation. Landscape, particularly of the west of Ireland, was again the dominant theme and source of identity on show in both Tailteann exhibitions, with 259 of the 547 paintings in 1922 of rural scenes and 122 of the 383 paintings and drawings in 1924 were displayed in the landscape and seascape class. Many of the Portraiture and Genre class exhibits were also based in an identifiable Irish landscape and its inhabitants, exemplified by, *Galway Fisherwomen* by Sarah Purser or *A Crossroads Dance* by Charles Lamb (figure 56).¹⁹¹ Lamb's painting was in the genre class, it was a major work for the artist and was first exhibited in the 1921 RHA as *A Northern Crossroads Dance Scene*. Art historian Marie Bourke describes it as 'one of a pattern of works inspired by the West of Ireland created over a decade by a body of artists including Jack B. Yeats, William Orpen, John Lavery, Paul Henry, Sean Keating, Gerard Dillon and

¹⁹¹ *Aonach Tailteann, Exhibition of Irish Art 1924 Catalogue*. Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1924. Sarah Purser exhibited five paintings, two unidentified portraits (Cat. 72 & 73), *Landscape* (Cat. 201) and two images of Galway fisherwomen (cat. 279, 280).

Maurice MacGonigal'.¹⁹² The picture depicts a dance at a crossroads that is clearly 'Irish' with the dancers in traditional west of Ireland dress, the women in shawls and the men in waistcoats and wide brimmed hats, relocated to the North. It is of the Irish school and stylistically Keating could have painted the figures and Jack Yeats imagined the scene.¹⁹³ The generic nature of the characters allowed Lamb to alter the title in the hope of wider appeal and a sale.¹⁹⁴ Lamb painted *Crossroads* in 1920 while still a student at the DMSA and shortly after his first trip to Connemara. Although, he was never regarded as politically aligned, this painting can be read as a response to the political events and also the nationalism in the art school at the time. Visiting and documenting a traditional, native West of Ireland custom as a source of national identity, is in keeping with other artists at that time, such as, Keating, Yeats, McGonigal, Margaret Clarke, Tuohy and so on. It is also possible that originally titling the painting, *A Northern Crossroads Dance*, and later dropping the Northern, was a political statement – situating the disputed Six Counties as culturally integral and united with the rest of the country. Keating himself exhibited *The Widow Quin*, based on a scene from *Playboy of the Western World*, the apogee of the West of Ireland as a site of cultural survival that J. M. Synge sought to record in literature.¹⁹⁵ Keating was successful across a number classes winning Portraiture, Genre, Prints and drawing classes as well as the overall Tailteann Trophy for his *Homage to Hugh Lane*, (1919). This last painting as a commission by Thomas Bodkin differed from his other exhibits, such as *The Widow Quin*, *G.H.Q*, *Corn Phíopa (Pipers award)*, and *Barney backed the winner* and various landscapes. Works that the critic in the *Freemans Journal* wrote, 'resembles more what one would like to imagine a national tradition of genre

¹⁹² Marie Bourke. "A Growing Sense of National Identity: Charles Lamb (1893-1964) & the West of Ireland" in *History Ireland*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring, 2000. 30-34. 30.

¹⁹³ Lamb won a scholarship to the DMSA in 1917. Sean Keating as one of his teachers was an influence. See Snoddy, *Dictionary*. 248.

¹⁹⁴ Lamb dropped the Northern location from the title, and reduced the price from £300 in the RHA to £200 in the Tailteann exhibition. The painting was owned at one time by W.T. Cosgrave.

¹⁹⁵ Keating was commissioned to produce a series of ten colour illustrations for a special limited edition of *The Playboy of the Western World* in 1922. The edition was published in 1926 by Allen and Unwin, London.

painting to be. It breathes the very life of the west...'¹⁹⁶ The critic, who notes that not all exhibits were 'good' or 'representative of Irish Art', included Charles Lamb as a comparable 'case' to Keating and notes 'similar [quality] works' by a range of other artists.¹⁹⁷ In the history of art, genre painting was prized over landscape, portraits and still lifes and if a painting crossed over, it was generally entered in the genre class. One such significant work exhibited in both 1922 and 1924 was Margaret Clarke's portrait of her sister Mary and her niece Brigid on Inisheer, the smallest of the Aran Islands (figure 57).¹⁹⁸ West of Ireland was the zenith of cultural nationalists, and the islands west of the West, more isolated and harsh, were its crown. Set in an unmistakable Irish landscape, Clarke dresses her subjects in traditional west of Ireland attire – Brigid wears a dress as was also common for boys. With her short hair she could easily be taken for a boy and the painting has been read as both a 'Mother Ireland' and Madonna image with complex Irish catholic and cultural underpinnings.¹⁹⁹ Like many of the exhibiting artists it was inevitable that Clarke was influenced by the overlap of the cultural and political milieu and similar to other exhibits, the painting's setting, title and subjects reflected the cultural and national aspirations of the IFS.

Many of the works on paper, such as the Cuala prints were also set in an unmistakable West of Ireland location. Artists in these two early Tailteann exhibitions reclaimed the iconography of the landscape as they had in Paris. They repositioned the landscape as one that was Irish, to be used and peopled by its native people, rather than one which was colonial. Straight forward peopled and unpeopled Irish landscapes exhibited as part of the

¹⁹⁶ H. L. M. "Art at the Aonach" in *Freemans Journal*, 6th Aug. 1924. 4.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. Artists listed are Leo Whelan, Crampton Walker, Power O'Malley, Dermot O'Brien, John Lavery, Sarah Purser, William Conor, Harry and Margaret Clarke and an abstract design by Mainie Jellett.

¹⁹⁸ Margaret Clarke, *Mary and Brigid, Inisheer, Aran Islands*, 1917, oil on canvas is now in the Mount Saint Vincent University art gallery, Halifax, Canada.

¹⁹⁹ Marie Hammond Callaghan, "Margaret Clarke's 'Mary and Brigid,' 1917: Mother Ireland in Irish Art and Nationalism" in *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice / Études Critiques Sur Le Genre, La Culture, et La Justice*. Vol. 22.2, Spring/Summer, 1998. 99–111. This painting was runner-up in its class at the 1924 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition.

Aonach Tailteann portrayed a unique land, previously under-represented in art, a place that was identifiably Irish, populated by and worked by the native inhabitants and theirs by right.

Much of the art work included scenes of Irish everyday life and the arts and crafts section featured everyday items as well as noteworthy pieces.²⁰⁰ The crafts exhibitors continued to seek inspiration from ‘the Early Christian era’ and this was reflected in the Celtic Revivalist ornamentation on both domestic and religious objects.²⁰¹ The arts and crafts were central to the cultural aspect of the Tailteann. The introduction to the art catalogue describes how the event took ‘so important a place in the national life, from its inception in the year 632 B.C.’ with ‘craftsmen who assembled in contest’ for ‘trophies and awards’.²⁰² More so than painters, it was ‘the master-craftsmen whose names we know – Mael-jesu, Ultan, Ferdornach, Tairill, Nectan; ...attended the festival in their time’ adding ‘exquisite craftsmanship to the prowess of physical attainments’.²⁰³ The organisers cognisant of Irish tradition and antiquity used the past ‘splendid traditions of those earlier Irish craftsmen’ in a continuum with these ‘modern days in the bringing together... the best work that our native talent can produce’.²⁰⁴ They were also resolving the complexities in looking to the past to find the modern; a modern up-to-the-minute stadium, transport infrastructure and crowds to view modern Irish athletics and arts and crafts.

As noted, the most high profile arts and crafts class, stained glass, was dominated by Harry Clarke and An Túr Gloine artists Michael Healy and Wilhelmina Geddes. Along with his *St. Agnes* panel based on Keats century-old poem, Clarke exhibited one of his ‘finest’

²⁰⁰ Such as items of jewellery, some clocks, bowls, furniture, mirrors, various lace and textile items.

²⁰¹ Paul Larmour, *The Arts & Crafts Movement in Ireland*, (Belfast: Friar’s Bush Press, 1992). Preface. Vii. Jeanne Sheehy, *The Rediscovery of Ireland’s Past. The Celtic Revival 1830–1930*. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980). 189,190.

Pyle, *Irish Art 1900-1950*. 13.

²⁰² “Foreword” in *Aonach Tailteann, Exhibition of Irish Art 1924 Catalogue*. Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1924.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

jewel-like windows, the *Visitation*, Geddes' included her *St. Colman* panel and Healy showed part of a three-light window (Christ's Baptism, Crucifixion and Resurrection) for the Holy Trinity Church in Bardsea, Cumbria.²⁰⁵ These exhibits contrived to demonstrate Ireland's contemporary virtuosity of a medieval medium and invoke the early Christian era. Many of the other crafts, such as, enamelling, carpet-making and metal-work also sought to merge an ancient medieval craft with a modern aesthetic.²⁰⁶

The Aonach Tailteann, organised on an all-Ireland basis, succeeded in engaging a broad public with sports people, writers and dramatists, and artists and craftspeople from all provinces of Ireland and from across the political divide. The past was reimagined to fulfil the needs of the present and the seemingly backward-looking Aonach Tailteann re-incarnation engaged with modern society and looked forward.

3.1.7 Reality bites.

It is already noted, that a school of art and a national style existed in the Arts and Crafts sphere is uncontested in Irish art historiography.²⁰⁷ Cronin concurs in his article on the 1924 Tailteann art exhibition and states that the arts and crafts movement had created an

²⁰⁵ *Aonach Tailteann, Exhibition of Irish Art 1924 Catalogue*, (Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1924). Clarke exhibited cat. no. 393, *One set of 19 Drawings for Stained Glass*. 394, *Domestic Stained Glass – St. Agnes' Eve*. 395, *Stained Glass for Balbriggan Catholic Church – The Visitation*. 396, *Stained Glass for Notre Dame, Ashdown Park – Immaculate Conception*. Geddes exhibited cat. no. 399, *Panels – Legends of St. Colman*. 400, *Cartoons for Glass*. 401, *Panel – The Entombment*.

Healy exhibited cat. no. 402, *Part of a Three-light Window for Bardsea*. 403, *Heraldic Panel*.

The Bardsea window was designed by Geddes, see Nicola Gordon Bowe, "The Tower of Glass. An Túr Gloine and the early 20th century stained glass revival in Ireland" in *Historic Churches: The Conservation and Repair of Ecclesiastical Buildings* (Cathedral Communications Limited, 2008). Access on 30th Apr. 2020 at <https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/towerofglass/towerofglass.htm>

²⁰⁶ There were 64 entries in the Enamels and Enamelled Metal-Work class, including pieces by various well-known artists and craftspeople such as Sean Keating, Norah McGuinness, Nan Holland, Letitia M. Hamilton, Kathleen Fox, Margaret (Daisy) O'Keefe, Kathleen Quigley... The class was won by Kathleen Bridle and Nora O'Kelly was runner-up (see appendix 7 for full list of winners in the 1924 Tailteann art exhibition). Enamel and art metalwork were revitalised with the appointment of Oswald Reeves to the DMSA in 1903 after the 1899 Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act moved control of the School from London to the Irish Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, see, Paul Larmour, "The works of Oswald Reeves (1870-1967) artist and craftsman: an interim catalogue" in *Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies*, Volume 1. (Dublin: Irish Georgian Society, 1998). 34-59.

²⁰⁷ This was discussed in chapter one.

‘expression of Irish identity and tradition in the two decades from 1912’.²⁰⁸ That a contemporary Irish School of Art would be based on common aims, location, and landscape was stated at the Paris Congress by Jack Yeats and the existence of such a School was identified by the international critic Arsène Alexandre in that exhibition’s catalogue. Arguments that landscape and its people was reclaimed by Irish artists during the Revival and after have been put forward. The Tailteann exhibits, featured a number of the actual works, alongside others that were similar, from the Paris Congress exhibition. Missing at the respective Aontaí were the revolutionary images, references to atrocities, and political portraits. Avoiding a display of partisan political works during this period was cognisant of the Treaty differences that were still visceral and allowed both sides to put aside rancour and to celebrate shared cultural identity for the sake of the nation. Across the divide, as evidenced by these spectacles, all republicans recognised and valued the fact that Irish artists and craftspeople were moving the landscape and Irish life and culture into a postcolonial setting and decolonizing the Irish visual.

However, it was inevitable that the Civil War, as it did for all citizens challenged Irish artists. They found themselves confronted with the choice of aligning to a treaty side or disengaging from the political situation, whilst sustaining their almost unanimous support for a politically and culturally independent state. Partition meant that some Irish artists found themselves separated from the Free State, they remained in another country, and were part of two artistic communities. As discussed in chapter one there had been a long history of alignment between Irish and British artists and associations. Jack Yeats’ nationalism and sympathies for the republican side has long been argued but what is evident is his almost complete non-participation in State organised art exhibitions after 1922 until De Valera came to power in 1932, when he exhibited at the Tailteann Games

²⁰⁸ Cronin. “The 1924 Tailteann Art Competition”. 68.

and represented the State at the Olympics in Los Angeles. Paul Henry had produced four nationalistic texts, in support of an art exhibition he organised at Mills Hall in 1922. While these provide an insight to his political allegiances supporting nationalism at this time he was or became ‘in the main ... apolitical’.²⁰⁹ The cohesion that had existed between Irish artists and the political establishment before the Civil War now started to soften.

Artists who had eschewed using their Academy designations in 1922, both in the Paris and Tailteann exhibitions, would reclaimed them. The 1924 Aonach expressed the realities of neo-colonial and postcolonial hybridity that would become a feature of Irish life, exemplified by the guests of the nation, organisations such as the Royal Hibernian Academy and the Royal Dublin Society would remain important pillars in Irish cultural and social life.²¹⁰

Other evidence of a softening of relations between artists and IFSG was visible when some Irish industries and artists participated, in a private and practical capacity, at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition. The State officially refused to partake in this event in an attempt to assert political and cultural separation from Britain. However, artists and designers still needed to sell work, gain commissions in order to make a living, and England remained an important platform.

²⁰⁹ Kennedy, *Paul Henry*. 2007. 55.

²¹⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. (London: Routledge, 1994).

While the intermingling of the Royal Dublin Society horse show and the Aonach Tailteann, as in the joint promotional literature for the 1924 events, are text book examples of Bhabba’s post-colonial hybridity, it is fair to note that organisations such as the RDS and RHA were controlled and governed by Irish members.

3.2 British Empire Exhibition 1924 and 1925.

Although invited, the Irish Free State refused to participate in the British Empire Exhibition which took place between April and October 1924. It also declined to participate when it was extended for a second season from May to October 1925. The Empire Exhibition took place on a two-hundred-and-twenty-acre site in Wembley, London. It held the promise of stimulating and improving trade among the participating dominions and, as a statement of strength, the twenty five million anticipated visitors could view the dominions and colonies of the empire in one location. The stated aim of this event was to 'ensure the empire's stability after World War I' and improve the economy across the empire.²¹¹ All 58 territories which composed the Empire at the time were invited to participate by exhibiting at the commercial and artistic national displays or pavilions.²¹² However, despite no official involvement there was an Irish presence.

The Irish Free State invitation to the exhibition was issued to the Irish Governor General from the exhibition organisers in December 1922, the letter stated that participation 'would produce an excellent impression over here... [and] would probably be of material assistance to the Free State in advertising their economic resources and industries'.²¹³ The then Irish High Commissioner in London, James MacNeill, wrote a memorandum for the Free State government outlining the advantages in taking part, stressing the state had been offered a good exhibition site, that there were benefits in promoting trade, commerce and the new State itself, adding that 'abstention seems to be neither good politics nor good

²¹¹ Alexander C. T. Geppert, "Wembley 1924-25," in John E. Findling & Kimberely D. Pelle, Eds., *Encyclopaedia of World's Fairs and Expositions*, (London; MacFarland & Co, 2008), 231.

²¹² The Irish Free State, Gambia and Gibraltar were they only non-participants. For a discussion on the 1924 British Empire Exhibition 1924 see Anne Clendinning, "On The British Empire Exhibition, 1924-25", August 2012 at http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=anne-clendinning-on-the-british-empire-exhibition-1924-25 accessed 06/11/2018.

²¹³ NAI. TSCH/3/S1967. Rialtas Sealadach na hÉireann. Uimhir S1967. External Affairs. British Empire Exhibition. Letter from Devonshire, Colonial Office, Downing Street, S.W.1, to Tim Healy, Irish Governor General, 30th Dec, 1922.

business'.²¹⁴ The only argument in the report that MacNeill offered against participation was that '[t]he name of the exhibition does not attract'.²¹⁵ This was the earliest international fair or exhibition after Irish independence to which the state was invited to participate. MacNeill's report was circulated to the Executive Council for decision. The Executive Council of the Government reviewed the invite favourably and confirmed their provisional approval to participate, subject to suitable accommodation for an exhibit at its meeting of the 2nd February 1923.²¹⁶ This decision also stated that a budget of up to £30,000 and Dáil sanction would be sought at a later date. Exhibits suggested for display at the event included stained glass, carpets, embroidery, lace, enamels, home spuns and pictures by Irish artists as well as educational, industrial and tourism displays.²¹⁷ In effect they were proposing an Irish display similar to the Tailteann and Paris Race Congress art exhibitions with additional exhibits that might promote Irish education, industry and tourism abroad and generate income

Just over two weeks later on the 27th February the Executive Council rescinded their decision to participate citing the need to reduce expenditure. However, up until this decision, cost considerations in the numerous Government memos and files is not seen as a prohibiting factor and the potential to generate trade opportunities was seen as cost effective.²¹⁸ MacNeill also wrote to the Minister of Finance, Ernest Blythe, TD supporting Irish engagement in the Exhibition suggesting that participation would be financially

²¹⁴ NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/28. British Empire Exhibition file, 1923. Memorandum by Mr. James MacNeill on The British Empire Exhibition (April-October, 1924), not dated but January, 1923.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S1967. British Empire Exhibition. Various notes and extracts from meetings of the Executive Council. From 20/1/23 to 12/12/23.

²¹⁷ NAI. 92/3/438. General file re the question of Saorstát representation at the British Empire Exhibition. 26 Jan 1924-13 Mar 1925. Memo prepared for Minister of Agriculture by his Department, 30th Jan. 1924.

²¹⁸ The following are the relevant National Archive of Ireland (NAI) files:
TSCH/3/S1967. British Empire Exhibitions, 1924 and 1925. Date: Dec 1922-Jun 1925.
DFA/1/GR/393/28. British Empire Exhibition file NAI. 1923.

92/3/438. General file re the question of Saorstát representation at the British Empire Exhibition (92/3/438). 26 Jan 1924-13 Mar 1925.

positive.²¹⁹ In an effort to salvage Irish participation, event organisers offered a variety of cheaper options, including a smaller pavilion site or space in the exhibition buildings which would remove the need to build a venue, or it was suggested that the government take a space for a shorter period of time.

Further discussions between the Irish Office of the High Commission in London and various departments took place during the year. The departmental secretary of Industry and Commerce, Gordon Campbell, on behalf of the Minister wrote to the Executive Council in December, 1923 arguing that for the sake of the costs involved it would be a mistake to risk ‘non-appearance at the Exhibition’ and ‘prejudice [to] Irish trade’.²²⁰ The memo bluntly states ‘the question [of participation], however, appears to this Ministry largely a political one’ [rather than exclusively cost].²²¹ The Executive Council revisited their decision on a number of occasions and each time reasserted their decision for non-participation due to ‘necessity for reducing expenditure’.²²² The Secretary of the Executive Council wrote to the Office of the High Commissioner stating that ‘The Executive Council have decided that the IFS will not take part in the British Empire Exhibition. They consider that the money would be better expended on an Exhibition here during the Tailteann games’.²²³ The IFSG also wished to concentrate its efforts on that year’s Aonach Tailteann. In fact, J.J. Walsh, Tailteann Director arranged for the printing of Aonach Tailteann advertising literature which was distributed at the Empire Exhibition.²²⁴

²¹⁹ NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/28. James MacNeill, High Commissioner to Ernest Blythe, TD, Minister of Finance, 7th Dec, 1923.

²²⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S1967. Letter from Gordon Campbell, Secretary Industry and Commerce to Secretary, Executive Council, 12th December, 1923.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² NAI. TSCH/3/S1967. Rialtas Sealadach na hÉireann. Uimhir S1967. External Affairs. British Empire Exhibition. Various notes and extracts from meetings of the Executive Council. From 20/1/23 to 12/12/23.

²²³ NAI. DFA/1/GR/393/28. Letter 01/39/500 from Executive Council to the Secretary, Office of the High Commissioner, London, 21st Dec, 1923.

²²⁴ NAI. TSCH/3/S1592. Letter addressed on official Aonach Tailteann stationary A Chara from J.J. Walsh, dated 3rd November 1923.

As stated in Campbell's letter, it is apparent that not taking part in the BEE was a political act and not entirely based on finance. Given recent history and British government relations, as MacNeill stated the name did not attract. Despite the possibility of increased trade, the possibility of 'build[ing] popular support for British imperial policies' and the IFS place within same, was too high a price for the IFSG.²²⁵ The Irish newspapers backed the initial decision to take part, 'it is gratifying to know that all Ireland will be represented' and saw the retraction as 'a matter for general regret'.²²⁶ Citing financial reasons not to take part was later 'regarded as a sad example of "penny wisdom" and "pound foolishness"', opting out was seen as a missed opportunity to advertise the Free State and push its industries, 'find new markets for its agricultural produce' and establish the 'tourist industry on a sound basis'.²²⁷ This report added that participation would give visible evidence of the States 'existence' and 'stability' after a period of revolution and violence and provide an 'effective cure' for the country's 'insularity of outlook'.²²⁸ Members of Seanad Éireann also saw advantage in being part of the Exhibition with Oliver Gogarty noting that other 'Colonial Premiers have seized upon the sites in Wembley' and claimed if New Zealand and Australia saw trading opportunities then, because of its closer proximity to Britain, the Free State had greater opportunity.²²⁹ In the same debate W. B. Yeats said that artists in an organisation that he chaired had received invitations to exhibit their work and he feared they would have to exhibit in the 'general mass of English artists', causing confusion as to the position of the IFS.²³⁰ A separate Irish room would, he believed, create

²²⁵ Robert W. Rydell, *World of Fairs: The Century of Progress Expositions* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1993). 5.

²²⁶ Anon. "Ireland and the Empire Exhibition", *Irish Independent*, 5th February, 1923. 4.

Anon. "An Imperial Exhibition", *Irish Times*, 10th Sep, 1923. 4.

²²⁷ Anon. "Ireland and Wembley", *Irish Times*, 12th Jan, 1924. 6.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Seanad Debate - Seanad Éireann debate – Saorstát Representation at British Empire Exhibition. Tuesday, 15 Jan 1924 accessed at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/1924-01-15/9/> on 12/11/2018.

²³⁰ Ibid.

‘a distinct possibility for Ireland’ and build on the reputation of Irish artists established by Hugh Lane’s exhibition of Irish Art in London, 1904.²³¹

Individuals recognised that the exhibition offered the country trade and soft power opportunities, but it was primarily about promoting the British Empire.²³² Therefore, it is unsurprising that the name or ethos of the exhibition was ultimately not palatable to the nascent government of the Irish Free State. It decided not to take its place on Dominions Avenue or participate in other elements to which it received individual requests, such as the Exhibition Pageant, billed as an homage to the Empire featuring such episodes as ‘Let us commemorate the growth of the Ideal of Colonization’.²³³ The Free State sought not to internationally declare, tacitly or otherwise, its allegiance to the empire, but, rather sought to reaffirm a political and cultural separation from England through non-participation.

However ‘for some colonial participants [such as Canada and Australia], the British Empire Exhibition enabled them to present a distinct national identity in pursuit of greater autonomy from Britain’.²³⁴ Canada was particularly effective in creating a unique and distinct identity through its art exhibits by the Group of Seven artists at the BEE.²³⁵

There was a large Ulster exhibit in the Palace of Industries of the United Kingdom which served to highlight the North South divide and the six county’s loyalty to the monarch.

When James MacNeill had advocated participation, he held out the possibility of doing so in conjunction with the Six Counties. Despite no official State participation, some Irish companies and visual artists took part independently in the event. The Horace Plunkett Association organised a conference on Agricultural Co-Operation involving English, Irish,

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Anon. “Closing Scenes at Wembley: The King’s Message Duke of York on Empire Work”, *Irish Times*, 2nd Nov, 1925.

Rydell, *World of Fairs*. 9.

²³³ NAI. Empire Pageant. Outline of the Provisional Programme for the First and Second Days. Dec., 1923.

²³⁴ Clendinning, “On The British Empire Exhibition, 1924-25”, August 2012.

²³⁵ Ann Davis. "The Wembley Controversy in Canadian Art." *The Canadian Historical Review* 54, no. 1 (1973): 48-74. <https://muse.jhu.edu/>. Accessed 6th Nov. 2018.

Welsh and Scottish participants. The Great Southern & Western & Midlands Railway Companies (Ireland), The City of Cork Steam Packet Co, Jacobs Biscuits and Jameson Whiskey exhibited in the United Kingdom industries section.²³⁶

Free State artists who took part independently in 1924 included John Lavery who represented Ireland in the 1924 Paris Olympics Art Competition. Dermot O'Brien, President of the Royal Hibernian Academy exhibited the same portrait of the playwright Lennox Robinson that he showed in Paris two years earlier. On this occasion he retained his PRHA designation and omitted the two nationalist plays Robinson wrote from the work's title in Paris, thereby removing the political significance of its previous outing. O'Brien was also a member of the [British] Arts Council for the BEE art exhibition. Edward L. Lawrenson (1868-1940), Robert Gibbings (1889-1958) and E. M. O'Rourke Dickey, who won a 1922 Aonach Tailteann medal, exhibited prints. Other artists included were William Orpen (1878-1931) with a painting of his parents,²³⁷ and sculptors Oliver Sheppard with a bronze *Brothers* (which he previously exhibited in the 1922 Paris exhibition and again in London in 1931 which is discussed in chapter four), Albert Power with his Tailteann winning marble statue of *Dr. Mannix*, and Rosamond Praeger with a bronze titled *The Waif* (figures 58, 59). Lavery's exhibit *The Amazon* (now in NMNI) priced at a thousand pounds was of no national political significance and consequently differed from his work exhibited in Paris (figure 60). Likewise Sheppard decided not to exhibit *Death of Cuchulainn* (1911/12) at the BEE, but to show it with another political sculpture at the IFSG supported DCW art exhibition in 1927.²³⁸ The Youghal Lace Industry showed pieces in the embroidery section and a trio of artists from An Túr Gloine, Sarah Purser, Wilhelmina Geddes and Ethel Rhind collaborated on a stained glass window

²³⁶ List of Exhibitors, *British Empire Exhibition, 1924*. (London: Fleetway Press, 1924). Most of these were companies with strong UK connections and UK offices.

²³⁷ Orpen later exhibited this portrait at a 1930 exhibition of Irish Art in Brussels.

²³⁸ Sheppard's *Death of Cuchulainn* is discussed in chapter four.

St. Brendan the Voyager (figure 61).²³⁹ Tur Gloine was short of work at this time and the Empire exhibition offered opportunity for a sale and more importantly a means to promote and advertise the co-operative.²⁴⁰ St. Brendan was a renowned traveller who discovered unexplored foreign lands centuries before British colonisation and in this instance choosing him as the subject matter could be seen as ‘a deliberate Irish response to the exhibition’s claim to display “the might, dignity, power and prestige of the British Empire”’.²⁴¹

The Government was approached again to participate in the exhibition’s second year and again the Executive Council declined, this time stating, there was a lack of interest expressed by Irish industrial and art industries in participating. Many of the same Irish artists who exhibited in 1924 did show again the following year but there were fewer works, and O’Brien remained on the Arts Council for the show. One noteworthy exhibit featured the *Great Seal of the Irish Free State* and two related Seals, credited to Cecil Thomas of the Royal Mint where it was cut.²⁴² The entry makes no reference to their Irish designer Archibald McGoogan (1860-1931).²⁴³ The Seals featured the harp surrounded by Celtic Revivalist ornament appropriated from the base of the ‘famed’ Ardagh Chalice, ‘accepted as representing the crowning point of ancient Irish art in decorative metal work’, and the name of the Ministry and the title ‘Saorstat Eireann’ (figure 62).²⁴⁴ These Seals designed in 1924 had been discussed by the State since 1922 and the Executive Council of

²³⁹ *The British Empire Exhibition (1924) Palace of Arts*, (London: Fleetway Press, 1924). This is catalogue entry ‘F. 7 S. H. Purser – “*St. Brendan the Voyager*.” Designed by W. Geddes. Executed by E. Rhind’. It was priced at £70.

²⁴⁰ Bowe, *Wilhelmina Geddes, Life and Work*. 189.

Including Purser’s well-known name in the exhibit entry even though she didn’t take an active part in the making the piece was also promotional.

²⁴¹ Bowe, *Wilhelmina Geddes, Life and Work*. 192.

Bowe’s quotation is from *British Empire Exhibition Official Guide* (London: Fleetway Press, 1924).

²⁴² *Catalogue of the Palace of Arts, British Empire Exhibition, 1925*. (London: Fleetway Press, 1925). Page 31, entries P.21, b, c, d. The seal impressions were for the IFS Ministers of Justice and External Affairs. For a discussion on the Seals commissioned by the Irish Free State see, Dr. Ciarán Swan, “Design and change: The Oireachtas Harp and an historical heritage,” an entry on Design Research Group, accessed at <https://designresearchgroup.wordpress.com/2008/03/28/design-and-change-the-oireachtas-harp-and-an-historical-heritage/> on 12/11/2018.

²⁴³ McGoogan was an official of the Science and Art Museum, Kildare Street, Dublin, a designer and an artist who regularly exhibited landscapes and portraits at the RHA.

²⁴⁴ “Seal of The Irish Free State, Harp chosen as the National Emblem”, in *Irish Times*, 6th May, 1925. 9.

the Irish Free State approved the harp as the central emblematic national symbol on the official seal of the Government on the 28th August, 1923.²⁴⁵ Chief Justice Hugh Kennedy, member of the design committee for the seal wrote, ‘The first Great Seal will carry its message, that though the State be young, the Nation is old’ and added that it showed the continuity between contemporary artisans and their Ardagh Chalice antecedents.²⁴⁶ The harp was seen as a non-party or sectional symbol and one which represents the entire Nation. The earliest coding of the Irish harp as a symbol of Ireland dates from the thirteenth century. A gold harp on a blue background was cited in a French roll of arms as the arms of the king of Ireland.²⁴⁷ Since Irish independence, the Trinity College harp has been used when Ireland was represented by the instrument, such as on these seals, coinage, and flags. The harp was also a symbol of colonial Irishness where it was shown surmounted by a crown, as on Irish coinage introduced by Henry VIII in 1534. It was reclaimed in the 19th century by romantic images of Hibernia as a harp as in Daniel Maclise’s (1806-70) *The Origins of the Harp*, 1842. Maclise’s other illustrations for Moore’s melodies in the middle of the 19th century also helped popularise the harp as a symbol of Irish national identity.²⁴⁸ The choice of the harp for the seal was not straight forward, it had also been used by the Royal Irish Constabulary, the armed police force of the United Kingdom in Ireland as its emblem and it also appeared as part of the British Royal arms.²⁴⁹ Exhibiting the seals in the British section at the BEE without acknowledging their Irish designer, could lead some, particularly a British public, at this

²⁴⁵ The principle individuals involved in the emblematic decision were Hugh Kennedy, Chief Justice, Thomas Sadleir, Registrar of the Office of Arms at Dublin Castle, Tim Healy Governor-General of the Irish Free State and Dr. George Sigerson, president of the National Literary Society.

²⁴⁶ Chief Justice Hugh Kennedy quoted in, “Seal of The Irish Free State, Harp chosen as the National Emblem”, in *Irish Times*, 6th May, 1925. 9.

²⁴⁷ Mary Louise O’Donnell, “Death of an Icon: Deconstruction the Irish Harp Emblem in the Celtic Tiger Years” in *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland*, 8 (2012-13). 21-39.

²⁴⁸ Moore, Thomas, *Irish Melodies*, 1845 (Dublin: James Duffy, 1900?).

²⁴⁹ As late as 1947, following the adoption of the new Irish Constitution a new Irish coat of arms featuring the harp was designed and immediately withdrawn. The harp represented had its strings at an angle rather than vertical and, so, was similar to that used by an English knight seven centuries earlier. See in, O’Donnell, “Death of an Icon: Deconstruction the Irish Harp” in *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland*, 8 (2012-13), 21.

1924 exhibition to the misconception of the seals and by extension the Irish Free State, as still being part of the United Kingdom.

Free State exhibitors were intermingled with British companies in the Palace of Industry which was dedicated to British industries, whilst Northern Ireland (described as Ulster) industries exhibited in its own section. Similarly Irish artists were included in the British sections in the Palace of Arts.²⁵⁰ Three hundred and fifty Irish scouts demonstrated outdoor activities in Wembley as part of the Imperial jamboree.²⁵¹ British and Irish exhibits were inextricably linked giving the impression of a close union, and not the separation the Free State intended to give to the ‘political question’ by non-engagement.²⁵²

The BEE art exhibition was ‘an attempt to show the art of the Empire under one roof’ but what it revealed for the participating nations ‘were the growing pains of dominion nationalism’.²⁵³ Canada, as a self-governing dominion, occupied a prominent place at the BEE providing it with the opportunity to assert its own sense of national identity. That sense of identity was increasingly tangible by the 1920s, having been strengthened by Canada’s military efforts during World War One, its representation at the 1919 Paris Peace Conferences, and, like the Irish Free State, its separate seat in the League of Nations.²⁵⁴ It enabled Canada to demonstrate to the rest of the empire, through its artistic and industrial exhibits, that Canada was a modern, industrial nation. Canada exhibited over 200 works of art in their own Gallery, many of them by the ‘the Group of Seven [who] presented to the art world a school and style of painting that was truly Canadian’ at a time when the country was declaring its economic and diplomatic independence.²⁵⁵ Their works received

²⁵⁰ *Catalogue of the Palace of Arts, British Empire Exhibition, 1925*. (London: Fleetway Press, 1925).

²⁵¹ Anon. “Irish Free State Scouts at Wembley”, *Irish Times*, 30th Jun, 1924. 9.

²⁵² NAI. TSCH/3/S1967. Letter from Gordon Campbell, Secretary Industry and Commerce to Secretary, Executive Council, 12th December, 1923.

²⁵³ Tom August. “Art and Empire—Wembley, 1924” in *History Today* 43 (Oct., 1993): 38–44. 44. Accessed on 27th Nov, 2019 at <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=hft&AN=503167439>.

²⁵⁴ Anne Clendinning, “On The British Empire Exhibition, 1924-25”, August 2012 at http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=anne-clendinning-on-the-british-empire-exhibition-1924-25 accessed 06/11/2018.

²⁵⁵ Tom August. “Art and Empire—Wembley, 1924” in *History Today* 43 (Oct., 1993).

enthusiastic reviews and the Tate Gallery purchased *Entrance to Halifax Harbour* by group member, A.Y. Jackson. At the BEE, Canada, through participation and art asserted its identity and place in the world.

Conversely, Irish absenteeism resulted in a lack of government control and agency over its identity, as exemplified by losing the significance of the harp, a dominant and potent icon of the new Irish Free State, on the seals. IFS official non-participation and the inclusion of participating Irish artists in the rooms reserved for British painting confirmed W. B. Yeats' fears expressed in the Seanad debate and led to confusion as to the position of the Irish Free State. The State made a choice not to participate, citing financial reasons in 1924, and lack of interest by industry in 1925, but primarily it was a statement that its identity was that now of a free and independent state. Non-participation for political reasons in the Empire Exhibition, a name that did 'not attract', sought to further distance the new State from its former coloniser, an objective it struggled to achieve in this instance.²⁵⁶

Participation by other dominions, such as Canada, South Africa and Australia, demonstrated that exhibiting a national identity through participation and using art was more effective than absenteeism.²⁵⁷

This was a lesson the Irish Free State learned and it actively engaged with British exhibitions and trade endeavours in the following years, such as the Empire Marketing Board from 1926 to 1933, the 'Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and [small] sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions' between 1927 and 1931 and it took a prominent role in the second Empire Exhibition held in Glasgow, 1938.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ NAI. British Empire Exhibition file, DFA/1/GR/393/28. 1923. Memorandum by Mr. James MacNeill on The British Empire Exhibition (April-October, 1924), not dated but January, 1923.

²⁵⁷ This was also exemplified by India who participated in 1924 with the hope of increase trade and as a statement of identity. However non-participation in 1925 resulted in an image of the country as an underdeveloped 'oriental bazaar' – see Clendinning, "On The British Empire Exhibition, 1924-25", August 2012.

²⁵⁸ The Empire Marketing Board from 1926 to 1933 and the 'Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and [small] sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions' between 1927 and 1931 are discussed in chapter four.

Chapter five discusses how the IFS would ‘lead the way’ in using contemporary art to enhance the country’s global footprint by participating in its first trans-Atlantic exhibition in Chicago, 1933.²⁵⁹

The Executive Council of the Free State discussed and approved participation in these events, but insisted on asserting its identity and how it was represented, clearly identifying as Irish and not British.²⁶⁰ The revolution was over and Irish art would play an ocular role in the reconciliation of Irish identity, asserting uniqueness and compatibility in international arenas.

²⁵⁹ Eleanor Jewett, “Many Interesting Paintings Now to be Found in Buildings on the Grounds of A Century, Irish Free State Started Trend: Followed by Local Associations, Artists”, *Chicago Tribune*, undated clipping but May/June, 1933. Participation at these exhibitions are discussed later in this thesis.

²⁶⁰ This is discussed in the next chapter. The Executive Council had the phrase ‘Buy Empire Goods – Ask if it is British’ removed from the Empire Marketing Board advertisements for Irish goods and had artists designated as Irish and not grouped with British artists as had been proposed in the exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and [small] sculpture.

Chapter 4. Evolution: Irish art and the reconciliation of identity.

4.1 Introduction.

This chapter continues with its examination into the methods and means that the IFSG used in deploying visual art, at home and abroad, as part of its state building project in the mid - 1920s. The Empire Exhibition extended into 1925 and again there was no official participation by the IFSG. While a presence had economic potential there was an up-front cost to participation, and this coupled with the contentious issue of the exhibition supporting the British Empire at a time of economic stringencies was presented as a justification for non-participation. However, there was a pragmatism in the Cumann na nGaedheal government during this period that recognised that the UK was Ireland's biggest market, and that in particular, agricultural export earnings paid the bills.¹ These economies still operated a free trade model. The importance of the UK market to the IFS was acknowledged with the appointment of John W. Dulanty as Irish Commissioner for Trade attached to the High Commission office in London in 1926.² Patrick Hogan, the Irish Free State Minister for Agriculture, was the first Government minister 'to address an audience in Great Britain' by radio.³ He promoted Irish agricultural produce and sought reciprocal trade stating 'we expect, as a matter of business, to receive whatever preference is rightly due to a country which is one of the most substantial purchasers of British goods'.⁴ In another newspaper article on cross-channel trade, Hogan was quoted,

We have no sympathy with those who pretend that the Irish Free State is completely independent of Great Britain, and that, therefore, the policy of the Government ought to be directed towards *rapprochements* with every other Government in Europe except the British Government. Membership of the League

¹ D.S. Johnson and Liam Kennedy, "The two economies in Ireland in the twentieth century", in Hill, Ed. *A New History of Ireland*, VII. 452-486.

² John W. Dulanty, (1881-1955) was Irish Trade Commissioner in London (1926-30); Irish High Commissioner in London (1930-49); Ambassador to Britain (1950). Dulanty was regarded as an affable and persuasive diplomat, who engaged extensively with Irish writers and artists, frequently entertaining them in London. See also, J. Anthony Gaughan, *Memoirs of Senator Joseph Connolly (1885-1961), A founder of modern Ireland*. (Dublin: IAP, 1996). 342 and Dulanty's obituary in *The Guardian*, 12th Feb. 1955, 3.

³ Anon. "The British Market. What the Free State Wants." *Belfast Newsletter*, 13th Jun, 1929.

⁴ Anon. "Irish Eggs and English Buyers." *Irish Times*, 14th Jun, 1929.

of Nations, and all that it implies, may gratify national pride; but what the Free State needs at present is better trade, and that need can be supplied only in one way.⁵

It was therefore no surprise that the IFS actively engaged with the Empire Marketing Board whose stated purpose was to promote reciprocal trade between Great Britain and its dominions and colonies. Unlike the British Empire Exhibition, it was promoted as mutually beneficial. The EMB scheme dovetailed with the State's economic nation building project. EMB functions fell into three divisions, publicising/ marketing empire goods in the UK, sharing research and economic analysis on various commodities, and finally promoting schemes for the improvement of production.⁶ These divisions fell into 'two main fields', Publicity and Research, for which two sub-committees were established. Publicity was

to include newspaper publicity and newspaper advertising; the display of posters; the use of cinema films; broadcast talks and lectures; special arrangements at exhibitions; provision of speakers for meetings and lectures; and arrangements through schools for the education of children in the meaning and economic importance of the Empire.⁷

It was proposed 'to concentrate at the outset on a general campaign of newspaper publicity and poster display...' during the EMB lifetime, posters accounted for approximately 35% of the publicity budget with newspaper advertising slightly less.⁸ As will be discussed later, the IFS sought to affect agency and control over both the production of EMB posters and press advertising, where its identity, produce and market were concerned, despite the High Commissioner at the time, James MacNeill, arguing to accept the British-led publicity as it was, rather than loose 'the value of an advertisement of this nature in the

⁵ Anon. "Cross-Channel Trade", *Irish Times*, 19th Dec, 1928. 6.

Joining the League of Nations in 1923 is regarded as a mark of true confidence and optimism by the Irish Free State, at such an early point in the evolution of statehood, demonstratively taking its diplomatic and political place in the World.

⁶ EMB, *The Work of the Empire Marketing Report*, Report No 1, July, 1926.

⁷ Ibid. 2.

⁸ Ibid.

By the end of 1932, £1,101,152 had been spent on publicity. £380,405 on posters (an additional £46,000 was spent until the EMB was disbanded in Sep. 1933), £362,122 on press, £242,496 on exhibitions & Shopping Weeks with the remainder on Lectures, Cinema and miscellaneous. Source: David Meredith. Imperial images: the Empire Marketing Board, 1926-32. *History Today*. 1987, Vol. 37. 30-36. 35.

British press free of expense'.⁹ While all nations sought an economic dividend, the IFS was the only Empire country that engaged artistically and politically with the EMB publicity campaign to project a particular identity. This chapter will show how the IFS was balancing the essentialism of a rural identity and way of life with the epochalism of economic development and modernity. Some commissioned poster designs of Irish economic life were rejected by the IFSG. These indicate the State's intentions, in particular the identity it wished to avoid, just as much as those posters approved and produced.

The maturity and evolution of the State and its confidence in its place in the world is further exemplified by its participation in, and support of, Irish artists inclusion in the "Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions" exhibitions held at the Imperial Gallery of Art, Imperial Institute, London between 1927 and 1931. Unlike its refusal to take part in the Empire Exhibition in 1924, the Executive Council actively discussed this show, encouraged participation, sought to control artist selection and to clearly designate and brand Irish art.

During these years at home, the engagement of Fianna Fail in constitutional politics and the ongoing tensions and recriminations from the Civil War, determined that reconciliation between those still divided by the Treaty was imperative.¹⁰ As shown, culture and art was still something both sides engaged with together, it was viewed as non-contentious. The State support of 1927 and 1929 Dublin Civic Week exhibitions and the 1928 Tailteann Games, was about finding the common ground to continue reconciliation, state building and expanding national identity to include modernity. The State's relationship with its

⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter MacNeill to McDunphy. 10/11/1926.

James McNeill (1869-1938) was an Irish politician and diplomat, who served as first High Commissioner to London until 1928. He was the IFS representative on the EMB board being replaced by Dulanty in 1927. Michael McDunphy, was Assistant Secretary to the Executive Council and also attached to the President's Office at this time.

¹⁰ De Valera led Fianna Fail and entered the Dáil for the first time after the 1927 general election, becoming the major opposition party. Kevin O'Higgins, Irish Free State Minister for Justice and Vice President of Cumann na nGaedheal, was assassinated on Cross Avenue in Blackrock, Co. Dublin on 10th July, 1927 by anti-Treaty activists in revenge for his part in the Irish Civil War.

diaspora had also changed, no longer was it primarily identified as an agent to put pressure on the British government to grant Irish independence but it was now viewed as a vital source of tourist and trade revenue. Events such as Dublin Civic Weeks and the Tailteann Games provided the opportunity to attract those of Irish descent home and extend the tourist season. Art and other forms of cultural expression were politically important and central to these spectacles. By extension the Irish EMB posters spoke directly to the Irish diaspora in Britain. It was important that the agency of the State was seen to direct and endorse any visual materials that related to Ireland, its landscape, its people and its produce; images that would resonate nationally and internationally, presenting official national identity and the viewer/ individual's place in it. Art allowed for a dialogue on identity in a language that transcended politics.

The State's desire during these years to steer Ireland's direction towards modernization and innovation while remaining cognizant of its unique heritage and traditions is overtly portrayed and documented in the numerous civic publications produced in association with, or inspired by, these home spectacles. These spectacles encouraged mass participation in parades, pageants, games and exhibition attendance – and the publications were often the only important material cultural objects to survive.¹¹ These publications, discussed in this chapter, were state sponsored, had mass appeal, were distributed at home and internationally, and had high production values. These were important official publications that didactically told Irish people about the state, textually and visually, justified the government agendas and, along with the illustrations commissioned from Irish artists, overtly presented an identity for the State and its citizens' place within it.

¹¹ These are cited where individually referenced but include: various Tailteann Games publications 1922-1932, *Dublin Civic Week Official Handbook 1927*, *Dublin Civic Week Official Handbook 1929*, *A Book of Dublin 1929* and *Saorstát Éireann Official Handbook 1932*.

In 1926 the economy was weak, the cost of the recent wars remained a drain on the state finances. The Government had cut the old age pension and teacher salaries in an attempt to balance the books.¹² Therefore the proposal that the EMB would contribute to the country's economic development through the promotion of the sale of Irish goods in the UK and its dominions, the IFS biggest market, offered the prospect of increased revenues and engaged the apparatus of the Irish State.

¹² Ernest Blythe, Cumann na nGaedheal Finance Minister, cut a shilling off the old-age pension and 10 per cent off National teachers' salaries in 1924.

4.2 Art, Press and Posters; Selling Ireland in Britain.

The earliest correspondence between the Irish Executive Council and the EMB, was a telegram in May 1926 informing the Government of its establishment, and that the High Commissioner in London, James MacNeill, was appointed as the Irish representative on the EMB Board.¹³ Numerous other memos quickly followed, including a confidential report that stated it was proposed, ‘to concentrate at the outset on a general campaign of newspaper publicity and poster display...’¹⁴ A second report followed in October confirming their intention to place advertisements for Irish goods ‘in the leading daily papers of the United Kingdom’ and for the EMB posters it proposed ‘to enlist ... the best [English] poster artists at work in the country’.¹⁵

The EMB extensively placed adverts in newspapers explaining their *raison d’être*, as stimulating ‘the consumption within the United Kingdom of Empire products, whether grown at home or brought from overseas’.¹⁶ Other adverts encouraged British consumers to purchase produce from specific countries in the Empire. In this regard, Dulanty, Irish Commissioner for Trade wrote to the Assistant Secretary [McDunphy] of the IFS Executive Council with a ‘proof of the draft [newspaper] advertisement’ promoting Irish goods in the UK. He was unhappy with the Irish coat of arms proposed as a logo for the IFS, and sought ‘a good photograph or drawing of the [IFS] Seal’ which he opined would make a better emblem (figure 63).¹⁷ By this time the emblem of the IFS was resolving to the harp, it had been selected as the central element of the Seal and the Department of

¹³ NAI. TSCH/3/S9386. Telegram from Leo Amery, Colonial Secretary in the British government, dated 21/05/1926. Sent to Executive Council via Governor General.

The High Commission (HC) was effectively the Irish Embassy. Commonwealth countries maintain a HC with the UK, when Ireland became a Republic in 1949 the HC became an embassy.

¹⁴ EMB, *The Work of the Empire Marketing Report*, Report No 1, July, 1926. 2.

The EMB had a budget of £500,000 for 1926 and £1,000,000 for the following year.

¹⁵ EMB, *The Work of the Empire Marketing Report*, Report No 2, October, 1926. 3,4.

¹⁶ Advertisement, “What is the Empire Marketing Board?” *Belfast News-letter*, 24th May, 1927. 18.

¹⁷ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter from John Dulanty, Commissioner for Trade, London to M. McDunphy, Asst. Secretary to the Executive Council, Dublin. 4/11/1926. The Secretary to the Executive Council, Diarmuid O’Hegarty advised Dulanty to write.

Finance had issued a directive to the Coinage Committee set-up to select designs for IFS coins that an Irish harp should be shown on one side of Irish coins.¹⁸ The proposed coat of arms was derived from the aforementioned shield on a 1922 stamp designed by Millicent Grace Girling and the proposed Seal image was that designed by artist, Archibald McGoogan.¹⁹ The advert extols UK consumers to purchase ‘Irish eggs, bacon or butter’ as well as cream, condensed milk, ham, pork, poultry and lard, with the reciprocal advantage that it ‘increase[s] the spending power of the [Irish] people whose orders keep British mills and factories and ships running and British workers employed’.²⁰ The proposed text ends with ‘Buy Empire Goods. Ask – Is it British?’ An image of the Seal was despatched to the Office of the High Commission. Diarmuid O’Hegarty, Secretary to the Executive Council was asked for his comments on the proposed advertisement by McDunphy, the use of the seal was uncontentious but exception was taken to the phrase, ‘Buy Empire Goods. Ask – Is it British?’ - British was seen as ‘practically synonymous with English’ and it was questioned ‘that an appeal under this title is going to benefit us commercially ... The real objection is, however, political’.²¹ The objection was sanctioned by President Cosgrave who, when shown the ‘notice’, agreed that the quote ‘is very objectionable from our point of view’.²² It was feared, because the IFS had representation on the EMB, that whatever it issued had Irish State approval. The matter was passed to the Irish High Commissioner in London for action.

By this time Dulanty had queried this wording with the EMB executive and had sought ‘amendments to the letterpress’, he expedited and elevated the issue when he informed

¹⁸ NAI. FIN F17/23/29. Memorandum from J. Brennan to E. Blythe, Oct. 1925. See also letter from WB Yeats to Edmund Dulac, 1st Aug. 1926, cited in R. F. Foster, *W B. Yeats: A Life II: The Arch-Poet*. (Oxford: OUP, 2003). 333.

¹⁹ The stamps designed in 1922 were exhibited at that years Tailteann Art Exhibition and the IFS Seals were exhibited at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition and both are noted in this context in chapter three.

²⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Advertisement proof, *Last year the Irish Free State spent 40 millions on goods from the United Kingdom*. Undated.

²¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. ‘Urgent’ memo from McDunphy to O’Hegarty. 8/11/1926.

²² Ibid.

them of the President's objections.²³ There was uncertainty if the text of the advertisement would be changed and McNeill argued that the commercial value of the free promotion of Irish produce in the British Press outweighed the political objection to the slogan, which was 'a general one' – in other words this slogan appeared in advertisements for other self-governing dominions.²⁴ There was a sense of relief in the letter from the High Commission, addressed to McDunphy at the President's Office, due to President's Cosgrave's personal interest in the matter, saying 'You will observe that the words "Ask if it is British" were deleted and you will see that the crest [IFS Seal] at the head of the advertisement looks quite well' (Figure 64).²⁵

What this exchange showed was that the IFS was intent on distancing its identity from that of the United Kingdom; and asserting its individuality was politically important. Yet it did this while fully engaging with, and benefitting from, the EMB scheme. It also demonstrated to the IFSG that the British authorities seemed to wish to appease them, a situation they continued to exploit. This episode also re-stated that the official Irish emblem was the harp, the central portion of the seal and the Celtic Revivalist border design denoted a historic, ancient and unique state.²⁶ If there was ambiguity over the agency of the IFS Seal, designed by McGoogan (and discussed in chapter three), at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition, it was reclaimed here. Removing 'Ask[ing] if it is British' from the advert, laid down a marker that the Irish Executive Council would seek to define its

²³ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter to O'Hegarty certainly from Dulanty but not signed. 10/11/1926 and NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter MacNeill to McDunphy. 10/11/1926.

²⁴ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter MacNeill to McDunphy. 10/11/1926.

²⁵ NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter from High Commissioners office, indistinct signature, [Diarmuid Mc..taigh] to McDunphy. 15/11/1926.

Interestingly the other amendment was the removal of these lines, 'That money is to-day helping to pay wages, provide employment, create prosperity for the workers of your own country', clearly the image of the Irish citizen paying the British worker was to be avoided.

²⁶ Politicians and state officials chose it over an emblem depicting the four provinces which included the contentious region of Ulster.

individual sovereignty. The EMB continued to place advertisements, supporting the purchase of IFS produce, in British newspapers for the duration of the scheme.

Posters provided the most visible element of the EMB project and came to define it. The history of posters is well documented and their role as propaganda in war, social unrest and marketing is cited in economic and political histories.²⁷ Any era's political and social history is mirrored in these posters. Although posters are still common, their dominance receded with the ubiquity of film, television, the internet and social media. The golden age of the poster is regarded as spanning the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century which sites the EMB poster campaign at the acme.²⁸ Business and advertisers realised that the visuals in advertising campaigns and posters was a critical element that attached the consumers to the product. For artists, working in advertising offered them well-paid work and the opportunity to enhance their reputations to a broader audience. While a number of leading artists would be involved in poster and marketing campaigns, for some this could create tensions between their status as artist and that of poster designer, with the restrictions of pandering to a phantom public constructed by the assumptions and needs of the client.²⁹ These tensions were evident and, as will be shown, were resolved in the commissions and engagement of Irish artists with the EMB.

EMB posters were displayed in a number of formats. Publicly placed permanent poster display boards were designed in English oak, specifically for EMB use, 'to hold three pictorial posters separated from each other by two letterpress posters'.³⁰ These would show

²⁷ John Barnicoat, *A Concise History of Posters* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972). Josef and Shizuko Muller-Brockmann, *The History of the Poster*, (Zurich: ABC Verlag, 1971). Recent exhibitions at the National Print Museum, Dublin have highlighted the agency of posters in campaigns, such as "Print, Protest, and The Polls: The Irish women's suffrage campaign and the power of print media, 1908 – 1918" in 2018, see <https://www.nationalprintmuseum.ie/print-protest-and-the-polls-the-irish-suffrage-campaign-and-the-power-of-print-media/> and "World to Win, Posters of Protest and Revolution" in 2015, see <https://www.nationalprintmuseum.ie/a-world-to-win-posters-of-protest-and-revolution/>.

²⁸ For a discussion on commercial art and posters in advertising during this period see Michele H. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising and the Borders of Art*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

²⁹ Ibid. 302.

³⁰ EMB, *The Work of the Empire Marketing Report*, Report No 2, October, 1926. 4.

‘scenes of production in different parts of the Empire at home and overseas’. Letterpress would give some economic information on the produce in the other posters (figure 65).³¹ By 1931 the EMB would have 1,750 of these special frames in 450 towns in the United Kingdom, in addition posters were exhibited at exhibitions and trade fairs.³² Reproductions of some posters were sent to over 22,000 UK schools, ‘bringing the Empire alive’ and instilling an image of empire in younger generations (figure 66).³³ A large number of requests for these posters were received from schools in the Irish Free State, and the EMB had decided to ‘rank their [Irish schools] status with’ England’s, enabling them to automatically receive all reproductions.³⁴ Limited numbers were sent to other dominions. In addition posters were issued and posted in factories ‘where orders are being executed for the Empire overseas’ (figure 67).³⁵ As part of the newspaper publicity the EMB sent photographs of English factories displaying these posters extolling workers to buy Irish produce and these were reproduced in Irish newspapers.³⁶ Posters were also displayed in pairs each measuring up to 610x305cm on ordinary hoardings. The scale of poster advertising was ambitious and difficult for the consumer to avoid.

On the 1st January, 1927 the EMB unveiled its first poster *Highways of Empire*, at 610x305cm in size, it dominated Charing Cross Road, London and set the tone for much of the EMB’s seven year poster campaign.³⁷ This poster was created by a British, London-

³¹ EMB, *The Work of the Empire Marketing Report*, Report No 2, October, 1926. 4.

³² Empire Marketing Board, *Note on the work and finance of the Board and statement of research and other grants approved by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs from July, 1926, to March 31st, 1931*. (London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office. July, 1931). 15.

A small number of specimen frames were also erected in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the British West Indies.

There were no poster frames in Northern Ireland but posters were shown there at exhibitions and trade fairs.

³³ Uma Kothari, “Trade, Consumption and Development Alliances: The Historical Legacy of the Empire Marketing Board Poster Campaign.” In 2014, *Third World Quarterly* 35 (1). 49.

³⁴ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 28th Apr. 1927. Item 12. 2. See also Letter from Arnold Marsh, Newton School, Waterford in *Irish Times*, 8th Dec, 1933. 6.

School posters were accompanied by information leaflets including one on *Farming in the Irish Free State*.

³⁵ Ibid. 16. Bills, cards, postcards and window strips were also issued for display.

³⁶ See, Anon. “Advertising Free State Produce”, *Irish Times*, 20th Mar. 1929. 4.

Anon. “Cross-Channel Trade”, *Irish Times*, 19th Dec, 1928. 6.

³⁷ The poster was designed by MacDonald Gill, printed by Jordison & Co. Ltd. For more details see Andrew Johnston, Caroline Walker, *The life and legacy of MacDonald Gill*, (London: British Library website, no

based commercial artist, MacDonald Gill, and publishers, Jordison & Co. Ltd, presented a positive image of Britain at the centre of the world linked by trade routes to its dominions and colonies – it defined British imperial culture. Highlighting the significance of trade, these posters were also propaganda for the ideological and cultural repair and renewal of the Empire for a new generation after the destabilising 1914-18 war.

The ‘almost exclusive use of British artists’ to market the products of other nations resulted in posters created for the self-governing dominions taking ‘on a familiar, British-looking form’, while those for the colonies ‘could be considered almost a paint-by-numbers study in Saidian orientalism’.³⁸ The most extreme stereotypes of black and white figures appeared in the tropical African posters, caricatures were often grotesque and ‘the paternalism of the colonial relationship was illustrated by the image of the strong, silent bush officer’.³⁹ Posters created by artists who had limited experience, if any, of that country, resulted in ‘essentialised representations of formerly colonised people and places’.⁴⁰ Placing commodities in the imagined society in which they were produced, presented a faux cultural construct, and semiotic value to the material goods. In general, they idealised the Empire as a modern interdependent whole, projecting Britain as benevolent with no mention of the inhumanity of domination and colonial subjugation. Simultaneously it presented Britain as the superior industrial metropole and the dominions

date), accessed at <https://www.bl.uk/maps/articles/the-life-and-legacy-of-macdonald-gill> on 21/01/2019. *Highways of Empire*, a 20ft x 10ft poster of a hemispherical projection of the world. Produced in 16 sheets, this was the largest poster ever produced at that time and required specially-built hoardings.

³⁸ Barnes, “Bringing Another Empire Alive?” (2014). 66, 69, 75.

For a discussion on the different construction of colonial and dominion identity in the EMB posters see Barnes, “Bringing Another Empire Alive?” (2014). For a discussion on the racial stereotype and colonial paternalism in the posters see Meredith, “Imperial Images” (1987).

³⁹ Meredith, “Imperial Images”, (1987). 33.

⁴⁰ Uma Kothari, “Trade, Consumption and Development Alliances: The Historical Legacy of the Empire Marketing Board Poster Campaign.” In 2014, *Third World Quarterly* 35 (1). 44.

and colonies as ‘non-industrial, backward and inefficient’.⁴¹ However, for the EMB organisers, to their mind its poster campaign brought ‘the Empire alive’.⁴²

The Irish poster designs for the same EMB campaign by Paul Henry, James Humbert Craig, Sean Keating, Margaret Clarke and Dorothy Travers Smith are exceptions in the series in that they were created by Irish artists following IFSG political interventions with the EMB.⁴³ IFS posters promoting Irish produce in the UK also spoke to a large Irish diaspora, and were a projection rather than a reflection of the country’s society, its economic aspirations and its cultural difference. Humbert Craig’s poster promoted the Northern Ireland flax industry, all the others were for IFS commodities (figure 68).⁴⁴ The EMB initially intended that English artists would create posters advertising IFS produce in the United Kingdom. TJ Kiernan, Secretary of the Office of High Commissioner in London wrote to The Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Dublin - that the EMB are launching a poster publicity campaign ‘in favour of the purchase of home and other Empire produce in preference to Foreign produce’ and that ‘[f]or the guidance of selected artists to whom the designing of these posters will be entrusted’, he sought photographs showing ‘[Irish] scenes of production or transport’ and ‘scenery as might supply background’. The EMB requested ‘photographs of this nature’ for guidance in their advertising campaign.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Uma Kothari, “Trade, Consumption and Development Alliances: The Historical Legacy of the Empire Marketing Board Poster Campaign.” In 2014, *Third World Quarterly* 35 (1). 52. See also, Meredith, “Imperial Images” and Barnes, “Bringing Another Empire Alive?”

⁴² Stephen Constantine, *Buy & Build, The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1986). 6,7.

⁴³ See, Stephen Constantine, *Buy & Build, The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board*, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1986), 10-12.

These artists and their poster designs are discussed in this section. The Henry and Travers Smith designs were never produced as posters.

A.B. Webb an English born Australian artist designed an Australian poster which was reworked by a London Design House, and Burmese artist Ba Nyan, designed two Burmese posters while based in London.

⁴⁴ Anon. “New Ulster Poster, Mr. J. H. Craig’s Design for Ministry of Commerce.” *Belfast Newsletter*, 15th Apr. 1927. 11.

Humbert Craig was awarded the EMB commission through the Northern Ireland Minister for Commerce, Sir John Milne Barbour whose family were wealthy linen manufacturers, owners of William Barbour Linen Thread Company of Hilden – the largest linen thread manufacturers in the world at the time.

⁴⁵ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan, Secretary of the Office of High Commissioner to, Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Dublin. 27th Jul. 1926.

Subsequent correspondence from Kiernan outlined the size and scale of the poster initiative. While awaiting suitable photographs the High Commission engaged with the EMB, specifically Gervas Huxley, their publicity officer and suggested that they commission Paul Henry to produce a design for IFS dairy products along the line of his successful *Connemara* poster for the London, Midlands and Scottish Railway Company.⁴⁶ As a result of this intervention the EMB commissioned Henry to produce both the Irish poster and ‘to paint the British scene which will be shown side by side with the Irish poster’.⁴⁷

At this early stage in the evolution of the EMB organisation the Poster sub-committee was not yet established to advise the Publicity Committee on commissioning, producing and displaying posters. As part of the start-up phase a number of artists had been commissioned to design posters. Artists listed were commissioned to design two posters, including Paul Henry for *Irish Free State Dairy Produce* and *UK Market Gardening*.⁴⁸ Commissions to these artists pre-dated the Poster sub-Committee and were from the Publicity Committee, and Henry was one of the earliest artists selected.⁴⁹ Once established the Poster sub-committee published a ‘comprehensive’ report and outlined the plans for display, on interim arrangements, until its network of hoardings was in place.⁵⁰ Kiernan outlined the subject matter of Henry’s painting in some detail despite not having discussed

⁴⁶ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Sean Lester, Director of publicity, External Affairs. 9th Sep. 1926.

Connemara, a London, Midlands and Scottish railway poster was hugely popular and the most sought after of all LMS posters. First issued in 1925, it was also an image of Ireland that the IFSG wished to promote. See Kennedy, *Paul Henry*. 2007. 60.

⁴⁷ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Sean Lester, Director of publicity, External Affairs. 9th Sep. 1926.

See also NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Dublin. 28th Sep. 1926 and Anon. “Items of Interest, Irish Artist’s Posters”, *Irish Independent*, 19th Oct. 1926. 8.

⁴⁸ Other artists on this list were Charles Pears, G. Sheringham, Gregory Brown, Spenser Pryse, McKnight Kauffer, EA Cox, N. Wilkinson, Charles Dixon and Fred Taylor.

⁴⁹ Commissions appear to have been listed in award order, with Henry early, appearing at no. 2 after Pears. Kew. CO 760/22. Publicity Committee. Papers. 1-227. Gervais Huxley, Appendix to Empire Marketing Board, Publicity Committee Note dated both 30th Aug. 1926 and 28th Aug. 1926.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

it with Henry, stating it ‘will contain a typical piece of Irish scenery, a winding road, a Creamery, and carts bringing the milk to the creamery’.⁵¹ It was a very specific commission to Henry by the EMB filtered through the High Commission Office. The letter further stated that Henry’s designs would be displayed in the upcoming exhibition of EMB poster art associated with the Imperial Conference in London.⁵² The request for photographs was cancelled. Newspapers reported that ‘[t]he poster calling attention to Irish food products has been designed by Mr. Paul Henry, and is certain to be much admired. It is in three divisions, the central space in which the letter-press appears being flanked by two designs in Mr. Henry’s characteristic manner’.⁵³ At least that was the plan. Henry’s Irish poster was designed and exhibited at the Imperial Conference but never reproduced for EMB billboards as a poster. The composition was ‘similar to a number of others by Henry executed during the 1920s and early 1930s’, a painting dominated by clouds in a distinctive west of Ireland landscape and ‘unusual for Henry at this date’ it included figures (figure 69).⁵⁴ Henry’s second poster design ‘display[ed] a charming market garden scene on the Sussex coast’, which is a unique example of an Irish artist designing an English poster.⁵⁵ Not everyone was enamoured with Henry’s design for the IFS, the Department of Agriculture suggested that the best course of action was for ‘the artist who designs the poster... [to get] in touch with the experts of this Department’, for future guidance.⁵⁶ In this instance the High Commission Office replied that the EMB were hanging ‘the original

⁵¹ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Sean Lester, Director of Publicity, External Affairs. 9th Sep. 1926.

⁵² The exhibition was held at the Royal Academy in November, 1926. The Imperial Conference was attended by all the Dominion Premiers including W. T. Cosgrave in October/November 1926.

⁵³ Anon. “London Letter, Inter-Imperial Markets”, *Cork Examiner*, 1st Oct. 1926. 6.

⁵⁴ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry with a catalogue of the Paintings Drawings Illustrations*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 234, 239.

Kennedy does not identify this painting as an EMB poster design and the inclusion of figures is less exceptionable because it was a commission.

⁵⁵ Anon. “Items of Interest, Irish Artist’s Posters”, *Irish Independent*, 19th Oct. 1926. 8.

These two posters were to be displayed either side of a letterpress poster promoting reciprocal trade between England and the IFS – buy IFS dairy produce and that will enable them to buy English garden produce.

⁵⁶ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from D. J. McGrath on behalf of the Secretary of Department of Agriculture to Secretary of External Affairs. 24th Sep. 1926.

paintings ... in an exhibition during the meeting of the Imperial Conference ... and time did not permit' it being submitted to the High Commission in advance, to obtain other views on the finished design.⁵⁷ The poster was further validated on the grounds that, the High Commission had suggested Henry as a suitable artist, 'also in view of the fact he works in Dublin', that James MacNeill was a member of the EMB, that Henry was 'also commissioned to paint the British scene' and that the 'Department of Lands and Agriculture can arrange to see Mr. Henry in Dublin'.⁵⁸ The letter adds that in future the High Commission would seek the views of the relevant home department. The tetchiness of this exchange indicated that, despite it not being explicitly stated, the Government had an issue with Henry's design.

S.B. Kennedy in his various texts on Henry, only references and identifies Henry's design for the English poster. Snoddy offers the view that a 'poster which he designed for the dairy industry aroused some controversy in 1927'.⁵⁹ Cronin cites Snoddy and erroneously 'surmise[s] that the Southern Irish government specifically requested that Paul Henry's poster of the Irish Free State dairy industry be withdrawn' because it was to 'appear alongside an image from Northern Ireland' therefore 'implying a positive linkage between the two states'.⁶⁰ There were cordial trade relations between both parts of the country at this time and Irish Trade Commissioner, Dulanty announced the (JH Craig) Northern Ireland EMB poster to a meeting of Southern and Northern Ireland representatives of the

⁵⁷ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Dublin. 28th Sep. 1926.

⁵⁸ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, Dublin. 28th Sep. 1926.

⁵⁹ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (Dublin: NGI, 2003). 99.

S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry with a catalogue of the Paintings Drawings Illustrations*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 62.

Snoddy, Theo. *Dictionary of Irish Artists 20th Century*. Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1996. 187.

⁶⁰ Henry's Irish Dairy poster was to be displayed in tandem with his English Market Gardening poster. This first Henry commission was well in advance of JH Craig's for a Northern Ireland Flax poster.

Mike Cronin. "Selling Irish Bacon: The Empire Marketing Board and Artists of the Free State" in *Eire-Ireland* 39 no. 3&4, Fall/Winter 2004. 132-143. 135. There are a number of other errors in this paper, this one can be partly put down to his erroneous statement that no files in the Irish National Archives refer to Henry's commission. Evidence suggests that there were cordial trade relations between the IFS and Northern Ireland at this time.

Irish Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce.⁶¹ Secondary sources do not identify the Henry design (possibly assuming it didn't survive), however it was reproduced in the *Irish Times* on the 3rd November, 1926 under the caption "Dairying in the Free State" – One of the posters, the work of Mr. Paul Henry, that have been prepared for the forthcoming advertising campaign of the Empire Marketing Board (figure 70).⁶² Henry's other design was illustrated in the *Irish Independent* three days later as 'a photograph of one of the posters – "Market Gardening" – shown at the Royal Academy, London, to the Dominion Premiers, and is one of an interesting series prepared for the forthcoming publicity campaign of the Empire Marketing Board'.⁶³ Henry's "Dairying" poster design was exhibited again over two years later at the Industries Fair at the White City, London, being described as '[a]mong the Empire Marketing posters shown is Paul Henry's painting of a West of Ireland scene entitled: "*Bringing the Milk to the Creamery*"'.⁶⁴ A report on this fair stated, 'It has been truly said of this piece of work that, however admirable it may be from the artistic point of view, it is not a good advertisement for Irish dairy produce'.⁶⁵ It was a quaint image designed to attract the tourist rather than promote an efficient, productive agricultural industry. When Henry's work was exhibited for the Imperial Conference exhibition in 1926, it was hung beside a New Zealand poster, also advertising their dairy industry (figure 71).⁶⁶ The New Zealand poster was seen as presenting a modern and efficient industry while Henry portrayed a 'romantic' but cruel reality and 'touched on the stage Irishman idea for this design' stressing that 'Irish farmers have a long way to go' when small Irish carts are compared to New Zealand's up-to-datedness.⁶⁷ Unlike other

⁶¹ "Ireland's Trade", *Irish Times*, 31st Mar. 1927. 6. This Henry commission was in 1926 and the JH Craig was in 1927.

⁶² Photograph, "Dairying in the Free State", *Irish Times*, 3rd Nov. 1926. 9.

⁶³ Photograph, "Poster Designing", *Irish Independent*, 6th November, 1926. 3. Sending these images of the posters to newspaper was part of the EMB press advertising.

⁶⁴ Anon. "The British Industries Fair, Some Fine Irish Exhibits", *Irish Independent*, 19th Feb, 1929. 9.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ W.T. Cosgrave, President of the Executive Council led the IFS delegation to the Conference.

⁶⁷ Special Representative, "Empire Trading, Poster libel on Irish Dairying", *Irish Independent*. 3rd Nov, 1926. 9.

Henry paintings such as the *Potato Diggers* (1927) (figure 72), that captured the dignity and hard work of the protagonists, his creamery image failed to attach the people to the land, they are presented as poor, isolated and unsure of their direction – there is no indication of working the land or their right of ownership.⁶⁸ Referring to ‘poster libel on Irish dairying’ this *Irish Independent* article poured scorn on the design referring to

the typical West of Ireland cottage... manure piled against the end wall [these were his trademark turf stacks] ... an angry looking atmosphere... no suggestion of dairy herds or dairy equipment ... on the fenceless road we see a typical old man seated on a donkey cart ... [and] a little girl in charge of another cart. They are apparently on the way to a creamery. In the New Zealand picture there is the suggestion of organisation, bustle, method, up-to datedness... cleanliness [and] well-arranged tankards.⁶⁹

The *Irish Times* was similarly scathing, noting again that it compared poorly against the poster advertising the dairies of New Zealand, lamenting that ‘the picture representing “dairying in the Free State” should resemble an advertisement for Irish scenery rather than for Free State agricultural efficiency’. It failed to present a

spectacle of a busy Munster creamery, with laden lorries at the door... The Free State is not the Cinderella of the British Dominions, and ought not to permit her artists to represent her in that role either for the instruction of the English consumer or for the edification of her own children.⁷⁰

Stung by this criticism, Henry wrote to the *Irish Times* defending his design, saying ‘he was not tied in any way’ on his composition and having confirmed the practice depicted was ‘a usual sight’, he thought that the carts were ‘an excellent idea’ and suggests the critic was suffering from ‘our old friend, the “inferiority complex”’.⁷¹ Huxley wrote to Henry in March 1927, about ‘the public controversy which has raged over your dairying poster’ and that in order to ‘respect the wishes’ of the Free State Government, it would not be used.⁷²

Henry was now (almost six months after initially receiving this commission) invited to

⁶⁸ *Potato Diggers* was sent for exhibition by the IFSG to the Imperial Art Gallery also in 1927. This exhibition is discussed later in this chapter.

⁶⁹ “Empire Trading, Poster libel on Irish Dairying”, *Irish Independent*, 3rd Nov, 1926. 9.

⁷⁰ Anon. “Imperial Markets”, *Irish Times*, 4th Nov. 1926. 6.

⁷¹ Paul Henry, “Letters to the editor, Mr. Henry’s poster”, *Irish Times*, 5th Nov. 1926. 8.

⁷² TCD 7434/1-59 (6). EMB letter from Gervais Huxley to Paul Henry, dated 4th Mar. 1927.

submit a second design for a new poster, this time to form a set with J.H. Craig's poster on flax, and an English shipping/ trade poster, *The River Mersey*, by Charles Dixon.⁷³ Henry's reply is unknown but he did not design another EMB poster. As a prominent and successful poster artist, he is unlikely to have taken kindly to have been sent a photograph of JH Craig's design, 'for his guidance in the preparation of the corresponding panel for the Irish Free State' by the Poster sub-committee.⁷⁴

Despite the controversy surrounding his designs for the EMB, Henry's tourist posters were hugely successful and he continued to receive commission from railway companies and Irish tourist authorities throughout his life.⁷⁵ This episode is a microcosm of the conflicts and tensions involved, as the IFS robustly negotiated its identity on the EMB posters, despite the fact they had no costs for the campaign. The popularity of Henry's railway and tourism posters for the West of Ireland had emboldened the EMB and the High Commission to conclude that Henry's involvement with the EMB would be a sure fired success.⁷⁶ Kiernan and Dulanty in the High Commission Office knew they would receive an image representing the IFS which was tried and tested. They failed to recognise that when presented within an international business milieu the IFSG wanted to be represented as a modern state. Geertz succinctly describes the 'tension between...moving with the tide of the present and to hold to an inherited course – [which] gives new state nationalism its peculiar air of being at once hell-bent towards modernity and morally outraged by its manifestations'.⁷⁷ The links between consumer culture and capitalism, identified by cultural critic and philosopher, Walter Benjamin, and manifest in the EMS posters, are

⁷³ TCD 7434/1-59 (6). EMB letter from Gervais Huxley to Paul Henry, dated 4th Mar. 1927.

Henry was offered a 65 guineas fee and was required to produce a sketch. There were no issues exhibiting the IFS, UK including Northern Ireland in the same set

⁷⁴ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 18th Mar. 1928. Item 4. 2. The Poster sub-committee approved Craig's sketch at this meeting.

⁷⁵ See for example, "Irish Posters Sell Best", *Irish Independent*, 7th Nov. 1928. 9 and "[Tourism] Publicity for Coming Season", *Strabane Chronicle*, 28th Mar. 1932. 8.

⁷⁶ NAI. DFA/1/GR/807. Letter from TJ Kiernan to Sean Lester, Director of Publicity, External Affairs. 9th Sep. 1926.

⁷⁷ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 243.

characterised by visual inscriptions of modernity in which commodity culture is a projection, not a reflection, of the economy.⁷⁸ Although designed by Henry, a native artist, and mediated through State diplomats, his poster reflected the view of the Empire from the metropolis, a colonial view of the Irish dominion. It may have been an acceptable view to attract tourists but was politically unacceptable to project agrarian or economic progress. As a tourism image Henry's poster designs presented a traditional romantic essentialist image and an acceptable 'advertisement for Irish scenery', however it failed when sited among international images of industry.⁷⁹ That the poster worked on an aesthetic level is evidenced by its exhibition display. The original painting was purchased by Dulanty in a personal capacity. However, when he had responsibility for the later EMB posters commissioned from Sean Keating, Margaret Clarke and Dorothy Travers Smith, he and the IFS government avoided the Henry poster pitfalls. Particularly with Clarke, he would successfully negotiate images of modernity in rural Ireland.

Dulanty secured a grant from the EMB to 'commission an Irish artist' to produce a poster to market IFS produce in the UK.⁸⁰ This commission was awarded to Keating. The Poster Section of the EMB Publicity Committee noted in December, 1927 that Keating 'be invited to design [one] ... 60"x40" poster, depicting a dairy scene in the Irish Free State' and he would be paid 65 guineas for the sketch and the completed design.⁸¹ Originally this poster was scheduled to appear in an 'Ireland' set, with Charles Dixon and J. H. Craig, effectively

⁷⁸ See, Uma Kothari, "Trade, Consumption and Development Alliances: The Historical Legacy of the Empire Marketing Board Poster Campaign." In 2014, *Third World Quarterly* 35 (1). 46.

⁷⁹ Anon. "Imperial Markets", *Irish Times*, 4th Nov. 1926. 6.

⁸⁰ NLI. MS 48,424/5/1. Letter from John Whelan Dulanty, Commissioner for Trade, Free State, Office of the High Commissioner, London, to Margaret Clarke about designing posters for the Empire Marketing Board, 26/7/1929.

Dulanty replaced MacNeill on the EMB Board in 1927. The unique engagement of Irish artists by the EMB was as a result of the intervention of John W. Dulanty, Irish Commissioner for Trade in London, who would later become High Commissioner and ambassador. Dulanty was culturally engaged, and friendly with Irish writers and artists, frequently entertaining them in London. He was a member of EMB committees and he alone canvassed for poster work for Irish artists.

⁸¹ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 15th Dec. 1927. Item 4. 2.

replacing the second Henry design which never materialised.⁸² Dulanty requested from the EMB Poster Section that a ‘complete frame set [of three posters] dealing with the Irish Free State should be commissioned from an Irish Free State artist’.⁸³ The group agreed to consider this further once Keating had submitted his Irish dairy farming design. His design was considered in March 1928, where the committee agreed to return the work temporarily to the artist who wished to exhibit it in the RHA annual exhibition that year.⁸⁴ The Poster Section opinionated on many posters and artists but unusually for the committee it refrained from pronouncing its assessment or suggest alterations on Keating’s design, at this stage. However at a meeting in April 1928, it was noted that the poster ‘had been approved by the Irish Free State Authorities’ – these authorities appeared to have had the last word (figure 73).⁸⁵ Emboldened by their stance and objection, resulting in amendments, to the first EMB publicity advertisement for IFS produce, and having a competent representative on the Publicity committee, the IFS was the only country to demand such an imprimatur on its EMB posters.

It is not clear what officials had the final say, but both Dulanty and Patrick Hogan, Minister for Agriculture were involved. The EMB participated in numerous trade and industrial shows, promoting IFS and other nations’ goods, mainly in the UK but also in other Empire countries. Hogan accompanied by Dulanty had visited the North East Coast (Newcastle) exhibition in June 1929, and was impressed by the EMB’s pavilion and display, resulting in his interest and involvement, in the Keating posters.⁸⁶ He opened the

⁸² Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 5th Jan. 1928. Appendix – 1928 Sketch programme.

⁸³ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 12th Jan. 1928. Item 6. 2.

⁸⁴ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 8th Mar. 1928. Item 2. 1.

⁸⁵ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 19th Apr. 1928. Item 8. 2.

⁸⁶ Quidnunc, “Posters of Irish Industries”, *Irish Times*, 27th Jun, 1929. 4.

See also Kew. CO 760/38 Standing Conference on Exhibitions. Notes on Meeting.

It is worth noting that the IFS throughout the EMB project recorded in minutes at various committees its satisfaction with outcomes from the many exhibitions it attended with the EMB.

IFS three week take-over of the pavilion and spoke on reciprocal trade with Britain in a BBC broadcast organised by the EMB.⁸⁷

In April 1928, the Poster sub-committee agreed to Dulanty's request that 'Mr. Keating should be asked to design two further posters at the same fee' for display 'this summer'.⁸⁸ From this period, not only did the IFSG seek to effect agency over its economy, but it became just as important to direct its image and the specifically chosen artists who created it. Keating's *Dairying in the Irish Free State* featured a prosperous Irish farm, adorned with immaculate slate roofs with red ridge tiles, a belfry, and tidy and freshly white-washed walls. One milkman milks into an aluminium bucket and another five, all in uniform overalls, are washing their hands in the washroom – a scene of hygiene and production against a mountain background. This was the officially endorsed image. At meetings in July and November the Poster sub-committee approved Keating's 'further two designs depicting pigs and poultry' subject to Mr. Dulanty's imprimatur.⁸⁹ However it was not until its meeting in February 1929 that the sub-committee - somewhat exasperatedly - recorded 'that the three 60x40 posters in this set had been finally approved by the Government of the Irish Free State'.⁹⁰ The delay in IFSG approval is unexplained but it explicitly demonstrates that they had full control over the content and display of the IFS posters.

As noted by Eimear O'Connor, the period during which the two latter posters were designed was a particularly busy time for the artist.⁹¹ As discussed, Keating initially

⁸⁷ Anon. "Free State Trade Exhibit, Products Displayed at Newcastle" and "Mr. Hogan's rush to keep broadcasting engagement", *Irish Times*, 13th Jun. 1929. 9.

Kew. EMB CO760 36. Notes of a meeting of Dominion and Colonial Representatives held at the Board's Offices. 7th May. 1929. Mr D'Arcy who curated the Irish display in Newcastle represented the IFS at this meeting.

⁸⁸ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 19th Apr. 1928. Item 8. 2.

⁸⁹ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 1st Nov. 1928. Item 2. 1.

⁹⁰ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 7th Feb. 1929. Item 6. 2.

⁹¹ At this time Keating was, teaching in the DMSA, finishing a commission for illustrations to Synge's play, *Playboy of the Western World*, painting images of the Shannon Electric scheme and had a busy portrait practice.

received a commission for one poster in December 1927 and when he was eventually awarded the full set of three in April 1928, he was required to have the final two works with the EMB at short notice in June. The EMB had wished to display these during the summer of 1928, although Irish Governmental approval delayed their eventual display until July 1929. Time constraints prevented Keating producing the originality of his initial dairying poster in the later posters. These ended up being ‘cut-and-paste image[s] constructed’ from earlier work made by Keating.⁹² The couple and donkey and cart in the poultry poster previously appeared in the painting *Aran Couple with Donkey and Cart* (figure 74) and the pigs in the Bacon poster previously appeared in *Rising Up in the Red Dawn* (figure 75).⁹³ The farmyard depicted is consistent across the three works and Keating records that this was based on an actual farm near where he lived.⁹⁴ Following IFSG approval, the EMB Poster sub-committee sought modifications in the colour scheme to be incorporated at the printing stage including graduating the colour to get rid of the existing flattening effect, lowering the colour of the mountain in the background by at least two tones, and modification of the colour of the bricks over the belfry.⁹⁵ The effect of Keating cropping the images, in the two later posters is to remove the farm from any particular landscape or place, and present the farmyard as an inside view, as merely a centre of production, a factory. It can be argued that these two posters lack the sincerity, vibrancy and immediacy of his dairying image, partly because they are constructed from other works. They look staged and improbable with the occupants of both, posed and stagnant. In the poultry poster the somewhat relaxed central figures of an aging farmer and his young wife lack the sense of industriousness or efficiency of the first poster. They look

⁹² Éimear O’Connor, *Seán Keating, Art, Politics and Building the Irish Nation*, (Kildare: Irish Academic Press, 2013). 177.

⁹³ *Rising Up in the Red Dawn* was an illustration for an edition by George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London, in 1927 of JM Synge’s, *The Playboy of the Western World*. The Aran Couple appeared again in a mural Keating completed for the Irish Sweepstakes Co. in 1934.

⁹⁴ As quoted in O’Connor, *Seán Keating, Art, Politics and Building the Irish Nation*. 177.

⁹⁵ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 7th Feb. 1929. Item 6a, b, c. 2.

out of place with their donkey and cart, and his belt and braces are as unnecessary as courtering hens in the cart. The two late posters, which are hurriedly contrived genre scenes, are saved as images of IFS bacon and poultry production by their prosperous, hygienic and efficient farmyard setting. The EMB paid the costs but the Irish State was effectively the patron of the commission and while Keating's bacon and poultry posters are in the same prosperous farm set, they failed to portray the efficiency or up-to-datedness of his dairying image [which may have led to a delay in governmental approval], but they avoided the backwardness of Henry's earlier design.⁹⁶ What has been referred to by Cronin as indolence or overstaffing on the farm depicted in Keating's posters points to agrarian reform as the 'fundamental' problem 'in virtually all new states' and specifically in the IFS.⁹⁷ The lack of mechanisation means simple and old manual methods of production are used and workers can be viewed as 'underemployed'. The political solution required improved social welfare and technological progress but the methods of getting there were slow and complex and resulted in 'the massive displacement of rural labour'.⁹⁸ Keating's dairying poster portrayed the actuality of IFS agrarian life in 1929. These posters were well received and publicised in Ireland with numerous Irish newspapers carrying images of the individual posters and the set of three - the Dublin Chamber of Commerce reviewed them at their council meeting.⁹⁹

Artist and designer William Grimmond produced the two smaller royals or letterpress posters for this set with statistics on reciprocal trade between the IFS and Britain. The top strip, which captioned Keating's posters from left to right simply stated, 'Butter, Eggs and

⁹⁶ Cronin interpretation that Keating and Clarkes posters 'subvert the EMB's agenda of depicting productivity' fails to recognise the control the Irish government exerted over the commission.

⁹⁷ Cronin, *Selling Irish Bacon*, 141.

Clifford Geertz, *Available Light, Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics*, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000. 3rd edition, 2001 used). 24, 25.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 25.

⁹⁹ "Advertising Irish products", *Irish Times*, 6th Jul. 1929. 11.

"Poster advertising Irish produce in England", *Cork Examiner*, 27th Jul. 1929. 11 & 12.

"Business Council, Matters of wide general interest", *Irish Independent*. 14th Aug. 1929. 10.

Bacon from the Irish Free State' (figure 76). One royal featured the EMB logo and initially the second was to feature a shamrock, however this was changed to a harp logo – almost identical, down to the decorative motifs on the harp, to the obverse of the recently minted IFS coinage (figure 77).¹⁰⁰ The IFS coins were now an icon of Irishness and no longer just 'the silent ambassadors of national taste' but visual ambassadors of national identity.¹⁰¹ Dulanty sent photographs of the Keating poster frame set as they appeared in public, 'in over 300 cities and towns in Great Britain', and copies of the posters to O'Hegarty, Secretary of the Executive Council who showed them, *quod erat demonstrandum*, to the President and Council (figure 65).¹⁰²

The James Humbert Craig poster – of flax growing in the Six Counties - that was originally approved by the EMB on the 28th April, 1927 didn't appear on billboards until October 1932. Originally scheduled to appear with a second Henry design (which never materialised) and an image of trade on the River Mersey, it was then planned to display it with the Mersey poster and Keating's first commissioned dairy poster, until Keating was later awarded a full frame set. It eventually appeared in a trio, alongside other posters featuring Scottish oat harvesting and English sowing.¹⁰³

In June 1929, the EMB poster sub-committee, on Dulanty's request, agreed to another set of IFS posters but not necessarily to an Irish artist.¹⁰⁴ The Board had previously suggested the English artist, Harold S. Williamson for the commission, but Dulanty wanted Keating

¹⁰⁰ This was a 16 string Irish harp modelled on the 'Brian Boru' harp in Trinity College Dublin. The legend Saorstát Éireann surrounds, the EMB version only showed 12 strings.

¹⁰¹ W. B. Yeats, Coinage Bill, 1926 – Second Stage. Seanad Éireann debate - Wednesday, 3 Mar 1926 accessed at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/1926-03-03/3/> on 22/10/2018. This coin symbol appeared also on a later poster set designed by Carlton Studios, London which is discussed later.

¹⁰² NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Letter from Dulanty to O'Hegarty, Executive Council. 18th Jul. 1929.

NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. Reply. 23rd Jul. 1929.

NAI. TSCH/3/S5198. File cover with various instructions and annotations. Various dates, 11th Nov. 1926 to 1st Aug. 1927.

¹⁰³ Stephen Constantine, Buy & Build, The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board, (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1986), plate 57. See also "An Ulster Poster", *Belfast Newsletter*, 5th Oct. 1932, 6.

¹⁰⁴ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 27th Jun. 1929. Item 4. 1.

again because his first poster set was successful. In the end it was agreed ‘that a fresh artist should be sought’ and Dulanty was to suggest names for consideration.¹⁰⁵ As a subsequent meeting it was reported that Dulanty sought the advice of William Orpen, who suggested inviting three artists to submit proposals, Patrick Tuohy, Leo Whelan and Sean Keating.¹⁰⁶ The sub-committee were unhappy with this proposal and directed that Dulanty should seek specimens of Tuohy’s work for consideration. Dulanty also sought advice from Bodkin.¹⁰⁷ By this time Tuohy was living in New York and it may have been difficult to contact or communicate with him, a subsequent meeting noting the delay in providing specimens. Attempts to contact Tuohy were abandoned and instead, ‘a number of photographs and specimens of the work of Mrs. Margaret Clarke, whose name had been suggested by Mr. Dulanty as suitable for undertaking the design of this set of posters for the Board’ were presented for consideration in late August, 1929.¹⁰⁸

Dulanty wrote to Margaret Clarke and asked if she would allow him to propose her name to the poster committee. Enclosing copies of Keating’s posters he informed her that the two letterpress posters would be omitted and she would produce five posters if selected (three large posters (100x150cm) and two smaller posters instead of letterpress (101x64cm)). The EMB would suggest the poster subject and the Irish Government Department would provide technical information and advice on the subject matter. The artist’s fee for the posters was £250, a considerable sum in 1929 and there was an additional £25 for preliminary sketches.¹⁰⁹ Clarke was invited to send samples of her work, ‘particularly in landscape, or of a character allied to Posters’.¹¹⁰ Unlike the Henry

¹⁰⁵ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 27th Jun. 1929. Item 4. 1.

¹⁰⁶ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 11th Jul. 1929. Item 3. 1.

¹⁰⁷ TCD Bodkin Papers. 7004/182-269. Letter from J. W. Dulanty to Thomas Bodkin, 18th Jul. 1929.

¹⁰⁸ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 29th Aug. 1929. Item 3. 2.

¹⁰⁹ NLI. MS 48,424/5/1. Letter from Dulanty, Commissioner for Trade, Free State, Office of the High Commissioner, London, to Clarke about designing posters for the Empire Marketing Board, 26th Jul. 1929. Dulanty replaced MacNeill on the EMB Board in 1927.

NLI. MS 48,424/5/6. Letter from Huxley to Clarke. 12th Oct. 1929.

Cronin in *Selling Irish Bacon*, 137 erroneously implies Clarke was paid 6 guineas.

¹¹⁰ NLI. MS 48,424/5/1. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke about designing posters for the EMB, 26th Jul. 1929.

commission where he had full control of the design, Clarke's work, like Keating's, was subject to the scrutiny and approval of the EMB, Dulanty and the relevant Government Department.

Enticed by the prospect of such a lucrative commission, Clarke sent samples of her work, all of which were well received. She was requested to travel to London to meet with two members of the EMB Poster Committee to discuss the poster designs, and how 'the British housewife should be persuaded into buying the products of one or other Dominion [Ireland] because so much of what is produced in Britain is sold to those Dominions [Ireland] and is therefore the cause of employment in this country [England]'.¹¹¹ Clarke would meet Gervas Huxley and Frank Pick (1878–1941) both members of the EMB Poster Committee.¹¹² Pick was the driving force on the committee. He was managing director of the London Underground in the 1920s and the first chief executive of London Transport. He had a passionate belief in the social and civic value of applied art and design.¹¹³ He commissioned some of the most recognisable icons of London Underground's identity, including eye-catching commercial art, striking advertising posters, graphic design and modern architecture. Art historian Nikolaus Pevsner, described Pick as 'the greatest patron of the arts whom this century has so far produced in England, and indeed the ideal patron of our age'.¹¹⁴ He was regarded as having overseen transport design's golden age, served on a number of art and design bodies and was the ideal choice to chair the Poster

¹¹¹ NLI. MS 48,424/5/4. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 1st Oct. 1929.

See also Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 29th Aug. 1929. Item 3. 2, and Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 5th Sep. 1929. Item 4. 1.

¹¹² Gervas Huxley (1894–1971). Frank Pick was Managing Director of the London Underground for which he used poster advertising extensively.

See Oliver Green, *Frank Pick's London: Art, Design and the Modern City*, (London: V&A Museum, 2014).

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Cited in Amelia Taylor-Hochberg, "The Art of Public Service," *Places Journal*, December 2017. <https://doi.org/10.22269/171212> Accessed 29th Jan 2019.

Committee of the EMB, where he selected many artists/ designers who had previously worked for him to design posters.¹¹⁵

Clarke's final designs were the result of protracted discussions between the artist and the Poster Committee.¹¹⁶ It was decided that the posters would again advertise Irish agricultural produce and Clarke received approval for her designs from the Department of Agriculture through the Secretary General.¹¹⁷ The Irish Department of Industry and Commerce also approved coal to show 'reciprocal exports'.¹¹⁸ The message to UK audiences was buying Irish agricultural produce will enable the IFS to buy British coal. The headings over the five poster set, measuring 165x15cm (65x5.75inches) read, 'Empire buying makes busy factories' and the middle poster was to carry the legend, 'Every time you buy Empire produce you help the Empire to buy goods you make at home' (figure 78).¹¹⁹

Clarke's posters were presented as a sequence reading from left to right: in frame 1, an IFS farm with hens, cows and pigs, Irish freehold farmers as primary producer of eggs, dairy and bacon (figure 79). Frame 2, shows an English family at their dining table eating Irish produce for breakfast (figure 80). Frame 3 contains a composite image of Hibernia and Britannia, a map of both countries/ the British Isles, and the EMB marketing message (figure 81). Frame 4, shows English coal being delivered in Ireland whilst Irish butter is going in the opposite direction (figure 82). Frame 5 shows English miners and a coal colliery (figure 83).

¹¹⁵ Including McDonald Gill, E. A. Cox, Spenser Pryse, Fred Taylor, Charles Pears and E. McKnight Kauffer...

¹¹⁶ Dulanty first contacted Clarke about the commission in July 1929, her designs were approved in June 1930 and went into production the following September.

¹¹⁷ NLI. MS 48,424/5/8. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 29th Oct. 1929. The Secretary General was F. J. Meyrick.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ NLI. MS 48,424/5/9. Handwritten note on the rear of letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 13th Dec. 1929.

Clarke's two primary production posters (frames 1 and 5) show two contrasting scenes, an essentially rural Ireland and industrial England. The contrast between these scenes could be read as another presentation of the west of Ireland as a 'site of cultural survival, the sole remaining enclave of traditional values in a world corrupted by progress and industrialisation' – a culture that survived the pervasive English influence under colonisation.¹²⁰ However, it is more nuanced - Clarke's rural farm appears to be located in the wealthier Midlands or East Ireland close to Dublin where she lived. The land is good, livestock healthy and the farm depicted avoids the thatched cottage cliché. Like Keating's farmyard, the buildings are presented as clean, orderly and efficient with slated roofs. The farmer and his wife busy themselves with their chores, feeding the hens and loading hay. Almost unanimously the posters produced by the EMB showed divided economic roles - men as the producers and women as consumers. Occasionally this was explicitly stated, such as, in posters asking workers to get their wives to purchase Irish or other produce from the Empire (figure 84). However, Clarke's unit of production, the farm, is subversively dominated by a farm woman. The scene is a stylised, storybook illustrative of farm life in an Irish well-to-do farm, presented to work as a poster. Austin Cooper, an EMB artist himself, in his book *Making a Poster* expressed '[t]he functions of a poster are dual: to arrest the attention and then, having caught the eye of the passer-by, to deliver a message swiftly, convincingly, effectively'.¹²¹ The EMB required a level of technical accuracy, Clarke had access to Irish farms but not to a coal colliery. Her husband, Harry Clarke wrote from Davos while undergoing treatment for TB, offering advice on the colliery poster.¹²² Ultimately, she received images from J. P. Stafford, John Potts & Co.

¹²⁰ Luke Gibbons, *Transformations in Irish Culture, Field Day Essays*, (Cork: CUP, 1996). 23. Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007), 8. John Brannigan, *Race in Modern Irish Literature and Culture*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009). 117.

¹²¹ Austin Cooper, *Making a Poster*, (London & New York: The Studio, 1945).

¹²² NLI. MS 48,419/2/6. Letter from Harry Clarke in Davos to Margaret saying he asked F. Meagher of Durham to send her material on coal to help with her poster design and suggested she visit the National

Ltd., Coal Owners & Shippers, Macclesfield, and used these as the basis for that poster.¹²³

As well as technical accuracy the Poster committee (Pick in particular) concerned themselves with the aesthetic and the balance in the poster sequence. Clarke was required to amend the large colliery scene poster to include more landscape and lessen the darker part to balance with the Irish farmyard poster on the left and a new sketch was required, exemplifying the control exerted by the EMB over the aesthetic.¹²⁴ Clarke's 'expansion of the landscape' resulted in an incongruous landscape element, a tree, on the left side competing with billowing smoke and an unforgiving industrial skyline.¹²⁵ Despite the tree's inappropriateness, Clarke successfully manages its insertion in terms of the aesthetic of the poster design and the balance of the series, it emerges out of the train's steam cloud rather than rooted in the darkness of the colliery.

The centre poster was contentious, with disagreement between the EMB who were 'uncomfortable now about [how] the maps' of the UK and the IFS were presented.¹²⁶ Stephen Tallents, secretary to the EMB, a driving force in the organisation and very much its public face, previously 'served as Secretary to the last [Lord] Lieutenant of Ireland and worked in Northern Ireland after partition...' and would have been acutely aware of the political significance of a border line on an Irish map.¹²⁷ The Poster committee wanted Clarke to remove/ omit the pictorial detail about produce relevant to the individual countries, which obscured the Northern Ireland border, on the grounds that it overlapped

Library (asking for Dr. Best) for further information. His anxiety was palpable when he wished that he could help her 'slog' on the posters, 14th Dec. 1929.

Davos with its high altitude, dry climate, numerous sanatoria and some pioneering TB treatments offered some hope and respite from the disease. Harry Clarke, was one such patient. He travelled frequently to Davos seeking respite but unfortunately died from the disease in Switzerland, aged 41, in January 1931.

¹²³ NLI. MS 48,425/1/5. Letter from JP Stafford, John Potts & Co. Ltd, Coal Owners & Shipper, Macclesfield to Margaret Clarke thanking her for her gift of her husband's illustrated book of 'Swynburnes works', 17th Apr. 1930.

¹²⁴ NLI. MS 48,425/1/2. Four page letter from Dulanty to Clarke on behalf of the EMB. 10th Jan. 1930.

See also Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 2nd Jan. 1930. Item 4. 2.

¹²⁵ NLI. MS 48,425/1/2. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 10th Jan. 1930.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Scott Anthony, *Public relations and the making of modern Britain*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012). 27.

with a poster of 'Great Britain and Ireland' by MacDonald Gill.¹²⁸ The EMB wanted both maps blank and white and 'the boundary between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State must be clearly defined'.¹²⁹ Dulanty wanted the white areas filled in with text about exports.¹³⁰ He added

I think they feel that the conventional requirement of any map of England is that it should be painted red:!! they doubt whether red would do for the Irish Free State,! and if they have green for the Irish Free State another colour would be needed for the Six Counties.¹³¹

In the end the poster featured blank maps with Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales white, the IFS off-white and a clearly delineated border.¹³² What is most striking about this poster are the images of Hibernia and Britannia, succinctly described in a contemporary Irish newspaper account as

being a symbolic representation of the Irish Free State and Great Britain doing each other a good turn by exchanging their products. Neither of the ladies in this panel, who represent the respective countries, look as if she would give much for nothing; each is holding a symbolic coin, and it is gratifying to notice that the coins are inscribed "Saorstat Eireann" and the other "United Kingdom" and are of exactly the same size... Altogether quite a clever piece of work.¹³³

Extant centre posters show the UK coin marked as EMB surmounted by a crown. Both female icons wear cloaks, Britannia's wraps to the sea borders protecting/ claiming Northern Ireland and a confrontational Hibernia's mantle extends to the South West coast, perhaps reclaiming the treaty ports of Cobh and Castletownbere but certainly protecting the IFS.¹³⁴ This poster encouraging reciprocal trade also reflected the political tensions that

¹²⁸ NLI. MS 48,425/1/2. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 10th Jan. 1930.

¹²⁹ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 2nd Jan. 1930. Item 4. 2.

¹³⁰ NLI. MS 48,425/1/2. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 10th Jan. 1930.

¹³¹ Ibid.

See also Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 3rd Apr. 1929. Item 2. 1. The EMB brief to Edward McKnight Kauffer (1890-1954) to design a series of national mark labels specified 'England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland should be shown in one colour – red; The Irish Free State should be shown in green;' in Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 9th Feb. 1928. Item 3. 2.

¹³² Cronin in *Selling Irish Bacon*, 137, 138 erroneously states 'Significantly, in the final poster frame set the map was eliminated, and thus debates about the existence of the border and the two competing states were, for the time being, avoided'. The map is evident in the surviving poster.

¹³³ Anon. "Irish Products." *Cork Examiner*, 18th Sep. 1930. 6.

¹³⁴ The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 6th Dec. 1921 allowed for the retention of three IFS ports at Castletownbere, Cobh and Lough Swilly by the United Kingdom. These were returned to the State in 1938.

existed in the aftermath of independence and the boundary commission between the IFS and Britain.

The poster featuring an English family at breakfast is straightforward in its message with Irish eggs, bacon and butter prominent on the breakfast table. It is presented as a serene genre scene, one that also outlines the mother's role as carer and nurturer of her family, and by extension recognises female economic agency. Clarke had a number of meetings with Pick and Huxley of the poster committee where design theory and marketing strategies would have been discussed. In the correspondence from the EMB to Clarke, they were clear that the posters show, how 'the British housewife should be persuaded into buying the products'.¹³⁵

The second smaller poster shows imported English coal, being delivered to power a creamery in rural Ireland, and Irish creamery butter going for export. Again, the image has a storybook illustrative style with strong colours used to arrest the passing gaze and deliver a simple message. Unlike Henry's EMB poster, Clarke points to a modernising IFS, new trucks coming from and going to the creamery, bearing an up-to-the minute Dublin registration plate.¹³⁶ The partly visible butter cart is brightly coloured with modern rubber wheels. The co-operative creamery, sited in bucolic surrounding of fertile green fields and healthy livestock, emits smoke from its chimney; it represents the industrial arm of the Irish agriculture industry. Accuracy in the image can be detected in the similarity of the buildings depicted to actual 1930s creameries and staff houses (figure 85). This was an image of Irish rural life that was aware of Irish agricultural expansion and embracing current technological developments. Beside the creamery is the manager's house slated and modern, the all-too-clean coal delivery men and the uniformed butter deliveryman portray prosperity and efficiency. It was the antitheses of Henry's archaic dairy image which had

¹³⁵NLI. MS 48,424/5/4. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 1st Oct. 1929.

¹³⁶ Dublin City used the ZI prefix on vehicle registration plates from 1927-1933.

drawn so much criticism. Perhaps Dulanty had this criticism in mind when he wrote to Clarke, thanking her for a gift copy of her husband's book and added a postscript that indicated the accepted success of her designs, '[t]here was rather a row at the EMB meeting last week over certain posters and several of the critics said "can't you get this New Zealand man to do for N. Zealand what Mrs. Clarke did for the I.F.S.?"'¹³⁷

Clarke's gendered poster set successfully negotiated the EMB remit and the requirements of the Departments of Agriculture and Industry and Commerce and the objectives of the Irish Free State, as mediated through the Irish Trade Commissioner. She presented a reverse view of the Empire that connected the realms of production and consumption that resonated with the everyday sensitivities of the imperial housewife and British consumers. These posters satisfied the political objectives of the State, to market its agricultural produce and to represent Ireland as a rural but modernising country within an international/UK environment. Presenting the new State as owning a bright future statehood, Clarke's posters retained an identity embedded in rural Ireland, but one that embraced modernity.

Clarke's posters were also popular and successful on an aesthetic level and 'Margaret Clarke's posters advertising Free State produce, part of the propaganda of the Empire Marketing Board' won a vote on the most 'popular poster to be seen in England' in 1931.¹³⁸ The prize was awarded by the Publicity Club of London. Her posters were also among those distributed to schools across Britain and Ireland to demonstrate the working of the Empire but also as art.¹³⁹ Displayed at trade fairs to promote Irish produce for sale,

¹³⁷ NLI. MS 48,425/1/10. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 4th Dec. 1930.

Clarke sent Dulanty a book, *Selected Poems of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, with Illustrations and Decorations by her husband Harry, as a present for helping her with the commission.

¹³⁸ Anon. "Irish Artist's Success", *Irish Press*, 18th Jan. 1932. 12.

Anon. "Popular Posters", *Irish Times*, 23rd Jan. 1932. 6. Part of the prize was a case of Jameson whiskey.

¹³⁹ In a wide ranging letter, "Art in the Free State" from Arnold Marsh, Newton School, Waterford, to *Irish Times*, 8th Dec, 1933, 6, he states 'I have tried to get reproductions of the work of Irish artists for our walls, and to whom have I had to apply? To the London, Midland and Scottish Railway and the Empire Marketing Board'.

her posters also conveyed an image of Irishness for the diaspora and an English public that promoted Ireland in the mind of ordinary citizens (figure 86).

One other Irish artist, the set designer, Dorothy Travers-Smith (better known later after her marriage to playwright Lennox Robinson as Dolly Robinson) was commissioned to produce designs. Dulanty wrote to Huxley on the Poster sub-committee in March, 1931 complaining the IFS ‘had hitherto received less publicity on the Board’s posters than other Dominions’ and requested a new set.¹⁴⁰ The committee mandated Huxley to ‘discuss subjects, etc.’ with Dulanty. Discussions resulted in Irish artist, ‘Miss Travers Smith suggested as a possible artist for this poster set’.¹⁴¹ The committee inspected specimens of her work and ‘agreed that she should be asked to see the Sub-Committee at their next meeting with a view to her designing Irish Free State Butter, Eggs and Bacon in a theatrical setting’.¹⁴² Dorothy Travers Smith (1901-77) was a landscape and stage set artist who trained and worked in Dublin and London and designed numerous Abbey Theatre sets (often under the guise of the Dublin Drama League), in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁴³ Requesting designs ‘in a theatrical setting’ was a departure from the instructions to Henry, Keating and Clarke and sought to exploit Travers Smith strength as a set designer. She exhibited infrequently at this time, was less well-known than the other Irish artists commissioned and was not an obvious choice for the project.¹⁴⁴ Travers Smith and her future husband,

¹⁴⁰ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 12th March, 1931. Item 10. 3. This would be the last IFS set.

¹⁴¹ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 9th April, 1931. Item 4. 1.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Travers Smith married playwright Lennox Robinson and is better known as Dolly Robinson. She trained at the DMSA from 1916 to 1920 and afterwards at Chelsea School of Art. As well as designing sets and costumes for more than 33 productions at the Abbey between 1927 and 1935, she worked in the Clarke Stained Glass Studios. Often confused with Anglo-American artist Dorothea Travers Smith (1902-85). Both artists lived and worked in London for periods.

See Abbey Theatre archives entry for Dorothy Travers Smith (Dolly Robinson) at https://www.abbeytheatre.ie/archives/person_detail/13879/ accessed 14/08/2019.

¹⁴⁴ Travers Smith first exhibition (a two-hander with Isabel Duncan) was at 7 Stephens Green, in 1926, she exhibited there again on her own in 1938. She exhibited once at the RHA in 1936. The Crawford Art Gallery hold an oil painting by her called, *Cordyline Palms*, 1935

Lennox Robinson, were close friends of Margaret and Harry Clarke and it is likely that Margaret Clarke recommended her to Dulanty for the commission (figure 87).¹⁴⁵

Interviewed by the poster committee, she ‘undertook to submit the roughs within 14 days and finished designs by the middle of June’, she would be paid 10 guineas for the sketches and 40 guineas for each finished design.¹⁴⁶ At their next meeting on 7th May 1931, the committee approved artistically Travers-Smith’s designs, subject to Dulanty’s political approval.¹⁴⁷ Unusually, Dulanty attended the following Poster sub-committee meeting as, while a member of the EMB he was not on the poster sub-committee and he normally communicated with them by letter. The first agenda item discussed Travers Smith’s design roughs, and he vetoed them, because he felt they wouldn’t make a suitable poster set and ‘suggested that something more direct would be appropriate’.¹⁴⁸ As Travers Smith’s commission was effectively cancelled, it was agreed to double her fee for the roughs, which were kept for future use, to twenty guineas. During her lifetime her art work and set designs were considered novel, modern and futuristic (figure 88).¹⁴⁹ Her original EMB sketches have not come to light but it can be assumed that they were stylistically radical and Dulanty felt their message was indirect, an issue previously raised in the press with Clarke’s designs.¹⁵⁰ Dulanty, mindful of the Henry poster reversal was playing safe and censored the designs. While their aesthetic value passed difficult EMB poster committee

¹⁴⁵ See NLI. MS 48,419-48,442. Harry Clarke and Margaret Clarke Papers, 1860-1991 for an indication of their close relationships. Margaret Clarke’s portrait of Dolly Robinson (Travers Smith) is in the Crawford Gallery, Cork.

See NLI. MS 48,425/1/10. Letter from Dulanty to Clarke. 4/12/1930. It is evident that Dulanty and Clarke met and had lunch in early 1931.

¹⁴⁶ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 23rd April. Item 1. 1.

¹⁴⁷ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 7th May 1931. Item 4. 1.

¹⁴⁸ These designs have not yet come to light and it is not known if they are extant.

Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 28th May 1931. Item 1. 1.

¹⁴⁹ Her set designs for a 1928 production of *King Lear* were considered futuristic. See Snoddy, 430.

W. B. Yeats in a letter to Dorothy Travers Smith, 11th Nov. 1929, identifies ‘novelty’ in her theatre work. “Work of Women Artists” in *Weekly Irish Times*, 23rd Oct. 1923. 5. Reviews her 1926 exhibition and describes her work as ‘modern in treatment’.

¹⁵⁰ Anon. “An obscure advertisement”, *The Liberator* (Tralee), 1st Nov. 1930. 8.

scrutiny, their Irishness or identity or message, was not something the Irish State believed it could harness for political or economic advantage.

Probably exasperated with Dulanty refusing the designs they had approved and the delay this caused, the Poster sub-Committee, there and then at the same meeting forced Dulanty to agree on another artist to produce new poster designs for IFS produce. This resulted in Carlton Studios, an English commercial art studio, being commissioned for 'three large '60"x40" posters [featuring] a butter box, an egg box and sides of bacon' with the words 'Buy Irish Butter, etc. hiding Northern Ireland'.¹⁵¹ When the first Carlton Studio designs were considered, 'in accordance with the views of the Irish Free State High Commissioner's Office', they too were rejected by the poster committee.¹⁵² Specifications for new drafts requested replacing the maps with, 'the Irish harp and appropriate animals as depicted on the back of Irish coins, as a pattern background for each poster' - as symbols to convey Irishness.¹⁵³ The new designs were approved for production on the 2nd July, 1931 and were displayed on EMB billboards the following August.¹⁵⁴ Copies of these designs were sent to Irish newspapers and two posters were reproduced in the *Irish Independent* (figure 89). Posters by Irish artists had conveyed an essence of Ireland, its people, landscape and rural industry in aesthetically enticing images. These were politically managed and approved by the Irish State authorities. IFS posters produced by Carlton Studios, on the other hand, simply carried didactic messages, were bland and lacked artistic merit, per functionary in their presentation of butter boxes, containers of eggs and rather grotesque, almost trompe l'oeil, sides of bacon (figure 90). Irishness was indicated in text, in poorly reproduced Irish coin elements (animals), in shamrock borders and the reproduction of a Saorstat Eireann coin harp (figure 91 and 92). This lack of a

¹⁵¹ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 28th May 1931. Item 1. 1.

¹⁵² Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 11th June 1931. Item 3. 1.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 2nd July 1931. Item 6. 2.

sensitive ‘Irish’ aesthetic by British artists was also evident in the only other Irish poster designed by an English artist, the prolific EMB poster designer, Frederick Charles Herrick (1887-1970).¹⁵⁵ His design featured an Irish wolfhound as an icon of the Irish Free State, incongruously the cottage in the background is typically English and not remotely similar to those found in Ireland (figure 93). This poster was reproduced in a number of sizes for billboards, shop window cards and even cigarette cards, each extolled the British customer to buy Irish bacon or eggs or dairy products. It was one of a series that included a New Zealand kiwi, British lion, South African gazelle... and was the first poster displayed that promoted Irish Free State produce.¹⁵⁶

The EMB exhibited its posters at various trade shows throughout the UK and occasionally in other Empire countries.¹⁵⁷ It proposed showing a number of posters at the 1932 Cork Industrial & Agricultural Fair, a major exhibition of Irish food production and industry spread over a 13 acre site, which had the misfortune to coincide with the start of Anglo-Irish Trade war, between Britain and the new IFS government led by de Valera.¹⁵⁸ This dispute may partly explain why the secretary to the Fair, refused the EMB permission to display their posters on the grounds that they advertised, ‘a number of goods which could be produced in Ireland’.¹⁵⁹ This signaled a change in official policy towards the EMB and trade with the United Kingdom and no other Irish trade posters were commissioned. With

¹⁵⁵ The Irish Free State was also represented in general EMB posters, showing groups of flags or a shop featuring a range of Empire products. The IFS also appeared in map posters by McDonald Gill and in one of a series of national mark labels by Edward McKnight Kauffer.

¹⁵⁶ The Wolfhound as a representation for the IFS was approved at the poster sub-committee on 24th May, 1928. See, Kew. EMB CO760 26. EMB Minutes. Publicity Committee. Poster Section. 24th May 1928. Item 7. 1. An elephant was approved to represent India at the same meeting. An IFSG response to this design has not been traced in British or Irish archives. It is possible because it was a sub-series allocated to a single artist that there was no consultation.

¹⁵⁷ Poster frames were also erected in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the British West Indies. Posters were displayed in many other countries at exhibitions and trade fairs.

¹⁵⁸ See Brian Girvin, “The republicanisation of Irish society, 1932-48”, in Hill, Ed. *A New History of Ireland*, VII. 127-160. 130.

Ireland was not unusual in that most countries turned towards trade protection following the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. British moved from free trade towards protection before Ireland in late 1931 and early 1932.

The Cork Fair was held at Carrigrohane, near Cork city, from 11th May to 2nd Oct. 1932.

¹⁵⁹ Anon. “Empire Marketing Board and Cork Fair”. *Strabane Chronicle*, 23rd Apr. 1932. 2.

the worldwide rise of protectionism and the introduction of global trade tariffs in the 1930s, the EMB, which sought mutuality and persuasion to establish a mass preference for Empire produce had run its course, and it was dissolved after the Ottawa Conference of Empire Nations in 1933.

4.3 Irish art in Britain; ‘make sure they know where it’s from’.

As argued, the IFSG successfully asserted its identity in EMB newspaper advertisements for its dairy produce and reconciled it further in the context of the EMB posters showing reciprocal trade. It negotiated a new space between tradition and modernity within Irish national identity and in the context of its position in relation to the British Empire. It could not avoid the fact that the UK remained its largest trading partner and was critical to its survival. Art work, whether it was McGoogan’s seal, Grace Girling’s stamp design, Henry Keating or Margaret Clarke’s poster art, were central to this reconciliation. By 1926, the IFS was also more self-assured, it had stabilised politically, had achieved international recognition and was asserting its position in the world as a member of the League of Nations. However, it would remain anxious to clearly identify its independence and separateness from Britain on the international stage.

The Department of Education received an invite from the Imperial Art Gallery in London, via the Irish High Commissioners Office, in late 1926 seeking the co-operation of the Government in selecting ‘the work of contemporary Irish Free State artists’ to be exhibited in an annual exhibition, starting in 1927, of ‘British artists resident in this country and Overseas’ at the Imperial Gallery of Art.¹⁶⁰ The proposed exhibition would consist of 200 exhibits with 100 from the UK and 100 from the dominions, the IFS would be allowed exhibit ‘about 12’ works between the various categories of oil painting, drawing, engraving and sculpture.¹⁶¹ All ‘oversees’ participation had ‘the co-operation of the Dominion Governments’.¹⁶² It was to be a selling show, however, the gallery would take no fee and delivery costs were to be met by the participating country. The then Minister for

¹⁶⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Letter from Honorary Director of the Imperial Gallery of Art to the Irish High Commissioner. 10th November, 1926. Art dealer Sir Joseph Duveen (1869-1939) financially supported the exhibitions.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. During the five years the show ran, the IFS showed between 12 and 18 works annually.

¹⁶² *Exhibition of paintings, drawings, engravings and small sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions*, (1927). (London: Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd, 1927). 3.

Education, John M. O'Sullivan, engaged keenly with the invite, and 'desire[d] that the proposal should be submitted for the consideration of the Executive Council', in order to nominate a selection committee.¹⁶³ O'Sullivan enthusiasm was expected, he was interested in promoting Irish art, and previously produced policies and observations on how this might be achieved.¹⁶⁴ For this exhibition he suggested a small committee with members selected from the NGI (Director and Governors) and RHA.¹⁶⁵ A file was prepared for the Executive Council with an observation noted on the cover stating, 'It will be observed that it is intended that the description "British Artists" shall be applied to all exhibitors, including those from the Irish Free State. We have already objected, with success, to the description of our products as "British" goods'.¹⁶⁶ This references the change made to the EMB newspaper advertisement and signals the IFS intention to distinguish Irish art and the State as unique and independent of the UK.

The Executive Council selected five committee members including artists Sarah Purser and John Lavery.¹⁶⁷ After representations by the Minister for External Affairs, Desmond Fitzgerald, Dermot O'Brien, PRHA, was added to the selection committee.¹⁶⁸ This process of the Executive Council selecting the committee was repeated for each of the next four years. George Atkinson was added to the organising committee in 1930.¹⁶⁹ O'Brien took

¹⁶³ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Department of Education memo for circulation to the Executive Council, titled, "Nomination of authority to select pictures and works of art for exhibition in the Imperial Gallery of Art, London." No date but December, 1926.

¹⁶⁴ John Marcus O'Sullivan, T.D., was Minister for Education from 1926-32, covering the duration of all "Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions" exhibitions held at the Imperial Gallery of Art, from 1927-31.

UCD archives. LA60. Papers of John Marcus O'Sullivan. LA60/63 January–March 1930.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. A list from these two bodies was drawn up.

¹⁶⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Minister for Education, Agenda covering page for each Council member re "Selection of pictures of Irish Free State Artists for exhibition in the Imperial Gallery of Art, London." 9th Dec. 1926.

¹⁶⁷ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Letter from Secretary, Executive Council to Secretary, Department of Education, 24th Dec, 1926. The five members, per the memo, were Mr. Lucius O'Callaghan, R.H.A. (Director of the NGI), Mr. Justice Murnaghan, K.C. (Governor NGI), Mr. Thomas Bodkin, B.L. (Governor NGI), Miss Purser, R.H.A., John Lavery, R.A.

¹⁶⁸ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Memos to Private Secretaries for Minister for Education and Minister for External Affairs from Secretary, Executive Council, both dated 2nd Mar. 1927.

¹⁶⁹ Lavery was on an extended holiday in France and unavailable in 1930.

George Atkinson exhibited an etching *Shannon Scheme, Excavations* in 1929.

control of organising IFS participation in the first three exhibitions and Atkinson the final two shows. They convened meetings of the selection committee and communicated with artists.

That participation in these exhibitions was regarded as nationally important, is exemplified by the Council itself discussing the exhibition and appointing the selection committee each year, rather than delegating the task to civil servants. In financially stringent times the State funded participation and the costs were a concern. Executive Council discussions considered the additional costs involved in appointing Lavery who would have to travel from his base in London to committee meetings.¹⁷⁰ Those appointed could reasonably be described as the most eminent Irish art administrators, director and two governors of the NGI, president of the RHA, two prominent and internationally recognised artists and, later, the Headmaster of the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art. In other words, those involved in promoting and selecting Irish artists, were the most senior politicians and among the country's most eminent culturally engaged individuals. Participation in these exhibitions paralleled Irish involvement with the EMB. In both, the IFS was anxious that Irish art is recognised as distinct from that of British or other Dominion work. J. V. Fahy, the then Secretary General of the Department of External Affairs records in a 1930 memo, that his Department's 'only concern' with these exhibitions is that it provided 'a good opportunity for propaganda' by exhibiting the best of our national art.¹⁷¹ Art could represent Ireland's unique culture within a modern context, and by selecting the best Irish artists it sought to assert its place within the international cultural (and by extension political) arena. The role of the selection committee was to identify the best of Irish art. O'Brien in his letter to the first IFS selection committee in 1927, suggests Paul Henry, Sean Keating, Harry Clarke, Grace Henry, Margaret Clarke, Patrick Tuohy, Leo Whelan, Oliver Sheppard and AE

¹⁷⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Letter from Deputy Secretary, Dept. of Education to Secretary, Executive Council. 18th Feb. 1927.

¹⁷¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5235. Exhibitions of Contemporary Art. Memo dated 17th Sep. 1930, signed J. V. F[ahy].

(George Russell).¹⁷² These were established and well regarded artists, known for their nationalist (not republican) sympathies and stalwarts of the annual RHA exhibitions. All had participated in the 1922 Paris exhibition and the 1922 and 1924 Tailteann Art exhibitions and as will be shown later, each continued to feature in State supported events. Being committee members excluded Lavery and Purser from involvement. The only notable absentee was Jack Yeats who had ‘refused’ to participate.¹⁷³ There is no reason given for this refusal, it may have been politically motivated but Yeats did not exhibit in any of these Imperial Gallery exhibitions. It is notable that he did not exhibit in any State supported shows after the Civil War until Fianna Fáil came to power.¹⁷⁴ His refusal in 1927 was clearly final and in O’Brien’s letter to committee members in 1931 (the only other letter traced convening the selection group and proposing artists) he is not suggested.¹⁷⁵ He proposed,

The conditions are that of the 16 works which may be sent representing Ireland, only 8 may be oil paintings, the others water-colours, drawings or prints, or a small bit of sculpture. I append a list of artists who might, I think, be asked to contribute the Oil Paintings:- Paul Henry, John Keating, Gerald Kelly, Leo Whelan, Crampton Walker, Letitia Hamilton, Humbert Craig, F. McKelvey

The following I suggest might be asked to contribute drawings etc:- Margaret Clarke, Drawing. Crampton Gore, Water-colour. E. L. Lawrenson, Water-colour. Willie Leech, Water-colour. M. McGonigle, Water-colour. Sean O’Sullivan, Drawing. Albert Power, Sculpture. Oliver Sheppard, Sculpture.

Former Exhibitors have been: - Charles Lamb, Grace Henry, James Sleator, Charles Leeper, F. Mulock, Hilda Roberts, Stella Steyn, Eva Hamilton.¹⁷⁶

Another artist whose name is notable by its absence from this list is Estella Solomons.

‘Politically, Solomons was a republican’ and it is noteworthy that like Jack Yeats, she exhibited at the 1922 Paris Congress exhibition and the 1922 Tailteann art exhibition, but

¹⁷² TCD Bodkin Papers 6944/962/986. Letter from O’Brien to Bodkin. 11th Mar. 1927.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Yeats did exhibit in the Paris 1924 Olympics but did not take part in 1924 and 1928 Tailteann exhibitions, the 1927 and 1929 DCW exhibitions, any of the five *Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and [small] sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions*. After Fianna Fáil came to power in 1932 he exhibited in the 1932 Tailteann art exhibition and the 1933 *Exhibition of Irish Art* in Chicago.

¹⁷⁵ TCD Bodkin Papers 6944/962/1001. Letter from O’Brien to Bodkin. 20th Feb. 1931.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

was not included again in State supported shows, until after De Valera came to power in 1932.¹⁷⁷ It is fair to say that the work of the selection committee, coupled with the State paying the costs and no sales fees, ensured the selected artists exhibited their best works and a number of same are now held in public collections.¹⁷⁸ This was consistent over the five years that the Imperial exhibitions ran. Sales are not recorded, but archive files record estimated attendances for two years of fifteen and sixteen thousand, and that in 1929, two Irish paintings sold, one to a private collection and a Paul Henry work to the Sheffield Art Gallery (figure 94).¹⁷⁹

Unlike the Paris or Chicago exhibitions, the State were not the organisers, they participated at a low cost, and unlike their engagement in these exhibitions and with the EMB, controlled the Irish engagement with a light touch. Engaging in these exhibitions raised the profile of Irish art and artists and enabled the government to promote and present Irish art and the Irish Free State in an international context. Having a work enter an English public collection provided evidence of the authenticity of Irish art and culture and further justified IFSG engagement with the scheme. The series of exhibitions ended after 1931.¹⁸⁰ Apart from the IFS, only India participated in each of the five years, Canada took part in four,

¹⁷⁷ Angela Griffith, *Estella Solomons, An Irish Painter-Etcher*, (Bethesda: The Wild Apple Press, 2018). 2. Solomons did undertake commissions for state supported civic publication, discussed later, but she was not included in any exhibitions until after Fianna Fáil came to power in 1932 when she exhibited in the 1932 Tailteann art exhibition and the 1933 *Exhibition of Irish Art* in Chicago.

¹⁷⁸ For example in the 1927 Oils category, Paul Henry exhibited *Potato Diggers* which sold for €400,000 plus fees at Adams, Dublin auction on 29th May, 2013. Grace Henry's *Girl in White* and Patrick Tuohy's *Mayo Peasant Boy* are in the DCGHL. Leo Whelan's *Kitchen Window* is in the Crawford Gallery, Cork. Appendix 10 list all art works exhibited that represented the IFS from the start of these shows in 1927 until it ended in 1931.

¹⁷⁹ NAI. DFA/38/43. Letter from Secretary, Office of The High Commission, Irish Free State, London to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 27th July, 1929.

NAI. DFA/38/43. Letter from Secretary, Office of The High Commission, Irish Free State, London to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 5th July, 1928. (15,000)

NAI. DFA/38/43. Letter from Secretary, Office of The High Commission, Irish Free State, London to Secretary, Department of External Affairs, 15th Aug, 1930. (16,000)

The Paul Henry painting is Paul Henry R.H.A., (1876 – 1958), *The Village by the Lake*, 1929. Oil on panel. 84.7 x 90.8cm. Collection Sheffield Art Gallery.

¹⁸⁰ NAI. DFA/38/43. Letter on behalf of The High Commissioner for the Irish Free State, London to the Secretary of External Affairs, 7th Nov. 1931 states that the trustees of the Imperial Gallery of Art 'have decided that circumstances no longer justify them in continuing the series of exhibitions'.

South Africa, Newfoundland and New Zealand in a single year.¹⁸¹ Seven artists were responsible for nearly half of the seventy IFS works exhibited, Sean Keating and Margaret Clarke with six, Paul Henry, WJ Leech and Oliver Sheppard with four and multiple exhibits by Maurice MacGonigal, J. Humbert Craig, Letitia Hamilton and others. Many of these artists had been to the fore in other State supported shows and were well-known for rural Irish scenes. *The Spectator* critic commenting on the 1927 exhibition devotes most of the review to the IFS representation, ‘the special interest of this exhibition’.¹⁸²

Commenting that,

Mr. John Keating's *Brethren of the Coast*, a study of two Aran boatmen (Synge's people), faces straight down the room, and suggests at once the Spanish grace and the untamed wildness of Aran's people. Next it hangs a Paul Henry, *Potato Diggers*, thoroughly characteristic of this artist, probably the best painter Ireland has ever produced.

He name checks artists Harry and Margaret Clarke, AE, Leo Whelan and Patrick Tuohy's ubiquitous *Mayo Peasant Boy*, ‘in a discarded red flannel petticoat’ is also singled out (figure 24).¹⁸³ That artists and writers identified with the west has already been discussed and its association with Irish identity had now transferred to the critics and British audiences.

Henry's *Potato Diggers* (1911) exhibited in 1927 is now regarded by his biographer ‘as one of his most accomplished works’ (figure 72).¹⁸⁴ Gone is the ‘stage Irishness’ of the nineteenth century ‘and the simple toil of the figures gives a natural dignity to their efforts that is more convincing than much academic painting of the time’.¹⁸⁵ Leo Whelan's, *The Kitchen Window* (1927), an interior redolent of Vermeer and the Dutch school is a display

¹⁸¹ The IFS exhibited 70 works, Canada 57, India 50, South Africa 16, New Zealand 8 and Newfoundland (a self-governing dominion) 8.

¹⁸² Lemon Grey, “Art, Imperial Gallery of Art Exhibition”. *The Spectator*, 16th Apr. 1927. 9.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Fine art catalogue note by S. B. Kennedy in Adam's, *Important Irish Art Sale*, 29th May, 2013. Lot 21. As noted earlier in this chapter the exhibition of this painting by Henry in London is contemporaneous with his EMB design but this image of proud, hardworking natives toiling their land had a positive reception.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

of artistic virtuosity (figure 95). His sister is posed in front of a window in a Georgian house in Eccles Street. Her Irishness is declared in her ‘firm pose and independent air is more representative of the spirit of the 1920s’ Ireland.¹⁸⁶ Other works in 1927 included Grace Henry’s subtle portrait, *The Girl in White* (1912), contrasts the peasant scenes of Achill with delicate tones and limited palette, referencing the influence of James McNeill Whistler, and a trademark Harry Clarke pen and ink macabre drawing, *Death Lurks Without* (1925), an illustration to Goethe’s *Faust* was also displayed (figures 96 and 97).¹⁸⁷

In the following years, scenes of the rural west by the Henrys, MacGonigal, Craig and Keating were again accompanied by genre works, still lifes and portraits, Atkinson showed a Shannon Scheme etching and Margaret Clarke exhibited *Strindbergian*, a Swedish scene transferred to an Irish landscape.¹⁸⁸

Other exhibiting countries used a wider range of artists and surprisingly the Canadian government didn’t favour the Group of Seven and it was only in 1928 that four of its members were represented.¹⁸⁹ In her article on Canadian participation in the 1924 BEE, Ann Davies documents the dispute between the two dominant artistic bodies in Canadian art, the conservative Royal Canadian Academy (RCA) and the more progressive and modern National Gallery of Canada who actively promoted the Group.¹⁹⁰ Unlike in the IFS, the Canadian parliament or the bodies themselves, never established who ‘would organise foreign Canadian art exhibits’.¹⁹¹ So despite the success of the Group’s exhibits at the BEE, the RCA had responsibility for exhibits at the Imperial Art Gallery and favoured

¹⁸⁶ Wanda Ryan-Smolín, “Leo Whelan (1892-1956)” in *Irish Arts Review Yearbook*, Vol. 10 (1994). 227-234.

¹⁸⁷ Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, (Harry Clarke illustrator), *Faust*, (London: George G. Harrap, 1925).

¹⁸⁸ *Strindbergian* was most prominently exhibited in Chicago, 1933 and is discussed in this context in chapter five.

¹⁸⁹ Four of Canada’s fifteen exhibiting artists in 1928 were regarded as members or associates of the Group, J. E. H. MacDonald, Arthur Lismer, A. Y. Jackson and Franz Johnston. MacDonald and Jackson exhibited again in 1930.

¹⁹⁰ Davies. “The Wembley Controversy in Canadian Art”. 48.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. 73.

its own members.¹⁹² Consistent engagements by the IFSG, who took artistic and financial responsibility for Irish involvement in foreign art exhibitions both directly and through arts administrations, resulted in a cohesive presentation of officially endorsed Irish art and identity. This demonstrated a recognition of soft power agency in displaying a unique Irish identity and a vision of the State designed to make audiences feel kindly towards the country, with potential diplomatic and economic benefits.

¹⁹² Davies. "The Wembley Controversy in Canadian Art". 73. See also, Tom August. "Art and Empire - Wembley, 1924" in *History Today* 43 (Oct., 1993).

4.4 Engaging the masses; Dublin Civic Weeks and 1928 Tailteann Games.

4.4.1 Dublin Civic Weeks.

The Dublin Civic Weeks (DCW) of 1927 and 1929 were public events managed by Dublin Corporation aimed at boosting civic engagement across the city involving business, tourism and the local population. Its programme featured a number of industrial parades, historical pageants and exhibitions in an attempt to link revivalist visions of ancient Ireland with the new state. Organisers sought to create an interrupted historical narrative of Irish self-rule from pre-Christian times to the modern era. The goals pursued by those behind the civic week celebrations included ‘educating the public, [to] instil [national] pride in citizens and stage a public history that celebrated a community heritage’.¹⁹³ These were addressed by staging the aforementioned historical pageants, organising public lectures and curating art and design exhibitions. Dublin Civic Week pageants are well documented in contemporary newspaper accounts, the civic weeks’ Official Handbook publications and in recent academic texts by scholars including Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, Elaine Sisson and Paige Reynolds.¹⁹⁴ Civic weeks welcomed tourist audiences but were primarily aimed at home crowds. Based in the metropolitan capital it encouraged rural citizens to attend events. Special trains to facilitate ‘large numbers of visitors from the country’ and other transport arrangements provided easier access to the capital during both civic weeks.¹⁹⁵

The first DCW took place against the background of a General Election which happened two days before the event opened on the 17th Sept, 1927 and the assassination of the Minister for Justice, Kevin O’Higgins T.D. which occurred just two months earlier.

¹⁹³ Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*. 92.

¹⁹⁴ Bulmer Hobson, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1927). E.M. Stephens, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1929 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1929). Elaine Sisson, “Dublin Civic Week 1929 and the Materialisation of History” in *Object Matters: The Visual and Material Culture of 1916*, eds. Lisa Godson and Joanna Bruck, (Liverpool: University Press, 2015), 138-145. Joan FitzPatrick Dean, “Rewriting the Past: Historical Pageantry in the Dublin Civic Weeks of 1927 and 1929”, in *New Hibernia Review*, Vol. 13, Iss. 1. 2009. 20-41. Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*. 2014.

For political expediency the Minister for Local Government and Public Health had suspended the Dublin Corporation and City Council in 1924 and replaced it with a group of unelected city commissioners.¹⁹⁶ The Government had (and still has) the power to remove a council and appoint its own officers to take over the administration in certain circumstances. The Council was restored again in 1930 following a Commission of Enquiry and legislation to reconfigure the Corporation.¹⁹⁷ Therefore both DCWs were government projects and took place during the five years of the Cumann na nGaedheal administration. The DCWs sought to justify the legitimacy of the unelected commissioners and, in particular, an article in the 1927 event handbook on municipal government in Dublin sought their validation.¹⁹⁸ Nationally finances were tight, and consideration was given by the government to cutting further the wages of Dublin Corporation workers and the Old Age Pensions Act of 1924 had reduced the state pension by one schilling.¹⁹⁹ Dublin still had its tenement slums, marked by unsanitary living conditions and high infant mortality.²⁰⁰ Despite these challenges, the State and its city agency collaborated to fund and support the Civic Week events. The State provided practical support, and arranged extra subsidised transport to the city, encouraged people to provide accommodation for visitors, and provided publicity for the event.²⁰¹ The government allowed the Irish Army to

For more on pageantry in general see, Paige Reynolds, *Modernism, Drama, and the Audience for Irish Spectacle*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2007). See bibliography for newspaper references.

¹⁹⁵ Anon. "To Stir the Pride of Dublin", *Irish Independent*, 31st August, 1929. 11.

¹⁹⁶ The Minister for Local Government was Seamus Bourke, speaking in the Dáil on the 23rd Nov. 1927 said the Council was suspended because there 'was a certain amount of mismanagement' which was exposed by an enquiry. The Dublin City website says it was 'As a result of the Civil War'. The City Commissioners were Seumas Murphy (Chairman), PJ Hernon and WC Dwyer.

¹⁹⁷ The *Greater Dublin Act* of 1929 enabled restitution.

¹⁹⁸ Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*. 98.

John J. Murphy, Town Clerk of Dublin, "Municipal Government of Dublin" in *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1927). 9-11.

¹⁹⁹ Dáil debates 23rd Nov. 1927,

<http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/debates%20authoring/debateswebpack.nsf/takes/dail1927112300056?opendocument> accessed 12/01/2017.

²⁰⁰ For information on the Dublin slums at this time see Frank Murphy, "Dublin Slums in the 1930s" in *Dublin Historical Record* 37, no. 3/4 (1984). 104-111.

²⁰¹ For example see Anon. "Dublin Civic Week", *Irish Times*, 14th Sep, 1929. 1, cites 'Augmented bus services' and Anon. "The Pageantry of Civic Week", *Weekly Irish Times*, 17th Sep, 1929. 13, cites Low railway fares and extended travelling hours.

perform in the military tattoos, the Garda Síochána provided security, and their members added to the numbers performing in the pageants.²⁰² The Irish Tourist Association led with a feature on the Civic Week in its *Irish Travel* periodical.²⁰³ On request from the Civic Week President, to the Government, the Office of Public Works externally illuminated state buildings in the city in 1927 and 1929.²⁰⁴ Copies of the Official Civic Week Handbooks were requested by and distributed to embassies around Europe and were available at Irish Tourist Offices – their content represented the agendas the authorities wanted to propagate, nationally and internationally.²⁰⁵

The opening parades, pageants and military tattoos were well attended, despite the bad weather in 1927 and a Dublin tram strike during the 1929 week. Pathé newsreel films show large crowds of well-dressed people enjoying the parades and pageants.²⁰⁶ The men are mostly wearing suits and hats, the women, including those taking part in the “Dublin Queen of Beauty competition”, are dressed in a modern ‘flapper’ style.²⁰⁷ The 1927 pageant, “Grand Pageant of Dublin History” was scripted and designed by Seamus MacCall, he also designed the costumes which were regarded as historically accurate (figure 99).²⁰⁸ Two years later Micheál MacLíammóir scripted and designed the pageant, “The Ford of the Hurdles”. Both pageants portrayed ‘a glorious heritage for the Free State’, MacLíammóir linked Ireland’s ancient past through to the 1916 Easter Rising to the

²⁰² Anon. “Gardaí as Norman Invaders, Preparing a Pageant”, *Irish Independent*, 31st Aug. 1929. 11.

²⁰³ Anon. “To Visitors for Dublin’s Civic Week.” in *Irish Travel*, (Dublin: Irish Tourist Association, September, 1927).

²⁰⁴ NAI TAOIS/S5515 various memos dated, 9th Sep. 1927, 15th Sep. 1927, 20th Jul. 1929 and 25th Jul. 1929. Seumas Murphy, Chairman, Dublin City Commissioners, was President of the both DCW councils.

²⁰⁵ NAI DFA/GR/967. Memo dated 12th Sept. 1927. These Handbooks are discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter.

²⁰⁶ “Ireland Through The Ages 1927” at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/ireland-through-the-ages/query/dublin+civic+week> and “Over Sixty 1929” at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/over-sixty/query/dublin+civic+week> and “Irish Military Tattoo 1929” at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/irish-military-tattoo-1/query/irish+military+tattoo>.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ *Honesty*, Sept. 17, 1927.

Seamus MacCall, (1892-1964) was an Irish Nationalist, Author and Broadcaster. Apart from pageants his books include, *The Perjury of Kings* (1929, illustrations by Maurice MacGonigal), *And so began the Irish nation* (1931), *A Little History of Ireland*, biographies of Thomas Moore (1930s) and John Mitchell (1938).

foundation of the New State, and was careful to ‘exclude the past century and a quarter’ of colonial rule.²⁰⁹ The pageant started with the Viking invasion of Dublin and culminated with a re-enactment of the Easter Rebellion of 1916. Jumping from Robert Emmet’s execution in 1803 to finish in Easter 1916, it managed to avoid any reference to the recent Anglo-Irish treaty negotiations or the Civil War. It presented a version of history in which both pro- and anti-treaty citizens participated and supported, seeking to unite a public divided by war. Recent history was excluded because it still was not resolved, and any narrative of it was so contested that it could re-ignite hostilities. This articulation of this period in history still resonates today with anxiety about how these events can be commemorated a hundred years later.²¹⁰

The Military Tattoos (1927 and 1929) were presented as an unbroken historical line from ‘Fionn and the Fianna to the [Free State] army of today’.²¹¹ The press photograph of ‘Fionn’ passing a torch to an IFS soldier, served to legitimise the Free State army by demonstrating its ancient lineage and further promoted the Government’s state building intentions (figure 100).²¹² The DCWs witnessed thousands of citizens taking to the street and mass participating in events. The Irish public had the opportunity to celebrate civic pride, and to commemorate pre-Civil War Irish history, serving both sides of the treaty divide. These events allowed the public to share, with the government, in a vision of the new State.

Other events and exhibitions organised by the various DCW committees reflected another prong of the government’s agenda, Ireland as a progressive and modern society. Industrial exhibitions displayed new building materials and modern housing schemes. Exhibits

²⁰⁹ Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*. 99.

²¹⁰ Ronan McGreevy, “2019 will be centenary central as Ireland remembers turbulent past”, *Irish Times*, 5th Jan. 2019.

²¹¹ Anon. “Military Tattoo and Fireworks Display”, *Evening Herald*, 21st Sept, 1927. 2.

²¹² Joan FitzPatrick Dean, “Rewriting the Past: Historical Pageantry in the Dublin Civic Weeks of 1927 and 1929”. 31.

relating to the Shannon Electricity Scheme lent by the ESB were on show in the capital's City Hall, as were displays of new electrical products and talks on engineering and medicine.²¹³ Modernism and the modern city and life were a dominant theme. A two page pamphlet on the municipal exhibitions and displays, widely distributed by the DCW Information Bureau in 1929, uses the word modern on six occasions, 'modern water pipes', 'modern traffic conditions', 'Modern Housing Schemes', 'Modern Fire Fighting Methods', 'modern library practice', 'Modern Art'.²¹⁴ The DCWs were modern, urban and urbane, something that the Pathé films also corroborate. John McCormack the 'most famous of Dublin's citizens, and first of living singers', performed as part of the Music Festival.²¹⁵ Arthur Darley who lectured in Paris on Irish Music at the 1922 Irish Race Congress directed Irish Concerts at the Mansion House.²¹⁶

Both Dublin Civic Weeks engaged with the visual arts through exhibitions and commissions. The 1927 event featured an exhibition of art photography in the 'First Salon of Photography' exhibition and in 1929 the 'Second Salon'.²¹⁷ Established contemporary Irish artists such as, Paul Henry, Beatrice Glenavy and Estella Solomons, along with younger up-and-coming artists, like Harry Kernoff, Hilda Roberts, Maurice MacGonigal and others, were commissioned to design posters and provide illustrations and embellishments to the Official Handbooks produced for both events.²¹⁸ The modern aura of the Civic Weeks continued to be represented in the illustrations and reflected the progressive and contemporary aspirations of not just the designers, but the commissioners.

²¹³ Dublin Civic Week, *General Programme*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1927) and 1927 & 1929 *DCW Handbooks*.

²¹⁴ Dublin City Archive (hereafter DCA), 941.83. Pamphlet titled, "Dublin Civic Week, Programme of Municipal Exhibitions and Displays" issued by Information Bureau – City Hall, Cork Hill. Sept. 1929.

²¹⁵ Souvenir inset to Dublin Civic Week, *Souvenir Programme of Music, September 17-25, 1927*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1927).

²¹⁶ Ibid. 2 and 17.

²¹⁷ Dublin Civic Week, *General Programme*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1927).

²¹⁸ These handbooks are discussed in detail in the final section of this chapter, "Read all about it; Visuals in Civic Publications". In 1927 Katharine MacCormack produced a DCW posters and in 1929 Micheál MacLiammoir (as Willmore), Maurice McGonigal and Paul Henry designed DCW posters, see, Anon. "The Posters", *Cork Examiner*, 2nd Aug. 1929. 8..

This wasn't Modernism as an ideological-theoretical construct in art, but rather an artistic endeavour to represent a new Dublin, a place of the present moment, of modern city life. The *Handbook* illustrations and designs, discussed in detail at the end of this chapter, along with other publications displayed a modern vibrant city with an ancient past. A number of the illustrators of both *DCW handbooks* participated in the 1927 DCW art exhibition.

4.4.2 DCW Visual Art Exhibitions.

The City Commissioners appointed Paul Henry as Honorary Director of the 1927 DCW art exhibition and he was joined by a committee of two, George Atkinson and Leo Whelan.

All three were members of the RHA and represented the establishment, Atkinson was still headmaster of the Metropolitan School of Art. Henry, the principle organiser, had a growing international reputation at this time, with work in Irish, UK and French public collections and his Irish tourism posters were extremely popular in both Ireland and the UK. He would have been respected as an authoritative, erudite and safe pair of hands for the authorities to place in charge of the exhibition. This high-regard was further exemplified by their commissioning of him to produce a DCW poster for the 1929 event (figure 101).²¹⁹ The brief for the art exhibition, in keeping with the overall theme of the spectacle in presenting a progressive image of the city and country, was modernity. City Commissioner, Seamus Murphy and DCW Director of Publicity, Bulmer Hobson, announced the details of the planned events including the art exhibition, at a press conference. They were clear in their intentions for the show, stating that 'Mr. Paul Henry is organising an art exhibition ... [that] will be representative of modern Irish art ... [and] have a considerable number of pictures by modern French and Dutch artists brought over specially'.²²⁰ Irish art was to be exhibited within an international modernist context. Henry

²¹⁹ The oil study for this poster was originally owned by Bulmer Hobson. A newspaper article states that Henry was also commissioned to produce a poster for 1927 also but there is no evidence that this happened. See Anon. "The Programme", *Irish Times*, 4th Jul. 1927. 9.

²²⁰ Anon. "The Programme", *Irish Times*, 4th Jul. 1927. 9.

‘busied himself’ organising the exhibition for a number of months until it opened on the 17th September, 1927.²²¹ The organisation of the show was outsourced to this committee without direct State or Council officials’ involvement, but it was issued with clear guidelines. This was the standard approach by the State to exhibitions it supported and promoted after 1922. For the Paris and Aonach Tailteann art exhibitions that year, as discussed, it imposed direct involvement and control. It took a more hands-on approach again for the Chicago 1933 exhibition, (examined in chapter five), when a new Fianna Fail administration came to power for the first time. The loosening of control happened in this instance as the administrative powers had confidence in their selected administrators and their affiliated bodies such as the RHA, DMSA, ACSI and NGI - having had previous successful working relations with them.

One hundred and sixty works in the 1927 exhibition were divided into three categories - paintings, works on paper (watercolours, drawing and engravings) and sculpture. Unlike the earlier, government administered Tailteann art exhibitions in 1922 and 1924, urban scenes and not landscapes were the dominant subject matter. The show was held in the Metropolitan School of Art galleries and consisted of works on loan and for sale. As well as works from Irish private lenders, some leading commercial London galleries, each of whom had also worked with Irish artists, supplied European art works.²²² As a result, Irish artists were confidently exhibited among their more famous French and English counterparts. Contemporary newspapers noted that Irish painters were well represented, and in their commentaries selected Sarah Purser, W.J. Leech, John Lavery, Dermot O’Brien, Paul Henry, Frank McKelvey, Harry Kernoff, Margaret Clarke, John Keating,

See catalogue, *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engraving and Sculpture September 19th-October 15th*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1927) for list of artists and works in the 1927 show.

²²¹ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 62.

²²² These were, Leicester Galleries, Fine Art Society, Barbizon Galleries and St. George’s Gallery, Catalogue. *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engraving and Sculpture September 19th-October 15th*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1927).

Leo Whelan, Grace Henry, Mainie Jellett, Charles Lamb, Eva and Letitia Hamilton for mention, whilst noting the absence of Jack Yeats.²²³ The organisers had

got together a collection of pictures which has never been equalled in the art history of Dublin. The aim of the Director has been to show Irish pictures of modern date along with works by leading English and foreign artists. One result has been to show that Irish artists can well hold their own in the ordeal.²²⁴

European artists on display, such as Camille Pissarro, Paul Signac and Modigliani, and leading contemporary English artists such as, Augustus John and Frank Brangwyn were well-known and belonged to international schools and movements such as Cubism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism and Abstraction.²²⁵

As discussed in chapter one, Henry organised an earlier exhibition, *Some Modern Pictures*, in Mills Hall, Dublin in 1922 where he showed many of the same European and English artists. He hoped it would stimulate the emergence of an indigenous art by confronting Irish artists with the best avant-garde painting from abroad.²²⁶ Now, five years later, as a newspaper review noted, he was measuring ‘Dublin’s place in the world of art’ by exhibiting Irish artists in tandem with these same international colleagues.²²⁷ Some of those Irish artists had imbued European Modernism, such as, Mainie Jellett, who was regarded as belonging to ‘the ultra-modern school’, exhibited a cubist oil painting.²²⁸ Cecil Salkeld (1904-69), aged 23, had just returned from studying in Germany where he encountered and was influenced by the emerging New Objectivity movement. He exhibited

²²³ See in particular Anon. “Works by Irish Artists”, *Irish Times*, 20th Sep, 1927. 11. Most articles covering the art exhibition in the bibliography note the exhibiting artists.

²²⁴ Anon. “Exhibition of Modern Art”, *Irish Times*, 17th Sep. 1927.

²²⁵ European artists included cubist Andre L’Hote (1885-1962), impressionist Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), post-impressionist Paul Signac (1863-1935), fauves Kees Van Dongen (1877-1968), Maurice de Vlaminck (1876-1958) and Raoul Dufy (1877-1953). Other artists were Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) and Modigliani (1884-1920). Exhibiting English artists included Leslie Hunter (1877-1931), Samuel John Peploe (1871-1935), John Nash (1893-1977), Gerald Brockhurst (1890-1978), Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956) and Augustus John (1878-1961).

²²⁶ S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007). 55.

²²⁷ Anon. “Paintings, Drawings and Engravings. The Metropolitan School of Art.” *Irish Times*, 20th Sep. 1927. 11.

²²⁸ Anon. “Ultra-Modern Art, Miss M. H. Jellett’s Paintings”. *Irish Independent*, 8th Jan. 1927. 8.

an oil painting *A Sale*.²²⁹ Another of the younger artists, Stella Steyn (1907-87), who would go on to study at the Bauhaus school, exhibited two drawings.²³⁰ The exhibition also presented recent works by Ireland's best known contemporary artists with the exception of Yeats. Henry showed *In Connemara* (figure 102).²³¹ Further reflecting Henry's desire for a modern European influenced Irish art, many of the works were created by Irish artists when working or studying abroad, and were of European scenes. Dermot O'Brien exhibited an image of a chateau on the Loire, Letitia Hamilton paintings of Honfleur and Le Petit Andely, William Crampton Gore (1871-1946) a scene in Montreuil and Richard Moynan (1856-1906) was represented by *Belgian Fisher Girl*. Two other French scenes, Sarah Purser's (1848-1943) *Le Petit Dejeuner* and Walter Osborne's (1859-1903) *Apples Gathering, Quimperlé*, both now hang in the NGI. Moynan and Osborne were the only posthumous exhibits, and were probably selected because of both artists early and strong association with European art movements.²³² There existed a long tradition of Irish artists travelling abroad to broaden their artistic vision, to study, to work and to engage with international art of their time. This is well documented for the second half of the 19th to the early decades of the 20th century in Julian Campbell's *The Irish Impressionists* which covers Irish artists in France and Belgium 1850-1914.²³³ Other artists continued to travel later into the century, particularly to France, and this is noted in other accounts of Irish art history.

²²⁹ Salkeld is discussed in Angela Griffith, "Visualizing To-morrow: An Irish Modernist Periodical" in Philip Coleman, Kathryn Milligan, and Nathan O'Donnell, eds. *BLAST at 100: A Modernist Magazine Reconsidered*. (Leiden: Brill, 2017). 109-129. See also Snoddy, *Dictionary of Irish Artists*. 440-442.

²³⁰ Other younger artists included Hilda Roberts (1901-82), Frank McKelvey (1895-1974), Harry Kernoff (1900-74), Henry O'Donnell (1900-92), John Dixon (1895-1970), Maurice McGonigal (1900-79), Sean O'Sullivan (1906-64) and Matthew Barry (1892-1976).

²³¹ Harry Clarke, Margaret Clarke, William Conor, J. Humbert Craig, Grace Henry, Charles Lamb, Letitia Hamilton, Mainie Jellett, Sean Keating, Maurice MacGonigal, Harry Kernoff, Dermot O'Brien, Albert Power, AE (George Russell), Oliver Sheppard, Mary Swanzy, Leo Whelan... all exhibited.

²³² Julian Campbell, *The Irish Impressionists Irish Artists in France and Belgium, 1850-1914*, (Dublin: NGI, 1984). The author opines that Osborne was 'the only Irish artist who could justifiably be called an Irish Impressionist', (88). Osborne also studied and worked in France. Both Moynan and Osborne studied with Charles Verlat (1824-90) in Antwerp.

²³³ Ibid.

Paul Henry and his small organising committee were acknowledged in newspaper reports and by Seumas Murphy, Chairman, Dublin City Commissioners, at the exhibition opening.²³⁴ Murphy was delighted with the exhibition and writing in that year's handbook opined that Irish art 'is better known in Paris Salons than in our own drawing rooms', and this was something that the handbook, the Civic Week exhibition and by extension the City Commissioners wished 'to draw attention to' and rectify.²³⁵ Art along with literature, music, science and culture was to 'reflect the spiritual growth of the country'.²³⁶

The works on paper section in 1927, also featured international artists Camille Pissarro, Paul Signac and John Nash. Irish exhibits included George Atkinson's up-to-the-minute etching *Shannon Scheme, No.1*, showing the work in progress on the state's ambitious rural infrastructure project to build Europe's largest power station in County Clare. This was a flagship political, economic and modernising scheme undertaken by the first Cumann na nGaedheal government.²³⁷ The development of such a scheme was discussed at the Paris Race Congress in 1922. Atkinson's official State commissioned images of the development were exhibited in national and international exhibitions in the late nineteen twenties and early thirties. Models of the scheme were displayed prominently in the 1929 DCW event and as part of the Irish display at the Chicago Worlds' Fair in 1933 (discussed in chapter five). It was also displayed elsewhere and portrayed the modernity and confidence of the new State. The dam was completed in 1929, set in the rural west, 'it was a heroic realisation of Padraig Pearse's vision [for rural development] in modernist form'.²³⁸

²³⁴ Anon. "Paintings, Drawings and Engravings. The Metropolitan School of Art. The Opening." *Irish Times*, 20th Sep. 1927. 11.

Anon. "Exhibition of Modern Art", *Irish Times*, 17th Sep. 1927. 13.

²³⁵ Seumas Murphy, "Foreword" in E.M. Stephens, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1929 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1929). 7.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ For details of the Shannon scheme see, Sorchá O'Brien, *Powering the nation: images of the Shannon Scheme and the electrification of Ireland*. (Newbridge: IAP, 2017).

²³⁸ Ellen Rowley, "Modern Ireland in 100 Artworks: 1927 – Ardnacrusha hydroelectric scheme", *Irish Times*, 31st Jan, 2015.

There was little political work similar to that seen in Paris in the 1927 DCW exhibition. It is fair to assume that this reflected the ongoing political and practical imperative of reconciliation following the Civil War. There were no political portraits or paintings referencing conflict. Lavery, the most ubiquitous artist in Paris, exhibited *The Hon. Mrs Forbes-Sempill and Anne Moira* (1923) at the Civic Week exhibition (figure 103). It was harshly described by a newspaper critic at the time as having a ‘certain harshness of treatment of outline indicates that it is one of this famous artist’s earlier efforts’.²³⁹ Echoing his friend’s, James Abbot McNeill Whistler’s famous portrait of his mother, *Arrangement in Grey and Black No.1* (1871) in format and colour tone, it is a work about youth, anticipation and hope for the future.²⁴⁰

Two of the seven sculptures exhibited were by Oliver Sheppard, *Island of Destiny* (1901) and *Death of Cuchulainn* (1911/12). These slightly dated sculptures were not as contemporary as the paintings, however, born out of cultural nationalism, they seemed to foresee the State’s future and were relevant in 1927.²⁴¹ Declan Kiberd writing in his 2017 book, *After Ireland*, considers how, since independence, Irish writers acted as early warning systems for Irish society.²⁴² As already discussed with Jack Yeats’ painting, *Batchelor’s Walk, In Memory* (1915), which anticipated the upcoming Easter Rising and was first exhibited in Paris 1922, Kiberd’s assertion could also be applied to other Irish artists. *Island of Destiny* (1901) also known as *Inis Fail* is regarded as the ‘perfect expression in sculpture of the Irish Cultural Revival’ (figure 104).²⁴³ This symbolist group

²³⁹ Anon. “Work of the Modern Irish Artists”, *Irish Independent*, 20th Sep. 1927. 6.

This work is now in the collection of the NMNI, Ulster Museum, Belfast.

²⁴⁰ The word anemone comes from Greek. The flower’s natural operation of closing up at night and opening for the morning means it symbolizes anticipation and excitement for something in the future. It may be an oblique reference to the nascent IFS.

²⁴¹ Also in the sculpture section were two contemporary pieces by Beatrice Campbell, portraits from 1921 by Albert Power and from 1910 by Francis Doyle Jones and *Dawn* (c. 1920) by Frank Wiles.

²⁴² Declan Kiberd, *After Ireland*, (London: Head of Zeus, 2017).

See also, Declan Kiberd, “Irish writers were an early warning system about abuse”, *Irish Times*, 21st Oct, 2017.

²⁴³ John Turpin, *Oliver Sheppard 1865-1941*, (Four Court Press, Dublin, 2000). 68.

is seen as an allegory for Ireland and when a committee sought to raise funds to have it cast in bronze in 1938 the promotional brochure described it as embodying ‘the spirit and history of a race’.²⁴⁴ Each of the three figures represent an aspect of Ireland, the fallen figure the past, the tall figure the present and the youth with the insular cross, Ireland’s future as a young nation setting out with hope. The sculpture which is skilfully modelled with the figures displaying sorrow, pathos and hope references Irish literature and was critically well received by, among others, Padraig Pearse when it was first exhibited in 1901.²⁴⁵ The second Sheppard piece *Death of Cuchulainn* (1922-12) has now become iconic in the Irish psyche and part of the canon of Irish art, a process completed in 1934, when it was appropriated by President De Valera and the Irish State to be the official memorial to the Irish Easter Rising of 1916. It was cast in bronze in 1934 and placed in the Dublin GPO, the central site of the Rising. A *pietà*-like sculpture, it depicts Cuchulainn tied to a stone by his belt with a bird on his shoulder. The ideological context for the sculpture references ‘the Pearsian rhetoric of chivalry and the sacred blood sacrifice on behalf of Ireland’.²⁴⁶ It was inspired by the old Irish legend that was also a source for other Irish writers and artists of the Cultural revival.²⁴⁷ A larger scale replica of the work was displayed in the Irish Pavilion at the 1939 New York World’s Fair. It was a visual art image that for the state, embodied Irish literature, legend, history and State ideology. Both *Inis Fail* and *Cuchulainn* were symbolic visions of the new State transcending the heroic suffering of the past.

²⁴⁴ Cited in Turpin. *Oliver Sheppard 1865-1941*. 71.

²⁴⁵ Turpin. *Oliver Sheppard 1865-1941*, 68-72. Pearse reviewed it in *An Claidheamh Soluis* and it was reviewed in the national newspapers in 1901. It was cast in 1938 and presented on behalf of subscribers to the DCGHL.

²⁴⁶ Turpin. *Oliver Sheppard 1865-1941*. 136. The sculpture was only previously exhibited at the 1914 RHA annual show.

²⁴⁷ As noted earlier, the Cuchulainn legend inspired work by among others, Lady Gregory, W.B. Yeats, George Russell, John Hughes, and Padraig Pearse. For comments on *Death of Cuchulainn* as a 1916 memorial see Yvonne Whelan, “Symbolising the State— the iconography of O’Connell Street and environs after Independence (1922)” in *Irish Geography*, Volume 34(2), 2001, 135-156.

The 1927 art exhibition - like the Civic Week itself - was secular, modern, urban, outward looking, with Irish artists in dialogue with modern European artists, taking their place in the world. Presenting the exhibition as a Civic Week event ensured that the 'general public took a keen interest in the pictures, and patronised the exhibition daily in great numbers'.²⁴⁸ The same review noting that the modern art work on display may face a difficult public reception suggested that those 'who love progress' would tolerate it. In keeping with the overall DCW aims, the art exhibition educated a greater public on modern and Irish art and presented it on the same platform as Irish history, industry, sports, music, security, education and science, as a pillar of nation building.

The art exhibition for the 1929 Civic Week was also held at the Metropolitan School of Art and the organising committee appointed by the City Commissioners consisted of Dermot O'Brien PRHA, George Atkinson RHA and Oswald Reeves and E. R. Richards-Orpen. The latter three were also members of the Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland.²⁴⁹ It was primarily an exhibition of contemporary Irish ecclesiastical art, but also featured a small selection of Irish and European pieces from the 15th to the 16th century, lent by the National Museum.²⁵⁰ In doing so it sited contemporary Irish church art in a continuum of Christian art from earlier times.

As will be shown, O'Brien, PRHA as Director, saw potential Church patronage as an important source of revenue for Irish artists and craftspeople. Atkinson RHA, was Headmaster of and represented the School of Art which was training the next generation of artists and craftspeople, and alongside Reeves and Richards-Orpen represented the primary producers of artistic ecclesiastical art. The City Commissioners facilitated the committee to organise a quality exhibition that was broader in content and impact than the narrowness of

²⁴⁸ George Edmund Lobo, "Notes". *The Dublin Art Monthly*, Vol.1, No. 2. Nov. 1927. 25.

²⁴⁹ Catalogue. *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art Dublin Civic Week 1929 2nd to 28th September*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1929).

²⁵⁰ Ibid. There were twelve catalogue entries on loan from the NMI and sixty entries of contemporary work.

its title might imply. On the face of it, an exhibition of church art, appears limited and insular when compared to the broad horizons of the 1927 exhibition. However, the lack of support and patronage of artists by religious orders in the Irish Free State was a sore that had prompted commentary by critics and artists. This first exhibition of ecclesiastical art in the IFS was seen as a tool to remedy the situation. O'Brien, in conjunction with the City Commissioners, sought a practical element to the exhibition – which was that commissions from ongoing church building and renovations would become a source of income to Irish artists and craftspeople.

In keeping with the ideology of Civic Week, this focused exhibition was to educate the public, clergy, architects and builders about the good quality work being produced in Ireland.²⁵¹ Earlier in the century, Robert Elliott in his 1906 publication *Art and Ireland*, was scathing of the quality of ecclesiastical art in Churches, 'trade art is visible everywhere, and fine art, the work of artists [and craftsmen], nowhere'. He regarded much of it as 'shop art' mass produced and of little artistic merit. 'There is next to nothing worth consideration as a work of fine art [in our Churches]...beyond one or two slight exceptions'.²⁵² Elliott's book laments the quality of art and design in church architecture and interiors. Edward Martyn in the preface describes the theme of the book as 'the saving of modern church design' by commissioning ecclesiastical work from artists.²⁵³ The 1914 DMSA Headmaster's report quotes a speech by T. P. Gill, Secretary of DATI, in which he identified the church as a new and important patron of 'the whole realm of ecclesiastical art'.²⁵⁴ However, at the opening of the 1929 DCW exhibition, James MacNeill could only reference two churches (Loughrea Cathedral from 1902 and the Honan Chapel from 1916),

²⁵¹ Anon (presumably Dermot O'Brien), "Preface" in *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art Dublin Civic Week 1929*.

²⁵² Robert Elliott, *Art and Ireland*, (Dublin: Sealy, Bryers, 1906), republished by Kennikat Press, 1970. 151.

²⁵³ Edward Martyn, "Preface" in *Art and Ireland*, by Robert Elliott, (Dublin: Sealy, Bryers, 1906), republished by Kennikat Press, 1970. Vii.

²⁵⁴ Cited in John Turpin. "The Metropolitan School of Art 1900-1923 (Part I)" in *Dublin Historical Record* 37, no. 2 (1984). 69.

as exemplars of Church art.²⁵⁵ The preface to the exhibition catalogue added the new church in Killester by Robinson and Keeffe architects to this list.²⁵⁶ The quality of artistic church work available in Ireland was not being criticised, merely the failure of the clergy to use it in preference to off-the-shelf, cheaper, unexceptional, conventional and poor-quality imports. A year earlier, Dermot O'Brien, as President of the RHA, spoke about church art in his speech at the opening banquet of the 1928 annual RHA exhibition. He proposed 'Chairs of Art in universities, colleges and above all Divinity schools' saying that 'the church was the chief, almost the only patron, of the Arts [in Ireland]'.²⁵⁷ He identified the lack of education about visual arts in the seminaries as a problem. It left the clergy with no guidance when it came to church art and this accounted for the poor quality of ecclesiastical art in churches. This was the first time the RHA held a banquet as part of the official opening of its annual exhibition. It was following in the English tradition where the event was patronised by Royalty and Government and it was seen to 'help art towards greater recognition by interesting the State...as well as the general public, in the claims of Art'.²⁵⁸ Similar hopes were expressed at the RHA banquet, attended by President Cosgrave, who said 'the best symptoms of the well-being of the body politic was the presence of a bold and vigorous national Art'.²⁵⁹ Acknowledging that 'the Government are well aware of the important part which the Fine Arts play in the development of a free people', he promised all help that was proper while stating Art was 'at its best' when free

²⁵⁵ James McNeill was Governor-General of the Free State from 1928 to 1932.

²⁵⁶ Anon (presumably Dermot O'Brien), "Preface" in *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art Dublin Civic Week 1929 2nd to 28th September*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1929). 4.

²⁵⁷ Dermot O'Brien, speech as part of a toast to "The Arts of Ireland" reported in "Art in Ireland", *Irish Builder and Engineer*, Vol. LXX, No. 8, 14th Apr. 1928. 323.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ "The State and Art: Royal Hibernian Academy's first Banquet, A Century's Good Work in Ireland". *Irish Times*, 2nd Apr. 1928. 5.

"An Irish College of Arts, the hopes of the President of the R.H.A." *Irish Independent*. 2nd Apr. 1928. 9.

of State aid. While not very practical these comments served to attach Government support for Irish art.²⁶⁰

In the preface to the catalogue for the ecclesiastical exhibition the quality of stained glass, enamelling, embroidery and teaching in the Metropolitan School of Art, was praised along with the individuals involved. It was noted that the ‘appreciation of it by the general public [and clergy] has yet to come’ and hence this exhibition ‘is held for the purpose of informing the citizen’.²⁶¹ One reviewer of the exhibition concluded that ‘none of the Churches has thought it important to give their clergy an education in good taste as well as in dogmas’.²⁶²

In the exhibition the vitality of Irish stained glass was demonstrated in windows and cartoons by Harry Clarke and his studio, members of An Túr Gloine and Earley & Co. Large scale photographs were used to illustrate work in-situ in Churches such as a *Stations of the Cross* series by John (Sean) Keating in Clongowes Chapel (figure 105). Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone (1894-1955) exhibited mural designs. As per the Tailteann exhibitions, Jack Yeats was only represented through designs he provided for his sisters’ Cuala Industries, who exhibited religious banners with Jack’s and his wife Mary Cottenham Yeats’ designs. DMSA enamel teacher, Oswald Reeves showed candlesticks (figure 106). Other examples of, ‘church decoration and furniture, including architectural designs, glass, mosaic, carving, plaster-work, sculpture, painting, fabrics, metalwork, etc.’, displayed an Irish and contemporary interpretation of this public art.²⁶³ The exhibitors were

²⁶⁰ Ibid. The banquet was held in the National Museum Library and was attended by RHA members, politicians and academics. The clergy were not represented.

²⁶¹ Anon (presumably Dermod O’Brien), “Preface” in *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art Dublin Civic Week 1929 2nd to 28th September*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1929). 4.

He cites the work of the late Edward Martyn, with the assistance of Mr. Vincent O’Brien, for raising the standard of Church Music; Mr. T. P. Gill, Miss Purser and Mr. C. W. Whall, for the initiation of a school of stained glass that is now supreme in that Art; the enamel work done under the guidance of Mr. Oswald Reeves; the training and direction of the Art-Craft workers by Mr. George Atkinson, at the DMSA; the embroidery work of the Dun Emer Guild and Cuala Guild.

²⁶² George Russell, *The Irish Statesman*, 14th Sept. 1929. 26.

²⁶³ 1929, *DCW Official Handbook*. 65.

well-known artists, craftspeople and arts and crafts societies. Many such as Harry Clarke, An Túr Gloine, Cuala and Dun Emer were stalwarts of the Irish art scene and brought a cachet of artistic reputations with them, and exhibited in other state selected or funded exhibitions of the period.

This pioneering 1929 DCW Ecclesiastical Art exhibition, ‘the first of its kind held in Dublin’, bridged and gave practical expression to two important Catholic religious spectacles celebrated by both church and state, that year’s Catholic Emancipation centenary celebrations and the 1932 Eucharistic Congress.²⁶⁴ Following on from the centenary of Catholic Emancipation celebrations in June 1929, and the 1929 DCW exhibition, the Irish Academy of Christian Art was established.²⁶⁵ Like the DCW show, the academy encouraged the clergy to engage Irish artists to improve the quality of art in churches.²⁶⁶ Count Plunkett claimed that ‘Nine-tenths of the material in Irish church buildings was not ... native... and was furnished with the most incongruous [imported] material’.²⁶⁷

4.4.3 DCW Conclusion.

These DCW spectacles were funded and promoted by the Dublin City Commissioners and the IFSG. The government associated itself closely with each occasion and President Cosgrave attended events such as the photography exhibition, sent his personal gratitude to John McCormack for performing and issued a press statement saying that the success of

Other notable exhibitors included, Oliver Sheppard, Albert Power, Mrs. M. A. Hutton, Norah Jackson, Nan Holland, Nellie O’Brien, George Atkinson, Ethel Rhind, J. J. Robinson, Grange Furniture, and George Collie. It was a selling show. See catalogue, *Exhibition of Ecclesiastical Art Dublin Civic Week 1929 2nd to 28th September*. (Dublin: Civic Week, 1929) for list of artists and works in the 1929 show.

²⁶⁴ 1929 DCW *Official Handbook*. The Eucharistic Congress 1932 is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

²⁶⁵ For a discussion on the academy see, Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, “The Academy of Christian Art (1929-1946): An Aspect of Catholic Cultural Life in Newly Independent Ireland”, in *Éire-Ireland*, eds. Curtin & Kreilkamp, Vol. 31, Issue 3/4, (Morristown: Irish American Cultural Institute, 1996). (102-116).

²⁶⁶ Ibid. 103.

²⁶⁷ Anon. “Christian Art. New Academy in Dublin”, *Irish Times*, 23rd April, 1930. 9.

George Nobel Count Plunkett was President of the Irish Academy of Christian Art. Membership of the Academy was restricted to Catholics. They organised lectures on church art but only held one small exhibitions in 1941.

the project celebrated a community ‘with a great past and a greater future’.²⁶⁸ It involved mass participation by Dubliners and citizens from further away enticed to the city by subsidised travel fares. The well attended, ‘thronged’, art exhibitions were central; advertised as just another event of the DCW, they extended their reach beyond the habitual art audience to the general DCW spectator.²⁶⁹ Handbooks, newspaper reports and speeches by Murphy and Cosgrave extolled the citizen to take pride in its city, its history and its ancient and contemporary art.²⁷⁰ In taking pride and participating in events, people invested in the socio-political and cultural life of the State. This created an acceptance of the political situation and aided reconciliation after the treaty split. As the *Irish Times* commentator put it, the DCW will instil a ‘patriotism [that] ought to be a reconciling, not a dividing, influence, and that a splendid legacy [visible in the DCW] carries high responsibility’.²⁷¹ It added, ‘In Civic Week, Dublin looks backward and forward, and, as it regards the past with pride, so it may contemplate the future with hope and courage’.²⁷² Cosgrave saw the events of the DCW providing, ‘a *renaissance* of the spirit of citizenship’.²⁷³ The DCW displayed to its citizens the pillars of the nation being built, including, industry (industrial parade), history (historical pageants), security (military tattoo) and culture (art). It avoided showcasing the myriad of problems, particularly poverty and housing, although Cosgrave acknowledged these in his statement.

Similar to participation in the EMB, the DCW also had tangible practical elements. It advertised IFS industry and tourism potential and it promoted art; in 1927 it put forward

²⁶⁸ Anon. “The Irish Salon of Photography. President Cosgrave’s Visit.” *Irish Times*. 22nd Sep. 1927. 11.

Anon. “Mr. Cosgrave and Dublin.” *Irish Times*. 24th Sep. 1927. 7.

Anon. “Civic Week Music.” *Irish Times*. 19th Sep. 1927. 5.

²⁶⁹ Anon. “Success of Civic Week.” *Irish Times*. 1st Oct. 1927. 6.

George Edmund Lobo, “Notes”. *The Dublin Art Monthly*, Vol.1, No. 2. Nov. 1927. 25.

²⁷⁰ For example see, Anon. “Civic Week Opening Ceremony.” *Irish Press*, 9th Sep. 1929 (clipping in DCA 941.83) and Anon. “Mr. Cosgrave and Dublin.” *Irish Times*. 24th Sep. 1927. 7. Cosgrave also acknowledges the important NGI collection and the Hugh Lane ‘gift of pictures’.

²⁷¹ Anon. “Civic Week.” *Irish Times*. 17th Sep. 1927. 8.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Anon. “Mr. Cosgrave and Dublin.” *Irish Times*. 24th Sep. 1927. 7.

Irish art as a European endeavour, and in 1929 it showcased Irish art publicly to its largest potential patron at that time, the church.²⁷⁴ Specifically, it built political capital - by organising, supporting and funding the spectacle; social capital - through goodwill generated by mass participation events and showcasing the positive; cultural capital - through education, theatre and music with lower price performances for poorer children, through exhibitions of art photography and important art exhibitions.

4.4.4 1928 Aonach Tailteann.

Governmental support to hold the second Aonach Tailteann in August 1928 was requested the previous December. In a letter, from JV Lawless of the Tailteann Finance Committee to President Cosgrave, he stated that despite some financial losses the 1924 spectacle was a success. He added that in his opinion, ‘it is still worth considering as a National Event to be continued for the rallying of our Nationals throughout the world, every fourth year’.²⁷⁵ This letter was accompanied by a report which highlighted ‘the difficulties’ holding the 1924 games, namely, ‘the opposition of the Executive of Sinn Fein’ and the boycott.²⁷⁶ Without explicitly or literally mentioning reconciliation, soft power or cultural diplomacy (terms yet to be formalised), the report cites the Games as delivering text book examples of each. It identified ‘the outstanding advantages of holding the Games’ as improvements in ‘National stability’..., ‘the general improvement of relations between contending political parties through association at the Games’, the invaluable restoration ‘of this great National festival’, and also importantly, ‘linking up of representatives of the Irish Race throughout

²⁷⁴ Arts and Crafts groups individually and privately also approached the clergy for commissions. For example, The Craftworkers Ltd., an A&C co-operative established in 1919, ‘for the revival of Irish art industry’, whose members included William McBride, Albert Power, Jack Morrow... issued a leaflet in the 1920s and pointedly ‘invited the Clergy and all interested in Church Decoration, Stained Glass... to visit their workshops...’.

²⁷⁵ NAI. TSCH/3/S8970 - Aonach Tailteann, 1928. Letter from J. V. Lawless, Dublin County Council and member of the Tailteann Finance Committee, to William T. Cosgrave, President, Irish Free State, dated 19th Dec. 1927.

²⁷⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S8970. “Memo. Relative to financing of Tailteann Games – 1928.” J. V. Lawless, Chairman, Finance Committee, no date but Dec. 1927.

the world’ on common platforms.²⁷⁷ The report stated that the Aonach Tailteann ‘synchronis[ed] with the restoration, to some extent, of our legitimate national aspirations’.

It is summarised as:

1. The games were a huge success but incurred a [relatively small] financial loss.
2. They had ‘a steadying effect on the National outlook, thereby helping the State’.
3. Created a positive view of the State that was not financially measurable.
4. It was positive for Irish sport and culture.
5. The Tailteann provided an advantage in gathering representatives of the Irish diaspora and ‘distinguished foreign visitors’ to view Irish athletics, music, art and literature – the work of national regeneration.
6. It enabled the State to engage with its diaspora and reconnected them with their motherland.

The report concludes that the Tailteann ‘bring[s] credit and stability to the state’. It suggests that ‘the Dáil approve of the holding of the Tailteann Games... and make provision for a grant of £2,500’ annually.²⁷⁸

On foot of this request and report the Executive Council ‘agreed that the [1928] Games should be allowed to proceed’ and provided a loan of £7,500.²⁷⁹ The spectacle was set for August that year and the organisers planned a souvenir programme which would carry a message of goodwill and support from President Cosgrave.²⁸⁰ An undated and unsigned note (possibly by Cosgrave or Diarmuid O’Hegarty) suggested a ‘message on general lines welcoming visitors ... [expressing] goodwill [and] best wishes for success. Strike an all-Ireland note’.²⁸¹ This asserted again, that art, culture and sport were not partitioned, and served to highlight an aspirational thirty-two county State. The government further approved the illumination of State buildings such as the GPO for the duration of the event.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S8970. Saorstát Éireann. Meeting of the Exec. Council 10/3/24. Extract from Minutes. C.2/63.

²⁸⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S8970. Letter from Tailteann Games Committee members to President Cosgrave. 29th May 1928.

²⁸¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S8970. Handwritten memo. Undated and unsigned but June, 1928.

The promotional brochure for the 1928 spectacle features a drawing of a hurler on its cover and numerous sporting vignettes (figure 107). It offered practical information on travelling to Ireland and extolled the diaspora to visit and participate in events that offered ‘honour and fame on the one hand to writers, artists and musicians, and on the other hand to athletes...’²⁸² The games followed the successful structure and organisation of the 1924 spectacle. It featured sporting and cultural competitions and an opening pageant that again displayed the pillars of the State’s nation building and identity formation scheme. Actress Nancy Rock played ‘Queen Tailté, attended by chieftains and pages, all wearing ancient Irish costumes’, during the opening pageant.²⁸³ This time the visual arts and design sector were represented by Irish cultural stalwarts Dermot O’Brien, Margaret Clarke, Harry Clarke and Albert Power, all in their RHA members’ robes. O’Brien as President of the RHA since 1910 and, as is exemplified by most of the case studies in this research, was the government’s go to person for official engagements involving the visual arts. Power won the 1928 Tailteann Trophy for sculpture and at this stage had a commission to produce commemorative statues of both Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith. Margaret Clarke was elected a full member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1927, only the second female artist to achieve this professional recognition at this date. Her husband, Harry Clarke, was one of the leading figures in the Arts and Crafts movement. He enjoyed an international reputation, was seen as a modernist and was at this time at the height of his fame. His reputation was recognised by the Government and at their invitation through the Minister for Industry and Commerce he had just submitted his proposal for the so-called *Geneva Window* – a commission for the International Labour Building, League of Nations, Geneva.²⁸⁴ The government followed this in 1931, when Clarke was first choice to design

²⁸² *Aonach Tailteann (Tailteann Games), 11th to 26th August, 1928, Dublin*. Promotional brochure. (Dublin: Committee of the Aonach Tailteann and the Irish Tourist Association, 1928). Browne & Nolan, Ltd, printers.

²⁸³ Anon. “Aonach Tailteann, Opening Ceremony in Dublin”, *Anglo-Celt*, 18th Aug. 1928. 8.

²⁸⁴ For details of Clarke see Angela Griffith, Marguerite Helmers & Roísín Kennedy, eds, *Harry Clarke and artistic visions of the new Irish State*, (Newbridge: IAP, 2019) and Nicola Gordon Bowe’s, *The Life and Work of Harry Clarke*, 1989.

a state gift for Pope Pius XI.²⁸⁵ Other cultural codes, including sport, music and literature were also represented. The army and An Garda Síochána were present. However, because the spectre of the War of Independence or the Civil War did not hang over these Games the symbols of national security were less prominent than in 1924, State ‘aeroplanes or salvoes of artillery’ were absent.²⁸⁶ A dominant theme, as Lawless had intimated in his submission to Cosgrave, was a shared culture and art - a soft power tool, that helped bridge Civil War divisions, ‘conducive to good feeling’, and aided ‘national regeneration’ – reconciliation and nation building.²⁸⁷ Director of the Games and former government minister, J.J. Walsh performed the official opening in front of 20,000 spectators. The President and various government ministers were represented by their parliamentary secretaries and the press lamented the lack of ‘heads of Government’ present.²⁸⁸ However, De Valera, the leader of Fianna Fail and numerous TDs were present, ‘those present represented all sections and interests in the community’.²⁸⁹ That night’s opening banquet was attended by Ernest Blythe, Vice-President of the Executive Council, government ministers and TDs. At the banquet Dermot O’Brien PRHA presented the awards in the literary section.²⁹⁰ As at the previous Tailteann spectacle, motor cycling in the Phoenix Park was the most popular 1928 event. The industrial pageant and the promotional window displays of Irish goods also engaged large crowds. Like the DCWs, many of the Tailteann events encouraged mass participation and sought to support civic engagement. The interconnectedness of these spectacles was further evidenced with the performance of Seamus MacCall’s pageant from

²⁸⁵ Discussed in the next chapter.

²⁸⁶ Anon. “Aonach Tailteann, Opening Ceremony in Dublin”, *Anglo-Celt*, 18th Aug. 1928. 8.

²⁸⁷ NAI. TSCH/3/S8970. “Memo. Relative to financing of Tailteann Games – 1928.” J. V. Lawless, Chairman, Finance Committee, no date but Dec. 1927. 5.

²⁸⁸ “Tailteann Games”, *Irish Times*, 13th Aug. 1928. 9.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Among the literary prize-winners were W. B. Yeats and George Bernard Shaw.

the 1927 DCW, *The Coming of Fionn*, as part of the Tailteann awards ceremony in the Iveagh Gardens.²⁹¹

At the banquet given by the RHA in 1928, already discussed, O'Brien had used the event to lobby for more government support for the arts. Cosgrave, commenting 'on the relations between the State and the Arts', reassured the RHA that they were 'of real concern to a Government that ... [were] endeavouring to do all that is proper in furtherance of their fortunes'.²⁹² O'Brien acknowledged existing government support given through 'the exhibition of graphic and plastic arts to be organised in connection with the [1928] Tailteann Games, and the decision to have an Irish Art section in the Olympiad at Amsterdam'.²⁹³ At different times he could have similarly mention other spectacles and exhibitions in this research.

Held in the Metropolitan School of Art, the Art Exhibition was organised along the 1924 format, and although substantial at 508 exhibits, this was down on the two previous Tailteann art exhibitions.²⁹⁴ Dermot O'Brien was Chairman of the 19 person exhibition committee, which was made up of reputable representatives of all exhibition classes, and of both smaller selection committees; Group A for drawing and painting, sculpture and architecture and Group B for arts and crafts and art industries.²⁹⁵ An anonymous foreword to the catalogue, probably by O'Brien, states that an Art Section 'is essential' to the Games. It adds that the 'trophies, whether bronze statuettes, or gold, silver or bronze medals, are the work of Irish artists; the posters, programmes and show-cards have been designed by Irish artists' and that the exhibition itself features examples of 'all forms of the

²⁹¹ "The Tailteann Pageant Aka The Coming Of Fionn 1928" issued 3rd Sep. 1928, available at <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/the-tailteann-pageant-aka-the-coming-of-fionn> accessed 21/01/2018.

²⁹² Anon. "President Cosgrave Meets Artists", *Sunday Independent*, 1st Apr. 1928. 1.

²⁹³ Ibid, and Anon. "An Irish College of Arts", *Irish Independent*, 2nd Ap. 1928. 5.

²⁹⁴ *Aonach Tailteann Exhibition of Irish Art 1928 Catalogue*, (Dublin: Hely's, 1928).

²⁹⁵ Group A committee: O'Brien, Harry Clarke, Paul Henry, Lucius O'Callaghan and Estella Solomons - all RHA. Hon. Sec was E R Richards-Orpen.
Group B committee: O'Brien, George Atkinson, Evelyn Gleeson, Oswald Reeves and Sara Reynolds.
Secretary was Olive M. Olden.

work of Irish artist and craftsman’ for the house, individuals and the church.²⁹⁶ In effect the entire look and feel of the spectacle itself was embellished and branded by Irish artists.

Goods in the Art Exhibition, including paintings, sculpture, clothing, ornaments, books and musical instruments were produced for the customer following the ancient Aonachs, when the ‘craftsmen took advantage of the occasion to proffer their wares for sale’.²⁹⁷ Petitioning Church patronage was in keeping with O’Brien and the RHA efforts to encourage the clergy to preference the purchase of Irish art and craft work over foreign off-the-shelf industrially produced work.²⁹⁸

The material design of the Tailteanns was consistent across all incarnations. Oliver Sheppard medals, Albert Power’s trophy of Queen Taité, graphic work by Victor Browne (1900-53), Norah McGuinness (1901-1988), Austin Molloy (1886-1961) and others, combined with the historical dress in the pageant gave the Tailteann a cohesive revivalist look, an almost corporate identity for Ireland.²⁹⁹ The Games committee stipulated that ‘only Irish manufactured paper’ should be used for printing programmes.³⁰⁰ The design of the art catalogue, standard across all Aonachs, is uncredited, and featured an image of Sheppard’s Tailteann medal surrounded by text. This branding was used abroad by the State on the catalogue produced for the 1933 exhibition of Irish Art in Chicago.³⁰¹ Both were identical in design and format (figure 108).

²⁹⁶ Dermot O’Brien, Foreword in *Aonach Tailteann Exhibition of Irish Art 1928 Catalogue*, (Dublin: Hely’s, 1928). 5.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ As discussed earlier O’Brien used the 1929 DCW art exhibition to promote art for Church patronage and the first RHA Banquet in 1928 similarly extolled the clergy to support artists.

²⁹⁹ For example, Victor Browne image of a spear throwing Celtic warrior appeared at each Games, including the 1922 Prospectus and the 1932 Daily Programmes. Norah McGuinness illustration in the 1924 souvenir program. Austin Molloy illustrations in Maura Molloy, illustrated by A.O. Maolaoigh (Austin Molloy), *One Tailteann week a chronicle of the games of ancient days*. (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1928). Revivalist dress and pageant are visible in press reports and Pathé films already cited. Note also Oliver Sheppard’s medal design.

³⁰⁰ Anon. “Finance Committee Report”, *Irish Independent*, 29th Feb. 1928. 9.

³⁰¹ This exhibition is discussed in chapter five.

The Governor-General, James McNeill, opened the art exhibition and presented the principle prizes.³⁰² Although it had fewer works than 1924 it was a good representation of Irish art and ‘one of the most extensive staged in Dublin for many years [since the 1924 Tailteann exhibition]’.³⁰³ Trophies and gold medals were awarded to Margaret Clarke in painting, James Hicks in the Arts and Crafts furniture class and to Albert Power in sculpture for a marble head of Rev. Dr. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne (figure 109). Both Clarke and Power’s pieces were religious.³⁰⁴ Most commentators also noted canvases by John Lavery, John (Sean) Keating, Leo Whelan, Letitia M. Hamilton, Charles Lamb, Paul Henry, Dermot O’Brien and others, not all of which were new works or entered for competition. Lavery exhibited a portrait of an itinerant musician known as *Phil the Fluter* and a landscape, *Bringing home the turf*, both painted during a 1924 summer driving tour in Ireland (figure 110).³⁰⁵ The latter painting captures an unmistakable Kerry landscape and a figure in a donkey cart carrying his load home in fading evening light.

Keating complained about the judging of the 1928 art competition. In 1924 with John Lavery as judge, Keating won the Tailteann Trophy, as well as the portraiture, genre and prints and drawing classes.³⁰⁶ In 1928 Keating exhibited a number of works and won two runner-up (bronze) medals.³⁰⁷ His painting *Men of the South*, was second to Margaret Clarke’s *Mary Magdalene* painted in the style of ‘El Greco’, in the genre class, and in portraiture his depiction of *Sean Moylan* was second to Leo Whelan’s portrait, *Earl of*

³⁰² Anon. “Tailteann Exhibition”, *Evening Herald*, 6th Aug. 1928. 1. Trophies were presented by the Governor General to Albert Power for sculpture, James Hicks for furniture and Margaret Clarke painting. Other medals were distributed by O’Brien. See appendix 8 for a full list of the 1928 Tailteann art exhibition winners.

³⁰³ Anon. “Arts and Crafts, Aonach Tailteann Exhibition”, *Irish Independent*, 6th Aug. 1928. 9

³⁰⁴ Margaret Clarke won for *Mary Magdalene* (she also exhibited *Strindbergian*). Power for a marble sculpture of the *Most. Rev. Dr. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne*.

³⁰⁵ This painting is also known as *Bringing Home the Turf: The Kingdom of Kerry*. Both works were included in the Genre class.

³⁰⁶ John Lavery was judge for all four painting and drawing classes in 1924. See appendices 6, 7, 8, 9 for award winners in all Tailteann exhibitions.

³⁰⁷ In all Keating exhibited 21 works all for competition, including four portraits, three landscapes, four genre scenes, four works on paper in prints and drawings, four illustrations for Synge’s *Playboy of the Western World*, a poster design for the Shannon Scheme and another.

Longford.³⁰⁸ He ‘refused’ to accept his medals because he declared ‘the persons who acted as judges... were not competent either to make or withhold awards for painting’.³⁰⁹ Lavery was unavailable to adjudicate in 1928 and members of the art sub-committee selected the prize-winners - these were Dermot O’Brien (Chairman), Harry Clarke, Paul Henry, Lucius O’Callaghan, Estella Solomons and E. R. Richards-Orpen (Hon. Sec). Keating complained bitterly about the judging of the art exhibition in his letter to the *Irish Times*.³¹⁰ As already noted there were no divisive political works exhibited in the 1924 Tailteann art exhibitions. In 1928, Keating alone exhibited works that recalled the political troubles associated with the revolutionary period.³¹¹ He recalled a past, which with both sides of the treaty divide now represented in the Dáil and with reconciliation a Tailteann and national objective, was out of step with the new political zeitgeist.³¹² In addition a new generation of artists with a more modernist attitude were also exhibiting.

Maurice McGonigal won a silver in painting and bronze in prints and drawings, where George Atkinson was awarded silver for his three etchings of the Shannon Scheme (figure 111, 112 and 113). The Shannon etchings celebrated progressive industrial development and pointed to a modern future. These works and those on show by an emerging generation of Irish women modernists who studied in avant-garde European studios, including Mainie Jellett, Nano Reid (1900-1981), Norah McGuinness and Stella Steyn (1907-1987) diverged from the exhibition’s main themes.³¹³ Letitia Hamilton won silver for her landscape,

³⁰⁸ “A fine display, Aonach Tailteann’s Art Exhibition, Winning competitors” in *Sunday Independent*, 5th Aug. 1928. 7. *Men of the South* shows a group of IRA men and is regarded as an important work in the Crawford Art Gallery, Cork. Sean Moylan was commander of the 2nd North Cork Brigade of the IRA and subsequently a TD and Minister.

³⁰⁹ Sean Keating, Letter to the Editor, “The Tailteann Art Exhibition”, *Irish Times*, 11th Aug. 1928. 9.

³¹⁰ Sean Keating, Letter to the Editor, “The Tailteann Art Exhibition”, *Irish Times*, 11th Aug. 1928. 9.

³¹¹ Keating previously exhibited *Men of the South* in the 1922 Tailteann when he won the class with another political painting *Men of the West*.

³¹² As noted in chapter two, Keating sought permission to create a record of the revolutionary period in art from his employer, the Department of Education, only to be told the State preferred to forget rather than remember these recent events.

³¹³ See S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991), and also Luke Gibbons, “Visual Modernisms” in Joe Cleary, *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Modernism*. (New York: CUP, 2014). 128-143.

Ireland, ‘a typical Co. Kerry [landscape] scene’.³¹⁴ Out of competition, Paul Henry exhibited a new painting of a village scene in Achill, *The Village by the Lake*, and another landscape typical of his oeuvre (figure 114). These works were again illustrative of a recognised Irish school in terms of style and subject matter, and as evident in the 1922 and 1924 exhibition, landscape and religious themes were prominent. These works continued to underline for the exhibition audience the sources of Irish identity – the West of Ireland, rural life, Catholicism and patriotic fervour. Jack Yeats again was notable by his absence. In the Arts and Crafts section, ecclesiastical stained glass was to the fore with works by William McBride, Hubert McGoldrick, George S. Walsh, Katherine O’Brien, Wilhelmina Geddes and Ethel Rhind, and although Harry Clarke was absent some members of his studio showed work.³¹⁵ Reflecting developments achieved over the previous decades within Irish Arts and Crafts, enamels, weaving and lace were strongly represented, with Dun Emer and Cuala studio members winning a number of classes.³¹⁶

Although a smaller spectacle than presented four years previously, the 1928 Aonach was a success and this emboldened the National Athletics and Cycling Association of Ireland (NACA) to make a bid to stage the 1936 Olympics.³¹⁷ Such an ambition would seem fanciful today but the scale and success of the Aonach Tailteanns legitimised it. Their efforts made it to the international newspapers. *The New York Times* reported that ‘a small number of influential men are at present investigating the possibilities of holding’ the 1936 Olympics in Dublin.³¹⁸ Ireland was asserting its place among the nations of the world.

Jellett exhibited three works, two in the genre class and one drawing, Reid showed a single genre work, McGuinness one drawing and Steyn a drawing and two etchings.

³¹⁴ “A fine display, Aonach Tailteann’s Art Exhibition” in *Sunday Independent*, 5th Aug. 1928. 7.

³¹⁵ Geddes exhibited her St. Brendan panel made in An Tur Gloine that she previously exhibited at the British Empire Exhibition in 1924 and discussed in chapter three.

³¹⁶ See appendices 6, 7, 8, 9 for winners of all Aonach Tailteann art classes in 1922, 24, 28, 32.

³¹⁷ Anon. “Ireland’s Chance to make a hit in athletics. Dublin and the Olympics”, *Irish Independent*, 13th Sep. 1928. 9.

³¹⁸ Anon. “Politics Divide Irish on Tailteann Games; Free State Is Seeking 1936 Olympic Contest”, in *New York Times*, 26th Aug. 1928. 29.

4.5 Read all about it; visuals in Civic Publications.

4.5.1 Civic Publications.

For the purpose of this research, civic publications are defined as books/ large pamphlets/ souvenir brochures, and other ephemera that celebrated and recorded events and places such as the *Dublin Civic Week Handbooks*, the *Aonach Tailteann Programmes* and *souvenir booklets*. Also included are government publications *A Book of Dublin* (1929) paying homage to the metropolitan national capital, and *Saorstat Eireann, Irish Free State Official Handbook* 1932 celebrating the progress made by the IFS in the first ten years of independence.³¹⁹ To achieve mass appeal and distribution, they were usually attractively illustrated, contained didactic State propaganda, were inexpensive to buy but well produced, had limited commercial opportunity and were often the sole surviving material culture object that recorded the event it celebrated.³²⁰ The target audience evolved, from the first *DCW Handbook* in 1927 to the 1932 *Saorstat Eireann* publication. As it will be shown, the original market was national but the appeal was international and later editions catered for that demand. Some of the textual content was academic and demanding but the illustrations had broad appeal. In this thesis, the *Aonach Tailteann* and Eucharistic Congress publications are primarily discussed in conjunction with their associated spectacles, *Tailteann* publications were issued primarily as practical timetables/ guides/ programmes and had limited artists input.³²¹

As already discussed, from the material promoting the cancelled 1922 *Tailteann*, through the 1924 and 1928 games to the event's final incarnation in 1932, each displayed a cohesive identity, one that resulted in a recognisable *Tailteann* brand (figures 115 and

³¹⁹ Bulmer Hobson. *A Book of Dublin*. (Dublin: Dublin Corporation, 1929).

³²⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Official Handbook of the Irish Free State: proposed publication. Dec 1924-Apr 1932. Estimates and Dáil debates included in this file make it clear that the publication of *Saorstat Eireann* would be a cost to the State and any sales and advertisements would only be a contribution to overheads.

³²¹ All Eucharistic Congress publications, except for, Adolf Mahr, *Christian Art in Ancient Ireland, Selected Objects Illustrated and Described*. Vol. 1. (Dublin: Stationery office of Saorstát Éireann, 1932), discussed in the next chapter were published by the Eucharistic Congress and not on behalf of the government.

116). Programs, medals and pageant dress all maintained identical or similar motifs. The cohesive identity message presented was that the new IFS was a nation with a pre-colonial ancient Celtic heritage, which had progressed to become a modern and capable independent society. As a now self-determining nation it could stage a celebration on an international scale to showcase its accumulated culture. Aonach Tailteann publications were multifarious. They included pamphlets for promotional literature and daily activity programs, catalogues for the art exhibition and souvenir programs. These souvenir programs documented Irish sport, culture and art, and outlined the historical legacy of the event, validating the Aonach as a pre-colonial Irish festival. In an effort to unite the population they included messages from across political, geographic and religious divides.³²²

Various Tailteann publications give insights into the IFSG's views on the development and progress of the country and on Irish life and culture including the visual arts. There was also desire to project modernity, one that reflected the up-to-datedness required to produce a modern Tailteann spectacle and the progress made by the IFS since independence. The modern was tempered by the desire to reflect a history of an ancient nation - the IFS was an ancient nation and a progressive new State. Consequently there was a choice when it came to producing state publications and this dichotomy, between a publication that had the look and feel of the ancient nation or the modern State, is evidenced in what was published.

All were expensively produced, the Tailteann publications from 1924 on – unlike contemporary and subsequent state publications – signalled modernity in primarily using

³²² For example the souvenir program in 1924 included 'messages' from W. T. Cosgrave, Dr. Douglas Hyde (Gaelic League), T. F. Kiely (an Irish world champion athlete) and artist John Lavery and in 1928 messages included those from W. T. Cosgrave, Eamon de Valera, President of UCD (Dr. Coffey), Provost of TCD (E. J. Gwynn), W. McMullan (President Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress) with 'Good Wishes from Belfast', Eoin O'Duibhne on behalf of the 'Gaelic Movement in Scotland'...

photographs.³²³ Artist illustrations were limited to the Dublin-based commercial artist Victor Browne's spear thrower in Celtic Revivalist clothes, other cover illustrations and one Norah McGuinness insert drawing of an imagined ancient Aonach Tailteann (figure 117).³²⁴ Thirty two county sporting and cultural participation reflected political ideological ambition and any maps of the island omitted the border. The authors employed factually descriptive photographs of the eminent people who contributed articles, the games organisers, sporting activity and museum artefacts.³²⁵ The aesthetic appeal of the images is not of major concern to the authors. Photographs also advertised ancient sites and scenic locations, designed to attract tourists from home and abroad – particular the diaspora to spend time and money in the new IFS. The quality of the 1924, 1928 and 1932 *Tailteann Souvenir Programmes* is further enhanced by gilded page edges.³²⁶

The key civic publications considered here were four elegant, luxurious productions that officially commissioned a large number of artists as designers and illustrators. In all books, the aesthetic appeal of the images was of concern and the illustrations were harnessed to support an official positive view of the fledging State. These are the *Dublin Civic Week Official Handbook* of 1927 and 1929, *A Book of Dublin*, 1929 and the acme of IFS civic publication, *Saorstat Eireann, Irish Free State Official Handbook*, 1932. All were printed on high quality Irish paper with a handmade look and feel, through their substance, colouring and texture. The driving force and editor of all but one of these publications was

³²³ Using photographs in publications was regarded as new. It was still more than a decade before the 'Golden Age of photojournalism' at this time, see, Terence P. Moran, *Introduction to the History of Communication: Evolutions & Revolutions*. (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2010). 181.

³²⁴ Norah McGuinness, *The Fáilte*, 1924, illustration to Anon. *Aonach Tailteann 1924 Souvenir Programme*. (Dublin: Helys, 1924). Commissioning 23 year old McGuinness to complete this drawing was also a statement. She was regarded as a modern. In 1923 she won the RDS medal, in 1924 she exhibited at the RHA for the first time and had illustrations published in the *Dublin Magazine*. Harry Clarke taught her at the DMSA and his 'drawing style appealed to her', see Catherine Marshall, "McGuinness, Norah" in *AAI Volume V: Twentieth Century*. 277 and Snoddy, *Dictionary*. 294.

³²⁵ For example, photographs across the publications included JJ Walsh and the Tailteann General Council, politicians W. T. Cosgrave and Eamon De Valera, Professor of Irish at UCD Agnes O'Farrelly, water sports on the river Lee in County Cork, Queen Tailté burial mound in County Meath and others.

³²⁶ For a note on gilding page edges see, Beth Carswell "Riddled with Gilt", accessed on 26th May, 2020 at <https://www.abebooks.com/books/rarebooks/gold-gilded-decoration/riddled-gilt.shtml>

Bulmer Hobson, - the exception being Edward Millington Stephens who edited the 1929 *DCW Handbook*.³²⁷ Hobson would probably have had responsibility for the 1929 handbook had it not clashed with his editing and producing *A Book of Dublin*. Both Hobson and Stephens were politically engaged cultural nationalists.³²⁸ The selection of artists and literary contributors to these civic publications seems to have been made through acquaintance and shared cultural networks. Some artists contributed to a number of the publications and personally knew Hobson and/ or Stephens. Only two illustrators of the *Saorstát Éireann* handbook had not contributed to at least one of the other books, namely Mary Duncan (1885-1964) and Sean Keating.³²⁹ Artist Maurice MacGonigal, who provided 31 full page illustrations across three publications, joined Na Fianna Éireann, the nationalist youth organisation founded in 1909 by Constance Markievicz and Bulmer Hobson and was a 'lifelong friend' of Hobson.³³⁰ MacGonigal in turn was a friend of Kernoff who provided illustrations to all four books, as did Hilda Roberts, a fellow Quaker friend of Hobson.³³¹ This interconnectedness was sometimes through cultural institutions.

³²⁷ Bulmer Hobson (1883-1969) was born into a Belfast Quaker family and a leader of the Irish nationalist movement leading up to the 1916 Easter Rising and was involved in the Gaelic League, GAA, IRB, Sinn Féin, Na Fianna Éireann and Irish Volunteers. He opposed the Rising, after which he was excluded from mainstream Irish nationalist politics. Thereafter he became involved in publishing and a career Civil Servant. For a political accounts of his life see Marnie Hay, *Bulmer Hobson and the Nationalist Movement in Twentieth- Century Ireland*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009). As a political biography there is limited consideration given to his civic publication work and the *DCW handbook* is not mentioned. Hobson wrote a biography before he died which doesn't mention any of these publications, Bulmer Hobson, *Ireland Yesterday and Tomorrow*, (Tralee: Anvil Books, 1968).

Edward Millington Stephens (1888-1955), a barrister, secretary to the committee that drafted the 1922 Irish Free State Constitution and was part of the Irish political delegation to the Boundary Commission (he was the North-Eastern Boundary Bureau's secretary). Later he worked in the Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeal. He founded the short-lived cultural organisation, The Society of Irish Tradition 1917-1919 and was a nephew and biographer of playwright, JM Synge.

³²⁸ Cultural nationalism evolved from Romanticism and its concerns with emotions and nature. It found voice in art, literature, language and culture, creating cultural communities. Encouraging the conservation, preservation and advancement of these cultures as a means of defining a unique cultural Nation, it differs from nationalism or political nationalism which has at its core, political self-government by the State, of the culturally distinct and independent nation. As chapter two discussed, in Ireland's pre and post-independence period the political engaged were usually also cultural nationalists. For a discussion on cultural nationalism, see John Hutchinson, *The dynamics of cultural nationalism: the Gaelic revival and the creation of the Irish nation state*, (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

³²⁹ John (Sean) Keating and Mary Duncan. See Appendices 11-14 for artists' illustrations to these publications. Appendix 15 lists artists to the four civic publications.

³³⁰ Fine art catalogue note by Ciarán MacGonigal in Adam's, *Important Irish Art Sale*, 6th Dec, 2010. Lot 2.

³³¹ Snoddy. 234. Many of these artists were also at the DMSA at the same time.

Hobson and his wife supported the Gate Theatre start-up in 1928. The artist Lilian Davison who provided an illustration for *A Book of Dublin*, was part of the theatre's circle writing plays for the Gate under the pseudonym of Ulick Burke.³³² Hobson had previously worked in publishing with Colm Ó'Lochlainn (1892-1972) and his Candles Press enterprise, and Ó'Lochlainn produced and printed the 1927 *Handbook* and contributed a chapter entitled "Some Dublin Ballads" to the 1929 incarnation.³³³ E. M. Stephens' brother Frank, and his cousin, John Lighton Synge also contributed chapters to the 1929 *Handbook*.³³⁴ This high level of interconnectedness also reflected the insular nature of that era's Dublin-based cultural nationalist scene. Its small scale meant that all these people knew each other independently. The three Dublin titles were commissioned by Dublin Corporation and the City Commissioners, and *Saorstát Éireann* was primarily the responsibility of the Department of Industry and Commerce. All four editions were official propaganda and didactically presented positive reports of the city and the nation's history, culture, economy and political stability. Written by well-known authorities in their field, textual accounts were re-enforced by the commissioned illustrations.³³⁵

4.5.2 DCW Handbooks.

Both *DCW handbooks* announce in Irish Arts and Crafts nationalistic rhetoric that the illustrative plates were made and printed in Dublin on paper made in County Dublin

³³² Hay, *Bulmer Hobson and the Nationalist Movement in Twentieth- Century Ireland*. 220.

Hobson helped MacLiammóir research episodes for his 1929 DCW pageant, *The ford of the hurdles* and produced another luxurious illustrated book on the theatre in 1934 as a fundraiser.

³³³ Colm Ó Lochlainn was a ballad collector, Gaelic scholar, printer, publisher, binder and bibliophile, from Dublin. He was involved with the ACSI and was frequently on organising committees for A&C exhibitions. He originally started publishing at the Candle Press in 39 Harcourt Street (home of the Craftworkers Co-operative) in 1916 but established his own press the Sign of the Three Candles Press, in 1926 and moved to Fleet Street, Dublin. He was also an award winning bookbinder and bound editions of the 1927 handbook in blue morocco for members of the Civic Week committee.

³³⁴ Synge wrote on science. He also wrote a chapter for the 1927 *DCW handbook* on William Rowan Hamilton. Frank Stephens, teacher and photographer, contributed a chapter on the 'Foundations of Dublin Commerce'.

³³⁵ For example, in *Saorstát Éireann*, Robert Lloyd Praeger, D.Sc. President of RIA, writes on Irish Fauna and Flora, Eoin MacNeill, D. Litt. Professor of Early Irish History, on Irish history, EM Stephens LL.B. on both the judiciary and the constitution, Thomas Bodkin D.Litt. Director of NGI on modern Irish art, RM Butler, M.Arch., ARHA, FRIBA, Professor of Architecture, on architecture and George O'Brien, D. Litt, Professor of Economics on industries. Bodkin and Butler wrote similar articles for the 1927 *DCW handbook*.

‘where every printer is an artist and every artist a craftsman’.³³⁶ These were 19x28cm sized soft covered books elegantly produced in 1927 by the Sign of the Three Candles press, the burgeoning Dublin printing company run by Colm Ó’Lochlainn, and the offset plates for the illustrations were made by the Irish Photo Engraving Company.³³⁷ The 1929 *Handbook* was designed by the Dublin Book Studio and printed and produced by Alex Thom printers. All the commissioned artists in 1929 were ‘associated with the Dublin Book Studio’.³³⁸ Both *Handbooks* featured articles on Dublin industry, housing, culture and history. Commissioned artwork reflected the literary content and showcased the city.

1927.

Stella Steyn’s (1907-87) cover design for the 1927 edition features a modernist image of a quintessential Dublin flower seller, the clouds borrowed from Japanese prints (figure 118).³³⁹ Sean O’Sullivan, Flora Mitchell (1890-1973), Hilda Roberts and Harry Kernoff (1900-74) supplied some modern up-to-date scenes of Dublin city life as full page illustrations; streets with trams and public lighting, social, business and trade life is recorded at the Custom House, Grafton Street, Mountjoy Square, College Green ‘the centre of banking and commercial life’, and Dublin’s historic landmarks such as TCD, the Casino in Marino, O’Connell Street are represented. Efforts to celebrate old Dublin and record its lost and disappearing aspects is exemplified in scenes of city markets. *Rosemary Alley* by William McBride, is presented as rare survival of the alley laneways (figure 119), the same scene is celebrated in an Estella Solomons image in *A Book of Dublin* which is discussed

³³⁶ Bulmer Hobson, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1927 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1927). 8 and inside back cover.

E.M. Stephens, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1929 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1929). 7.

³³⁷ Irish Photo Engraving Company operated from Middle Abbey Street, Dublin and had produced plates for the *Ireland’s Memorial Records*, 1914-1918 (1922).

³³⁸ The 1929 handbook seems to be the only publication by the Dublin Book Studio and it is likely that it was established for that particular purpose. Appendix 12 lists the illustrators of the 1929 *Handbook*.

E.M. Stephens, ed., *Dublin Civic Week 1929 Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Civic Week Council, 1929). 8.

³³⁹ Appendix 11 lists the illustrators of the 1927 *Handbook*.

later.³⁴⁰ In the 1927 *Handbook*, Solomons illustrated *Marsh's Library* and the *Leinster Market*. Other artworks commissioned for the 1927 DCW, include Katherine MacCormack's (1892-1975) poster (figure 120) and Beatrice Glenavy's cover illustration for the Historical Costume Ball booklet which closed the week's celebrations (figure 121).

1929.

The 1929 *Handbook's* internal decoration differed substantially from its predecessor in not using any full page illustrations and instead it had a decorative border on each page.

Drawing inspiration from Harry Clarke's exquisite *Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918* (1922) (figure 122), by using elaborate ornamental decorative borders surrounding each page, but also in the selection of antique font type and high production values despite its industrial productive methods.³⁴¹ The British Arts and Crafts Kelmscott Press (1890-96) had also used ornamental borders in its productions, but here, Clarke was the paradigm influencing the Irish illustrators.³⁴² With a strong graphic quality, these designs were produced by artists, a number of whom still in their twenties would become well-known names in Irish art. Among these were Harry Kernoff (1900-74), Maurice MacGonigal (1900-1979), Hilda Roberts (1901-82), Kathleen Quigly (1888-1981), Art O'Murnaghan (1872-1954), and less well-known William MacBride (1880-1962) and Liam Megahey (1882-1934). Paul Henry designed one of the 1929 posters (figure 123) and MacGonigal illustrated the 1929 cover (figure 124). Other 1929 posters were designed by Micheál

³⁴⁰ *DCW Handbook*, 1927. 40, 41.

³⁴¹ Marguerite Helmers, *Harry Clarke's War: Illustrations for Ireland's Memorial Records, 1914-1918*, (Dublin: Merrion Press, 2015).

³⁴² See Appendix 12 for details of the 1929 artist-illustrators involved with the 1929 *Handbook*. Clarke's influence was persuasive among this group. During his time teaching at the DMSA, Clarke as professor of illustration at the DMSA from 1917 to 1923 taught many of the artist illustrators including Maurice MacGonigal, Harry Kernoff and Hilda Roberts. He also taught author\ book designer\ publisher, Colm Ó'Lochlainn. MacGonigal was his first cousin and spoke of Clarke's encouragement while working in the Clarke stained glass studios. MacGonigal was a good friend of Kernoff. Both Kathleen Quigley and William McBride had also worked with Clarke in his studios.

MacLiammoir (as Michael Willmore), depicting an ancient Irish warrior by a green sea, and Maurice McGonigal devised an image of ‘gun carriage in full flight’.³⁴³

The *Handbooks* opening capital letters in red type are developed into richly adorned initials, mimicking historical manuscript productions, including early Irish manuscripts, such as the Book of Durrow and the Book of Kells, and 15th century renaissance productions. The border decorations incorporate images of Dublin appropriate to the chapter contents, including the city’s public statues of Burke, O’Connell, Grattan and Nelson, the river masks from the Custom House and internal ornamentation from the Rotunda. There are references to science, trade, Ireland as an island nation, literature and music.

While the DCW itself had mass appeal and engaged citizens through its pageants, tattoos, various parades and urban decorations, the handbooks spoke to the educated cultural elite, the socially deprived working classes were not the intended readership. In an essay, “Town Planning in Dublin” in the 1929 *Handbook*, Manning Robertson, MRAI, ARIBA, referred briefly to the urgent housing problem, at the same time almost dismissing it, ‘[t]he Dublin slum problem mainly centres in well-built and originally aristocratic houses which have degenerated into over-crowded tenement houses... Dublin is not worse off than the average city of its size’.³⁴⁴ This article is decorated with borders by Kernoff, featuring Dublin landmarks, Wellington Monument in the Phoenix Park, Halfpenny Bridge, Rotunda and Leinster House. Other articles in this handbook including an account of Nicholas Querytott an imaginary 15th century Dubliner, by Edmund Curtis, another on the celebrated mathematician William Rowan Hamilton (1805-1865) by J. L. Synge, or even the treatise on the foundations of Dublin’s commerce, were not designed to appeal to the general

³⁴³ Anon. “The Posters”, *Cork Examiner*, 2nd Aug. 1929. 8.

Sean Keating produced a poster for the Irish Army which promoted the 1929 Military Tattoo.

³⁴⁴ *DCW Handbook*, 1929. 23-28

Dubliners.³⁴⁵ This image of an intellectual thriving city was one the State wished to propagate and copies of the handbooks were requested by and distributed to embassies and Irish Tourist Offices around Europe.³⁴⁶

4.5.3 A Book of Dublin.

A Book of Dublin was contemporarily produced with the 1929 DCW publication but had more in common aesthetically with the 1927 *Handbook*, employing full page illustrations rather than decorative borders. Like the *DCW Handbooks*, *A Book of Dublin* was intellectual and elitist. Its remit is more focused on attracting international trade, with articles on manufacturing and maps of Dublin port and an appendix “Factory Sites at the Port of Dublin”. It promoted tourism with essays, “Dublin as a holiday centre”, “Motor runs from Dublin” and similar.³⁴⁷ The political capital to be gained internationally from civic publications was more fully realised in *A Book of Dublin* which lists the Irish diplomatic and trade representatives abroad and twenty-five foreign representatives in Dublin. As noted, the *DCW Handbooks* were requested by Irish missions abroad and such requests had alerted the government authorities of the soft power value in making such didactic publications available overseas. The success of *A Book of Dublin* meant it was re-issued in 1930. When Hobson wrote to the Department of External Affairs for an updated list of representatives for the re-print, the department, anxious to help, supplied the information quickly.³⁴⁸ In a typical soft power and cultural diplomatic approach the overall

³⁴⁵ Both Curtis and Synge were authors and academics at Trinity College Dublin.

³⁴⁶ NAI DFA/GR/967. Letter from Dept. of External Affairs to the London High Commission Office dated 12th Sept. 1927. It shows copies were sent to London, Paris, Geneva, Brussels and elsewhere.

³⁴⁷ Although the authors of the individual chapters are not identified, in the Preface, Hobson thanks those who assisted in the books production and names; ‘Miss Olive Olden, B.A., Mrs George Roberts, [wife of George Roberts’ founder of Maunsel and Co. publishers], Miss Nora Walker, B.A.’ [Cumann na mBan member, granddaughter of Matt Harris, MP for East Galway, personal friend of Hobson, married Austin Clarke], Miss Roisin Walsh, B.A., County Librarian, [contributed a chapter on ‘Books about Dublin’ to the 1929 *DCW Handbook*], and Messrs. Paul Henry, R.H.A., Joseph Johnston, F.T.C.D. [government economic advisor and academic], Sean Mac Giobuin, [One time Sinn Féin activist, TD and later Chairman of Seanad Eireann], Maurice McGonigal, Gerald Sherlock, Town Clerk of Dublin, E. M. Stephens, B.L., and Frank Stephens, B.A.’. Undoubtedly some of these authored individual chapters. He also acknowledges the ‘enlightened policy’ of the City Commissioners in supporting publication of the book.

³⁴⁸ NAI. DFA/1/GR/612/28. Book of Dublin by Bulmer Hobson. Letter from Hobson to Cremins, Dept. of External Affairs, 25th Feb. 1930 and reply with enclosures 4th Mar. 1930. The existence of a State file shows

aim of the publication engenders an attachment to Dublin, simultaneously friendly, stable, ancient and modern. Chapters on Dublin's antiquities, on municipal administration and services, the seat of government, the port and transport facilities and numerous others on museums and galleries are optimistic, appealing and enticing.³⁴⁹ Ireland's art is further discussed in a chapter on "Dublin Arts and Crafts" produced 'in a direct continuance and evolution from the artists of the early Irish Church who produced the wonderful Cross of Cong...' ³⁵⁰ This chapter lists studios and artists and extols various Irish skills including stained glass, embroidery, carpet making, metal work, enamelling and printing – although not stated, exemplified by the book itself. The didactic propaganda of the text is continued in the images, harnessed for a political imperative. With decorated capitals and a faux wood font on the cover and throughout, its appearance again imitates a luxurious handmade arts and crafts production. In the same vein, the editor's preface notes that 'Dublin writers and artists have filled its pages. The paper was made in a Dublin mill, the printing, the plates, are the work of Dublin hands'.³⁵¹ The cover, features a dark but inviting night time image by MacGonigal of Dublin Quays, the light from buildings reflected on the river Liffey - symbolising trade and a gateway to abroad (figure 125). Inside another MacGonigal image of Grafton Street presents a modern cosmopolitan city with fine buildings, foliage and thronged orderly pavements. Cars and trams all contribute to present an inviting, bustling and prosperous urban environment (figure 126). The modern city was also exemplified in Hilda Roberts' *O'Connell Street, From a Drawing*; it shows a view from the bridge of the main thoroughfare, lined with commercial buildings, the foreground has a hatching of tram

official involvement. Hobson's correspondence was from his private address on personalised notepaper indicating that this project was in addition to his civil service duties in the Stamps Office.

³⁴⁹ Exemplified by authors commenting as in "The Seat of Government" on 'a new future opens before her [IFS] full of hope and promise' (pg. 26); in the NMI is 'housed a unique collection of Irish Antiquities' (pg. 61); a visit to the NGI 'cannot fail to impress even the most casual' (pg. 65); or the RIA's 'beautiful premises' (pg. 69) and so on. *A Book of Dublin*, 1929. There are chapters on Dublin libraries, The National Museum, The National Gallery, The Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, The Royal Irish Academy, and The Royal Dublin Society.

³⁵⁰ *A Book of Dublin*, 1929. 32-34. 34.

³⁵¹ Bulmer Hobson, "Editor's Preface" in *A Book of Dublin*, 1929. 6.

cables. It is a busy scene with people moving about on business and numerous motor cars, the GPO is prominent with its aerials broadcasting the newly formed 2RN national radio station, another sign of progress (figure 127). A letter writer to a newspaper, decrying the state of O’Connell Street in the 1990s, referred to ‘a wonderful drawing by Hilda Roberts which shows the grandeur of our No 1 thoroughfare after reconstruction in the 1920s... a perspective of international quality’.³⁵² Roberts’ drawing was aimed at an international audience – it told readers that the city’s principle thoroughfare had recovered from the wars earlier in the decade and had taken its place in a cosmopolitan and modern city.

Estella Solomons’ illustrations, *Rosemary Lane* and *Marsh’s Library*, presented an historic Dublin with a unique charm; while with images of State buildings, *Lenister House* and *Residence of the Governor-General* (now Áras an Uachtaráin, principle residence of the President of Ireland) artists portrayed a permanent and stable IFS.³⁵³ The full page illustrations were distributed evenly throughout the book and did not directly reference the text but supported the overall emerging themes of a thriving commercial capital with a flourishing intellectual and cultural life, made possible and sustained by a stable government, and thriving culture. A primary focus was to promote Irish industry, to attract foreign investment and to encourage tourism.

4.5.4 Saorstat Eireann, Irish Free State Official Handbook

The success of the *DCW Handbooks* and *A Book of Dublin*, which averaged just over a hundred pages each, prompted the Irish Government Minister for Industry and Commerce, Patrick McGilligan to commission *Saorstat Eireann, Irish Free State Official Handbook*.³⁵⁴ Governmental files indicate this project was initiated by Hobson, before being embraced whole-heartily by the government. His initial letter to McGilligan on the 7th July, 1929, was from his home address so presumably sent in a personal capacity, ‘following our

³⁵² Robert K. Gahan, “Main Street, Ireland” [Letter] in *Irish Times*. 25th Jun. 1997. 15.

³⁵³ See Appendix 13 for a full list of *A Book of Dublin* artists and illustrations.

³⁵⁴ The publication was also partly funded by its 150 pages of advertisements.

recent conversations I have gone carefully into the question of an Official Handbook for An Saorstat'.³⁵⁵ His letter is detailed and he enclosed an outline for 24 chapters in the book and a detailed budget (including amounts for writers and illustrators), all remarkably close to the final product. He detailed 50 full page illustrations (in the end there were 45) and 150 pages of advertisements. Chapters were later amended during the period it was discussed by the Executive Council.³⁵⁶ Hobson further suggested a small editorial committee led by Professor George O'Brien or Professor Tierney, both of UCD, 'as the right sort of people', anticipating a target audience that was academic and intellectual.³⁵⁷ The 'beautiful book' proposed by Hobson would be, 'designed as a whole with paper, typefaces, illustrations and decorations all in harmony' and 'with the exception of the printing inks to be used, it will be completely a product of An Saorstat'.³⁵⁸ The Executive Council appointed a committee chaired by Professor Michael Tierney, T.D., which included Hobson, to advise the Minister on contents and costs.³⁵⁹ The group met on three occasions and submitted its report, which was effectively, a revised version of Hobson's earlier submission.³⁶⁰ The book would include 'a design in colours on the paper boards' with 'one good map in colours' inserted and to off-set costs advertisement were included. A print run of 15,000 was planned, with 500 of these for complimentary distribution and

³⁵⁵ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Official Handbook of the Irish Free State: proposed publication. Dec 1924-Apr 1932. Letter from Bulmer Hobson to P. McGilligan, Esq, TD, Minister for Industry and Commerce, dated 7th Jul. 1929. Other papers on this file, eight pages of a revised 'Rough plan for proposed Irish handbook' dated December 1924, show that production of a handbook had been considered as early as 1924.

NAI. DFA/1/GR/612/28, small NAI file on *A Book of Dublin*, shows that this was also Hobson's personal initiative.

³⁵⁶ Additional chapters included topics such as modern art, education and learning, folklore and religion.

³⁵⁷ Professor O'Brien (1892-1973) was an economics professor in University College Dublin from 1921 to 1961 and also a senator. Michael Tierney, T.D. (Cumann na nGaedheal), Professor of Greek at University College Dublin (UCD) from 1923 to 1947 and President of UCD between 1947 and 1964.

³⁵⁸ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Letter from Hobson to Minister for Industry and Commerce, dated 7th Jul. 1929.

³⁵⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Extract for Cabinet Minutes, Cab. 4/124, 14.1.30 item No. 1.

The committee comprised of Professor Michael Tierney, T.D., Chairman, Mr Commissioner Kevin O'Sheil, Land Commission, Mr William F. Butler, M.A., Department of Education, Mr Frank Cremins, Department of External Affairs, Mr Bulmer Hobson, Stamps Office.

In Hobson's correspondence with Cremins on information for *A Book of Dublin*, he looks forward to meeting about the 'Official Handbook' – NAI. DFA/1/GR/612/28 (see above).

³⁶⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Report of Committee on proposed Official Handbook. Addressed to Minister for Industry and Commerce and signed by Michael Tierney.

the remainder for sale at 3/6d, ‘a low price... to secure the widest circulation’.³⁶¹ The committee was in ‘complete agreement’ that ‘artists’ drawings, offered a higher cultural product, and should be used instead of photographs for illustrating the book. Photography projected the commercial and was at odds with the ‘hand crafted’ look and feel required for the *Official Handbook*. Three hundred and fifty pounds, was budgeted for ‘between eighty and ninety drawings as well as for a serious [sic] of illustrative capital letters...’ with the same amount for writers and £200 for the editor.³⁶² The Executive Council approved, knowing this would be a loss making publishing venture, confirmed Hobson as editor, and appointed Tierney, as editorial committee chairman, with others to be selected by the Minister.³⁶³

The book was ‘written under the general direction of a committee appointed by the Minister’ and consisted of three senior civil servants and two academics from UCD, including Tierney.³⁶⁴ McGilligan also held the External Affairs portfolio and two of the three Civil Servants on the committee served this brief. Printed by Hely’s Ltd., for The Talbot Press in 1932, it measured 25x16.5cm and contained 324 pages of content and 150 pages of advertisements. When discussing including advertisements the committee believed that their inclusion sullied the publication, ‘on the score of dignity and appearance it is desirable that advertisements should not be included in a book of this kind’.³⁶⁵ However, considering the ‘financial aspect’ the Committee recommended that adverts should be included. They minimised their engagement in selling advertisement space by

³⁶¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Report of Committee on proposed Official Handbook. The sale price ensured it would be a loss making venture.

³⁶² NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Report of Committee on proposed Official Handbook.

³⁶³ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Estimates and Dáil debate, 11 Dec. 1930, Vol. 36. Cols. 1253-1257 “Vote No. 56 – Industry and Commerce”.

³⁶⁴ In the Handbook, Hobson states that the committee was appointed by the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Patrick McGilligan TD (page 15). They were Francis T. Cremins, Kevin O’Shiel (both External Affairs) and TR Price (Industry and Commerce). William J. Williams, M.A., lecturer in Education at UCD was also a committee member and the chairman was Michael Tierney.

³⁶⁵ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Report of Committee on proposed Official Handbook.

off-loading the entire 150 pages to one agency.³⁶⁶ All other publications considered here also included adverts, however in 1927 when the City Commissioners commissioned editions of the 1927 *DCW Handbook* for some dignitaries and DCW Committee members, these were identical to the general trade editions except were leather bound and excluded advertisements.

With forty-five photo-engraved full-page plates, thirty-five were reproduced from commissioned Irish art works, nine were of illustrations after objects from the National Museum and one depicted a capital letter from the *Book of Kells*. In addition there were sixty-eight similarly photo-engraved in-text headpieces, two images for the introduction of each of the thirty-three chapters, with a Gaelic font capital letter in a decorative frame printed on yellow background starting each chapter.³⁶⁷ Despite the *Official Handbook* being initiated and completed under the Cumann na nGaedheal remit, the production straddled the political change in the administration in 1932.³⁶⁸ However the incoming premier, De Valera was enamoured with the production and frequently sought the volume for reference, requesting the Government Stationary Office to purchase a number of second-hand copies to be retained by his department.³⁶⁹ As late as August, 1946, ‘he had discussed with Mr. Bulmer Hobson the question of the preparation and publication of [an

³⁶⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Kenny’s Advertising Agency bought the 150 pages of advertisements for £1,500. Letter 5/2/30 from Kevin J. Kenny to Minister for Industry and Commerce.

³⁶⁷ Bulmer Hobson, ed, *Saorstát Éireann, Irish Free State Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1932). See Appendix 14 for a list of full page illustrators.

³⁶⁸ Fianna Fail won the general election on 16th Feb. 1932 and de Valera forms the first Fianna Fail led Government on the 9th March that year.

NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Hobson sent a copy ‘of the recently published Government Handbook’ [really saying it is now yours] to President De Valera on the 5th Apr. 1932 on request of the editorial committee.

³⁶⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 B. Letter from Stationary Office to P. Ó Cinnéide, Roinn an Taoisigh. 23rd Feb, 1946. The Stationary Office purchased two copies, reporting ‘This book is now very rare, and it is impossible to procure a copy otherwise than second-hand. The Talbot Press were the publishers. They disposed of their interests to Easons, and the latter “remaindered” their unsold stock to Greene’s Library. What became of it after that we never heard? It appears to have had a chequered history’.

updated version of the] *Handbook* similar to the *Saorstát Official Handbook* published in 1932'.³⁷⁰

The 1932 contributors were mainly academics, most politically unaligned but some such as Eoin MacNeill and J.J. (Ginger) O'Connell, were closely associated with the pro-treaty side.³⁷¹ It was not designed to be read by a general reader, it was a reference book mainly written by academics with facts about the IFS commercial, social, political and cultural pillars – each chapter ended with a bibliography providing further details on its topic. McGilligan described it himself as, more descriptive than a statistical publication, 'it will be better dressed up' ... 'in an attractive form', but still useful for students, neither was it 'a sort of handbook which tourists carry about'.³⁷² Correspondence between the Department for Industry and Commerce and the President's Office stated that the *Official Handbook* was 'intended primarily to stimulate a general interest in the Saorstat activities in a form likely to give a favourable impression to other countries and, possibly, to promote knowledge of and pride in the Saorstat at home'.³⁷³ It would produce a soft power dividend at home and abroad. The illustrations enhanced the text providing a visual didactic to the managed essays, as such a complete official package was presented to the reader.

In effect it was produced under the influence of two government departments, Industry and Commerce and External Affairs, and this is evident in its dual role of promoting and soft-selling Irish culture and attracting investment. It was not, as it self-claimed, solely to give the 'necessary historical background' to understand the 'modern Ireland', or 'give an

³⁷⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 B. Official Handbook of the Irish Free State: proposed publication. Feb 1946-Jun 1947, FILE. Note, S.5932 dated 3rd Sep. 1946. This file records the Taoiseach De Valera personal high regard for the Handbook. De Valera's initiative eventually resulted in the printing of *Ireland An Introduction* in 1950 and *Facts about Ireland* in the 1960s. See also NAI file, s5932c/2 in this series, also referenced as TAOIS/96/6/124 – Official Handbook (Facts about Ireland) (Introducing Ireland). Hobson declined involvement.

³⁷¹ See appendix 16 for full list of authors and chapters in *Saorstat Eireann*.

³⁷² NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Dáil Debates [extract], 11th Dec. 1930. Vol. 36. Cols. 1253-1257. Vote No. 56 – Industry and Commerce. Minister for Industry and Commerce (Mr. McGilligan) reply to Sean Lemass.

³⁷³ NAI. TSCH/3/S5932 A. Letter from Secretary, Department for Industry and Commerce to Secretary to Department of the President. 16th Oct. 1929.

account of the Irish Free State as it is to-day’ and the ‘progress during the first ten years’ of self-government.³⁷⁴ Three chapters directly related to Industry and Commerce, and sixteen of the thirty-two could be said to harness culture to the national, diplomatic and soft power cause. As with *A Book of Dublin*, it sought to consolidate the IFSG and its administration to a national audience and sell it abroad to investors and tourists. The intent of building international partnerships is evidence in the Ordnance Survey Map of Ireland placed in the volume’s rear pocket which lists ‘Principle Steamship Routes and Distances to and from Saorstát Ports’ from England, Europe, United States and Canada.

The interconnectedness of the contributors and their involvement with nationalist cultural politics has led it to be described as ‘the production of the “bourgeois-nationalist elite”’ and a negative contemporary review by the *Catholic Bulletin* described it as ‘party propaganda’.³⁷⁵ The description of it as propaganda is well deserved; encased in covers of neo-Celtic interlacing, the handbook mixes recent progress such as the Shannon Scheme with icons of an ancient Irish identity from the National Museum, validating recent political developments in the continuum of Irish history. The book’s ‘Déanta in Éirinn’ stamp infuses every contribution.³⁷⁶ Terence Brown commented that while it was ‘an attractive and interesting cultural product, it was also effectively a work of propaganda that obscured the multiple shortcomings and conflicts of the Free State’.³⁷⁷ Irish visual art was co-opted to re-enforce the official image of national identity, predominantly but not exclusively rural, traditional but progressive, frugal but not poor or parochial. With an agenda to put its best foot forward, to attract and sustain international markets and political

³⁷⁴ *Saorstát Éireann*, Bulmer Hobson, “Introduction”, 15, 16.

³⁷⁵ William M. Harrison. “European Postcoloniality: The Saorstát Éireann/Irish Free State Official Handbook, 1932,” in *Éire-Ireland*, Vol. 30, no. 1, Spring 1995. 35-42. 37. Molua, “The last pose of Bulmer”, in *Catholic Bulletin*, Apr. 1932. 274-279.

³⁷⁶ *Saorstát Éireann*. Rear of title page.

³⁷⁷ Terence Brown, “Culture in the Free State” in *Atlas of the Irish Revolution*. 799.

partnerships, it was implausible to expect it to be anything other than, national rather than ‘party propaganda’.

The locations featured in the full page illustrations breakdown as, fifteen rural West of Ireland scenes (five with thatched cottages), eight rural eastern county scenes, seven city and five town scenes (the Shannon scheme is included here). There are no Six County images. Full page images are invariably decorative, not related to the content and are distributed randomly throughout the volume. If one theme dominates the publication, it is the intention to attract the people to a multifaceted Ireland – one that spawned from a romantic rural setting, alongside historic urban settings. It is an image of a progressive nation aware and proud of its ancient culture.

The in-text illustrations relate directly to the subject reviewed. The chapter on industry has two Kernoff images of Great Southern Railways at Inchicore, and two of his Guinness Brewery images start the section on Trade and Commerce. Two MacGonigal images of Westland Row station and Dublin’s Loop line bridge begin the chapter on transport and communications. Education vignettes depict UCD and Dept. of Education by O’Sullivan. A chapter on “the ownership of land” starts with another MacGonigal illustration of Claddagh cottages in Galway and an ancient Aran Islands church. There are numerous other images of industry, libraries, archaeology, government buildings and rural, urban, religious and historic buildings, many of them dating from the period under British Rule. Here these buildings have been reclaimed to serve the IFS. Revelatory of the commissioned nature of the art work, MacGonigal who had delivered six urban scenes for *A Book of Dublin*, produced eight rural scenes for *Saorstat Eireann*.

While numerous commentators refer to the publication as propaganda, Academic William M. Harrison also considers it from a post-colonial stance in his *Éire-Ireland* essay on the

Handbook.³⁷⁸ He argues the numerous chapters equate to liberation from its former coloniser – it presents the country’s ‘connection to Europe’ with ‘Great Britain exist[ing] apparently only as a migratory stepping stone’.³⁷⁹ Not only does the Handbook make the IFS part of Europe, ‘the chapters on education and culture present the historical Free State as the cradle of European thought’.³⁸⁰ In the early medieval-age, IFS history records that Ireland was not invaded and so ‘the old traditions of piety and learning had continued unimpaired’ and would eventually ‘make possible the revival of learning in’ Europe.³⁸¹ Reviving Irish as a living language is ‘a march against time’ and the chapters on literature laments Irish writers using the English language and assesses, ‘works of genius written by men and women of Irish birth’.³⁸² The Abbey Theatre is also highlighted. Chapters relevant to commerce and investment, ‘important to the realities of a post-independence nation’, and others relevant to tourism present the IFS as ‘an attractive investment’.³⁸³ The illustrations are not part of Harrison’s analysis but are cited in numerous other histories of the period, all noting the essentialist and epochalist dichotomy in the handbook’s competing views of Irishness, rural romantic and ancient Ireland competing with an image of a new state eager to show progress and engaging with the modern world.³⁸⁴ The book’s covers also embodied these contending forces, criticised at the time for its modernity and attempting to be ‘cubist figures performing motley mummery to jazz music’.³⁸⁵ It is now more likely to be described as ‘a beautiful Celtic design cover’ that references the Book of

³⁷⁸ William M. Harrison. “European Postcoloniality: The Saorstát Éireann/Irish Free State Official Handbook, 1932,” in *Éire-Ireland*, Vol. 30, no. 1, Spring 1995. 35-42.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.* 38.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ Rev. Michael Longford, M.A., “Religion”, in *Saorstat Eireann*. 64-71. 65, 66.

³⁸² Joseph O’Neill, M.A., “The Irish language and the linguistic struggle” in *Saorstat Eireann*. 257-263. 263. Robert Lynd, “Anglo-Irish literature” in *Saorstat Eireann*. 279-285. 279.

³⁸³ Harrison. 37.

³⁸⁴ For example see, Barber, *Art in Ireland*. 70, 71. Peter Murray, “Politics in Irish Art 1900-2000” in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*. 364. SORCHA O’Brien, *Powering the nation: images of the Shannon Scheme and the electrification of Ireland*, (Newbridge: Irish Academic Press, 2017). 22, 23, 24.

³⁸⁵ Molua, “The last pose of Bulmer”, in *Catholic Bulletin*, Apr. 1932. 274.

Kells and sourced from Irish medieval scripts, an image appropriated and up-dated by its creator Art O'Murnaghan (figure 128).

The handbook is presented from a staged managed view; where cottages appear, they were the long-established thatched type, and they are occupied and well kept, frugal but no evidence of poverty. The newly slated council houses, built in their tens of thousands in the early decades of the twentieth century, are absent.³⁸⁶ Instead a traditional Ireland is invoked. By comparison the cover of the US edition of the most popular Irish travel book at the time, *In Search of Ireland*, shows a ruined cottage and a barefooted woman in an Irish landscape (figure 129).³⁸⁷ This travel book's entry on Galway bemoans the redevelopment of the Claddagh, with 'hideous' modern houses replacing their unsanitary predecessors.³⁸⁸ The entry is illustrated with an earlier photograph of the poverty stricken cottages. *Saorstat Eireann*'s representation of the Claddagh also avoids the modern, but the illustration shows well-kept cottages with no hint of unsanitary conditions or poverty – a hybrid of the past and the present (figure 130).³⁸⁹ In the main, and while not always representing the social realities of the time, artists used in the *Official Handbook* produced representational images of what they saw. However, one advantage of illustrations over photographs was, as in this MacGonigal, they also allowed for the IFSG's subjective vision to be presented rather than realist reportage.

4.5.5 Civic Publications conclusion.

Artists and writers were harnessed to present the official view of the IFS in the *Official Handbook*. Devised and produced on the cusp of a change of government, it presented a hegemonic view of the State, acceptable to the political elite in both administrations.

³⁸⁶ Anne-Marie Walsh, "Root them in the land: cottage schemes for agricultural labourers" in Joost Augusteijn, ed., *Ireland in the 1930s: new perspectives*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999). 47.

³⁸⁷ H. V. Morton, *In search of Ireland*, (London: Methuen, 1930). This guide remained in print into the 1960s.

³⁸⁸ After a deadly outbreak of tuberculosis in the 1920s, cottages in the Claddagh were deemed unsanitary and demolished. They were gradually all replaced by council houses by the 1930s.

³⁸⁹ *Saorstat Eireann*. 109.

Sermonising and deemed suitable for international consumption, it presented a history and a vision of the IFS that both sides of the treaty divide could embrace.³⁹⁰ Geertz reasons that new states straddle the essentialist/ epochalist divide and that the most common approach is to combine the two.³⁹¹ Therefore ‘images, metaphors, and rhetorical turns from which nationalist ideologies are built are essentially devices, cultural devices designed to render one or another aspect of the broad process of collective self-redefinition explicit, to cast essentialist pride’ (evident in *Official Handbook* images of the sublime landscapes and museum artefacts) or ‘epochalist hope’ (in images of industrial development and trade) ‘into specific symbolic forms’ (figures 131, 132).³⁹² National pride and hope is described, developed, celebrated and used, turning IFS nationalist ideology into a practical achievement.³⁹³

These illustrations and text presented an official image of the IFS for a national and international audience. While the *DCW Handbooks* had to be requested or ordered by Irish overseas missions and tourist offices, *A Book of Dublin* was circulated automatically to the foreign representatives in Dublin and Irish missions abroad. This distribution was increased for the *Saorstát Éireann Official Handbook* to its more comprehensive list of diplomats.³⁹⁴ Despite being a Cumann na nGaedheal production, a pragmatic Fianna Fáil government enlisted it to promote the IFS during its official participation at the international Chicago Worlds’ Fair in 1933.³⁹⁵ A decade later the State considered producing another official handbook, based on its predecessor, resulting in the production of *Ireland An Introduction* in 1950.³⁹⁶ The active propaganda of such a handbook was a

³⁹⁰ For example, the chapter on “History” by Eoin MacNeill ends with the 1921 Treaty negotiations and ignores the Civil War. See *Saorstát Éireann*, 62, 63.

³⁹¹ Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 251.

³⁹² Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 252.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ *Saorstát Éireann*, Bulmer Hobson, “Diplomatic and Consular Representatives”, 314, 315, 316, 317.

³⁹⁵ UIC. Box 3 Folder 13-59. Shipping records show an entry for, Irish Free State Stationary Office of ‘100 Handbook of Saorstáts (sic) Éireann’. See chapter five.

³⁹⁶ See NAI. DFA/5/316/1/102. Idea of a hand book based on old Saorstát Éireann official handbook. 1944 file.

product administrations in power could harness for political advantage. It didactically presented an image of the nascent State by the 1930s and the citizens' place in it. In the civic publications discussed in this chapter the State recognised and commissioned a school of Irish art prepared to commit themselves to visualise an official expression of national identity.

Department of External Affairs. *Ireland an Introduction to her History, Institutions, Resources and Culture*. (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1950.), ironically this publication was planned by a Fianna Fáil administration but with a change of government in 1948 was published with the Inter-Party Government in power. Again in the 1960s another Dept. of External Affairs publication *Facts about Ireland* had its genesis in *Saorstát Éireann* see "Aiken calls MacEoin a liar in the Dáil", *Irish Times*, 13th Mar. 1964. 6.

Chapter 5. Transformation: Irish art and projecting modern Ireland

5.1 Introduction.

The backdrop to this chapter is the unfolding national and international political situation.

At home, the rejection of abstentionism by anti-treatyites and the establishment of the Fianna Fáil political party enabled many politically engaged citizens who had fought for an independent republic and had taken an anti-treaty stance to re-enter active constitutional politics. The party won the 1932 general election and took their seats in government on the 9th March 1932, the first change of government since the establishment of the IFS.¹

Internationally nationalism was taking hold and saw the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazi) led by Adolf Hitler, elected to power in Germany in 1933. At this time also fascism became entrenched in Italy.² Pseudo-scientific racist theories based on now dis-credited eugenics, emanating from American universities, were central to Nazism and underpinned a discourse on racial superiority in many countries.³ The IFS was not exempt from these nationalist and racial ideologies and, as is discussed in this chapter, these political ideas emerge as a theme in the State's first trans-Atlantic supported art exhibition in Chicago in 1933. In keeping with the earlier foreign exhibitions detailed in previous chapters, participation in this Chicago World's Fair continued the State's internationalist approach to cultural policy. This support paralleled Irish foreign policy which had seen the IFS join the League of Nations and establish Irish Embassies and consulates abroad. Daniel J. McGrath, appointed Irish Consul General in Chicago in November 1932, co-ordinated the IFS's participation in that city's World's Fair. As explored in this chapter, participation in the Fair and the associated exhibition of Irish art

¹ After the 1932 elections Fianna Fáil formed a minority government supported by the Labour party.

² Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent*, (London: Penguin, 1998).

³ Edwin Black, *War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race*, (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003), details how Hitler's hatred of certain peoples was predicated on the work of American eugenicists.

and art and crafts when there was no obvious economic gain, is explained as largely an exercise in soft power and public and cultural diplomacy.

The national agendas at home were also reflected in State supported cultural events – again nation building, reconciliation and defining an identity for its citizenry was salient.

Questions about the solidity of the IFS's democracy were asked when the 1932 general election offered the possibility of a change of government. Tourist numbers were down over fears of political instability and 'when elections were announced a few important outside newspapers had put forward the idea that peaceful conditions in this country were in jeopardy and that another Civil War was pending'.⁴ Hostilities never materialised and adherence to democratic principles was signalled with this first change of Government. It can be argued that the nation building and reconciliation efforts of the previous years had contributed to this new stabilised era in Irish politics by presenting a shared view of the State for its citizens. Events like the 1932 Aonach Tailteann were seen to 'represent Ireland at its best and they are to-day, as in the past, the symbol of unity and peace according to the wishes of their illustrious founder'.⁵ Mass participation, civic engagement and the universality of a shared art and culture in the various State supported spectacles discussed in this thesis, engaged both sides of the treaty divide on common ground, creating the environment for peaceful political debate and general elections. Shared native cultural products allowed both sides of the treaty divide to go beyond their political differences in supporting a cohesive and functioning democracy.

Catholicism, which had been a trait of national identity, before and after independence, became more prominent in Irish cultural life during the phase of national development

⁴ Anon. "Peaceful election" in *Strabane Chronicle*, 26th Mar. 1932. 6. See also, Barry Sheppard, "A Civil War as a sort of side-show?" (24th June, 2019).

⁵ J.J.H. "Aonach Tailteann" in *Irish Travel*, vol. 7, no. 10, June 1932. 234. The 'illustrious' founder is identified as, Lugh of the long arm [Queen Tailté's foster son], a god in Irish mythology.

considered in this chapter.⁶ At the Paris Race Congress, Catholicism was acknowledged by attendance at mass by delegates and the visiting of religious sites. It was acknowledged as just one of a number of signifiers of Irish national identity alongside ancient Celtic culture and heritage, and a rural Gaelic ancestry. J.J. Walsh in 1922 said that the Tailteann did not feature any aspect of religion.⁷ However from that time, the decade's increasing religiosity was evidenced by the 1929 DCW art exhibition's religious focus. It reflected other developments such as the founding of the exclusively Catholic Academy of Christian Art, later that year, and as will be discussed in this chapter, the hosting of the Eucharistic Congress and the makeup of the Aonach Tailteann in 1932. De Valera agreed to open that year's Tailteann, but a handwritten addendum to the memo confirming his attendance, states that 'Aonach to be opened by Cardinal MacRory' (figure 133 and 134).⁸

Photographs and Pathé newsreel film of the 1932 Tailteann show the prominent position of the clergy, directly participating in events such as throwing in the ball to start games and occupying front row seats at events. At the 1924 event, discussed in chapter three, these positions were occupied by the ethnically and racially diverse distinguished visitors which included artists, writers, politicians, and Indian and Persian princes. In 1924 it can be argued that status and class trumped race, but in the 1932 IFS, religion trumped both class and race. Catholicism and a narrowing view of nationalism would be reflected in trade wars with Britain and in shifting attitudes to the North of Ireland. The increasing agency of the Church would become evident in both the political and the cultural agendas of the country.

⁶ Religion was an issue in the 1932 general election with Cumann Na nGaedheal election posters questioning De Valera's Catholic bona fides; he had been excommunicated or at least refused the sacraments along with other active Republicans during the Civil War - see David McCullagh, *De Valera: Volume 1 Rise 1882-1932*, (Dublin: Gill Books, 2017).

⁷ Anon. "Tailteann Games Over-seas Representatives Confer. Next Year's Scheme", *Freemans Journal*, 8th Aug. 1922. 5.

⁸ TSCH/3/S8971. Letter from Private Secretary of President De Valera to Aonach Tailteann secretary. May, 1932.

The 1929 DCW religious art exhibition, as already discussed, was an effort to increase Church patronage for the arts in Ireland, because ‘[a]lthough patronage by the Roman Catholic Church was one of the most powerful forces in the history of European Art, it [wa]s not surprising that that model was not replicated in Ireland, [because] it began to emerge from political repression only in the early nineteenth century’.⁹ However, the days of the Church’s repression were behind it when the 31st International Eucharistic Congress took place over five days in June 1932, becoming the largest international spectacle held in the IFS.¹⁰ It was an organisational triumph which culminated in a pontifical mass attended by a million people in the Phoenix Park.¹¹ Both Civil War enemies, Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fáil, supported the 1932 Eucharistic Congress, and its ideals were shared by the dominant Catholic and nationalist population. Although Irish art and arts and crafts featured only peripherally during the Congress - there was no specific art exhibition - like the production of the event itself, what was on display was as a result of quasi-official and obscure State support and engagement.

⁹ Catherine Marshall, “Patronage and Awards” in Marshall & Murray, eds. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*. 350-355. 353.

¹⁰ The Congress ran from the 22nd to 26th June 1932. For details on the Congress see, Rory O’Dwyer, *The Eucharistic Congress, Dublin 1932: An Illustrated History*. (Dublin: Nonsuch, 2009).

¹¹ The enormous high altar used for the Phoenix Park Mass was designed by the official architect to the Congress, John (J.J.) Robinson, became the visual symbol of the congress.

5.2 The Eucharistic Congress, 1932.

The Congress, a celebration of Catholicism and the Eucharist (Christ's presence in the Mass), was held in Dublin in 1932 to coincide with, and to commemorate the 1,500th anniversary of St. Patrick's arrival in Ireland in 432 AD. Adding the St. Patrick celebrations provided a unique Irish perspective to the International Eucharistic Congress.¹² De Valera as President of the IFS stated that, 'It is my earnest hope that this occasion [of the Eucharistic Congress], when Ireland also celebrates the fifteenth centenary of the coming of her National Apostle, will inspire in them [visitors] and in us a renewed fidelity to the traditions of Christian civilization'.¹³ The Congress reflected a cohesive Catholic state, with a predominantly Catholic population – at the time 93 percent of inhabitants were Catholic.¹⁴ It demonstrated a homogenous population defined by their religion rather than their social position, occupation or income. Irish people saw their religion as 'an essential part of their whole racial, national and ideological identity'.¹⁵ The superior position of the Catholic Church in the IFS was demonstrated as the clerical entourage took over the city as they moved from the Phoenix Park mass to O'Connell Street for benediction, another Catholic ceremony (figure 135). President De Valera, his ministerial colleague Seán T O'Kelly and former President Cosgrave acted as canopy bearers for Cardinal MacRory, Archbishop of Armagh and the papal legate Cardinal Lauri, who presided over the Congress. Lauri travelled to other locations including the North of Ireland and large numbers of Northern Ireland's Catholics travelled to Dublin for Congress events. So while endeavouring to broaden the spectacle as an all-island Ireland endeavour, it also highlighted partition with northern attendees attacked by Loyalist mobs as they

¹² Other countries that previously hosted the religious event were United States, France, Australia, Great Britain, Germany, Spain, Canada, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Austria, and Tunisia.

¹³ Eamon de Valera, "President extends Céad Míle Fáilte (A hundred thousand welcomes) to visitors to Ireland" in *Irish Travel*, vol. 7, no. 10, June 1932. 217.

¹⁴ In the 1926 census almost 93 per cent of people were RC, by 1946 this figure had risen to 95 per cent.

¹⁵ Brian Fallon, "Ireland, 1930-1939: eye on the twentieth century", *Irish Times*, 12th Oct. 1999. 13. Cited in John Turpin, "Visual Culture and Catholicism in the Irish Free State, 1922-1949" in *Jnl of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 57, No. 1, January 2006. 55-76. 56.

travelled south.¹⁶ Clearly identifying the IFS as Catholic, the spectacle differentiated it further from Britain but also from the predominantly Protestant Six Counties and accentuated the widening gap between both parts of the country.¹⁷ It confirmed for Southern Protestants - and Northern Protestants in particular – of the communion of Catholicism and nationalism in the IFS.

Like the 1929 Catholic Emancipation celebrations, the Catholic Truth Society effectively organised the Congress on behalf of the Irish Catholic hierarchy and its executive secretary, Frank O'Reilly, was Director of Organisation.¹⁸ The Congress also had strong IFSG support. Cumann na nGaedheal was in power during the preparations for the spectacle and they established a Government Committee to co-ordinate the official response.¹⁹ It informed the Eucharistic Congress organisers and the Archbishop of Dublin that it 'was anxious in every way' to help.²⁰ Due to financial stringencies, both Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fáil, who entered power before the spectacle began, offered limited direct financial support but they did provide other state supports and resources that cost 'a considerable but undetermined amount'.²¹ De Valera approved a squadron of army planes

¹⁶ Rory O'Dwyer, "On Show to the World: The Eucharistic Congress, 1932" in *History Ireland*, Issue 6. Vol 15, (Nov/Dec 2007). 47.

¹⁷ By this time, Protestants in the Six Counties dominated official positions in government, police and public service.

¹⁸ For a discussion on the 1929 Catholic Emancipation celebrations see Gillian McIntosh, "Acts of 'national communion': the centenary celebrations for Catholic Emancipation, the forerunner of the Eucharistic Congress" in Joost Augusteijn, ed., *Ireland in the 1930s: new perspectives*, (Dublin: Four Courts, 1999).

¹⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005. Eucharistic Congress, 1932: setting up of inter-departmental Committee on Government Co-operation. Department of Finance memo titled, Eucharistic Congress 1932, signed by H. P. Boland. 4th Sep. 1930. The committee consisted of representatives the Depts. of Finance and Defence, Office of Public Works and the Garda Síochána.

²⁰ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005. Letter from Archbishop of Dublin Edward J. Byrne to Frank O'Reilly, Director of Organisation of the Thirty First International Eucharistic Congress. 27th Jan. 1931.

²¹ The Government appropriation accounts for 1932-33 show various items of expenditure on the Eucharistic Congress but also notes that 'in addition to these specific items, expenditure incidental to the Congress, to a considerable but undetermined amount, is included in the appropriation accounts of various other Votes'. See Saorstát Éireann. *Appropriation Accounts 1932-33*. (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 1934). Specific items related to the Congress noted included £2,300 for entertainment, £1,900 by Posts and Telegraphs, undetermined amounts by Public Works, Garda and Army. £2,168 for ceremonial uniforms. Loans from military stores, sky-lighting were paid 'on the basis of net cost' plus 10 percent. £1,650 was budgeted for a commemorative stamp. Extra staffing costs were incurred. Production of a book on Early Christian Art cost in excess of £600 and nearly £150 on other publications. £175 was spent on chartering a special boat and train for the Papal Legates return journey to London.

to fly in crucifix form over Cardinal Lauri's ship as it sailed into Dun Laoghaire harbour, symbolic of the State's devotion, security and modernity. On landing, the Blue Hussars (the recently established ceremonial cavalry unit of the Irish Army) provided an escort, wearing a special dress uniform at a cost of £2,200 (figure 136). In addition to church functions there were a number of official State events for visiting dignitaries.²² Official commitment to the event is evidenced by the governmental committee responsible for the Congress' State functions which consisted of the President, vice President and Ministers for External Affairs and Education. In addition, £3,700 was provided for upgrade works on Dublin Castle to make it a suitable venue for a State reception for Congress dignitaries.²³ The cabinet further agreed to charter a boat and a train to take the Papal Legate to London following the spectacle.²⁴ The army and Gardaí assisted at the Masses and maintained order and participated in religious ceremonies - 'at the Consecration of the Mass, Army Officers presented arms and in a brilliantly orchestrated sequence'.²⁵ Public buildings were lit up, numerous State gifts²⁶ were presented to the papal dignitaries and with regard to the visual arts the NGI opened late to provide access for visitors to the Congress. The only item the IFSG refused to take responsibility for was accommodation of pilgrims. Yet, even here they provided beds and mattresses from state supplies and altered licensing laws to

²² See NAI files, DFA/2/34/43g, Eucharistic Congress Distinguished visitors, Jan 1931, file and TSCH/3/S6005/6, Eucharistic Congress, 1932: state reception, Feb 1931-May 1932 file and TSCH/3/S6005/3, Eucharistic Congress, 1932: functions other than state functions, Mar 1931-Apr 1932, file. For example, about 3,000 people were invited to a State reception in Dublin Castle (including Dermot O'Brien, PRHA, Thomas Bodkin, NGI Director, John J. Reynolds, Curator Municipal Gallery and artists Jack B. Yeats, Andrew O'Connor, Jerome Connor and Rose Barton) and 20,000 attended a garden party in the grounds of Blackrock College organised by the Church.

²³ TSCH/3/S6005/6, Extract from Cabinet Minutes, Cab. 5/42, 3.2.31, item No. 2.

TSCH/3/S6005/6, Memo on expenditure on State Reception at the Castle on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress June, 1932.

²⁴ TSCH/3/S6005/18. Extract from Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, "7th June, 1932. Stamped 29th Jun. 1932. See also See Saorstát Éireann. *Appropriation Accounts 1932-33*. (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 1934). 216.

²⁵ Rory O'Dwyer, "On Show to the World: The Eucharistic Congress, 1932" in *History Ireland*, Issue 6. Vol 15, (Nov/Dec 2007). 44.

²⁶ Gifts included an Irish Ecclesiastical Art book which is discussed later and a replica of the De Burgo Chalice held in the NMI and made in 1494.

A replica in 18 carat solid gold of the De Burgo-O'Malley chalice in the NMI made by John Smyth & Sons, Ecclesiastical Art Manufactory was presented to Cardinal Lauri 'from the President and Council of Ireland'. Lauri in turn presented it to Pope Pius XI and in 1962 Pope John XIII returned it to the Dublin diocese and it is now in the Pro-Cathedral. See "Historic Congress gift returned to Dublin", *Irish Press*, 14th Dec. 1962. 1.

allow drink to be served on liners docked in port providing accommodation for their passengers.²⁷ Public buildings were decorated and searchlights were installed by the army to light up the city night-sky, and equipment from the Theatre Royal provided sky-writing, creating exotic and modern lumière displays (figure 137).²⁸ The lighting displays were more elaborate than those devised for the DCWs or Tailteanns. Producing the Congress was a combined effort of Church and State. The new 2RN radio station broadcast the event using the recently installed high-powered 60kw transmitter based in Athlone.²⁹ Irish listeners heard the voice of world-renowned tenor, Athlone-born, John McCormack singing at High Mass which was also relayed around the city on an elaborate PA system. This system also carried the Pope's Papal blessing transmitted from the Vatican. The front page of *L'Illustrazione Vaticana*, dated 1st July 1932 showed Pope Pius XI broadcasting his message to the Irish public (figure 138).³⁰ This was also an early broadcast for the Vatican, their radio system was installed earlier in that year by the Italian radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi. Relaying this broadcast emphasised the up-to-the-minuteness of the Irish Free State in terms of modern communications, and represented the modernity of the Congress itself, justifying the additional IFS expenditure on the broadcasting station.³¹

In addition to distancing itself from protestant England, the Congress also displayed a hybridity, latent in colonial interchanges that was also evident in other State spectacles covered by this research. While the event was marked by huge public participation there

²⁷ TSCH/3/S6005, Eucharistic Congress, 1932: setting up of inter-departmental Committee on Government Co-operation, Feb 1930-Feb 1931. Dept. of Finance Circular no. 24/30, Eucharistic Congress, 1932. 4th Sep. 1930.

²⁸ TSCH/3/S6005/18, Eucharistic Congress, 1932: decoration of government buildings. Jun 1932 file.

²⁹ TSCH/3/S6005/4, Eucharistic Congress, 1932: broadcasting service, Jul 1930-Apr 1932 file. See also RTE Archive. Eucharistic Congress 1932 at <https://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/681-history-of-rte/683-rte-1930s/290025-broadcasting-of-the-eucharistic-congress-june-1932/> accessed 27/05/2019.

By this time over 30,000 radio licences had been issued in the Irish Free State.

³⁰ Front page of *L'Illustrazione Vaticana*, 1st Jul. 1932.

³¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/4. Eucharistic Congress, 1932: Broadcasting. Report by J. Connolly titled, "Eucharistic Congress. Broadcasting from Athlone", 1st Apr. 1932 and memo to the Minister for Post and Telegraphs dated 6th Apr. 1932 noting an additional £1,500 would be spent 'to speed up the work of erection of the new station' in time for the Congress.

was also an elite element that celebrated titled and religious dignitaries in the official functions that were not of the people, or for the citizen.³² The papal legate journeyed from Dun Laoghaire through a triumphal arch erected at the city boundary between Merrion Gates and Booterstown, echoing Queen Victoria's entrance to the city through a Royal Triumphal Archway on Leeson Street in 1900.³³ In this instance the Congress archway incorporated round tower replicas and Celtic ornamentation.³⁴ The most visible displacement of English Protestant rule was the erection of a fourteen metre round tower on the exact College Green site where Grinling Gibbon's equestrian statue of King William of Orange (*William III*) had stood for more than two hundred years (figure 139).³⁵ Irrespective of the tower's lack of artistic merit, this was a clear and conspicuous reclamation and declaration of independence by an ancient Catholic nation from its previous Protestant occupier – the State was visually decolonising public spaces in 1932 just as painting the imperial red post-boxes green had done in 1922.

Because of the Congress' international profile, Ireland was on show to the world. It took the opportunity not only to declare and celebrate its Catholicism, it also demonstrated its capacity and modernity in its ability to organise a large scale and technically demanding international spectacle. The IFSG saw this as an Irish event with a worldwide audience. The Eucharistic Congress was recognised to be of greater importance than the national Tailteann celebration of sport and culture for the Irish diaspora. The IFS was a modern

³² See NAI files, DFA/2/34/43g, Eucharistic Congress Distinguished visitors, Jan 1931, file.

³³ British Pathé, "Queen Victoria in Dublin 1900", 4th April, 1900. Film clip available at <https://ifiplayer.ie/queen-victoria-in-dublin-1900/> accessed 27/09/2019.

³⁴ "Dublin's Preparation for the Eucharistic Congress", *Sligo Champion*, 11th Jun. 1932. 3. The earlier Royal archway was constructed of plain unadorned stone.

³⁵ William III reputation was staunch Protestant. His victory at the battle of the Boyne in 1690 ensured protestant ascendancy in Ireland. This sculpture was removed in 1928. For a discussion on this work see Paula Murphy, ed. *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 3, Sculpture 1600-2000*. (New Haven and London: Yale, 2014). 2.

Watson's Nurseries in Killiney had been awarded the contract by the City Council for floral displays and erecting the tower in College Green. See "Irish Round Tower in College Green", *Irish Times*, 15th Jun. 1932. 3.

nation and by declaring itself a Catholic nation, its recognition by the Vatican indicated its international agency and legitimacy.

5.2.1 “The Pope’s Carpet”. Soft power and Irish cultural diplomacy.

In January 1930 the IFSG instructed its ambassador to the Holy See, Charles Bewley, to express its ‘desire’ to Vatican officials ‘to make a gift to the Holy Father in honour of his jubilee year’.³⁶ Pope Pius XI nominated 1929 as a jubilee year to celebrate fifty years since his ordination as a priest. Separately, throughout 1929, speculation was rife that the Vatican would award the much sought after 1932 Eucharistic Congress to Ireland.³⁷ Governmental discussions on the presentation gift took place at a time when the IFS wished to maintain high level contact with the Vatican. It was a gift laden with expectation. The gift, which the ‘Holy Father [was] very glad to accept ... from Ireland’, was eventually presented after the Eucharistic Congress had been awarded ‘with great pride’ to Dublin.³⁸ This early State commission is significant and the archival papers show clearly that the government intended to achieve a soft power and cultural diplomatic gain from the presentation. The IFSG through its legation to the Holy See, originally proposed presenting a stained-glass window by Harry Clarke to the Holy Father. Clarke was the preferred artist probably because he had both a national and international reputation, and

³⁶ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Presentation of a carpet produced by the Dun Emer Guild to the Pope. Memo from Charles Bewley, The Legation of the Irish Free State at the Holy See, Rome to Secretary, Dept. External Affairs. 18th Jan. 1930. Bewley conveyed the Governments request to Cardinal Gasparri, the Vatican’s Secretary of State.

See also, Archivio Apostolico Vaticano. File on a gift, a carpet, which the Irish State presented to Pope Pius XI on 28th Feb. 1931. Archival unit: *Segr. Stato* 1931, rubr. 169, fasc. 1, ff. 5r-7r.

Pope Pius XI (1857-1939) was an Italian born Ambrogio Damiano Achille Ratti, was head of the Catholic Church from 6 February 1922 until his death.

Bewley was appointed Irish envoy to the Holy See in June 1929. He held this role during the 1932 change in government and for the period of the Eucharistic Congress. He was appointed envoy to Germany from 1933 to 1939 where his support for Nazi Germany and his extreme dislike for Britain led to poor relations with his superiors. He refused to return to Dublin when he was recalled in 1939 and stayed in Germany. He was interned for a short while after World War II by the allies. Following his release he settled in Rome until his death in 1969.

³⁷ Numerous newspaper reports, for example see, “The Eucharistic Congress”, *Irish Independent*, 15th Aug. 1929, 6 and “The Eucharistic Congress”, *Drogheda Independent*, 29th Jun. 1929, 6. Pope Pius XI announced 1929 as a Jubilee Year, reported in the *Osservatore Romano* in January 1929.

³⁸ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Memo from Charles Bewley, to Secretary, Dept. External Affairs. 21th Feb. 1930. Anon. “The Eucharistic Congress. Dublin chosen as the venue for 1932”. *Irish Independent*, 21st Nov. 1929. 9. Dublin was announced as the venue for the 1932 Eucharistic Congress in late November, 1929.

he was in the process of completing an important and high profile State commission to design and make a window for the ILO building in Geneva.³⁹ Discussions between Bewley and Vatican officials made it clear that any window would have to fit into the Vatican scheme of decoration.⁴⁰ This restriction would prevent the window from showing ‘Irish characteristics’, therefore it wouldn’t be immediately obvious that it was of Ireland, and although ‘beautiful’, it was deemed that a gift under such limitations would lose its political advantage.⁴¹ The option of a stained glass window was ruled out. However, Bewley had proposed secondary - ‘pis aller’ - alternatives of enamels, or vestments, or a carpet by the Dun Emer Guild or Donegal Carpets. Enamels and vestments were considered unsuitable because ‘they would not be kept in the Vatican’ and it was agreed to gift a carpet.⁴² The gift would fulfil all the requirements, and if placed in a prominent position ‘it would certainly be a good advertisement for Irish industry and piety’.⁴³ It was agreed that a 10.6 x 5.6 metres carpet, would have ‘the Papal arms in the centre and the arms of Ireland [a harp insignia similar to both the new coinage and the IFS Seal] at one end and the arms of the four provinces of Ireland at the other’ all within a Celtic interlace border.⁴⁴ Such a design would express an Irish Catholic identity, an ancient past, the IFSG’s political aspirations and its alignment to the Vatican, and its claim to all four

³⁹ The Geneva commission was ultimately unfilled and controversially repressed by the IFSG who feared its avant-garde, risqué scenes from Irish literature. It did not portray a conservative Catholic State, however the Vatican gift was considered just before the completion of the Geneva commission and the ensuing controversy. For a discussion on this commission and its aftermath see Roisín Kennedy, “The Geneva Window: A Precious Gift, Never Given” in Angela Griffith, Marguerite Helmers & Roisín Kennedy, eds, *Harry Clarke and artistic visions of the new Irish State*, (Newbridge: IAP, 2019), 73-99.

The IFSG considered donating a Dun Emer carpet to the ILO before deciding on a Clarke window – see Nicola Gordon Bowe, “Harry Clarke’s Geneva Window” in *Irish Arts Review*, Vol 30, No 1, 2013. 118-120.

⁴⁰ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. The file shows Bewley had various engagements with senior Vatican officials but in particular with Bartolomeo Nogara, Direttore Generale dei Musei & delle Gallerie Pontificie who had responsibility for artistic matters in the Vatican.

⁴¹ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Memo: “Present to the Holy Father”, by Secretary External Affairs to Bewley. 5th Feb. 1930.

DFA 2009/22/9. Memo from Bewley to Secretary, Dept. External Affairs. 18th Jan. 1930.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9 various.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

provinces in their entirety. Displayed prominently this official State gift made a visible statement in an international arena and within the Catholic world.⁴⁵

The briefing documents supplied to the ambassador for the presentation, detailed the Irish Arts and Crafts philosophy of the Dun Emer Guild, declaring its product was ‘hand woven’ and ‘characteristic of Irish Art’, not copied but ‘founded on the Celtic tradition’.⁴⁶ The carpet was designed by Katherine MacCormack and ‘woven by hand by Irish workers ... with about 2,000,000 knots in the whole carpet. It took nearly four months to weave. The ground is of a rich crimson... The border is in shades of red, purple, gold and blue. Twenty different shades were used in the carpet’.⁴⁷ It cost approximately £450.

At the formal presentation on the 28th Feb. 1931, Ambassador Bewley explained the motifs and discussed ‘the Celtic designs in the border’ with the Pope, who related the pattern back to ‘Irish illuminated manuscripts’.⁴⁸ After discussing the Guild with Bewley who described how it ‘preserved the tradition of Irish design’ and culture which ‘had been forcibly interrupted in all branches by the English invasion’, the Pope presented ‘medals and pictures’ and blessings for the carpet weavers. His ‘pleasure’ with the gift was evidenced by placing it in his private quarters where he received visitors - rather than the adjacent ante room. The carpet was also present during Papal consistories.⁴⁹

Seeking an additional political and cultural dividend, before being despatched to Rome the carpet was privately exhibited for three days by the Minister for External Affairs, Patrick McGilligan, at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art where it was viewed by President

⁴⁵ It was hoped the carpet would be used in ‘the Holy Father’s Study or in one of the immediately adjoining ante rooms’. The Dun Emer Guild produced carpets of various quality and this was the highest quality the Guild sold.

⁴⁶ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Briefing note on file regarding the Dun Emer Guild and the carpet for the Vatican.

⁴⁷ The carpet’s colour scheme took account of the decoration in the area of the Vatican proposed to house it.

⁴⁸ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Report on the presentation of the carpet to Pope Pius XI by Bewley. 28th Feb. 1931.

⁴⁹ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Letter from Bewley to Evelyn Gleeson, Dun Emer Guild. 31st Mar. 1931.

Bewley himself, was knighted by the Pope, with the Order of the Grand Cross of St Gregory the Great in July 1933.

Cosgrave, members of the government and invited dignitaries.⁵⁰ Later it was put on public display in Clery & Co department store, whose newspaper advertisement for the event is entitled ‘The Pope’s Carpet’.⁵¹ It showed a photograph of the exhibit and its nine weavers (figure 140 and 141). The media reported that thousands of people viewed the ‘beautiful carpet’.

The commissioning and presentation of the carpet was reported in Italian media, the Vatican’s *Osservatore Romano*, the *IL Messaggero* and extensively in local and national Irish papers, many of whom saw national affirmation in the Pope’s personal interest in the gift by its placing in his private study.⁵² *L’Illustrazione Vaticana* reproduced a photograph of the carpet that they had requested from the Departmental of External Affairs, who believed it would be a good advertisement, for the Dun Emer Guild and Irish industry (figure 142).⁵³

The IFSG had a clear agenda when it considered the gift. The object was to reflect an Irish identity aesthetically, and it had to align with its political and internationalist cultural ideology. It sought to present ‘something which would remain in the Vatican’, ‘typical [in style and content] of Ireland’s artistic capabilities’ that would ‘bring the country to the notice of any visitor who came to the Vatican, and as such would be very desirable’.⁵⁴ The IFSG was visually culturally aware and recognised in its deliberations the areas of arts and

⁵⁰ “Carpet for Vatican, Splendid Product of Dublin Industry”, *Sunday Independent*, 11th Jan, 1931. 9.

The carpet was displayed between the 14th and 16th January and the designer Katherine MacCormack was present to explain the design and answer queries about the carpet.

⁵¹ See advertisement “The Pope’s Carpet”, *Irish Independent*, 17th Jan. 1931 page 1 and report 29th Jan. 1931, page 8. See also “For the Vatican”, *Irish Times*, 12th Jan. 1931. 9. It was displayed in Clerys between the 19th and 30th January.

⁵² Vatican *Osservatore Romano* and the Italian *IL Messaggero* both 28th Feb. 1931. In Ireland, many local and national papers reported the presentation, for example, “Saorstát gift to the Pope”, *Limerick Leader*, 2nd Mar. 1931. 3 and “Ireland’s gift to the Pope”, *Irish Times*, 28th Feb, 1931. 6.

⁵³ “Il tappeto donato al Papa del Governo dello Stato Libero d’Irlanda” in *L’Illustrazione Vaticana*, 28th Feb. 1928. 18 (see also page 20).

NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Letter to Bewley from Secretary, Dept. External Affairs (J.P. Walshe), 11st Feb. 1931. *L’Illustrazione Vaticana* was a fortnightly publication by the Holy See in Italian and other languages. It was widely distributed.

⁵⁴ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Presentation of a carpet produced by the Dun Emer Guild to the Pope. Various memos/letters.

crafts in which the country excelled, namely stained glass (in particular the work of Harry Clarke), embroidery (exemplified by Cuala and Dun Emer), enamels (taught at DMSA by Oswald Reeves) and carpets (both Dun Emer and Donegal were considered).⁵⁵ In 1928 the *Irish Travel* magazine featured an article on Irish craftwork, subtitled, ‘carpet weaving, stained glass, metal and enamel work’.⁵⁶ This article discusses the work of An Túr Gloine, Harry Clarke, Dun Emer and the silver and enamelling of Mia Cranwill, putting it in a continuum of the work produced in early Christian Ireland.

In tandem with the Vatican commission, the IFSG commissioned other Dun Emer carpets and furniture by the Irish cabinet-maker James Hicks for the Irish Embassy to the Vatican, as it had - and continued to do - for Government buildings at home and other Irish embassies in Rome, Berlin and Paris.⁵⁷

5.2.2 Commemorative Stamp.

Once the Congress had been awarded to the IFS, the Cabinet approved ‘a Commemoration Postal stamp be issued by the Post Office in 1932’ following ‘a request from the Organisation Committee of the Eucharistic Congress’ to the Minister of Post & Telegraphs.⁵⁸ Three commemorative stamps had been issued before 1932.⁵⁹ George

⁵⁵ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Memo from Charles Bewley to Secretary, Dept. External Affairs. 18th Jan. 1930.

⁵⁶ M. Lyster, “Three Irish Crafts. Carpet Weaving, Stained Glass, Metal and Enamel Work”, *Irish Travel*, Vol. 3 No. 7 March, 1928. 426, 427.

⁵⁷ NAI. DFA 2009/22/9. Letter from Curnow, Furniture Clerk, Office of Public Works to Bewley. 21st Jan. 1931.

Dun Emer produced carpets and Hicks the furniture for the Dáil and Senate chambers.

Irish ambassador in Berlin, Daniel A. Binchy, wrote in 1930 ‘Fortunately the flat is a dream of beauty, and people spend most of their time admiring it. Germans think it is ‘eine typischen irische wohnung’ [a typical Irish apartment]; whereas I doubt if there is anything like it in the whole of Dublin, with its Dun Emer carpets, Hicks furniture, Carrickmacross lace, and pictures ... by Lamb, Paul Henry, Jack Yeats, AE and Nathaniel Hone’, see <https://www.difp.ie/docs/1930/Social-life-in-Berlin/1066.htm>

Bewley, in a personal capacity, ordered cushions from the Dun Emer Guild while based in Rome.

⁵⁸ TSCH/3/S6005/1. Eucharistic Congress, 1932: commemorative postage stamp. Extract from Cabinet Minutes, Cab. 5/14 8.7.30, item no. 4.

⁵⁹ Three commemorative stamps had been issued before 1932. The first was for the Catholic Emancipation Centenary in 1929 (image of Daniel O’Connell) by Leo Whelan, the Shannon hydroelectric scheme was celebrated in 1930 (image of a barrage on the river) by E. L. Lawrenson and in 1931 the Royal Dublin Society bicentenary was commemorated (image of a reaper carrying a scythe) by Atkinson. A Holy Year 1933-34 stamp was issued in 1933 (image of two angels and a cross) and one to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the GAA in 1934 (image of a hurler).

Atkinson had designed the most recent stamp commemorating the RDS bicentenary in 1931. Up to this point, Irish stamps continued to be produced using typography, a process superseded in many other countries.⁶⁰ It was initially proposed to commission George Atkinson to ‘prepare the [stamp] design’ using the Eucharistic badge ‘which was designed by His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin’.⁶¹ However, the design was not regarded as satisfactory, possibly because its intricate zoomorphic interlace was too complex for the printing process.⁶² The Ardagh chalice was suggested as the basis for the stamp design. A committee consisting of P.S. O’Hegarty (Secretary of the Department of Post and Telegraphs), Thomas Bodkin (Director of the NGI), Lucius O’Callaghan (RHA and former governor of NGI) and A. S. Roberts (Director of Stamping, Office of the Revenue Commissioners) was established, and they invited artists George Atkinson, Maurice MacGonigal and Michael Healy to submit designs.⁶³ The group strongly recommended an Atkinson design based on the chalice, they suggested ‘a primrose yellow background – which is the Papal colour – with the design in black for the 2d stamp and in blue for the 3d stamp’.⁶⁴ Ultimately, the only change to the issued stamp was a white background. The cabinet approved the stamp and on the suggestion of the Archbishop of Dublin the Latin inscription was altered with the word ‘Dublinensis’ being replaced with ‘Internationalis’, reflecting the events global aspirations (figure 143).⁶⁵ The finished highly stylised design shows an outline of the Ardagh chalice and a Eucharist housed in a Cross of Cong illustration against a background of straight hatched lines. This is combined with the

⁶⁰ Ewan Morris, *Our Own Devices, National Symbols and Political Conflict in Twentieth-Century Ireland*, (Dublin & Portland: IAP, 2005). 78.

⁶¹ TSCH/3/S6005/1. Memo prepared for executive council, titled, Eucharistic Congress Commemorative Stamp 1932. Not dated but Nov. 1931.

Atkinson was to be paid £25 for the design work.

⁶² TSCH/3/S6005/1. Cabinet minutes extract. 17th Nov. 1931.

⁶³ TSCH/3/S6005/1. Eucharistic Congress Stamp, Report of Committee. Not dated but Feb. 1932. Atkinson submitted 3 designs, MacGonigal 1 design and Healy 4 designs. Each unsuccessful artist was to receive a nominal fee.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ TSCH/3/S6005/1. Various Department of Finance and Executive Council memos.

Congress announced in Latin, and the word Éire and the denomination framing the image.

The boldness of the design was determined by the printing and production process.

This EC stamp continued a Catholic ethos evident in previous issues, and offered a visual symbol of continuity and identity for international consumption.⁶⁶ These iterations were evocative of an Irish Catholic expression associated with a period before the Anglo-Norman invasion and English occupation. The IFSG – recognising the value and agency of stamp design - organised an aesthetically informed committee, commissioned a reputable and experienced artist to produce a stamp that visually linked the new State with pre-colonial Catholic Ireland. All of this asserted the nation's cultural heritage, distinctiveness and independence. As stated earlier, W.B. Yeats referred to coins and stamps as 'the silent ambassadors of national taste' – now stamps were also visual ambassadors for national identity.⁶⁷

5.2.3 Attracting tourists to the Congress.

The Irish Tourist Association, known as the ITA, was the first organisation set up to promote tourism in the IFS.⁶⁸ It was funded from local authority (county council) rates and *Irish Travel* was its monthly magazine aimed at readers 'at home' and 'abroad'.⁶⁹ The ITA commissioned an advertising travel poster in 1932 from Paul Henry, a veteran of travel poster design, to entice tourists to Ireland, for the Eucharistic Congress year.⁷⁰ At the same

⁶⁶ The early stamps are considered in chapter three. For example the earliest stamp in 1922 by James Ingram showed a map of Ireland beneath a Romanesque arch. Lily Williams stamp design came into circulation the following year featured a cross similar to the 12th-century Cross of Cong with shamrocks around it.

⁶⁷ W. B. Yeats, Coinage Bill, 1926 – Second Stage. Seanad Éireann debate - Wednesday, 3 Mar 1926 accessed at <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/seanad/1926-03-03/3/> on 22/10/2018.

⁶⁸ For information on the ITA and the early years of Irish Tourism see Irene Furlong, *Irish Tourism, 1880-1980*. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009).

⁶⁹ It also collected subscriptions from companies involved in tourism; hotels, restaurants, travel companies and from others who indirectly benefited such as Guinness and the banks. See, Irish Travel Association. *Irish Travel*, Sep. 1925 [first issue]. 4.

⁷⁰ Anon. "Publicity for coming season" in *Strabane Chronicle*, 26th Mar. 1932. 6.

The date of this Paul Henry painting and poster design is 1932. In auction catalogues and in S.B. Kennedy's book and catalogue (2007) of Henry's work it has been dated variously between 1924 and 1930. Sean T. O'Kelly, a devout Catholic, was Minister for Local Government and Public Health and responsible for the Local Authorities at that time, acquired the original painting of the poster design.

meeting where the ITA announced the production of the poster it also announced other ‘[s]pecial arrangements for the Eucharistic Congress include the provision of interpreters and bureau facilities for the convenience of visitors’.⁷¹ The poster comprised an imaginary composite image featuring a High Cross and a castle set in the artist’s now typical view of the West of Ireland landscape, including billowing cumulus clouds, a blue mountain and a lake (figures 144 and 145). The medieval high cross that dominates in the foreground is based on the so-called Muiredach’s Cross, located in Monasterboice, County Louth, dating to the tenth century.⁷² The castle depicted featured regularly in Henry’s work and is based on Grace O’Malley’s castle on Clare Island.⁷³ Henry’s poster proclaims ‘See Ireland first’ and contains practical contact information. Uniquely for Henry in this poster, in reference to the Congress, the dominance of the High Cross identifies the IFS and the country with an ancient Christian heritage. The same image featured on the cover of *Irish Travel* issued in the month of the spectacle.⁷⁴ Éamon De Valera writing the forward for this edition of the magazine welcomed visitors to the Congress and the celebration of the fifteenth centenary of St. Patrick in Ireland.⁷⁵ He trusted that tourists would find entertainment and interest in the 1932 Aonach Tailteann, which started later that month. The magazine contains articles on both events and the official programme of the Congress. The poster was a specific commission and Henry, who was a successful painter and poster artist as discussed in chapter four, was seen as a safe pair of hands. Like the stamp, the poster projected a

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² An inscription on the base of the cross states, ‘ÓR DO MUIREDACH LAS NDERNAD IN CHROS, (pray for Muiredach who commissioned this cross).

⁷³ Known as Kildownet Castle, reputedly built by the O’Malley Clan in about 1429 is best known as the home of the legendary pirate queen Grace O’Malley.

For example Henry depicted the same castle in an oil painting *Grace O’Malley’s Castle*, oil on board, 24x30cm, see S. B. Kennedy, *Paul Henry*, 2007, no.403. He also used the castle in the foreground of a poster advertising the Dingle Peninsula for London, Midland and Scottish railways.

⁷⁴ *Irish Travel*, (Dublin: Irish Tourist Association, June, 1932) vol. 7, no. 10, front cover. Available at <https://arrow.dit.ie/irtourjap/10/> The subsequent two issues of *Irish Travel* also had this image on the cover.

⁷⁵ Éamon de Valera, “Presidents extends Cead Mile Failte to visitors to Ireland” in *Irish Travel*, vol. 7, no. 10, June 1932. 217.

national identity to the outside world, using early Irish visual sources from a pre-conquest Catholic State.

5.2.4 Exhibitions and other commissions.

The 1932 Aonach Tailteann took place after the Congress and it was hoped that some visitors would stay on for the Games. The Tailteann committee were requested by the Congress organisers to bring forward the opening of the art exhibition part of the event to the 18th June to coincide with the Congress program; so as not ‘to deprive visitors from all the world of the opportunity of judging the present position of Irish art’.⁷⁶ The Tailteann art exhibition effectively became part of the Congress celebrations. For artists this gave ‘an opportunity of showing their work during the very important weeks of the Eucharistic Congress and the Tailteann Games, [resulting]... in better-quality works’ on display.⁷⁷ George Atkinson exhibited his *Designs for Eucharistic Congress Postage Stamps*.⁷⁸ It was also seen as particularly relevant to have three commissioned paintings on the life of St. Patrick on view. ‘The really important things this year are the three St. Patrick pictures commissioned by the Haverty Trust’,⁷⁹ from ‘three of the leading [Irish] artists’,⁸⁰ ‘their large canvases hung in conspicuous places on the walls, and they were the centre of comment’.⁸¹ These works were commissioned for the 1932 religious celebrations by the Haverty Trust and were originally exhibited in that year’s RHA show.⁸² The trustees, consisting of art officials and politicians, requested

⁷⁶ Anon. “Aonach Tailteann – Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts”, *Irish Times*, 20th Jun. 1932. 12.

The exhibition ran from 18th June to 10th July in the DMSA, Kildare Street.

An additional grant of £150 was awarded by the government for this. See Saorstát Éireann. *Appropriation Accounts 1932-33*. (Dublin: The Stationary Office, 1934). 133.

⁷⁷ Anon. “Arts and Crafts, The Tailteann Awards, Many works of merit” in *Irish Times*, 6th Jul. 1932. 8.

⁷⁸ *Aonach Tailteann Exhibition of Irish Art 1932 [Catalogue]*, (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1928). 43.

⁷⁹ Anon. “Royal Hibernian Academy, The Last Day” in *Irish Times*, 7th May. 1932. 4.

⁸⁰ Anon. “400 Exhibits at R.H.A. Noted artists depict St. Patrick” in *Irish Press*, 11th Apr. 1932. 4.

⁸¹ Bluebird,” Round the world and home, The Hibernian Academy” in *Weekly Irish Times*, 16th Apr. 1932. 4.

⁸² The Trust was established in 1930 under the will of Thomas Haverty a son of the painter Joseph Patrick Haverty for the purchase of Irish paintings. Trustees included President of the RHA, Director of the NGI, and Lord Mayor of Dublin. The selection committee consisted of the trustees plus the Lord Mayor of Belfast, curator of the Belfast Museum and Art Galleries, and three other representatives from the NGI and RHA. All

That Mrs. Margaret Clarke, Mr. John Keating and Mr. Leo Whelan be each commissioned to paint a subject picture of Saint Patrick, the dimensions to be at least twenty-four square feet, the pictures to be completed and delivered framed in Dublin before the 1st April 1932, the price for each picture to be £250 to include the frame.⁸³

The paintings were well received and extensively and positively reviewed. The *Sunday Independent*'s critic was particularly enamoured with the Clarke piece observing the 'beautiful oils depicting incidents in the life of St. Patrick [that] strike the eye immediately on entering the [Tailteann] exhibition' (figures 146, 147).⁸⁴ It is worth noting that John Lavery also exhibited a pertinent painting, *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, now in the collection of DCGHL, in both the 1932 RHA and Tailteann exhibitions. This work features a devout group of barefooted penitents on an ancient Irish pilgrimage site located at Lough Derg, County Donegal (figure 148). Of the three commissioned works, Clarke's painting, also in the DCGHL, shows the saint in a green cloak, climbing Croagh Patrick, a mountain located in County Mayo, with billowing clouds and a windswept tree.⁸⁵ Patrick reputedly fasted on this mountain for forty days after which an angel appeared and told him that all his petitions for the Irish people would be granted, and that they would retain their Christian faith until Judgement Day.⁸⁶ Keating's dramatic history painting, now in the Irish College in Rome, depicts Patrick on the Hill of Slane shortly after he arrived at Eastertime in 432 AD. Keating's image shows Patrick in defiance of pagan law lighting a fire thus symbolically bringing the light of Christianity to Ireland. Surrounding him, the druids, King's warriors and subjects convert to Patrick's religion. Whelan's commission is

works purchased under the scheme were to be given to public institutions, later amended to include Irish legations and Colleges at home and abroad. A quarter were for the North of Ireland.

⁸³ NLI. MS 48,425/5/2. 1. Letter from the Thomas Haverly Trust to Margaret Clarke about her commission to paint a picture of St. Patrick. 11th Jun. 1931.

⁸⁴ The paintings were, Margaret Clarke's *St. Patrick climbs Croagh Patrick*, John Keating's *St. Patrick lights the Paschal candle* and Leo Whelan's *The Baptism by St. Patrick, of Ethna the fair, and Fedelmia the Ruddy, daughters of the Ard Ri Laoghaire*.

Anon. "Fine examples of Irish Art." *Sunday Independent*, 19th Jun. 1932. 9.

Anon. "Arts and Crafts, The Tailteann Awards, Many works of merit" in *Irish Times*, 6th Jul. 1932. 8.

Anon. "R.H.A. Exhibition" in *Irish Press*, 30th May 1932. 2.

⁸⁵ For a good commentary on Clarke's painting, see Claire Crowley, *St Patrick Climbs Croagh Patrick*, in Brendan Rooney, ed, *Creating History Stories of Ireland in Art*, (Dublin: IAP and NGI, 2016). 177.

⁸⁶ Martin Wallace, *A Little Book of Celtic Saints*, (Belfast: Appletree Press Ltd, 1995).

untraced but ‘is understood to have been presented to an Irish institution abroad in the 1930s’.⁸⁷

Whelan was involved in a couple of other artistic side-lines to the Congress. He was commissioned to paint the Papal Legate, Cardinal Lauri’s portrait. When completed it was exhibited in the DMSA, with advertisements to view it carried in the newspapers - a photograph of Whelan and his painting was also carried in the press (figure 149). The portrait was exhibited later that year in London at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters.⁸⁸ Whelan also produced a Madonna and Child oil painting for Gill publishers, who photo-mechanically reproduced the work in an edition of about 200, as a commercial venture.⁸⁹ Titled *Our Lady, Queen of Ireland* it was a representation of Mary and Jesus but within an Irish idiom (figure 150). This Irish-Ireland image rhymed with both the Irish Catholic Church and political establishment, identifying the Madonna with real Irish people placed in a local landscape - the infant has a ruddy complexion and red hair, the Virgin is in Irish attire.⁹⁰ This gaelicisation of sacred figures was not unique.⁹¹ A framed print of this West of Ireland Madonna was presented to Pope Pius XI in the Vatican in 1934.⁹² Gill’s obviously intended to sell this print into Irish homes and cash in on the demand for pious objects created by the Congress. Turpin notes that,

In terms of mass culture, the Catholic home was the place which contained the greatest quantity of religious objects (it would be inaccurate to say ‘art’) in two or three dimensions. Plaster statues of Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Fatima, St.

⁸⁷ Michael Parsons, “Taking a politician unawares”, *Irish Times*, 16th June 2012. 21. Whelan’s painting was described in, Bluebird,” Round the world and home, The Hibernian Academy” in *Weekly Irish Times*, 16th Apr. 1932, page 4, as ‘a conventional production, showing a group of converts to the Saint’s creed. It is rather dull also in colour and movement’.

⁸⁸ Anon. “Our London Letter – Legate’s Portrait”, *Irish Independent*, 17th Nov. 1932. 8.

⁸⁹ M.H. Gill O’Connell Street, Dublin, which later became the publishing company Gill and Macmillan.

⁹⁰ The models for the Blessed Virgin was Sally Deale and the infant Jesus was Justin Keating, the son of artist, Sean Keating.

⁹¹ For a discussion on this see, Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland’s Art, Ireland’s History*. (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007). 105.

⁹² Michael Parsons, “Taking a politician unawares”, *Irish Times*, 16th June 2012. 21.

Anne ... framed papal blessings, rosary beads... They provided a powerful visual cultural identity for generations of Irish Catholics.⁹³

Turpin argues that the huge demand for religious art in Irish homes as well as churches was mainly met by mass produced work that was conservative in its themes and conventions (figure 151).⁹⁴ The previously mentioned Academy of Christian Art (ACA) established in 1929, was a conservative, 'narrowly focused', group rooted in academic realism, who did not actively promote or support individual artists and artistic co-operatives.⁹⁵ Irish artistic Church art output was relatively minor compared to the wide availability of mass mechanical produced religious work, much of it imported.⁹⁶ Arguably, the dominance of poor quality religious artefacts, representing a limited, conservative visual aesthetic could be attributed to a lack of art education in the seminaries and the ready availability of inexpensive, industrially made products. This mass import market limited opportunities for Irish artists. As previously discussed, both the RHA at their banquet in 1928 and the organisers of 1929 DCW exhibition of religious art and Dermot O'Brien, in particular, attempted to address this problem.

Representations were made to the President William T. Cosgrave by Senator Eileen Costello to have an exhibition celebrating the Eucharistic Congress that 'illustrated Ireland's faith through the ages'.⁹⁷ These followed discussions she had with well-known French priest, Dom Louis Gougoud and Keeper of the NMI, Adolf Mahr.⁹⁸ Mahr had

⁹³ John Turpin, "Visual Culture and Catholicism in the Irish Free State, 1922–1949" in *Jnl of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 57, No. 1, January 2006. 58.

⁹⁴ See Barry Sheppard, "'Infectious piousness' – Advertising and the Eucharistic Congress, 1932", 30th Aug. 2017 at <http://www.theirishstory.com/2017/08/30/infectious-piousness-advertising-and-the-eucharistic-congress-1932/#.XPk1hYhKi00> on advertisement and consumerism around the EC in 1932 and the consternation caused by English suppliers selling their Congress wares.

⁹⁵ Bhreathnach-Lynch, "The Academy of Christian Art (1929-1946): An Aspect of Catholic Cultural Life in Newly Independent Ireland", in *Éire-Ireland*. 116.

⁹⁶ John Turpin, "Visual Culture and Catholicism in the Irish Free State, 1922–1949" in *Jnl of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 57, No. 1, January 2006. 55-76.

The main suppliers of artistic religious work were An Túr Gloine, Dun Emer Guild, Cuala Industries, Cluna Studios, Craftworkers and the firms of Clarke, Earley, J. & C. McGloughlin, Smith and M. H. Gill.

⁹⁷ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/14. Eucharistic Congress, 1932: proposed exhibition illustrating Ireland's faith through the ages. Letter from Senator Eileen Costello to President W. T. Cosgrave, with enclosure by Adolf Mahr, 9th Jul. 1931.

⁹⁸ Dr Adolf Mahr (1887-1951), Keeper, Irish Antiquities Division, National Museum at this time, he was subsequently promoted to Director in 1934 until 1939 when he returned to his native Germany. He was also

prepared a proposal for the show which was to be titled “The Faith in Ireland throughout the Ages” or “Early Irish Christendom” and this was included with the proposals. It was intended to exhibit material from the NGI as well as Irish objects from abroad giving ‘a complete representation of all the important Irish material which has contributed so largely towards the shaping of Christian Europe’.⁹⁹ Specifically it would site Catholic Ireland as a leader and cornerstone of European Christianity. It was an ambitious project that ‘would re-unite at least “in effigie” hundreds of objects which are scattered over more than half Europe and it would show them against the European background ... what Early Christian Ireland means in the European context’.¹⁰⁰ However, the ambitious scale of the project may have been its downfall and despite the Ministers for Education and Finance considering the proposal it never materialised.¹⁰¹ Although deterred by the practicalities, of garnering the loans of these rare exhibits, the IFSG obviously saw merit in a proposal, which reflected a shared European Catholic heritage and aspirations, and in 1931 they provided funding for an official government publication illustrating the same material.¹⁰² The proposal for the ‘production of the volume illustrating early Christian art in Ireland’ was lavish, with anticipated costs of £1,500, and merited a special sub-head in the government estimates.¹⁰³ The book was authored by Adolf Mahr and published by the

head of the Dublin Branch of the Nazi Party's Auslandsorganisation (1934-38). For details of Mahr see Gerry Mullins, *Dublin Nazi No. 1: the life of Adolf Mahr*, (Dublin: Liberties Press, 2007). Dom Louis Gougau (1877-1941) was a French born Benedictine priest and author who published texts on Gaelic pioneers of Christianity and the work and influence of Irish Monks and saints in Continental Europe in the early 20th centuries.

⁹⁹ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/14. Letter from Senator Eileen Costello to President W. T. Cosgrave. 9th Jul. 1931.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/14. Letter from Private Secretary for Minister for Education to Private Secretary to the President. 17th Jul. 1931.

¹⁰² NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/15. Eucharistic Congress, 1932: publication of volume illustrating early Christian Art in Ireland. Letter from T.P. Le Fanu, Secretary, Polite Literature & Antiquities Committee, RIA to Secretary to the President. 2nd Jun. 1931.

Adolf Mahr with the collaboration of the Royal Irish Academy, edited on behalf of the government of the Irish Free State, *Christian Art in Ancient Ireland, Selected Objects Illustrated and Described*. Vol. 1. (Dublin: Stationery office of Saorstát Éireann, 1932).

¹⁰³ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/15. Stationary and Printing Vote. Page 22.

Stationary Office and a special production bound in red morocco was presented to Cardinal Lauri (figure 152).¹⁰⁴

The archives show that the President through the Minister for Education, made representations to have St. Patrick's bell¹⁰⁵ borrowed from the RIA collection for use 'on the occasion of the celebration of High Mass in the Park'.¹⁰⁶ Despite its antiquity and fragility, arrangements were made for the loan. This was seen as a powerful and tangible symbol of the continuum of Irish faith from the past to 1932 – representing Ireland as both a new Catholic State and an ancient Catholic nation before a world-wide audience. It also represented the commemoration of the sesquimillennial anniversary of Patrick's arrival to Ireland, creating a distinctive Catholic Irish dimension to the international event. As Bhreathnach-Lynch noted, 'In a historic sense, Catholicism was seen to be truly Irish because its origins were rooted in the fifth century, a pre-invasion period'.¹⁰⁷

Some small private exhibitions took place such as that held by An Túr Gloine at their premises on Upper Pembroke Street (figure 153). Showcasing their work in glass and mosaic, the display was specifically targeted at the Eucharistic Congress clerical attendees all of whom were potential customers. A. E. Child was on hand to talk to visitors and explain the samples on show by artists Michael Healy, Sarah Purser, Ethel Rhind and Catherine O'Brien.¹⁰⁸ A display of eleven windows bound for Phoenix, Arizona highlighted their abilities to service an international market.

¹⁰⁴ NAI. DFA/2/35/69. Proposal to present Dr. Mahr's "Christian Art in Ancient Ireland" to Cardinal Lauri. Letter from Secretary to the President to Secretary, Department of External Affairs. 27th July, 1932. Volume 2 of *Christian Art in Ancient Ireland* was not published until 1941.

¹⁰⁵ The bell is now in the NMI whose website dates it to 8th-9th century AD. 'This bell is reputed to have belonged to St. Patrick. It is made of two sheets of iron which are riveted together and coated with bronze. This bell is frequently mentioned in written sources as one of the principal relics of Ireland'. See [https://www.museum.ie/Archaeology/Exhibitions/Current-Exhibitions/The-Treasury/Gallery-1-Iron-Age-to-12th-Century/The-Bell-of-St-Patrick-and-its-Shrine-\(1\)](https://www.museum.ie/Archaeology/Exhibitions/Current-Exhibitions/The-Treasury/Gallery-1-Iron-Age-to-12th-Century/The-Bell-of-St-Patrick-and-its-Shrine-(1))

¹⁰⁶ NAI. TSCH/3/S6005/13. Eucharistic Congress, 1932: use of St Patrick's Bell (R.I.A). President W. T. Cosgrave to Senator Farren, Eucharistic Congress committee member, 10th Apr. 1931.

¹⁰⁷ Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*. 103.

¹⁰⁸ Anon. "Stained Glass Art – work done to promote it", *Irish Independent*, 21st Jun. 1932. 7.

The Society of Dublin Painters held a ‘special’ exhibition of contemporary Irish art in their St. Stephen’s Green gallery ‘to enable foreign visitors [to the Congress] to have some idea of what this group is producing’.¹⁰⁹ It is known from a newspaper report that Harry Kernoff exhibited a view of Rathmines Church, however given the profile of the artists involved, including Mainie Jellett, Evie Hone and Grace Henry, it is probable that the focus of the majority of works was modern and not religious.¹¹⁰

In the Paris 1922 exhibition discussed in chapter two, Irish artists and politicians shared political aspirations for the emerging state, and the IFSG sought political advantage by funding the show. Now ten years later, as the State - and quasi-State organisations - used the Eucharist Congress for its own national and international political ends, artist’s works were being dovetailed into the State’s agenda of declaring a Catholic identity and its loyalty to Rome. The extent to which artists bought into same varied as they balanced the need to promote their work and serve a growing national and international religious market with their own faith and agendas. Paul Henry, a protestant, would have had little personal empathy with Catholicism, however, he knowingly drew on the ancient church to create a design for the ITA. Whelan a devout Catholic received three attractive opportunities, the legate portrait, the Haverty commission and *Our Lady, Queen of Ireland* for Gill publishers. However, unlike Paris, where culture and art was integral to the political, in the Eucharistic Congress both politicians and art were subservient to the Roman Catholic Church. Ireland’s religiosity and mythical greatness in the past and her aspirations for the future were enduringly joined through the Congress.

Among the exhibits were Michael Healy etchings and his window for Strandtown Church, Belfast, the Geddes designed St. Brendan window previously shown at the 1928 Tailteann Art exhibition, and both windows and mosaics by Ethel Rhind.

¹⁰⁹ Anon. “Dublin Painters – group exhibition for Congress visitors”, *Irish Press*, 7th Jun. 1932. 4. See chapter one for more on Society of Dublin Painters. To date a catalogue has not been traced for this exhibition.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. Exhibitors listed, included Grace Henry, Charles Lamb, Letitia & Eva Hamilton, Maurice McGonigal, Harriett Kirkwood, Evie Hone, Hilda Roberts and Mainie Jellett.

5.2.5 Eucharistic Congress conclusion.

The Eucharistic Congress and the recognition by the Vatican, a sovereign state, of Ireland as a Catholic country and a political entity was important to the IFSG. This was evidenced by the internal political considerations and diplomatic mission to present a gift to Pope Pius XI and the support for the event across the Irish political divide. It had economic potential beyond hosting the week itself, it showcased Ireland and its culture to the world and said the country was safe for tourists and open for business. The Congress was modern in presentation and event management with superb illuminations and modern radio broadcasts. Mirroring the strengthening ties between the Irish State and the Catholic Church in the 1930s, the Dun Emer 'Pope's carpet' was installed in the Vatican, in time for the Eucharistic Congress. Hosting the spectacle became an enduring and crowning achievement for the new De Valera-led government.

5.3 Aonach Tailteann 1932.

The 1932 Aonach Tailteann opened on the 29th June, just three days after the Congress closed.¹¹¹ Almost inevitably, attendances suffered coming so soon after such a popular event, however, the associated art exhibition, brought forward in the schedule, benefited.

The 1932 games were in trouble before they started when ‘Gael in the States ha[d] decided to boycott Aonach Tailteann while the Constitution (Amendment) Act [wa]s in force’.¹¹² The Amendment Act – giving emergency powers to the government - was seen as Cumann na nGaedheal partisan legislation. However, recognising the political, cultural and economic value of the event, the newly incumbent De Valera agreed to help the Tailteann organisers, and the boycott was reversed following statements by him to the Irish press supporting the event whole-heartily. He further encouraged participation in the Aonach in his St. Patrick’s Day American broadcast and his support was greatly appreciated by the organisers.¹¹³ That President De Valera and Fianna Fáil were favourably disposed to the 1932 Tailteann was further evidenced by the granting of a loan of £1,000 to the organisers. Government departments facilitated the participation of civil servants in, and organising Tailteann events, and the President and ministers attended the opening night ceilidhe in the Mansion House, visually associating the new government with the event.¹¹⁴ De Valera cleared his appointments for the day and agreed to open the Games,

¹¹¹ The games ran for 12 days, 29th Jun. to 10th Jul. 1932. The 1928 event lasted 15 days and 1924 event 16 days.

¹¹² TSCH/3/S8971. Tailteann Games, 1932. Letter from C. Gifford Wilson, Secretary, Aonach Tailteann to Éamon De Valera, TD, President, IFS. 4th Mar. 1932. This was the Constitution (Amendment No. 17) Act 1931 which empowered the Executive Council to declare a state of emergency, suspend most provisions of the constitution, and deploy extra security measures. De Valera’s government repealed this act later in 1932 but re-introduced it the following year.

¹¹³ TSCH/3/S8971. Numerous letters between the Tailteann Organisers and De Valera. See in particular a letter from C. Gifford Wilson, to Éamon De Valera, TD, President, IFS. 16th Mar. 1932. De Valera also hoped visitors would, ‘find entertainment and interest in the National Games’, in Éamon de Valera, “Presidents extends Cead Mile Failte to visitors to Ireland” in *Irish Travel*, vol. 7, no. 10, June 1932. 217. Tailteann organisers believed the games would not have happened without De Valera’s intervention.

¹¹⁴ TSCH/3/S8971. Extract from Cabinet Minutes, Cab. 6/29, 23-24.5.32, item No. 8. Tailteann Games. TSCH/3/S8971. Manuscript note confirming attendance at the Mansion House ceilidhe on letter from Seán óg O’Ceallaigh, 27th June, 1932.

Anon. “Tailteann Ceilidhe”, *Irish Press*, 29th Jun. 1932. 5.

Anon. “Ceilidhe Tailteann”, *Irish Press*, 30th Jun. 1932. 7.

ultimately the ceremonial opening was performed by Cardinal MacRory in De Valera's presence (figure 133).¹¹⁵ His government lent considerable support to ensure the 1932 games happened and in a further show of support for the final incarnation of the Aonach Tailteann the Ceann Comhairle and five government ministers also attended the opening.¹¹⁶ As already mentioned, in comparison Cumann na nGaedheal politicians were notable by their absence at the opening in 1928.¹¹⁷

As for the two previous Aonachs, Croke Park was the setting for the opening ceremony, and many of the sporting events. Around one thousand competitors from various sporting and cultural sectors gathered nearby in Holy Cross College, Clonliffe, dressed in their uniforms and marched into the stadium under their respective banners. As in previous years, RHA members, including Dermot O'Brien, Oliver Sheppard and James Crampton Walker, represented art and arts and crafts (figure 154). The pageant, heralded by a fanfare of trumpets, was led by two youths, 'dressed in native costume, leading two Irish wolfhounds... followed by Queen Tailté and her court... all dressed in native costumes'.¹¹⁸

Despite having a very full daily programme with a comprehensive range of events including Irish art and arts and crafts, dramatic arts, Irish dancing and music, a full range of swimming, athletic and team sports, speed boating and motor-cycling – attendances were down and the spectacle didn't garner as much enthusiasm as previously.¹¹⁹ As well as

¹¹⁵ TSCH/3/S8971. Letter from Private Secretary of President De Valera to Aonach Tailteann secretary. May, 1932 and earlier correspondence. De Valera cancelled an earlier appointment in order to attend and while he agreed to open the event a hand-written note on the letter indicated his deference to MacRory.

¹¹⁶ The seven senior political figures who attended were, Eamon de Valera, President, Sean T. O'Kelly, Vice-president, Frank Aiken, Minister for Defence, Sean Lemass, Minister for Industry & Commerce, Thomas Derrig, Minister for Education, TJ Ruttledge, Minister for Land & Fisheries and Ceann Comhairle, Frank Fahy,

¹¹⁷ Although Cumann na nGaedheal instigated and were completely supportive of the Aonach Tailteann, in 1928, President Cosgrave and various government ministers did not attend the opening of the event and were represented by their parliamentary secretaries. Non-attendance may have been an attempt to depoliticise the event which was aligned to the pro-treaty party. Fianna Fáil had abandoned abstentionism and re-entered the Dáil in 1927 and De Valera, then leader of the party and numerous other TDs were present in 1928.

¹¹⁸ Anon. "The Tailteann Games", *Irish Times*, 2nd Jul. 1932. 18.

¹¹⁹ NLI. AA16118. *Tailteann Games, June 29 - July 10, 1932. : Daily programme. Wed. July 6th - Sun. July 10th.*

being overshadowed by the Congress, the 1932 Aonach also suffered because it didn't dovetail with that year's Olympics. The 1924 games ran after the Paris Olympics and had attracted American-Irish athletes and others returning home to stop off and participate in Dublin. The 1928 Tailteann similarly gained from the Amsterdam Olympics. The 1932 Olympics took place in Los Angeles after the Tailteann, so not alone were other nation's Olympic participants unable to attend, Irish Olympians were also absent.¹²⁰

The one exception to the poor attendances was the Tailteann Exhibition of Irish Arts which, as noted, had an extended run as the organisers had opened the exhibition during the Eucharistic Congress, giving a boost to press coverage and attendances.¹²¹ As discussed in the previous section, the highlight of the show was the exhibition of the three paintings of St. Patrick commissioned by the Haverty Trust. In total there were 806 works exhibited in the RDS, 276 in Group A, Drawing and Painting, and the remainder in the Arts and Crafts and Art Industries group. Although there were considerably fewer works than had been exhibited in 1922 and 1924, it was an increase on the previous Tailteann show and was the largest exhibition held in the country since the 1924 event.¹²² A press report stated how the government's Aonach Tailteann exhibition had 'retrieved the position' of Irish visual art, allowing thousands of visitors to see 'more than 800 high quality and interesting works of Irish artists and craftsmen'.¹²³

Coinciding with the Fianna Fáil government's support for the event, this was the first Tailteann art exhibition that Jack Yeats and Estella Solomons had exhibited in since the 1922 show, and Yeats' presence was noted by the papers.¹²⁴ His submission *Darrynane*

¹²⁰ The 1932 Olympics took place in Los Angeles from 30th Jul. to 14th Aug.

¹²¹ Anon. "Aonach Tailteann – Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts", *Irish Times*, 20th Jun. 1932. 12. The 1932 Tailteann Exhibition of Irish Arts ran from 18th Jun. to 10th Jul. 1932.

¹²² There were 2,163 exhibits in 1922, 1,597 in 1924, 508 in 1928 and 806 in 1932.

¹²³ "Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts" in *Weekly Irish Times*, 25th Jun. 1932. 6.

Appendix 9 lists the 1932 prize winners in the various classes at the 1932 Tailteann art exhibition.

¹²⁴ "Fine examples of Irish art" in *Sunday Independent*, 19th Jun. 1932. 9.

"Aonach Tailteann, Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts" in *Irish Times*, 20th Jun. 1932. 12.

"Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts" in *Weekly Irish Times*, 25th Jun. 1932. 6.

(1927), an oil described as a ‘fine sea, rock and cloud symposium’ (figure 154) won the landscape and seascape class.¹²⁵ He finished third in the Genre section behind Margaret Clarke’s, *St. Patrick* painting and Beatrice Glenavy’s oil, *The Intruder* (1931), a work now considered her masterpiece (figure 156).¹²⁶ Clarke was also awarded first in the portraiture class and Glenavy won for sculpture in the round. Reflecting the zeitgeist of the Eucharistic Congress, paintings with a religious theme, were placed in a separate section even though that class didn’t exist and there were no awards.¹²⁷ Landscape was the largest class again with a number of the Genre section entries also set in an Irish landscape, many were ‘reminders of the West’.¹²⁸ Writing in January 1932, Brinsley MacNamara (1890-1963) novelist, playwright and the registrar of the National Gallery of Ireland, identified ten members of the ‘unquestionabl[e] movement in Irish art’, nine of whom exhibited fifty-three works in this last Tailteann exhibition.¹²⁹ This provided a consistency with the three previous Tailteann art exhibitions in again exemplifying the existence of an Irish school of art based on landscape and place. This supplement also notes the success by Irish stained glass in getting a greater share of the home market, ‘[d]uring the past three or four years home manufactures [of stained glass and ecclesiastical work] have grown in appreciation to the extent that foreign imports have fallen by fifty percent’.¹³⁰ It is reasonable to assume

Solomons exhibited two portraits of writers Austin Clarke and F. R. Higgins and two paintings in the Landscape and Seascape class, *The Avenue* and *The Stream*. She was not a prize-winner.

¹²⁵ “Aonach Tailteann, Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts” in *Irish Times*, 20th Jun, 1932. 12.

Jack Yeats print design by the Cuala were exhibited in all Tailteann exhibitions. As has been noted, Yeats and Solomons did not take part in any State supported exhibition, while Cumann na nGaedheal were in power.

¹²⁶ Clarke won the Tailteann trophy – effectively making her the overall winner in the painting classes. *The Intruder* is now considered Glenavy’s masterpiece (see Joseph McBrinn in Sotheby’s Fine Art Catalogue, 11th Sep. 2018 (Lot 30), and Nicola Gordon Bowe in De Veres Fine Art Catalogue, 27th Nov. 2013 (lot 9))

¹²⁷ Bluebird, “Round the World and Home”, *Weekly Irish Times*, 25th Jun, 1932. 5.

¹²⁸ “Fine examples of Irish art” in *Sunday Independent*, 19th Jun. 1932. 9.

¹²⁹ Brinsley MacNamara, “Section 12: Literature and Art”, in *Saorstát Éireann Irish free State 1921-1931, A decade of Progress*, a supplement to *Irish Times*, 21st Jan. 1932. 82,86.

MacNamara cites William Orpen as a major influence and name checks, Jack B. Yeats, John (Sean) Keating, Paul Henry, Charles Lamb, Maurice MacGonigal, Sean O’Sullivan and adds ‘less characteristically “national”’ Harry Kernoff, Leo Whelan, Hilda Roberts, Grace Henry and ‘a host of others’ not named.

¹³⁰ Brinsley MacNamara, “Section 12: Literature and Art”, in *Saorstát Éireann Irish free State 1921-1931, A decade of Progress*, a supplement to *Irish Times*, 21st Jan. 1932. 86.

that the promotion of Irish religious art produced by Irish artists and collectives, discussed previously, was at least partly responsible. The classes relating to stained glass saw awards go to Charles Simmonds and Richard J. King both connected to the Harry Clarke Studios, and Wilhelmina Geddes and Hubert McGoldrick both of An Túr Gloine (figure 157). This was the first year that Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone won awards, and these along with other awardees, King, Geddes, Kathleen Cox, Margaret Clarke, Nano Reid, Hilda Roberts pointing to an acceptance of more modern work. Jellett and Hone entered in the “decorative painting and schemes of decoration” class, which mainly consisted of designs and murals for churches. In a review of this exhibition their works were described as ‘works of futuristic statements’.¹³¹ These two artists, employing a modernist approach in religious themes and decorative schemes were informing and attracting audiences to progressive contemporary art.¹³² Art and arts and crafts classes were redolent of previous Tailteann exhibitions and representative of contemporary work produced in the IFS. Press coverage was extensive and positive, almost always focusing on the Haverty commissions, and the exhibition’s contribution to the Eucharistic Congress. These reports also noted ‘beautiful paintings’, the ‘gifted artist’ and some ‘outstanding’ crafts.¹³³ Catching the zeitgeist, religiosity and Saint Patrick was a dominant theme across all exhibition areas. Apart from the Haverty commissions, Patrick alongside other saints and religious exhibits appeared in many media, including paintings, drawing, sculpture, sculpture in relief, stained glass, jewellery, embroidery, architectural and other classes.¹³⁴ Newspapers reported that ‘many exhibitors had their work purchased’.¹³⁵ Of special note were three ‘outstanding’ Stations of the Cross designed by the artist Brigid O’Brien and embroidered

¹³¹ “Exhibition of Irish Arts and Crafts” in *Weekly Irish Times*, 25th Jun. 1932. 6.

¹³² In the first Tailteann Art Exhibition in 1922 Jellett exhibited *Portrait* and *Nude*, both oils.

¹³³ See for example “Fine examples of Irish art” in *Sunday Independent*, 19th Jun. 1932. 9.

¹³⁴ Exemplified in works by John Lavery, Clarke and An Tur Gloine studio artists, John J. Robinson, Morris Harding, Rosamond Praeger, Lily Yeats of Cuala Industries and many others.

¹³⁵ “Art Exhibition, Irish paintings on view” in *Irish Independent*, 20th Jun. 1932. 4.

by Lily Yeats.¹³⁶ These were purchased by an American Catholic Church patron, Genevieve Garvan Brady, who also commissioned the remaining eleven Stations, from Lily Yeats (figure 158).¹³⁷ The remaining designs were planned to be ‘drawn by Mr. [Jack] Yeats and Miss O’Brien’.¹³⁸

The climate of dominant Catholicism - created by the Eucharistic Congress and the St. Patrick celebrations and which remained for decades - was widely reflected in the art exhibition and with the Haverty commissions entering public collections. Following these events, Catholicism - with its lineage in Ireland stretching back to pre-colonial times, alongside its international agency and reach – was harnessed politically by the Irish government, and became a potent symbol of Irish national identity.

5.3.1 The end of the Aonach Tailteann scheme.

In any event, 1932 was the last incarnation of the Aonach Tailteann. Many reasons have been posited to explain the cancellation, some believe an Olympic scale event needs rotation to maintain freshness and enthusiasm.¹³⁹ The Games were loss-making and other commentators believe that Fianna Fáil sabotaged the event because it was too closely aligned with Cumann na nGaedheal.¹⁴⁰ However, De Valera and Fianna Fáil’s private and public backing of the event in 1932 hardly supports this interpretation. Whatever the role of party politics during earlier iterations, it was politics within sporting bodies that finally

¹³⁶ Ibid.

See also, “Fine examples of Irish art” in *Sunday Independent*, 19th Jun. 1932. 9.

The first three Stations were proposed by W. B. Yeats to his sister, in 1931, and he saw them as a commercial opportunity arising out of the religious celebrations, ‘not after my own heart & meant for a pious market’, is how he described them in a letter to Olivia Shakespear (Nov, 1931). They were priced at just under £16. See also WB Yeats letter to Lady Gregory, (10 Mar. 1931) – he paid O’Brien for the designs.

¹³⁷ These were commissioned by Genevieve Garvan Brady, who along with her husband Nicholas, were major church benefactors, and she commissioned these stations for the Novitiate of St. Isaac Jogues, Wernersville, Pennsylvania, United States, now known as Jesuit Center, Wernersville.

¹³⁸ Bluebird, “Round the world and home”, *Weekly Irish Times*, 9th Jul. 1932. 3. In the end Brigid O’Brien completed all the designs, none appear to be by Jack B. Yeats.

WB Yeats in another letter to Olivia Shakespear (30th Jun. 1932) celebrated his part in this American commission ‘I have had that rarest of things a success in my own family’.

¹³⁹ This is evidenced by the Olympics, World Cups in Soccer and Rugby and other major sporting spectacles that are rotated between different countries.

¹⁴⁰ Paul Rouse, *Sport & Ireland A History*, (Oxford: OUP, 2015) 254, 255.

scuppered any prospect of another installation of the Aonach before World War Two.¹⁴¹

This was the same impasse that prevented Ireland from participating in the 1936 Berlin Olympics.¹⁴² A myriad of sporting organisations emerged, all claiming to represent - all of Ireland, 26 county and 6 county athletes and cyclists and others - but essentially there were two main competing athletic and cycling bodies: the National Athletics and Cycling Association of Ireland (NACA) an all-Ireland/ island body affiliated to the GAA and the Irish Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) a 26 county body affiliated to the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF). If the Aonach Tailteann was held under NACA rules then the IAAF would prevent its members, both Irish and international athletes, taking part, and if the games were held under AAU rules then the GAA wouldn't participate, meaning in effect that having a Tailteann event centred on sport in Ireland had become impossible. Despite this, the Games organisers sought government support and private finance in the form of a public Aonach Tailteann Fund, its trustees being J.J. Walsh, Dermot O'Brien, George Atkinson and Cyril McGough. The presence of two artists reflected their personal public standing, and the importance to the spectacle of the art exhibition and competitions.¹⁴³ According to NAI files, disagreement on athletic representation is cited as the biggest obstacle to holding the Games, with the Minister of Finance fearing that, 'the athletic side of the Aonach would be an absolute failure and that national prestige would suffer'.¹⁴⁴ This file also documents the official government

¹⁴¹ NAI. TSCH/3/S8369, Aonach Tailteann, 1936. The dispute between the athletic bodies is detailed in a four page memo prepared for the Minister of External Affairs by official John Belton, "The Tailteann Games and the Athletic Dispute", 8th Dec. 1938.

¹⁴² For an explanation and analysis of this internal dispute and the reaction of the international IAAF and Olympic committees see, Pearse Reynolds, "'A First-Class Split': Political Conflict in Irish Athletics, 1924-40." In *History Ireland*, Vol. 20, no. 4 (2012). 30-33.

Patrick O'Sullivan, "Ireland & the Olympic Games." In *History Ireland*, Vol. 6, no. 1 (1998): 40-45.

¹⁴³ NAI. TSCH/3/S8369, Aonach Tailteann, 1936. Eamon de Valera, Cardinal MacRory, Dermot O'Brien and W. T. Cosgrave were the Funds patrons (as distinct from trustees). Cyril MacGough was a member of the London Gaelic Athletic Association

¹⁴⁴ NAI. TSCH/3/S8369, Aonach Tailteann, 1936. Various, much of the correspondence is from the current AT Director, J.J. Keane and the former Director J.J. Walsh. In particular, see, memo from Department of Finance to the Secretary, Office of the President, 25th Sep. 1936.

response, which was to commission a report into the feasibility of holding the Games in the future, it was ‘greatly influenced by the existence of the present athletic dispute...’ and responded negatively.¹⁴⁵ The split within the sporting associations, reflected unresolved political divisions and territorial claims arising out of Independence and the Anglo-Irish treaty, more than ten years earlier. This creeping political and cultural separation, between North and South, was also reflected in cultural institutions in the formation of the Royal Ulster Academy (RUA) much to the displeasure of the RHA which saw its remit as all island and considered it served all artists on the island.¹⁴⁶ In reality, a strong relationship would come to exist between both bodies with overlapping members. However, divisions would be exasperated by the IFSG political involvement in selecting art for an Irish exhibition at the Chicago World’s Fair, despite the Irish art establishment’s attempts to negate any such division.

¹⁴⁵ NAI. TSCH/3/S8369, Aonach Tailteann, 1936. Various memos and reports. “Memorandum for the Executive Council. Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Aonach Tailteann”, unsigned from the Department of Finance, circulated with a copy of the report. Undated but Jun. 1937. The report was produced by P. J. Rutledge, Minister for Justice, Tomás Ó Deirg, Minister for Education and Oscar Traynor, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for Defence.

¹⁴⁶ In 1930 the Belfast Art Society became the Ulster Academy of Arts, electing its own academicians, much to the displeasure of the RHA who saw their annual show as a 32 county endeavour. See “President Cosgrave Meets Artists”, *Sunday Independent*, 1st Apr. 1928. 1.

5.4 Irish Art at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair.

The last exhibition and spectacle considered in this research is the exhibition of Irish Art held in association with the Chicago World's Fair, also known as the Century of Progress International Exposition. It was the first IFSG sponsored transatlantic art exhibition and the first international exhibition supported by the new de Valera-led Fianna Fáil government. Unlike the previous cited projects it resulted in a contentious engagement between the State and artists over the selection of art works.

An official invitation to participate in the Fair was issued by the Fair's organisers to the IFSG in January 1930.¹⁴⁷ The event was created as a centenary anniversary celebration of the incorporation of the City of Chicago and a theme to showcase the technological progress made during the previous one hundred years was decided on. The organisers requested both scientific and industrial alongside cultural displays from Ireland and the other participating nations.¹⁴⁸ International involvement would represent the city's immigrant citizens from the many nations that had helped build Chicago, and also it was opined that progress has no boundaries.¹⁴⁹ With the attendance of countries from across the globe, the Fair opened in May 1933.

The exposition's focus on technological innovation as progress was reflected in the Fair's building construction methods and architectural styles. Structures were modernist, featuring clean lines and largely unadorned except for some art deco features of bold geometric and symmetrical shapes - a style popularised at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes 1925 held in Paris. An example of this was the

¹⁴⁷ NAI. DFA 15/12. Invite received by Department of External Affairs from Minister of the USA Legation, Dublin in Jan 1930. The invite originated from Felix Streyckmans, Chief of Foreign Participation for the Fair.

¹⁴⁸ NAI. DFA 15/12. Memo from Dept. of Industry and Commerce to Dept. of Education, 2nd Feb, 1931 and as stated in various official COP Booklets.

¹⁴⁹ Chicago had a large Irish population. It had remained a popular immigration destination for Irish people since the Irish famine of the 1840s. For details of the Irish in Chicago at this time see Lawrence McCaffrey, Ellen Skerrett, Michael Funchion, and Charles Fanning, *The Irish in Chicago*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987). Ireland's first Consul General to Chicago was appointed in 1933.

monumental Travel and Transport Building - with its suspended roof that expanded and contracted by nearly two metres as the temperature varied – this building housed the Irish exhibit (figure 159). A sky ride transported Fair attendees across a lake in rocket-shaped machines. Each previous international fair determined to develop a defining icon - for instance, the Chicago 1893 Fair presented the Ferris Wheel, the Eiffel Tower was built for the 1889 Exposition in Paris and the Skyride was the 1933 icon. Pathé News films of the Fair, shows motorcars travelling on circuits at record speeds, exhibitions of modern-designed homes and varying technological and scientific achievements, all these displays re-enforced the Fair's theme of 'Science Finds, Industry Applies, Man Conforms'.¹⁵⁰ The spectacle embraced modernity, with cutting edge architecture, speed, flight, and all these themes were echoed in the event's advertising posters (figure 160).

The Irish Free State had to position itself in the middle of this exciting, innovative melee and as will be explored, the IFSG's initial response was one of reticence and a reluctance to participate. During early discussions, an anxiety over participation was evident.¹⁵¹ The Irish Free State only officially participated in 1933 as the Fair was originally scheduled to close for good in November 1933 but recognition of the commercial opportunities presented meant it ran again between May and October 1934.¹⁵² However, not allowing a business opportunity pass, private Irish-American entrepreneurs filled the void left by the

¹⁵⁰ *Official Guide Book of the Fair 1933*, (Chicago, A Century of Progress, 1933). 11.

The Skyride allowed visitors to experience progress rather than simply observe it.

Various Pathé News and YouTube films show the buildings and activity of the COP fair. In particular see "Chrysler at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xY8rZN3tyVA> accessed 30/03/2017.

¹⁵¹ NAI. DFA 15/12. World's Fair to be held in Chicago 1933 (Centennial Celebration), General file, includes Interdepartmental Report, "Chicago Fair 1933", dated 23rd Dec. 1932.

¹⁵² The Fair was successful in 1933 but made limited profits, running it for another year without the building and other upfront costs offered the private backers opportunity to make money. 'Planned during the prosperous 1920s to celebrate 100 years of progress since Chicago founding, the fair opened during the Great Depression. Despite financial challenges, planners raised \$27 million to construct the fair, which included 85 buildings over 424 acres. More than 22 million visitors attended in 1933, prompting planners to re-open the exposition in 1934'. See Bill Cotter, *Images of America, Chicago's 1933-34 World's Fair, A Century of Progress*, (Charleston: Arcadia, 2015).

IFS by operating a commercial Irish village in 1934. The consequences of this are discussed later.

5.4.1 Taking Part in the COP.

National Archives of Ireland files detail the invitation to participate and the various reports and memos indicate the Government's torturous considerations over the proposal.

Correspondence in February 1930 between the Irish Department of Industry and Commerce and External Affairs show that the State was initially against participating.¹⁵³

As noted, following the 1932 general election, the sitting Cumann na nGaedheal government was replaced by an Eamon de Valera-led Fianna Fáil in March of that year, so ultimately the decision on Ireland's participation fell to them.¹⁵⁴ A detailed

interdepartmental report was completed on 23rd December, 1932 by representatives from five Government departments¹⁵⁵ including Finance and External Affairs, and it outlined that the civil servants were largely unenthusiastic about participation.¹⁵⁶ It stated that 'little or no advantage would accrue' to industry, it was unlikely 'advantages might be gained' for tourism and the most positive comment was that there was a 'possibility Gaeltacht industries [hand crafts] would profit'.¹⁵⁷ It further stated that any 'industrial display' would not compare well with the 'larger and more ambitious displays of other countries'. The report was considered by the Executive Council on the 30th December, 1932 and it was decided that, despite the pessimistic tone of the report, the State would participate and sought a supplementary estimate of £5,000 to cover costs from the Dáil.¹⁵⁸ The process

¹⁵³ NAI. DFA 15/12. Memo from Dept. of Industry and Commerce to Dept. of External Affairs dated 15th Feb. 1930.

¹⁵⁴ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1090. Letters issued from the Fair's committee to Eamon de Valera, and various ministers encouraging IFS participation. 26th Sep. 1932.

¹⁵⁵ Convened by Industry and Commerce, there were also representatives from the Departments of Finance, External Affairs, Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries.

¹⁵⁶ NAI. DFA 15/12. Interdepartmental Report, "Chicago Fair 1933", dated 23rd Dec. 1932. 7 pages.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ NAI. DFA 15/12. "Extract from Cabinet minutes" dated 30th Dec. 1932.

shows how carefully the Government considered participation in what was its first major transatlantic exposition since Irish Independence.

Most of their considerations were about the negative financial ‘value’ in taking part – tariffs meant there was little trade opportunity apart from the Gaeltacht industry products. Other discussions identified the potential to attract American and diaspora tourists but even then it was argued that spending this money on advertising in the UK and Europe would show a much better return. The Executive Council took a broader view, agreeing with a file memo that stated, ‘considerations such as those connected with national publicity and prestige might outweigh the more tangible considerations of trading advantage’; what would be termed today as, soft power and cultural diplomacy.¹⁵⁹ Essentially, this was an opportunity to demonstrate to the world a new and developing Ireland.

At the time of invitation, the IFSG contact and representative in the US was the Irish Free State Consul General in New York, William Macaulay. He engaged with the project, travelled to Chicago to meet the organisers and was enthusiastic about Irish participation.¹⁶⁰ Macaulay demonstrated that he was aware of the political thinking in Dublin that the government wished to show Ireland as a progressive and modernising state, he stated in a press release,

At former expositions, Ireland reproduced its typical peasant life... But the time has come to show more important aspects of Irish life... Instead of the hand loom, we wish to show the development of our industries since 1922, such things, for instance, as the development of water power from the River Shannon.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ NAI. DFA 15/12. Undated memo “International Exposition Chicago 1933”.

¹⁶⁰ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1089. Correspondence between Macaulay and Felix Streyckmans, Chief of Foreign Participation for the fair dated 4th & 9th Jan. 1933.

The *Official World's Fair Weekly* for week ending May 27, 1933 a pre-fair issue, contains an image of William Macaulay, ‘Irish Free State Consul General, when he visited Chicago’. 21.

The *Official World's Fair Weekly* was published each week during the 1933 run of the fair – publication started before the fair opened at the beginning of May with the issue ending May 6. A number of issues feature items of Irish interest. In UIC. Series XVI: Publications World's Fair Weekly (bound), 1933. Box 4.

¹⁶¹ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1092. Macaulay was cited in an official COP Press Release, dated 12th Feb. 1932.

In November 1932, the appointment of an Irish Consul General in Chicago was under consideration and the first permanent Irish Consulate in Chicago was opened in January 1933, when Daniel J. McGrath was appointed.¹⁶² On his appointment he replaced Macaulay as spokesperson and chief organiser of the Free State's participation in the Exposition.

5.4.2 The Irish Exhibit.

The Irish exhibition located in the Travel and Transport Building was bedecked in the national flag and displayed exhibits representing industry, science, archaeology and contemporary art.¹⁶³ Industry was represented by a model of the Shannon Ardnacrusha hydroelectric power station which had recently been on display in the RDS. Also included was a map outlining the 'distribution of electric current from Ardnacrusha' across the region (figures 161, 162, 163).¹⁶⁴ Included in this section were photographs of Irish industries such as Carroll's cigarette factory in Dundalk and exhibits from the Gaeltacht Industries of hand-woven tweeds and knit wear, and industrially produced Irish goods such as textiles, hosiery and biscuits.¹⁶⁵ Science was represented by academic articles and a book on the Irish-born mathematician, William Rowan Hamilton (1805-1865).¹⁶⁶ Also included were 'photographs of famous Irish-bred racehorses, [and] geological and

¹⁶² NAI, DFA 15/12. Memo dated Nov. 1932. IFS consul his official title in relation to the Irish exhibit was commissioner. The timing of this appointment was undoubtedly linked to the World's Fair. Matthew Murphy (1890-1967) held this Consul role briefly on a temporary basis before McGrath could take up office.

¹⁶³ Contemporary photographs of the exhibition space shows flags hanging above the entrance. Souvenir booklet of photographs titled, *Views from the exhibits of the Irish Free State Government at a Century of Progress Chicago, Ill.*, no date but 1933. Published by the Irish Free State Consulate in Chicago who state on the colophon, 'Every article in this exhibit has been produced or manufactured within the Irish Free State, a country of unequalled beauty and charm. You will want to visit it some day. For full information regarding travel thither apply at any steamship office or at The Irish Free State Consulate...'

¹⁶⁴ NAI, DFA 15/12.

UIC. Box 3 Folder 13-59. UIC. Box 3 Folder 13-67. UIC. Box 4 Folder 13-88. UIC. Box 5 Folder 13-150. UIC. Box 6 Folder 13-205. UIC. Box 8 Folder 13-301. Box 10 Folder 13-446. Between them hold the full shipping records of all goods sent from the IFS to the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. See also "The Chicago Fair", *Irish Independent*, 1st May, 1933. 7.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ William Rowan Hamilton, Arthur William Conway, J. L. Synge, Eds. *The mathematical papers of Sir William Rowan Hamilton*, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1931).

mineralogical specimens'.¹⁶⁷ For the cultural exhibits they considered displaying old manuscripts such as reproductions of the Book of Kells, replicas of artefacts from the National Museum of Ireland and a model of a round tower.¹⁶⁸ As discussed above, these were established icons of Irish cultural history that declared the unique national heritage of the State.

That national pride was at stake is clearly demonstrated in the memos and reports relating to the Fair in the NAI file. Free State government officials were in contact with their British counterparts about exhibiting in Chicago and - although not exhibited - the first Drumm Battery coach¹⁶⁹ was suggested because the 'British Government are sending Stephenson's Rocket'.¹⁷⁰ They further proposed exhibits representing 'Fords of Cork',¹⁷¹ motor manufacturers, and a 'model illustrating some well-known cottage industry' to be juxtaposed with a 'model of some up-to-date woollen mills as the modern development [of the cottage industry]'.¹⁷² The Government was seeking to situate the new Irish Free State as a modern country in the international context of the Fair, whilst acknowledging the existence of, and developments within, its craft heritage.

As it transpired, the State's fear about their industrial exhibits was unfounded as their central industrial display of the Shannon Scheme, the largest hydro-electric station in the world at that time, was a celebrated success. Writing about the Chicago Fair, the *New York Times* reported, 'how [the Irish Free State] transformed the River Shannon ... to a great new power development'.¹⁷³ Earlier the *London Financial Times* commented, that the

¹⁶⁷ "The Chicago Fair", *Irish Independent*, 1st May, 1933. 7.

¹⁶⁸ NAI file DFA 15/12. Minute to The Secretary, Department of Industry and Commerce, 2nd Feb, 1931.

¹⁶⁹ The Drumm Battery Coach was developed by Dr. James J. Drumm in the late 1920s. They were unique industrial-sized rechargeable batteries that powered railcars used on some railways lines in Ireland until the end of World War Two.

¹⁷⁰ NAI file DFA 15/12. Internal Department of Industry and Commerce memo 30th May, 1931.

¹⁷¹ Henry Ford (an American of Irish heritage) and Son Limited opened a tractor and car manufacturing plant in Cork in 1917. They were a very important industry in the IFS and by the 1930's had over 6,000 employees.

¹⁷² NAI file DFA 15/12. Internal Department of Industry and Commerce memo, 30th May, 1931.

¹⁷³ Anon. "World's Fair Opens in Chicago Today;" special supplement to *New York Times*, May 27, 1933.

Scheme broke the Irish ‘inferiority complex’, both articles spoke of a modern forward looking nation.¹⁷⁴

While the pre-Fair interdepartmental report demonstrated that they indeed suffered from an ‘inferior complex’ with regard to any Industrial section of the Fair, the Keeper of Irish Antiquities at the Museum, Adolf Mahr, had no such concerns in relation to the ancient or museum display, which he curated. In a letter to the Department of Education he stated, ‘archaeology is certainly a subject that in which the Irish Free State outshines many other [wealthier] countries’.¹⁷⁵ The Irish exhibit in the ancient section was entitled, ‘A century of progress in Irish archaeology’ and it had exhibits supplied by the National Museum of Ireland, in association with the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.

In the booklet accompanying the archaeology section, Mahr describes the ‘Golden Ages of Ancient Ireland’ as ‘the Early Bronze Age (B.C. 2000 to 1500) and the Early Christian Period (especially from A.D. 600 to 850)’.¹⁷⁶ The display included reproductions of pages from the Book of Kells, photographs of famous antiquities and ‘a plaster cast of the Monasterboice Cross’. Journals by the archaeological societies of Louth, Cork and Cavan and monographs on High Crosses and the Ardagh Chalice, along with other archaeological literature and photographs, were available at the stand.¹⁷⁷ Ancient Irish related exhibits included plaster cast copies of the Ardagh Chalice, Saint Patrick’s Bell (fresh from its cameo at the Eucharistic Congress), the Tara Brooch and other material including recent finds by American archaeologists working in Ireland in the 1930s. Included in the last

¹⁷⁴ Cited on ESB Archives, “An overview of the Shannon Scheme”. Available at <https://esbarchives.ie/2016/02/13/shannon-scheme/> accessed 12/7/2018. Original article December 1928.

¹⁷⁵ NAI. DFA 15/12. Memo to Minister of Education, Thomas Derrig from Adolf Mahr, NMI.

The Department of Education were responsible for the Archaeology display.

¹⁷⁶ Dr. A. Mahr, MRIA, *A Century of Progress in Irish Archaeology*, (Dublin: NMI, 1933?). 4. Note revision of dates today Bronze Age 2500-500BC and Early Christian Period 400-1000AD.

¹⁷⁷ Other replicas made by Mr. J.C. Wallace were displayed. These included the Miosach book shrine, St. Patrick’s Bell Shrine and the Lismore crozier.

category, was a hanging lamp and a yew-wood gaming board recently excavated from a crannóg in Ballinderry, Co. Offaly.¹⁷⁸ The crannóg was excavated in 1932 by academics from Harvard University who carried out a research mission in Ireland between 1931 and 1936, which focused on three strands of Irish culture and history; archaeology, and social and physical anthropology. The mission was led by Earnest Albert Hooton (1887-1954), a prominent American eugenicist of Harvard University, and Mahr was their main Irish advisor and contact.¹⁷⁹ It was Hooton's view that Ireland was an important source of [American] racial inheritance, 'the country of origin of more than one-fifth of the population of the United States'.¹⁸⁰ Using eugenicist language, Mahr wrote in the archaeology exhibition booklet that because Ireland 'never became a Roman province...she saved the unblended genius of the old Celtic race'.¹⁸¹

Including these recently discovered items, made a direct connection with a diasporic American public, and pointed to archaeology as a modern endeavour (figure 164).

Archaeological historian Mairéad Carew has written extensively about these American archaeologists and their Mission in 1930s Ireland in, *The Quest for the Irish Celt*.¹⁸² She asserts that the American archaeological mission and the museum exhibits at Chicago were essentially about showing that 'Ireland was a eugenically fit nation and defining it as a Celtic white European nation of great antiquity'.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ The Archaeology exhibit was a collaboration between the NMI, RIA and the Royal Society of Antiquarians. Details of the exhibits were extracted from Dr. A. Mahr, MRIA, *A Century of Progress in Irish Archaeology*, (Dublin: NMI, 1933?). 3-15 and newspaper reports, Anon. "Reproductions for Chicago Fair", *Irish Press*, 10th Aug. 1933. 11 and Anon. "Saorstát in Chicago", *Irish Independent*, 19th April, 1933. 5.

¹⁷⁹ For an overview of this, see Mairéad Carew, "The Harvard Mission, Eugenics and the Celts" in *History Ireland*. Winter, 2012. 38-40.

¹⁸⁰ Earnest Hooton as quoted in Anne Byrne, Ricca Edmondson and Tony Varley, "Introduction" in *Arensberg and Kimball and Anthropological Research in Ireland*, (Ennis: CLASP, 2001). 17.

¹⁸¹ Dr. A. Mahr, MRIA, *A Century of Progress in Irish Archaeology*, (Dublin: NMI, 1933?). 4. Note that this is now challenged.

¹⁸² Mairéad Carew, *The Quest for the Irish Celt: The Harvard Archaeological Mission to Ireland, 1932–1936*. (Newbridge: IAP, 2018).

¹⁸³ Ibid. 190.

Ryde in *World of fairs: the century-of-progress expositions*, outlines how at the inter-war Fairs colonialism went hand in hand with racism, both overt and tacit, with a eugenics subtext and that in the United States they were effective vehicles for transmitting ideas of scientific racism from intellectual elites to millions of Americans.

Mahr's archaeology booklet incongruously introduces what would become the problematic Irish film, *Man of Aran*, noting it would 'be on the screen in the autumn of the present year'.¹⁸⁴ Photographic stills from the film were exhibited as 'a fine album illustrating Aran [Irish] types, compiled by the well-known cinematographic expert, Mr. O'Flaherty'.¹⁸⁵ The film purported to be a contemporary documentary, but instead depicted anarchic events through the eyes of a family, such as shark-hunting, an activity that had not taken place on the island for centuries. This film cemented the Aran and West of Ireland myth, presenting the location as an authentic and pure Ireland not found elsewhere.¹⁸⁶ The family portrayed in the film were not actually related and instead cast from locals for their photogenic qualities. The stills, contemporary photographs, presented contrived images of a West of Ireland family, racially pure, untainted by the modern world; paradoxically born of the modern American film industry (figure 165). These photographs can be argued provided visitors with more real and more immediate images of a desirable American-Irish racial inheritance than the archaeological finds. Mahr was with the director, Robert J. Flaherty during filming of this movie and probably acted as an ethnographical adviser to him.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore the booklet explains that Thomas Mason's photographs of the 'architectural beauty' and 'natural setting of sites like Newgrange and Dowth... the imposing stone fort of Dun Angus on the Aran Isles... Skellig... etc., etc.,' was the natural setting for these Irish people - a Celtic people, 'a very fine and hardy race' in an ancient setting.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Film directed by American film maker, Robert J. Flaherty about life on the Aran Islands released in 1934. Gaumont British Distributors.

Dr. A. Mahr, MRIA, *A Century of Progress in Irish Archaeology*, (Dublin: NMI, 1933). 13,14.

¹⁸⁵ "Reproductions for Chicago Fair", *Irish Press*, 10th Aug. 1933. 11.

¹⁸⁶ This issue is discussed in chapter one. See also Seamus Deane. "Ultimate Place." Review of *Stones of Aran: Pilgrimage*, by Tim Robinson. *London Review of Books* 11 no. 6 (1989). 9-10

¹⁸⁷ Mairéad Carew, "'The Pageant of the Celt' World's Fair – Irish Archaeology at the Chicago World's Fair, 1933-4" in *History Ireland*, Vol 28., No. 1, Spring 2014. 9-12. 10.

The significance of these photographs is not discussed by Carew.

¹⁸⁸ Dr. A. Mahr, MRIA, *A Century of Progress in Irish Archaeology*, (Dublin: NMI, 1933). 12, 13. Other sites presented included, Glendalough, Monasterboice, Clonmacnoise

The American film director's stills of the authentic Irish type like the artefacts uncovered by the Harvard University archaeologists made a tangible connection with the American public. The final word in the Mahr booklet, like the colophon in the Irish exhibit photographs souvenir booklet, seeks to attract tourists. It encourages Americans to visit the archaeological sites and artefacts in person.¹⁸⁹ The IFS museum display was approved by the Minister for Education, Thomas Derrig.

These ancient exhibits were presented alongside the contemporary arts and crafts items (figures 166, 167, 168). This was a common approach in the exhibitions discussed in this research. The intention was to show modern Irish crafts in a continuum from the Golden Ages as described by the museum, to the present day and ancient craftspeople as antecedents of modern Irish practitioners. This re-enforced the thesis that Ireland was not a new nation, but a country with an ancient heritage which it had reclaimed along with its independence. In a radio interview, Daniel J. McGrath, Irish Consul and Commissioner for Irish participation, said the contemporary arts and crafts showed the same 'delicate perfection of execution' as the older items, examples of 'genius within the race'.¹⁹⁰

They were

a representative assortment of beautiful exhibits from the Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland and the Guild of Irish Art Workers...all evidencing the fact that the tradition of splendid craftsmanship, fineness of execution, beauty of design and sense of color [sic] which made Ireland famous in Early Mediaeval times still lives and flourishes in the Ireland of today.¹⁹¹

The most prevalent theme among the contemporary Arts & Crafts exhibits (about a quarter of the 150 items) was religious, such as stained glass by various artists from the Harry Clarke Studios and the Watson studio, large processional banners by Gertie Grew and the Cluna Studios, vestments by the Dun Emer Guild and various other examples of liturgical

¹⁸⁹ Dr. A. Mahr, MRIA, *A Century of Progress in Irish Archaeology*, (Dublin: NMI, 1933). 15.

¹⁹⁰ Daniel J. McGrath, "Ireland Looks Upward," *Official World's Fair Weekly* 1, no. 26 (Chicago: COP, 1933), 5.

UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1089. Transcript of McGrath Radio Interview to Station WGN, 23rd Apr. 1933.

¹⁹¹ Daniel J. McGrath, "Irish Free State" in *Chicago: a century of progress, 1833-1933*, (Chicago: Marquette, 1933). 84.

art.¹⁹² A number of the exhibits had previously been shown in the 1932 Tailteann art exhibition. All served to emphasise the distinctiveness of Ireland's heritage as the island of saints and scholars, a condition reflected in the success of the Eucharistic Congress a year earlier and which underpinned the country's historical and contemporary associations with the Catholic Church. Among the other items, many were of neo-Celtic design, some which included a re-configuring of insular motifs as seen in examples of Irish lace and metalwork. Other works on display included, numerous hand-printed images of primarily scenes of everyday rural Irish life by the Cuala Industries and others.¹⁹³ Some of the Cuala and to a lesser extent Cluna Studio craft items celebrated Ireland's literature with letterpress books and hand-coloured prints featuring work by Irish writers, such as, W. B. Yeats, Frank O'Connor and George Russell (AE).¹⁹⁴ Ireland's wider story-telling heritage was recalled in a Cuala embroidery of the *Abbey Theatre* and a hand-coloured print of a traditional Irish bard, *The Shanachie* (figures 169, 170). The arts and crafts exhibition was managed by Gertie Grew of the Cluna Studios.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² A&C catalogue compiled by the author from shipping records (op. cit.) - see Appendix 17 for list of exhibits.

Daniel J. McGrath, "Irish Free State" in *Chicago: a century of progress, 1833-1933*, (Chicago: Marquette, 1933). 84-85.

The two processional banners, both in appliqued poplin, were designed by Kathleen Quigley (St. Patrick design) and Margaret (Daisy) O'Keefe (Madonna and Child) and embroidered by Grew. Grew won first prize for the same works in the 1932 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition, Coloured Embroidery class.

Dun Emer made similar vestments for the clergy celebrating the Eucharistic Congress mass in the Phoenix Park in 1932. These were exhibited in the RDS library in 2012 and erroneously attributed to the Yeats sisters and Cuala Industries.

¹⁹³ UIC. A&C catalogue compiled by the author from shipping records. Exhibited prints were by, Dorothy Blackham, Kathleen Quigley, J. Fitzharris, Margaret O'Keefe, Elizabeth Yeats, Phillis Godfrey, C. B. Simmonds and Olive Henning.

¹⁹⁴ Cuala prints included *The Shanachie* and *The Tinker* by J.B. Yeats and *The Fiddler of Dooney* by George Atkinson, Broadside of W.B. Yeats' *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* and books by Frank O'Connor, *The Wild Birds Nest* (1932) and W.B. Yeats, *New Stories by Michael Roberts and his friends* (1931) and *Words for Music Perhaps* (1932) all printed by Elizabeth Yeats and assistants. Embroidered pictures of *The Abbey Theatre*, *The Custom House* and *The Cork Garden* were by Lily Yeats. Cluna Studios (Margaret O'Keefe) exhibited illustrated broadside poems by George Russell (AE) and others.

¹⁹⁵ Gertrude (Gertie) Grew was born in 1883 and studied at School of Art in Belfast, at the Royal College of Art in London and at the College of Art Dublin in 1921, her address at this stage was in Leeson Street. She founded the arts and crafts enterprise, Cluna Studios, 39 Harcourt Street in 1922, Margaret (Daisy) O'Keefe joined Cluna soon after it was set up. Both exhibited with Cluna in the 1922 RDS Tailteann art exhibition. Grew won a medal for ceramics at the Tailteann Exhibition in 1924 and joined the Guild of Irish Art Workers in 1925. Grew was one of the main organisers of the 1925 Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland exhibition. She also operated an arts and crafts store, the Dublin Art Shop, 54 Dawson Street in the 1930/40s, the Cluna Studios also moved to this premises. A multi award winner at the all the Tailteann Games, Grew delivered a

5.4.3 No thatched cottages.

The exhibition of Irish art had seventy-seven works (sixty-nine oils, six watercolours and two etchings) by forty artists.¹⁹⁶ These works received favourable comment in the media and were described by McGrath, as ‘a large collection of paintings by our great modern artists’.¹⁹⁷ There were twelve portraits, but unlike in Paris, there were none of politicians, suggesting that the Irish Free State was now a well-established entity that no longer needed public affirmation and\ or that its political figures were known among the leaders of the world (figure 171).¹⁹⁸ The Paris exhibition contained numerous, mostly contemporary political portraits, and political history paintings referencing the Easter Rising and the War of Independence. However, as discussed earlier, in the exhibitions that followed the Civil War such paintings were almost completely absent. This war had fractured society and part of the State’s nation building and reconciliation project was the avoidance of anything that would re-open old wounds, or inflame the tensions created by a change of government the previous year when press reports raised the spectre of another civil war.¹⁹⁹ Artists now avoided painting subjects relating to conflict. Furthermore, any suggestion of internal divisions or conflict within the State at an international exhibition such as Chicago risked losing the diplomatic and soft power advantage of positive ‘national publicity and prestige’.²⁰⁰

Responsibility for selecting the art exhibits was passed to the RHA and in particular its President Dermod O’Brien, a stalwart of State exhibitions to date. He received a request ‘to arrange works of art for exhibition at the Chicago Fair in a fortnight’s time’ on behalf of

talk on the Radio (2RN) on the 1932 Arts and Crafts Tailteann Games exhibition. She died 16th May, 1976, her address was St Mary’s Road, Dublin 4, her sister who lived with her died two years earlier.

¹⁹⁶ *A Century of Progress, Exhibition of Irish Art, 1933*. Catalogue, (Chicago: Century of Progress, 1933).

¹⁹⁷ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1089. Transcript of McGrath Radio Interview to Station WGN, 23rd Apr. 1933.

¹⁹⁸ *A Century of Progress, Exhibition of Irish Art, 1933*. Catalogue. 5-7.

¹⁹⁹ For example see, Anon. “Peaceful election” in *Strabane Chronicle*, 26th Mar. 1932. 6. See also, Barry Sheppard, “A Civil War as a sort of side-show?” (24th June, 2019).

²⁰⁰ NAI. DFA 15/12. Undated memo “International Exposition Chicago 1933”.

Sean Lemass, the Minister for Industry and Commerce.²⁰¹ The letter arrived on the 22nd March, 1933 and it appears O'Brien tried to use the urgency and short notice of the request as leverage to have a Government reduction in the RHA grant reversed.²⁰²

The letter stated that RHA members Leo Whelan and Sean O'Sullivan and 'an officer of the Department' representing the Minister – an unnamed civil servant - would make up the selection committee.²⁰³ From archive material the person is revealed as Philip Dempsey. Dempsey's appointment indicated that the government - and not the artists - would control and manage the selection of images. The initial invite to O'Brien stated a space of '1,569 square feet has been reserved for the display of Free State goods ... [and that it is] highly desirable that there should be a representative display of pictures by living Irish artists'.²⁰⁴

As President of the RHA, O'Brien took responsibility for all correspondence with the artists and with the Department.²⁰⁵ There is substantial correspondence with the exhibiting artists on file over art works selected and rejected. O'Brien sought clarification on costs, arrangements for display and whether 'living Irish artists' included Irish artists living outside the Free State.²⁰⁶ The Department replied to each point and confirmed they would meet all costs and other needs, it added that Irish artists 'not ordinarily resident in the Free State [were welcome to participate], provided that the selected exhibits are of Free State interest'.²⁰⁷ O'Brien drew up a list of suitable artists.²⁰⁸ A formal invite letter was prepared

²⁰¹ RHA O'Brien archive. Letters from Dermot O'Brien to various artists requesting them to submit work for exhibition in Chicago World's Fair, 1933. Most dated 29th Mar. 1933.

²⁰² "Cultural Societies' Losses." *Irish Times*, 8th Apr. 1933. 10. It is not known if he was successful.

²⁰³ The Department of Industry and Commerce representative was Philip Dempsey a civil servant, the other committee members were artists and RHA members Dermot O'Brien, Leo Whelan and Sean O'Sullivan. See RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from John Leydon, Secretary, Department of Industry and Commerce to Dermot O'Brien. Dated 22nd Mar. 1933.

²⁰⁴ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from Department of Industry and Commerce to Dermot O'Brien, 22nd Mar. 1933.

²⁰⁵ The Department of Industry and Commerce was responsible for organising the exhibits for the Chicago World's Fair 1933. Sean Lemass was the Minister.

²⁰⁶ RHA O'Brien archive. Draft handwritten note by O'Brien for the Dept. of Industry and Commerce, 24th Mar. 1933.

²⁰⁷ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter to Dermot O'Brien from Dept. of Industry and Commerce, 28th Mar. 1933.

²⁰⁸ RHA O'Brien archive. Hand written note by O'Brien identifying potential artists for exhibit. Undated.

by the Department, with O'Brien's input. This was signed by him and sent to each artist who was asked to submit no more than two or three works for consideration. The turnaround time from the date on the letter to having the pictures delivered to the School of Art in Dublin was just over a week. One of the artists invited, Paul Henry, complained that to get 'a really good representative show ... takes months of preparation' by both organisers and artists.²⁰⁹

The requested art works were delivered by the participating artists to the Metropolitan School of Art, however a number of paintings were rejected for not meeting the criteria mandated by the Department.²¹⁰ Specifically, the rejection letters sent by O'Brien to the artists concerned stated that 'representations of Irish life as emanating from thatched cottages' were not acceptable, also rejected were paintings interpreted as 'advertising beauty spots in the Six Counties'.²¹¹ Frank McKelvey's painting of a County Antrim beauty spot was rejected (figure 173). Invited artist William Conor (1881-1968) had two paintings rejected. One depicted 'an Orange procession' and the other, ship-builders – which included a detail, 'that might have represented' a small Union Jack flag. Neither subject was deemed, 'in the opinion of the Minister's representative, of Free State interest' (figures 172).²¹² Conor had a painting of an orange procession exhibited at the Paris IRC exhibition of Irish Art in 1922, but the political agenda had now changed.

Images of the frugal comforts of a thatched cottage life, a motif that artists had continued to use as an icon of Irish rural life, were now thought by the Department to represent poverty and a lack of progress and were therefore excluded. James Humbert Craig had his painting *Muckish, Co. Donegal* which included images of thatched cottages rejected but his painting *Cloud Shadows, The Rosses, Co. Donegal* without the cottages was accepted

²⁰⁹ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from Paul Henry to Dermot O'Brien, 1st Apr. 1933.

²¹⁰ John Lavery declined to submit and Robert Gibbings entries were received too late for consideration.

²¹¹ RHA O'Brien archive. Letters from Dermot O'Brien to various artists who had works rejected, 19th and 24th May, 1933.

²¹² RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from Dermot O'Brien to William Conor, 19th Apr. 1933.

(figures 174). O'Brien's letter stated that he contested the rejections and he sympathised with the artists implying clearly that he had his hand forced by the Government Department.²¹³ He said

It seems childish and I think any artist who had his work rejected on these grounds has a very definite grievance, for that was not made clear in the letter which was drafted by the Ministry for circularising the artists who, in many cases, might have found among their works pictures which would more easily conform to the Minister's wishes.²¹⁴

Despite his own involvement in drafting the invitation letter, O'Brien was employing his personal diplomatic skills in his attempts to avoid personal conflict with the artists.

Many of the rejected artists replied complaining about the process of the selection committee.²¹⁵ Theo Gracey's (1903-59) watercolour, *Muckish, Co. Donegal*, was selected for exhibition, it featured a cottage but it was one of the new slated council houses that marked progress for the government (figure 175). His thatched cottage image, *An Irish Homestead*, was rejected. Humbert Craig was particularly incensed, and complained that the 'new Government' should encourage the fine arts 'instead of using [them] for commercial purposes'.²¹⁶ He added that where he paints in Donegal only has thatched cottages and wonders if 'the critic for the ministry knows that Muckish is in the Free State?' Paul Henry asked for details about what was happening even though the single work he submitted, *A Connemara Lake* was accepted, he expressed dismay that

...the Minister for Industry & Commerce practically dictated what was to be such and what was not; that the Committee had to accept his decision although differing entirely from his point of view.²¹⁷

²¹³ RHA O'Brien archive. Letters from Dermot O'Brien to various artists who had works rejected, 19th and 24th May, 1933.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Artists who had works returned were William Conor, *The Shipbuilders* and *The Orange Procession*, James Humbert Craig, *Muckish, Donegal*, Theo Gracey, *An Irish Homestead*, Donald McPherson, *Doe Castle, Co. Donegal* and *Craig-na-Pastie, Co. Down*, Frank McKelvey, *River Bann, Co. Antrim*, H.C. O'Donnell, *Audrey at Work* and *Doune, Perthshire* and E.M. O'Rourke Dickey, *Rojate*.

²¹⁶ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from James Humbert Craig to Dermot O'Brien, undated, c. 26th April, 1933. A Theo Gracey watercolour of Muckish was exhibited so it is presumed that his treatment of the subject excluded the thatched cottages.

²¹⁷ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from Paul Henry to Dermot O'Brien, 27th Apr. 1933.

Henry wrote again a week later thanking O'Brien for his reply about 'the extraordinary' and 'deplorable' situation.²¹⁸ Commenting on the Minister's wishes not to have thatched cottages in the paintings he retorts that these were his best sellers in America,

As for the rot about cottages being liable to offend the sensibilities of Irish Americans it is sheer tosh. I know because all my pictures which I showed in America & which had cottages in them sold first. It is just the old inferiority complex & makes one dispirited & ashamed.²¹⁹

He also questioned the participation of [Gerald Festus] Kelly, an English artist who he can't remember 'ever having been in Ireland, North or South' and [William] Orpen who did all of 'his late work ... outside the country, so on those grounds both of those fine Irish artists ought to be excluded'.²²⁰ In the end, there was no work by Orpen but he did feature in a painting by James Sleator (figure 176). The case of English-born artist Kelly is interesting in that his three paintings, two painting of Burmese dancers and a portrait of his wife, were clearly not of any 'Free State interest' yet were included. Because of his Irish heritage, he exhibited willingly and frequently in Ireland and in Irish exhibitions abroad.²²¹ His stature in the art world at this time meant that in the Chicago exhibition his three paintings were the most expensive on show.²²² Kelly's international reputation and his membership of the RA and RHA made it attractive for the art establishment - and the State - to claim him. Through his cultural cache, the selectors appear to have accepted his work on different terms. Claiming British-born artists with doubtful Irish ancestry was nothing new and was evident in the Guildhall 1904 exhibition of Irish art previously discussed. Also, when Lane first opened the Municipal Gallery in Harcourt Street on 20th January, 1908 he included Kelly in the 'British Schools' room but included Charles Shannon (a

²¹⁸ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from Paul Henry to Dermot O'Brien, 8th May 1933.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Kelly exhibited frequently in the RHA annual shows, other exhibitions included the Irish Race Congress art exhibition held in Paris in 1922 and the Dublin Civic Week show in 1927. He came to the fore in Hugh Lane's exhibition of works by Irish Painters at the Guildhall, London in 1904. He served as RA President from 1949–54.

²²² Kelly's most expensive painting *Jane XXVI* was \$3,250, by comparison, Jack B. Yeats' two paintings were \$500 each.

personal friend of Lane) in both the British room and that reserved for ‘Irish Painters (by Birth or Descent)’.²²³ Shannon was included in the Paris Congress exhibition of Irish Art in 1922 with a portrait of English actress Lilah McCarthy.²²⁴ This hybridity stretched the definition of Irish cultural nationalism but allowed the Irish State to appropriate known artists to broaden the appeal of the shows. Exhibiting select individual artists under the cover of the larger Irish milieu was un-noticed, un-commented upon and accepted by the viewing public.

The conflict between the artists and the selection committee for the Chicago art exhibition was reported in the newspapers, the *Irish Independent* stated tamely that ‘certain work of Irish artists non-resident in Ireland was rejected because it did not deal with purely Saorstát subjects’ and identifies Kelly as an exception.²²⁵ It adds that ‘other exhibits had to be turned down through various considerations ... [and] in the space available they could fit in 67 [sic, should have read 77] paintings which are representative of what is being done in Ireland at the moment’. The Northern editions of *The Belfast Newsletter* and *The Daily Mail* were more forthright and both led with an identical opening sentence, ‘Politics have invaded the realm of art’.²²⁶ This caused the RHA and O’Brien, who had marked all the rejection letters as confidential, to speculate that someone was ‘stirring trouble’ in the press – they suspected that William Conor was ‘at the back of it’.²²⁷ Both northern press reports refer to the representative of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce as censoring the art work and excluding paintings ‘which contained a six-county interest’. Artists were ‘annoyed’ and quoted as saying ‘the whole affair is cheap, contemptible and childish’, adding that ‘it may be conjectured that they [artists on the selection committee], too, are

²²³ *Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Illustrated Catalogue with Biographical and Critical notes*, (Dublin: Dollard, 1908).

²²⁴ *Exposition D'art Irlandais [exhibition Catalogue]: Ouverte Du 28 Janvier Au 25 Février 1922*. (Paris: Galeries Barbazanges, 1922). This painting is now in The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum, Cheltenham.

²²⁵ “Saorstát in Chicago”, *Irish Independent*, 19th April, 1933. 5.

²²⁶ “Free State’s Mean Action Politics and Art”, *Belfast Newsletter*, 28th Apr. 1933. 9.

Special Correspondent, “ART War Declared in Ulster”, *The Daily Express*, 6th May, 1933.

²²⁷ RHA O’Brien archive. Memo from Dorothy Strich to Dermot O’Brien, 28th Apr. 1933.

very much annoyed'.²²⁸ It was suggested that 'the astounding boycott of Ulster paintings by the Free State Art Committee' should be raised in Parliament by Mr. Thomas Henderson [MP] to ask 'what steps the Government are taking to prevent Ulster artists from being penalised in this manner'.²²⁹

These reports mention the possibility of Northern artists being represented in the UK section, but the British didn't exhibit contemporary art. Ireland seems to have led the way or as the American media reported, 'started trend' with its contemporary art exhibition (figure 177).²³⁰ Naming Sleator, Kelly and Yeats, this American media report cites the Irish art exhibition as the 'most interesting feature' of the Fair and 'the thin shaft of the wedge', because it induced other nations to follow with their own shows.²³¹ A Los Angeles art critic reviews the Irish art and arts and crafts exhibits very positively, 'there was a surprise in the beauty and variety of the Irish exhibit'.²³²

However, the IFSG had experience in employing visual art to represent the State and its own ideological purposes in earlier spectacles, as discussed in this thesis. For Chicago it also took advice from Dulanty and other Irish public servants who had participated in EMB trade events.²³³ It is therefore unsurprising that the politicians behind the COP took the initiative to harness art for their political imperative and soft power purposes on one of the biggest international stages of the day.

²²⁸ "Free State's Mean Action Politics and Art", *Belfast Newsletter*, 28th Apr. 1933. 9.

²²⁹ Special Correspondent, "ART War Declared in Ulster", *The Daily Express*, 6th May, 1933.

²³⁰ Century of Progress Collection, Ryerson and Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago. Hereafter RBAIC. Series 1 Box 3 00.18. Eleanor Jewett, "Many Interesting Paintings Now to be Found in Buildings on the Grounds of A Century, Irish Free State Started Trend: Followed by Local Associations, Artists", undated clipping but *Chicago Tribune*, May/June, 1933.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² RBAIC. Series 1 Box 3 00.18. Madge Clover, "Art" in *Los Angeles Saturday Night* (Weekly Review), undated but 1933. Clover was art editor of the paper.

²³³ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1090. Initialled (undecipherable) letter to Professor T. A. Smiddy, Tariff Commission, Government Buildings, Dublin, IFS dated 20th Oct. 1931 citing seeking advice from Dulanty and co-operation with Smiddy's staff who previously worked on EMB stands.

The rejection of work was clearly problematic for artists on the selection committee, all of whom participated in the wider artistic community on the island of Ireland and in Britain. Many exhibited in the IFS and in the Six Counties and the UK. Events surrounding the selection of works for Chicago, challenged the concept of artistic freedom and it had the potential to undermine the personal relationships and cultural networks that existed within the larger artistic community of the Free State and outside.²³⁴ O'Brien mitigated the potential damage in the official rejection letters he sent by identifying the Minister's representative, the nameless Civil Servant, as the censor and sympathising with the artists. He repeated this in his personal letters to Paul Henry – conversely one of Ireland's best-known artists and a son of the Six Counties.²³⁵

Artists eventually selected included twenty RHA members and twenty others from outside the Academy.²³⁶ It seems likely that there was a policy to split the representation evenly, however, RHA members showed more works individually. Most of the non-RHA artists were artists who regularly exhibited with the association such as George Collie (1904-75), Harry Kernoff, Letitia Hamilton and Mary Swanzy, all of whom would become members. The relationship of the Chicago exhibition to home based spectacles and the interconnectness of Irish people, the diaspora and these government events is evidenced by the Chicago produced catalogue accompanying the Irish art exhibition.²³⁷ It featured an

²³⁴ Irish, English and artists based in the Six Counties exhibited extensively in all jurisdictions.

²³⁵ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter from Paul Henry to Dermot O'Brien, 8th May 1933. In this letter Henry thanks O'Brien for his long letter and repeats O'Brien's narrative of the selection process.

²³⁶ List of exhibiting artists as they appear in the 1933 Irish art exhibition catalogue: Maurice McGonigal, J. Crampton Walker, John [Sean] Keating, Jack B. Yeats, Leo Whelan, Miss S. C. Harrison, H. C. O'Donnell, Frank McKelvey, Sean O'Sullivan, J. Humbert Craig, Michael Farrell, Charles Lamb, Dermot O'Brien, George Russell (A.E.), Estella Solomons, E. L. Lawrenson, Miss Nano Reid, Gerald F. Kelly, Miss Moyra Barry, W. J. Leech, Paul Henry, Miss Letitia Hamilton, Miss Lillian Davidson, W. Crampton Gore, Mrs. Margaret Clarke, Miss Dorothea Fitzgerald, Philip Deegan, Hilda Roberts (Mrs. Marsh), Harry Kernoff, Miss Brigid O'Brien, James Sleator, Miss Lily Williams, Miss Mary Swanzy, George Collie, Power O'Malley, Theo J. Gracey, The Lady Glenavy, Mrs H. Townshend, George Atkinson.

²³⁷ John Flynn, "Foreword" in *A Century of Progress, Exhibition of Irish Art, 1933*. Catalogue, (Chicago: Century of Progress, 1933). In the Foreword to the catalogue Irish-American, John Flynn, details; the ties of immigration that link Ireland and America; the Irish literary revival; and the less well-known 'modern Irish painting' introduced in the art exhibition.

image of Queen Tailté similar to that used on the medals awarded at the Tailteann Games and identical to the cover of the Aonach Tailteann art catalogues (figure 178).²³⁸

Another American newspaper article, titled ‘Modern Ireland is Revealed by Display at World’s Fair’, would have pleased the IFSG who wished to present Ireland as a progressive country (figure 179).²³⁹ In this feature, the new Ireland, ‘born politically in the flame and blood of the poets’ insurrection of Easter week, 1916’, is praised for the modern development of the Shannon and its Book of Kells influenced crafts exhibits. It sees a renaissance of modern Irish art and literature ‘in the founding of the Gaelic League... shown in the display of books from the Cuala Press and paintings by Gerald F Kelly, George Russell, John Keating, Lady Glenavy, Jack B. Yeats and other noted painters...’ (figures 180, 181, 182).²⁴⁰ It notes other products exhibited and credits the curation of the entire IFS exhibit to Mary T. O’Donnell assisted by Carroll O’Carroll, Ernest O’Malley and Hugh Smith.²⁴¹ Despite the ‘Modern Ireland’ in the newspaper heading, judging by the titles of the majority of the paintings exhibited, many of which are extant and traced, they can be described as mostly conventional views of Irish subject matter in a realist style. One third were rural scenes, predominately of the West of Ireland, exemplified by titles like, *Portrait of a Connemara Girl* and *Turf Boat* by Charles Lamb, *Aran Islands* by Brigid O’Brien, *Stoney Headland* by Power O’Malley, *A Connemara Lake* by Paul Henry (figure 183, 184). However, these predictable works were tempered with the inclusion of modernist works by Nano Reid, Margaret Clarke, Jack Yeats and others. Yeats’ *Man*

²³⁸ In contrast, these catalogue bore no resemblance to the catalogue of the privately promoted Irish exhibition of Art in Brussels in 1930.

²³⁹ RBAIC. Series 1 Box 3 00.18. Anon. “Modern Ireland is Revealed by Display at World’s Fair” undated clipping but probably *Chicago Tribune*, May/June, 1933.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid. Ernest (Ernie) O’Malley is noteworthy because he was a key participant the Irish War of Independence and on the anti-Treaty side during the Irish Civil War. He was later a TD, author and art connoisseur. He went to America in 1928, where he initially sought to raise funds for De Valera’s nationalist’s newspaper, *The Irish Press*, subsequently he worked as a teacher and travelled, returning to Ireland in the mid-1930s. He acted as an Irish representative at the Chicago World Fair in 1933 but his name only appears in relation to the art exhibition. The other organisers were Irish-Americans living in the Chicago area.

Doing Accounts is an expressionist, thickly layered painting depicting a modern urban scene of a man doing accounts, a fashionable woman on the street and a landscape in the distance (figure 185). Clarke's entry *Strindbergian* (1927) drew its theme from August Strindberg's modern drama, *The Ghost Sonata* (1907). Such was the public response to this painting that the invigilators received 'many inquiries' at the Fair which caused McGrath to contact Clarke to 'please advise significance' of the work (figure 186).²⁴² The painting is an allegorical meditation on the human condition relocated to an Irish landscape.²⁴³ Sean Keating exhibited three paintings including *Homo Sapiens*, which is ironically a satire on progress, – the theme of the Fair (figure 187, 188).²⁴⁴ Other works included George Atkinson's now ubiquitous etchings of the modern industrial development of the Shannon Hydro electrical scheme. Dermot O'Brien exhibited his portrait of Lennox Robinson previously exhibited in the 1922 Paris Irish Race Congress exhibition. This time, as he did at the 1924 BEE, he omitted Robinson's nationalist credentials from the title, distancing himself from the political. McGrath expressed satisfaction with the 'much interest' shown in the paintings on display.²⁴⁵

The art exhibition was a good representation of contemporary art in Ireland despite the absence of three important contemporary Irish artists, now regarded as the doyens of Irish modernism, namely Mainie Jellett, Evie Hone and Norah McGuinness. The art on display was to project a modernising tone rather than one that promoted the more radical innovations of the modern art movement, echoing Geertz on the 'irrationality' of new

²⁴² NLI. MS 48,425/5/4. Telegram from Consul [McGrath] to Clarke. 1st Jun. 1933. McGrath replied thanking her for her reply (17th Jun. 1933), unfortunately Clarke's response has not been traced. This painting was previously exhibited at the 1928 Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions exhibition at the Imperial Art Gallery, London and the 1928 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition and the RHA.

²⁴³ This painting is extensively discussed in Carla Briggs, "Margaret Clarke as a History Painter", in *Irish Women Artists 1800-2009 Familiar but Unknown*, Ed. Éimear O'Connor, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), 84-101.

²⁴⁴ Keating exhibited (3) *Ras na Gaedael*, (41) *Homo Sapiens*, and (45) *Holy Joe in the Mountains*. For a discussion on *Homo Sapiens*, see, Éimear O'Connor, *Seán Keating, Art, Politics and Building the Irish Nation*, (Kildare: Irish Academic Press, 2013). 142-145.

²⁴⁵ NLI. MS 48,425/5/5. Letter from McGrath to Margaret Clarke. 17th Jun. 1933.

States ‘being at once hell-bent towards modernity and morally outraged by its manifestations’.²⁴⁶ These artists would be chosen to represent the State in later years, but for this exhibition they were excluded by O’Brien and are absent from his handwritten lists of artists under consideration as exhibitors in the O’Brien archive in the RHA.²⁴⁷ O’Brien was an active administrator and was engaged by both governments in organising and selecting artists in the state supported exhibitions over the previous ten years. He therefore brought his experience and understanding from these previous officially supported shows in short-listing acceptable artists. The invited artists, although feeling hijacked, were practically-minded and participated despite their misgivings. They were attracted by the prospect of self-promotion and the possibility of sales without commission in a show strongly representative of painting in the Free State, described at the time as ‘the finest and largest ever assembled outside Ireland’.²⁴⁸ Irish artists had become strategic and self-serving in their nationalist and political support.

As evidenced, in the previously noted 1930 exhibition held in Brussels, an artist-led show without IFSG involvement, participants were unconstrained in the themes they displayed. Those exhibiting in Brussels included many of the same names involved in State supported shows over the decade. John Lavery exhibited his painting of Cardinal Logue seen in Paris and a painting of the Pro Cathedral, but he also displayed a painting of the new British Labour Party and an image of the Tate Gallery in London.²⁴⁹ These images celebrating

²⁴⁶ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 243.

²⁴⁷ Mainie Jellett was prominent among the artists who represented Ireland in the Glasgow Empire Exhibition in 1938 and she was again included in the New York 1939 World’s Fair as was Evie Hone. Evie Hone and Norah McGuinness represented Ireland in the Venice Biennale in 1950. See, Fionna Barber, “Excavating Room 50: Irish Art at the 1950 Venice Biennale” in F. Cullen and J. Morrison, eds. *A Shared Legacy: Essays on Irish and Scottish Art and Visual Culture*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2005). 207-223.

²⁴⁸ John Flynn, “Foreword” in *A Century of Progress, Exhibition of Irish Art, 1933*. Catalogue, (Chicago: Century of Progress, 1933). 4. This was then the largest exhibition of Irish Art on American soil but the Irish Race Congress Exhibition in Paris, 1922 was larger.

²⁴⁹ Musée Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, *Exposition D’Art Irlandais 10 Mai – 8 Juin 1930*. (Brussels: J.E. Goossens, 1930)

John Lavery exhibited 11 paintings including 71. *Cardinal Logue* (1920), 73. *Pro-cathedral* (1923), 72. *The first [British] Labour government* (1923), 66. *The opening of the Duveen Gallery, Millbank* (1927).

British politics or culture were not themes that would have been acceptable at an IFSG-sponsored exhibition. The exhibition also included portraits of eminent Irish, British and European sitters and the genre and landscapes similarly spanned the continent, with Irish scenes that included the thatched cottage.²⁵⁰ However, the Brussels show would run at a financial loss to the organisers and in this instance artists had to personally contribute to the costs.²⁵¹ Dissuaded by the losses incurred in the venture this was the last exhibition on this scale that the organisers undertook without the IFSG anchoring the project despite the creative freedoms offered. So, despite constraints and disagreement with the selection process, artists availed of the risk free participation provided by Chicago.

The majority of art-works in the cultural section in Chicago reflected traditional, nationalist and essentialist views of Ireland. Conforming to – the then President - De Valera’s ‘espousal of rural civilization’ for the Irish Free State, preferring a ‘frugal, God-fearing country folk to any absorption of the country into industrial Europe’, an attitude described by Brown as his ‘cultural contribution to the 1930s’.²⁵² However, they decreed that any such images should avoid any notion of poverty or lack of progress. The approach taken at the COP - of exhibiting modernity and tradition in artefacts and art - was also evident in Irish participation at earlier spectacles. As Geertz’s has shown for ‘new nations’, the ideology is seldom purely essentialist - rooted in the past culture and tradition - or purely epochalist all-embracing of economic development and modernity.²⁵³ The hybridity of Ireland’s exhibits, including the art exhibits, in Chicago engaged directly with this cultural discourse. The skilled craftwork, the modernist painter and the industrial exhibitors, were representative of a modern Ireland – one that was progressing through

²⁵⁰ For example, William Orpen, 113a. *Portrait of [Belgian] Minister Paul Hymans*, John Lavery, 68. *Mr. William Cosgrave, T.D.*, Walter F. Osborne, 123. *Portrait of [British art critic] Walter Armstrong*, John B. Yeats (1839-1922), 156, *Portrait of Miss [Annie] Horniman*. Numerous European, British and Irish scenes – such as, Charles Lamb, 83. *Connemara Cottage*. Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone were invited and exhibited.

²⁵¹ RHA archive. RHA221 (1-46)/4B/4 Dermod O’Brien’s file on Irish art exhibition, Brussels, 1930.

²⁵² Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*. London: Harper, 2004. 85&133.

²⁵³ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 240-243.

industrialisation. The country's most significant project the Shannon Hydro-electrical Scheme - documented at the exhibition - was utterly modern and at the time the largest hydroelectric project in the world.²⁵⁴ The balance between showing a unique identity and heritage coupled with industrial progress demonstrated how the Irish people (its politicians and its artists) were balancing modernity and essentialism.

The State's demand that the Irish art exhibits represented 'Free State interests' reflected the political contexts of 1930s Ireland and the rise of nationalism internationally.²⁵⁵ According to the IFSG, anything that might confer political legitimacy on the Six Counties as British territory was out, particularly in light of the more hard-line republican policies of the new Fianna Fáil administration.²⁵⁶ That the State choose to control and effect agency over the image of the country for transatlantic consumption was in keeping with its own, and its US diplomats intentions, to show the 'progress made at the end of the first decade of national freedom'.²⁵⁷ This was explicitly documented in *Saorstát Eireann/ Irish Free State Official Handbook* published by the State in 1932 and which was on sale at the Chicago Fair.²⁵⁸ While exhibited, Irish language publications from An Gúm²⁵⁹ were unlikely to sell to the largely English-speaking audience but did demonstrate the Consul General's claim of the Free State's intention to assert its 'cultural identity'.²⁶⁰

Deliberate actions by the IFSG in excluding images of thatched cottages in rural Ireland - to avoid any suggestions of - a lack of progress, or poverty, or parochial mentalities is

²⁵⁴ "Bringing Ardnacrusha to Life", at <https://www.esb.ie/blog/energy-matters-ph/energy-matters/2016/10/28/bringing-ardnacrusha-to-life> accessed 3rd Apr, 2017.

²⁵⁵ RHA O'Brien archive. Letter to Dermot O'Brien from Dept. of Industry and Commerce, 28th Mar. 1933.

²⁵⁶ The Anglo-Irish Trade War (also called the Economic War) was a retaliatory trade war that imposed tariffs on imports between the Irish Free State and the United Kingdom that started in 1932 and lasted until 1938.

²⁵⁷ Bulmer Hobson, "Introduction" in *Saorstát Eireann/ Irish Free State Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Helys, 1932). 16.

²⁵⁸ Bulmer Hobson, ed., *Saorstát Eireann/ Irish Free State Official Handbook*, (Dublin: Helys, 1932). The *Saorstát Eireann* handbook is discussed in the previous chapter under "Civic Publications".

²⁵⁹ State publishing company founded in 1925. It is now part of Foras na Gaeilge.

²⁶⁰ Daniel J. McGrath, "Ireland Looks Upward," *Official World's Fair Weekly* 1, no. 26 (Chicago: COP, 1933), 5.

somewhat at odds with Irish art historical scholarship of this period.²⁶¹ As previously discussed, a narrative has been constructed that essentialist paintings of a rural untainted West of Ireland were viewed as an official narrative and suitable subject matter for a national art. Paul Henry's particular interpretation of the West and his thatched cottages had come to be regarded as embodying many of the ideals of the newly independent Irish Free State and dovetailed with their official construct of Ireland.²⁶² However, as demonstrated by the COP exhibition, a more nuanced interpretation of the State's attitude to the visual arts, after De Valera came to power, is required. The evidence demonstrates that Irish governments were willing to use reasonably modernist art, along with more traditional images, to promote the State in an international context. Prohibiting paintings that were considered to be stalwarts of official Irish art for the Chicago exhibition is an example of the State encouraging progressive views of Ireland to be exhibited abroad.²⁶³ It is a reality that for decades around the turn of the century, writers and artists promoted the West as the essential and authentic Ireland. This would be later adapted by the IFSG as seen in earlier exhibitions and while in part this was evident in the Chicago exhibition it had evolved. 'Representations of Irish life as emanating from thatched cottages', or those that might, showcase the myriad of social, economic or political challenges facing the State at this time, were effectively censored.²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ See, Síghe Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007). Fiona Barber, *Art in Ireland since 1910*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2013). S. B. Kennedy, *Irish Art & Modernism 1880-1950*, (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies at the Queen's University of Belfast, 1991). Dorothy Walker, *Modern Art in Ireland*, (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1997).

²⁶² Síghe Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art, Ireland's History*, (Creighton: Creighton University Press, 2007), 8.

²⁶³ Examples of the Irish State commissioning modern work for international exhibition include Harry Clarke, Window for the ILO building in Geneva in 1927 (although ultimately rejected), Mainie Jellett modernist murals for the Glasgow International Exposition in 1938 and the New York World's Fair in 1939, Hilary Heron's modernist sculpture for the various Frankfurt Trade Fairs of the 1950s and the 1964 New York World's fair. Oliver Sheppard's medal designs for the Tailteann Games and the Art O'Murnaghan cover designs for Saorstát Éireann handbook were traditional Celtic revival images - see *Art in State Buildings 1922-70*, (Dublin: OPW, 2000) for other national commissions covering this period.

²⁶⁴ RHA O'Brien archive. Letters from Dermot O'Brien to various artists who had works rejected, 19th and 24th May, 1933.

The exhibits in Chicago described an ancient culturally rich State, that the Irish people were culturally distinct and that the Free State remained largely rural, yet industrially progressive, Catholic and Gaelic. The State located itself into an evolving national development programme. The Chicago agenda was to promote this image in order to gain the respect and favour of all international exhibitors and visitors and in particular the US authorities and its public, in order to entice American tourists and possibly generate trade. Again maximising the diplomatic and soft power advantage of ‘national publicity and prestige’.²⁶⁵ Participation in the Chicago spectacle was further evidence of an emerging internationalist approach to cultural policy ten years after the founding of the IFS.

For the Chicago event in 1933, the official recognition of Irish art and culture was jealously guarded at home by the State and in Chicago by the Consul General, McGrath.²⁶⁶ The State harnessed visual art, to present a national identity for international consumption.

5.4.4 Managing the diaspora without state involvement in 1934.

The IFS did not participate in a later manifestation of the Chicago Fair in the following year, 1934 - citing expense and budgetary restrictions.²⁶⁷ In effect the 1933 and 1934 incarnations of the Chicago Century of Progress/ World’s Fair were two different events separated by a seven-month hiatus.²⁶⁸ A number of other countries did not return and the increased number of privately operated concessions took their place in 1934. During 1933 the IFS controlled their image but this became more difficult once they left the event.²⁶⁹ The vacuum was filled by a privately operated Irish-American concession, called the Irish

²⁶⁵ NAI. DFA 15/12. Undated memo “International Exposition Chicago 1933”.

²⁶⁶ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1092. For example, letters from McGrath to various Century of Progress staff, 15th Jul. 1933, 21st Jun. 1933, 27th Jun. 1933...

²⁶⁷ UIC Archive. Box 61 Folder 2 1089. Letters from the American Legation in Dublin to Secretary of State, Washington, about Irish state participation in the re-opening of the Fair in 1934. Dated 21st Apr. 1934 and 25th Apr. 1934.

²⁶⁸ The Fair ran from 27th May to 12th Nov. in 1933 and from the 26th May until 31st Oct. in 1934.

²⁶⁹ The most problematic engagement in 1933 caused McGrath to have the Fair organisers cancel a commercial GAA match scheduled to take place in Soldier’s Field as it was not an IFS official engagement.

Village, a purely commercial venture that related differently with the Irish diaspora, to be discussed anon.

One 1934 event that the IFS did align itself with was an open air theatrical pageant representing Irish history, namely *The Pageant of the Celt*. McGrath was on the executive committee of the production.²⁷⁰ The Pageant took place on the 28th and 29th August, 1934, at Chicago's main sports stadium, Soldier's Field, in front of large 'marvellous' crowds.²⁷¹ Although the pageant is credited solely to, Irish-American attorney, John V. Ryan it was likely influenced by its narrator Michael MacLiammoir, to whose Dublin Civic Week 1929 pageant *The Ford of the Hurdles*, it bears some similarities.²⁷² The Pageant was produced by Hilton Edwards and covered the period of Irish history from pre-Christian times to the Easter Rising of 1916 and it had almost two thousand participants.²⁷³ Unlike the

²⁷⁰ *The Pageant of the Celt, Soldier Field, Chicago, Aug, 28, 29, 1934*, (Chicago: Irish Historical Productions, 1934). Catalogue to accompany the outdoor Irish theatrical pageant. Available at Newberry Library, Chicago, call number F 034042 .44. Page 19.

²⁷¹ Quidnunc, Irishman's Diary, *Irish Times*, 4th Oct. 1934. 6.

²⁷² Quidnunc, Irishman's Diary, *Irish Times*, 4th Oct. 1934 quotes MacLiammoir as writing an oration for the pageant and refers to it as 'his Celtic pageant'.

Anon. "Pageant of Celt to tell history of Irish peoples", *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 26th Aug, 1934, 12, mentions MacLiammoir wrote the pageant based on Ryan's scenario.

See also Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, *All Dressed Up Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*. 118, 119 and 151.

Both pageants feature Ireland's subjection by Britain and end with the 1916 Easter Rising. Neither deal in any way with the war of Independence or the Civil War.

²⁷³ Scene I.

The Celtic Dawn.

Arrival of the Milesians in Ireland. Battle of Tailte.

Scene II.

Cuchulainn, Champion of Uladh. The fight at the Ford.

Scene III.

Patrick Lights the Paschal Fire. The coming of Patrick: conversion of Dubtach and Erc.

Scene IV.

Celtic Light in Europe's Night. The Golden Age of Ireland.

Scene V.

Brian meets the Menace from the North. The destroyer crushed at Clontarf.

Scene VI.

The Normans Won to Ireland. Marriage of Eva and Strongbow. Typifies the Union of Norman and Celt.

Scene VII.

The Gaelic Alliance. Edward, Brother of King Robert Bruce, of Scotland, Crowned King of Ireland at invitation of Irish princess.

Scene VIII.

The Rise of Republicanism. Scene shows the Irish Revolutionary Committee urging on Napoleon the strategic advantage of Ireland as base of operations in war on England. The Little Corporal decides to strike in Egypt. Defeat, exile, St. Helena.

Scene IX.

Up from the Ashes: Easter Week 1916. Phoenix-like, the Irish nation rises from the fires of defeat to wage anew the centuried struggle for liberty.

MacLiammoir pageant, it includes an episode on Ireland's conversion to Christianity. There were plans to tour the show to other US cities but this failed to materialise. It presented a narrative of Irish history, starting from ancient mythical beginnings from the Battle of Tailté; to the emergence of a Catholic Nation and the 'coming of [Saint] Patrick'; followed by 'The Golden Age of Ireland'; a nation defended from Viking invaders by Brian Boru; followed by the country's ultimate subjection by Britain, beginning with the marriage of 'Eva and Strongbow' followed by the 'rise of republicanism' and culminating in 'Easter Week 1916 [when] Phoenix-like, the Irish nation rises from the fires of defeat to wage anew the centuried struggle for liberty'.²⁷⁴ The Pageant's finale was a mass singing of 'The Soldier's Song, Irish National Anthem'.²⁷⁵ The elaborate Pageant Programme published the anthem's lyrics, it also featured 17 chapters relating to Irish cultural endeavours including; Irish music, the Harvard Irish Archaeological mission, the Celtic Revival, and it contained messages of goodwill to the IFS from other Celtic peoples.²⁷⁶ The program itself had a richly decorated cover and small illustrations and decorated capitals throughout by Irish-American artist Vincent O'Connor (c.1884-1974) (figure 189).²⁷⁷ The cover contrasts Celtic Ireland with modern Chicago. Round towers are juxtapositioned with skyscrapers, separated by clouds, both icons of their time and the spirit of their respective ages. A man and a woman in distinctive ancient Irish dress festooned with a Tara brooch, stand on Ireland's green shore facing the Atlantic. These and Saint Brendan's ship anchored, trademarked with a Celtic cross, signifying the Irish-American connection. This was an Irish pageant suitable for diaspora consumption, with its mix of the mythical

Finale:

The Soldier's Song, Irish National Anthem. (The audience was requested to join in a mass singing).

²⁷⁴ *The Pageant of the Celt, Soldier Field, Chicago, Aug, 28, 29, 1934*. Pull-out supplement after page 2.

²⁷⁵ Ibid. 41. *Amhrán na bhFiann* originally composed in English as *The Soldiers' Song*, is the Irish national anthem. The music was composed by Peadar Kearney and Patrick Heeney. Kearney wrote the lyrics.

²⁷⁶ The pageant program extolled the virtue of being Irish and often over-claimed, such as identifying an Irish origin for the Arthurian legends. Page 11.

²⁷⁷ Vincent Louis O'Connor was born in Kerry and immigrated to Chicago in 1914. An art teacher, he began teaching in Ireland in 1904. In America he first taught in the University of Notre Dame and thereafter at various institutes around Chicago. He exhibited in group shows and there is an artist's file on him in the Chicago Public Library.

and ancient, cultured and catholic, distinctive and unique, oppressed but not beaten, leading to phoenix-like revolution and rebuilding.

Not all the engagements with the diaspora went as smoothly as the pageant. Despite not being involved in the 1934 Fair, the IFSG sought to continue control over its national image and its agency. They advised the Fair organisers in the letter declining to participate in 1934 that it was aware ‘that a local group in Chicago are arranging for an Irish exhibit in the nature of an “Irish Village”, but it will be understood that the Government of the Irish Free State are not responsible for this exhibition...’²⁷⁸ Later McGrath threatened the Fair’s organisers with legal action if this privately operated concession, run by Irish-American business people, was presented as having any State involvement or approval.²⁷⁹ He feared it would offer a false version of Ireland by trading on hackneyed images of shamrocks, blarney stones, leprechauns, and drunkards. Everything the official presentation in 1933 sought to avoid.

William E. Ray, manager of the Irish Village initiative, had travelled to Ireland to secure items for display. He obtained some replicas on loan from the NMI, and the *Man of Aran* photographs from Flaherty, all of which were to be returned to the museum at the end of the event.²⁸⁰ Documents in this NMI archive show that Mahr and the Government Departments were wary of helping the Irish Village but trusted Ray personally. Ray also bought some other items in Ireland, such as ploughs and old currachs, to embellish the Village.²⁸¹

²⁷⁸ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1089. Letter to Secretary of State, Washington DC, 25th Apr. 1934.

²⁷⁹ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1092 contains most of the documentation concerning the village.

²⁸⁰ National Museum of Ireland archive. NMIAS.DIR.D001.00001.005.00005. Mahr file. Entry 13 in this file list the items borrowed by the Irish Village as Replicas of Lismore Crozier (£60), The Misach book shrine (£35), ecclesiastic lamp found by Harvard Mission (£15), Man of Aran/Flaherty photographs (£8), photographs of TCD manuscripts including the *Book of Kells*, bronze spear found in Tuam (£5), bronze spear heads and axes (£2), three original ancient Irish pikes used in the risings against the British rule (each £4). The pikes were the only original items loaned. Amount quoted were the then insurance values.

²⁸¹ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1089 states Ray also borrowed money (£12) from Mahr to buy a plough in Galway which was never repaid, see, letter from John O. Brew to Fay-Cooper Cole, dated 29th Aug. 1934.

The Irish Village is the focus of Charles Fanning's 2011 article for the *New Hibernia Review* and he documents how it was readied in slapdash haste and resulted in a 'saga of embarrassments, bankruptcies, and tangles with authority'.²⁸² The Village was opened just in time for the reopening of the Exposition in 1934 and this purely profit-making venture was beset by financial problems and poor reviews.²⁸³ Many of the events it ran had no Irish theme, some were bawdy, and all were purely commercial and profit focused. It went bankrupt twice and when the Fair closed, it was in debt to the organisers, and the NMI struggled to get its items back. Mahr had members of the Harvard Archaeological Mission intervene with their Chicago contacts to secure their return.²⁸⁴ This correspondence focused heavily, almost exclusively, on the return of the photographs although their value accounted for only £8 of the £148 worth of items borrowed.

Ironically when the IFS government departments were originally considering the possibility of participation, civil servants considered having thatched cottages constructed at the Fair to house the Irish exhibits.²⁸⁵ But reflecting the evolving IFSG agenda a cottage identity was not acceptable. This was reflected in Macaulay comments and re-enforced by the control and criteria Lemass and his department deployed in selecting pictures, and by McGrath's guardianship of the Irish image in Chicago. However, the Irish diaspora business people who established the Irish Village were seemingly out of step with IFSG intentions. They sought to connect a market of fellow Irish immigrants and make a profit by trading in a hackneyed version of Irish material and culture. Highlighting the lack of any official support for the Village, the IFS did not site any of the official 1934 Irish Day events there. Every nation had its day at the fair, in 1933 the event took place in the Hall of

²⁸² Charles Fanning, "Dueling Cultures: Ireland and Irish America at the Chicago World's Fairs of 1933 and 1934" in *New Hibernia Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3, Autumn 2011. 94-110. 100.

²⁸³ Fanning. 101, 103.

²⁸⁴ UIC. Box 61 Folder 2-1089 and NMIAS.DIR.D001.00001.005.00005 Mahr file, various letters.

²⁸⁵ NAI. DFA 15/12. Department of External Affairs memo to W.J.B. MacAulay, dated November, 1932. A proposal to house the Irish exhibit in a pavilion replica of the GPO was also considered at a later date.

Science Court on the 2nd August, and the Irish day in 1934 was held on the afternoon of 15th August in the Hall of States.²⁸⁶ Away from the Irish Village, these official Irish Days consisted of music and dance performances, short addresses, including in 1934 one by the Irish Consul and another on ‘the Educational, Cultural, Political and Economic Evolution of Ireland’ by Rev. Ambrose Griffin. The ‘speaker of the day’ was Quin O’Brien on “The Progress and Accomplishments of the Irish People”.²⁸⁷ The day finished with a rendition of *The Soldiers’ Song*, the Irish national anthem.

The Irish Village hosted a small private exhibition of thirty eight works of Irish art, over half of them by Douglas Alexander (1871-1945), and unlike the 1933 exhibition many of the works featured thatched cottages.²⁸⁸ Three artists who exhibited in the officially supported 1933 show, Charles Lamb, Maurice McGonigal, and Harry Kernoff, taking advantage of the commercial opportunity offered were included in the show hosted by the Irish Village. The West of Ireland was the setting for 32 pieces, and of the other six, two featured Wicklow and two more the Dublin mountains. These works further emphasising the dichotomy between the official and unsanctioned presentations. However, it can be argued that in Chicago the Irish diaspora failed to notice this dichotomy, unaware of (or unconcerned for) the emerging social and cultural formation of the Irish State. This disparity of exhibit represented a change and a conflict in the Ireland/ diaspora relationship, which reflecting internal conflict was previously split along treaty politics. The diaspora had been to the fore in promoting Ireland’s sovereignty at the Paris Race Congress, was appealed to as tourists attending Irish spectacles like the Aonach Tailteanns

²⁸⁶ The Program, *Irish Day at A Century of Progress August 15, 1934*, a four page pamphlet lists 38 people [as sponsors]. The Mayor of Chicago, Edward Joseph Kelly was honorary chairman.

²⁸⁷ Program, *Irish Day at A Century of Progress August 15, 1934*. No details. Quin O’Brien was an Irish-American Democratic politician and attorney.

²⁸⁸ NMIAS.DIR.D001.00001.005.00005. Mahr file entries 16, 17. Nine exhibits had cottage in the title. Others such as, *Among the Connemara Mountains, Road in Galway, In County Kerry, Turf Stacks Connemara, Near Cong County Mayo* - judging by titles undoubtedly also featured cottages. Exhibiting artists were Douglas Alexander (10 oils and 10 watercolours), Maurice McGonigal (2 oils and 2 watercolours), Charles Lamb (7 oils), Harry Kernoff (5 oils) and Howard Knee (3 watercolours).

and Civic Weeks, and they were instrumental in raising funds, loans and trade deals in wider diplomacy. Now the IFS - through McGrath - sought to assert control, define cultural identity and manage their activities on foreign soil, in effect looking beyond now to a non-diasporic international audience.

5.4.5 Chicago conclusion.

National pride was at stake for the IFSG when it constructed an exhibition for the Chicago 1933 World's Fair. This was further complicated by the fact that they were still building a nation, resolving divisions at home while diplomatically defining and positioning its place in the world. A carefully constructed, self-defined image was readied for the American public by the IFSG, whilst, managing and controlling its relationship with the diaspora. The Government were aware of the public diplomacy and soft power benefits of participation in challenging financial times, knowing that at the not inconsiderable cost of £5,000 – the event would not show a financial profit.²⁸⁹ In fact, the global economic stagnation of the period led to many government's protecting their economies with tariffs and barriers, sparking trade wars resulting in a rise in populist nationalism.²⁹⁰

The IFSG found itself involved in emergent Western eugenic jingoism with its presentation of Irish people as a racially pure white European race, mindful of the advantages that this might confer on the State and its American diaspora. This would 'enhance Ireland's cultural profile globally ... [and] have [positive] implications for her economy and tourism prospects in the future'.²⁹¹ In the 1930s the position of the Irish in America was improving politically and economically. Despite this, 'attitudes towards the immigrant Irish were slow to change'.²⁹² This attitude ignited by the many earlier American satirical magazines that

²⁸⁹ NAI file DFA 15/12. "Extract from Cabinet minutes", dated 30th Dec. 1932.

²⁹⁰ Terence Brown, *Ireland A Social and Cultural History 1922-2002*. London: Harper, 2004. 131-133. In addition to Fianna Fail introducing protectionist tariffs on goods a disagreement over land annuities resulted in the British administration introducing additional taxation on Irish agricultural produce.

²⁹¹ Mairéad Carew, *The Quest for the Irish Celt: The Harvard Archaeological Mission to Ireland, 1932–1936*. (Newbridge: IAP, 2018). 190.

²⁹² Ibid. 189.

had presented Irish immigrants, similar to many English publications, as racially inferior, was counteracted by the exhibits.²⁹³

Excluding images of the Six Counties sought to prevent attaching any political legitimacy to the British regime on the island of Ireland or promoting their tourist attractions. This demonstrated the complexity and reality of geographic partition in presenting an Irish national identity. Yet, including artists and crafts people from all parts of the island signalled that art and culture was not partitioned, and implied artistic and political ambitions unite the country. The official Irish exhibition was used to describe the Irish people as Gaelic, distinct and exceptional and the Irish Nation as ancient and the nascent State as modern, rural and progressive. The IFSG was reconciling its complex identity.

²⁹³ See Perry L. Curtis Jr, *Apes and Angels. The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*, (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997, rev. ed.) in particular, Chapter V. "Irish-American Apes". 58-67.

Conclusion.

This thesis is presented with an introduction which announces the proposed research area and the structure of the study, five chapters and this conclusion. The first chapter sets out the central research questions, the context for the overall research and describes the case study methodology employed in the thesis. It also introduces the principle primary sources and relevant literature. The remaining four thematic chapters reflect the political development of the Irish Free State between 1922 and 1934, summarised here as from revolution, to evolution, to transformation. Chapter two and three examines the aftermath of the War of Independence, the Civil War and the first years of relative stability. Essentially this was a period of revolution in a country unsure if it had a viable future. Chapter four saw the State achieve relative stability in the middle years of the 1920s and evolve into more democratic entity with the main opposition party abandoning a policy of non-participation and electing to engage in parliamentary politics. The political agenda further evolved to include matters of economic development and international engagement. In the final chapter, we see a transformation in national political developments with the first change of government post-Treaty without the predicted violence. As demonstrated here, permeating all these political developments was the government's engagement with Irish art and design to serve and promote its own political and social agendas, both at home and abroad.

Research Review.

As stated, this research uses a political lens to explore how the State harnessed art exhibitions and commissions to serve its own ends, therefore, the focus is on the government as the driver and facilitator rather than on the artist and their politics. That is a furrow ploughed by others and to some extent here – though this work demonstrates that there is still more to be said. The research determines that the IFSG mobilised visual art for

political purposes throughout the period under examination. Chapters two and three show that in the Ireland of this period those that wanted to effect political change featured prominently within the cultural milieu, and their aspirations for a free and independent country, one that recognised and celebrated its distinctive heritage, dovetailed. Faced with economic realities of a London-focused art network and economy at the turn of the century, which was replaced with an impoverished burgeoning state in the 1920s, it suggests that fewer opportunities were to be had. However, Irish visual art would reflect the political and cultural aspirations of its creators, depicting and reflecting the country's broadly common nationalist political agenda. This shared approach encouraged official use of these wide-ranging images and designs for political purposes. As far as the new government was concerned, in its early years the single item agenda was to gain, promote and consolidate Irish sovereignty. Hence, the government recognised and utilised Irish art – with the blessing of artists and designers - as propaganda. The 1922 Paris Congress exhibition and the Aonach Tailteann exhibition of that year, the largest exhibition of Irish art ever held at that time, presented an extensive and distinct Irish cultural identity to national and international audiences. However, attempts by the IFSG to create a distance from the former coloniser by not participating in the 1924 British Empire exhibition were recognised as unsuccessful and self-defeating. This episode demonstrated that they could best protect Irish political and cultural agency, project its national interests, and achieve financial and soft power benefits by engaging in spectacles and schemes at home and abroad.

Chapter four sees the realisation of beneficial participation in the EMB scheme between 1926 and 1933, demonstrating a now practical-thinking State – setting political legacies aside – seeking commercial trading opportunities. Despite not controlling or paying towards the scheme, this research shows, how the IFSG and its diplomats managed and asserted the country's commercial agency and national identity abroad by organising Irish

artists to design posters representing its produce and people. It was the only country - of many who participated in the EMB - to do so. This thesis corrects and augments a previous much cited article on these poster designs. Official interest and concern with visual art is also reflected in this period by the Irish Free State Executive Council meeting annually to discuss Irish participation in a series of international art exhibitions held at the Imperial Gallery London between 1927 and 1931. At home the IFSG's continued support for the Aonach Tailteann scheme, which despite some political opposition, engaged participants from both sides of the Treaty divide. Similarly, the State funded Dublin Civic Weeks of 1927 and 1929 encouraged both an urban and national civic engagement and consolidation of the political situation. Art exhibitions were a major component of these spectacles. These IFSG supported exhibitions are evaluated to show the affinities of Irish artists with their international counterparts in 1927 and, later, the practical engagement by artists in commercial opportunities. Exemplified by the first exhibition of ecclesiastical art held during the 1929 DCW, which, with official support sought to take advantage of a boom in Church building and substitute foreign decorative imports with Irish art and craft work.

The final thematic chapter continues to explore this political engagement with the Church, particularly the Catholic Church, as the dominant national religion. Church and State were visually joined during the 1932 Eucharistic Congress. Anxious to be awarded the Congress, the State commissioned an artistic gift, namely a Dun Emer carpet, especially for Pope Pius XI that spoke of the country's religious and political aspirations. Despite providing limited direct financial aid, State appropriation accounts show substantial indirect funding to the Congress across a myriad of government departments. The final Aonach Tailteann took place after the Congress and it too had a strong clerical involvement, with priests starting and prominently attending events, something that was absent from the previous incarnations of these games. The art exhibition was the most successful element of the 1932 Tailteann spectacle, largely due to the fact that it opened

during, and doubled as, the exhibition associated with the Congress. It featured works commissioned for the Congress and, catching the zeitgeist, was strong on religious art. Finally, the last chapter also examines the first State sponsored trans-Atlantic exhibition of Irish art in Chicago 1933, the first foreign cultural venture overseen by the new Fianna Fáil administration. It happened against an international backdrop of rising populist nationalism, tariffs and pre-war tensions. Despite the fact that Irish officials were anxious about participating, they used their experience from previous spectacles to develop an Irish exhibit which led to commentators acknowledging the IFS was leading the way for other nations in terms of contemporary art and design exhibits.

As perhaps evidence that these events were seen as part of an overall and continuous cultural propagandist programme, the art exhibition catalogue for Chicago was identical in design and format to that produced for the Aonach Tailteann exhibitions. Often the only extant material culture from the various spectacles were the catalogues and handbooks produced in parallel with the events. Other civic publications were produced such as the *Saorstát Éireann Handbook* to celebrate ten years of the country's independence and *A Book of Dublin* was produced to promote the city and the commercial opportunities it offered investors. These civic publications, considered in chapter four, show the State and officials desired in the main to produce a didactic propagandist narrative in text and image, promoting the State and consequently its administrations. While loss-making, high production standards were maintained and, in the main, artists' illustrations were utilised over photographs to add artistic value to these productions. Invited artists were strategic in their relationship with the political administrations and produced illustrations in tune with the official agenda of the publications.

Recap on the research objectives.

The principle research objective of this thesis was to assess how the Irish State, in the decade after it emerged from the War of Independence with Britain, used visual art for political purposes. In so doing, it demonstrates that the government was actively engaged with - and was directed by - key figures in Irish art circles. These collaborations, as recognised by all involved, provided financial, promotional and marketing opportunities for Irish artists and designers at home and abroad. This research challenges a hegemony that has supported Thomas Bodkin's assessment of the Irish government's attitude to the arts in the country since its foundation. He assessed 'a condition of apathy about them in which it had become justifiable to say of Ireland that no other country of Western Europe cared less, or gave less for the cultivation of the arts'.¹ The research reasons and shows, that despite the lack of formal structures, a cohesive national and international approach to cultural policy emerged in these early years of the Irish Free State. This involved deploying visual art and artists to events at home and abroad for political purposes. Ireland's cultural policy was eventually formalised with the establishment of the Cultural Relations Committee in 1949 and the Arts Council in 1951.² Reflecting the ongoing political priority, the Irish approach to international cultural policy was resolved two years in advance of the domestic code. Any notion that official government policy in relation to the visual arts during the research period was defined by 'apathy' is refuted by this thesis. This re-assessment was partly as a result of viewing Irish art historiography through a political lens. In doing so it responds to a challenge laid down by art historian Catherine Marshall to research it with an 'emphasis on the cultural and political environments in which they [art and artists] worked'.³ Building on existing scholarly research this thesis

¹ Bodkin, *Report on the Arts in Ireland*. 9.

² The Cultural Relations Committee was established in 1949 to promote Irish art and culture internationally. It was superseded by Culture Ireland in 2005. The Arts Council which promotes art and cultural nationally was established two years later in 1951.

³ Catherine Marshall, "Introduction" in *Art and Architecture of Ireland. Volume 5*, 2.

addresses this challenge. It resulted in a focus on political and public spectacles that had an associated art exhibition or art commissions. These spectacles were often dominated by political or economic wrangling, the primary focus of extant Irish historical studies - and thus overshadowed the cultural element. Exemplified by the contemporary and historical reportage of the Irish Race Congress in Paris 1922, which although primarily a cultural construct, is overwhelmingly dominated by the political. Similarly, investigations of the Empire Marketing Board scheme between 1926 and 1933 are dominated by economic history. The EMB art commissions - or associated art exhibitions - are not central to these accounts and are often omitted or inadequately recorded, making their recovery in this research an important contribution to Irish art history.

International and national spectacles, and associated art exhibitions and commissions, were interrogated to explore the varying political agendas of the period at home and abroad. At home these were explored in terms of nation building, Civil War reconciliation and identity formation and were shown to be important in terms of soft power and cultural diplomacy. This agenda evolved to the IFS deploying these tools in the international arena and promoting economic benefits such as trade and tourism. This progression is starkly evident in the arc from 1922 to 1933. Initially, the IFSG recognised the propaganda and cultural value of displaying images of a rural Ireland populated with indigenous thatched cottages in the 1922 Paris exhibition. This approach was validated by the international attention received, its recognition signified by the French Government's purchase of an exhibited West of Ireland Paul Henry painting. However, by the 1933 A Century of Progress International Exposition held in Chicago, the IFSG censored similar images for the associated art exhibition. They feared such images would present a backward and unfavourable impression of the country. These tensions between epochalism and essentialism were teased out throughout the thesis, often providing a more nuanced reading of Irish art history. While unquestioningly artists continued to produce romanticised

images of Irish rural life and landscape, this research challenges the trope that the thatched cottage was an uncontested official icon of Irish art during this period.

Despite the realities of the political landscape post the War of Independence, the 1922 Aonach Tailteann art exhibition displayed work by artists and craftspeople from across the country's thirty-two counties, reflecting an aspiration that art and culture was not partitioned. Perhaps it also reflected a government's difficulty in accepting the existence of or the absoluteness of such a divide. However, over the following decade, towards the end of the research period, the geographic and political realities of a divided country were acknowledged and sustained as works featuring images of the Six Counties were censored or rejected from state-sponsored exhibitions.

In seeking to contribute to the ongoing discussion, and pronounce on the existence of an Irish School of Art during the period, this research took an analytical approach. This thesis both challenged and built on the extensive debate around the existence of such a school. It is contended that an Irish School of Art is evident in the research period and it is exemplified by a cohesive group of practitioners who were consistently supported and involved in various government schemes.⁴ These artists, who were fully aware of the government agendas, were willing to invest in Ireland, to represent Ireland through their medium of real or mythologised images of the country across a range of genres. They used an aesthetic language drawn from the native landscape, dress, traditions, ancient heritage and types in an approach that mirrored a post-war European return to order within the arts. Despite differing reactions and political divisions, Irish artists harboured hopes and aspirations of the country achieving stability and independence, and supported the political

⁴ Exemplified by the fact that of the twenty-seven different artists who represented the IFS at the exhibitions in the Imperial Art Gallery from 1927 to 1931 twenty-two had exhibited in the exhibitions in Paris 1922, or Chicago 1933, many had exhibited in both. There was an even higher level of overlap with the A&C participants. This was also consistent across the Tailteann, DCW and other exhibitions. As shown art exhibition organisers consistently included the same individuals such as Thomas Bodkin, Dermot O'Brien, George Atkinson, and members of the ACSI.

soft power objectives of the IFSG national and internationalist cultural policies. The School of Art evident in this period was based on common training, shared political objectives and an art reflective of a national culture. The central figures within this school and who engaged directly at different times with IFSGs were Dermot O'Brien, Paul Henry and Jack Yeats, and among the myriad of others the most notable in this research were, Sean Keating, Margaret Clarke and Charles Lamb. Their work played an important role in visualising an identity with place - with the West in particular - in the national consciousness. These visions were shared and promoted within the international arena.

The School of Arts and Crafts is more readily identifiable. Its members are seen in terms of their Early Christian period antecedents who provided a distinctive source of ornament and historical inspiration. Its early 20th century incarnation was supported by the DMSA, where stained glass, metal-work and enamelling were boosted by the employment of English-born master-craftsmen, Alfred Child and Oswald Reeves, to oversee and modernise training in these areas. The establishment of the Dun Emer Guild at the same time (and the later break-off Cuala Industries) led to the development of exceptional productions in carpet-making, embroidery and letterpress printing. Other studios such as the Clarke and An Túr Gloine stained glass studios were also vital. As explored in this research, these crafts, coupled with the traditional lace industries were represented as cohesive expressions of Irishness in the exhibitions from Paris 1922 to Chicago 1933.

Contemporary relevance.

The soft power and cultural diplomatic machinations of government that emerged at home and abroad in the early years of the IFS are just as evident and relevant today. This internationalist approach to Irish cultural diplomacy was displayed when ninety ambassadors from around the world were guests of Ireland in 2018 at a U2 gig in Madison

Square Garden in New York.⁵ It was part of a government effort to show the best of Ireland, as the State launched a two-year campaign to win a seat on the UN Security Council. A separate event was held at UN headquarters showcasing Irish food, music and culture.

As mentioned in the introduction, the current Irish Government initiative, ‘Global Ireland 2025’, plans to share ‘our cultural offering around the world’ to ‘promote Ireland’s national interests, protect our reputation, develop new business opportunities...’⁶ To achieve these aims Culture Ireland and Irish diplomats will support ‘our music and dance, our art and our poetry, our plays and our films, our sport’ in an international arena. Art and culture are defined as the ‘window through which most of the world sees us for the first time’.⁷ They will ‘establish deeper connections with our Diaspora’ and ‘bring our culture and heritage to a wider audience’ and ‘promote Ireland’s national interests, protect our reputation, develop new business opportunities...’⁸ These statements echo both the IFS internationalist approach to cultural heritage, a tactic developed almost as soon as the State emerged, and the Minister for External Affairs, Sean McBride’s aforementioned comments - after the establishment of the CRC in 1949 - on how the promotion of art and culture abroad benefits the State. Echoing these comments the current Global Ireland project exclaims, ‘the sharing of culture is the sharing of our identity’ and ‘our cultural heritage opened doors long before we were able to travel through them’.⁹

⁵ The Irish government invited a representative from every country in the world to a U2 concert at Madison Square Garden, New York on July 1, 2018 as part of the country's bid to secure a non-permanent seat at the UN Security Council.

⁶ See, Leo Varadkar, “Speech of An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, at the launch of Global Ireland 2025”, 11th Jun. 2018 at <https://www.gov.ie/en/news/ab133b-speech-of-an-taoiseach-leo-varadkar-at-the-launch-of-global-ireland/> accessed 1/9/19. “Global Ireland Ireland’s Global Footprint to 2025”, available at <https://www.ireland.ie/media/ireland/stories/globaldiaspora/Global-Ireland-in-English.pdf>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

At home, the IFSG had utilised and promoted art and culture through various exhibitions and commissions often associated with major spectacles to build reconciliation between both sides of the Treaty argument, and encourage those who felt disenfranchised back into mainstream politics. These events presented a cohesive image of the State and defined the citizen's place in it. The success of this reconciliation and other political endeavours, paved the way for a peaceful change of administration in 1932. Today the State is peaceful but is fractured by high rates of immigration over the decades.¹⁰ In this environment the Arts Council promotes an 'Equality, Human Rights and Diversity (EHRD) Policy and Strategy' and 'strives to respect, support and ensure the inclusion of all voices and cultures that make up Ireland today'.¹¹ Specifically for schools, the Council seeks to sponsor 'a range of collaborative opportunities' that 'will develop and strengthen the relationships between schools and the broader cultural and community infrastructure within which they operate'.¹² Again the State is using art and culture as something everyone can embrace to unite and integrate its people.

The research shows the IFS as an early adaptor in using art and culture for political purposes. As already stated, this was due largely to the influence and utilisation of the Gaelic Revival as a driving force for the independence movement. As demonstrated by recent cultural scholarship, including that of Declan Kiberd, and supported here, artists were part of Ireland's cultural – and sometimes political – revolution. Furthermore, the relationships that existed between politicians, artists and artists' organisations were sustained and drawn on. And artists enjoyed the benefits of this network as major home exhibitions featured in this thesis such as those at the Aonach Tailteanns exposed Irish

¹⁰ Over half a million people have moved to live in Ireland over the seven years to April, 2019, see <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/pme/populationandmigrationestimatesapril2019/>

¹¹ See <http://www.artscouncil.ie/equality-human-rights-diversity/> accessed 13/03/2020.

¹² See <http://www.artscouncil.ie/creative-schools/> accessed 13/03/2020.

artists to a wide audience and as such were a feeding system onto bigger platforms of the Irish international exhibitions and commissions.

Further research.

Stemming from this work, there are myriads of avenues for further research not least of which is examining official State involvement with Irish visual art after 1934. There were various spectacles that had Irish State involvement and strong visual art components, exemplified by, but not limited to, Glasgow Empire Exhibition in 1938, New York World's Fairs in 1939 and 1964 and the Frankfurt trade fairs throughout the 1950s. At home, An Tóstal, an official tourist festival ran annually for a couple of weeks from 1953, featured illustrated publications, commissions and art exhibitions. Research making tangible links between contemporary Irish government schemes, such as, Global Ireland 2025 and the earlier IFSG diplomatic engagements could inform - and perhaps alter - current governmental policy in the area.

Artistic involvement in national and international schemes were politically controlled, through funding, departmental and diplomatic initiative, Dáil debate, official presence on organising committees, or combinations of these. The intention was to present a mediated official Revivalist view of the State as ancient, unique, sovereign, and traditional, whilst also being future-forward and progressive – the government using art to communicate this ideology and to serve its political needs. On occasion these requirements challenged artistic freedoms and resulted in conflict or omissions, but overriding symbiotic benefits, ensured ongoing collaborations with artists in most cases. As demonstrated here, for the IFSG, the visual arts served to define and promote Irish identity and citizenship at home, to maintain and sustain beneficial relationships with the Irish diaspora, and it communicated and asserted the country's sovereignty and agency in the international arena.

The following appendices are compiled from multiple sources and like the extensive bibliography were an essential part of the research methodology. They are presented here as integral to this thesis but also as another possible vein for future research. Names and details in the appendices are listed as they appear in the primary source so occasionally inconsistencies appear such as full first names interchanged with initials.

Appendices.

Appendix 1. Research spectacles timeline.

1922.	World Congress of the Irish Race/ Aonach na nGaedeal, Paris.
	Aonach Tailteann art exhibition.
1924.	British Empire Exhibition.
	Aonach Tailteann.
	Olympic Games, Paris.
1926.	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
1927.	Dublin Civic Week
	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
	Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, at the Imperial Art Gallery, London.
1928.	Aonach Tailteann.
	Olympic Games, Amsterdam.
	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
	Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, at the Imperial Art Gallery, London.
1929.	Dublin Civic Week
	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
	Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, at the Imperial Art Gallery, London.
1930.	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
	Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, at the Imperial Art Gallery, London.
1931.	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
	Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and Sculpture by Artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions, at the Imperial Art Gallery, London.
1932.	Eucharistic Congress.
	Aonach Tailteann.
	Olympic Games, Los Angeles.
	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
1933.	Century of Progress/ Chicago World's Fair.
	Empire Marketing Board campaign.
1934.	Century of Progress/ Chicago World's Fair.

Appendix 2. Irish Olympic Art Competitors.

Irish Participation in Olympic Art Competitions 1924 - 1948.								
Location Year	Artists	Gender	Age	Medal	Sport/ Category	Title of work		
Paris 1924.								
	Jack Yeats	Male	52	Silver	Mixed Painting	Swimming		
					Mixed Painting	Before the Start		
	Oliver St. John Gogarty	Male	45	Bronze	Mixed Literature	Ode to the Tailteann Games		
	Seán Keating	Male	24		Mixed Painting	The Fowler		
	John Lavery	Male	68		Mixed Painting	Steven Donoghue		
	T.C. Murray	Male	51		Mixed Literature	Birthright		
	J. Ryan	Male			Mixed Literature	The New Master of the Clanwilliams		
	Oliver Sheppard	Male	59		Mixed Sculpturing	Medals		
	John Weldon	Male	33		Mixed Literature	The Glorious Uncertainty		
Amsterdam 1928								
	Kathleen Bridle	Female	30		Mixed Painting, Paintings	Lutte à la corde		
					Drawings And Water colours	Garçons boxants		
	Lilian Davidson	Female			Mixed Painting, Paintings	Le Bain		
					Drawings And Water colours	Aux courses		
	Mainie Jellett	Female	31		Mixed Painting, Paintings	Baigneurs		

	Seán Keating	Male	28		Mixed Painting, Paintings	The Tipperary Hurler	
	Harry, Aaron Kernoff	Male	28		Mixed Painting, Paintings	Le lanceur de marteau	
					Drawings And Water colours	Le Boxeur	
	Edward Louis Lawrenson	Male	60		Drawings And Water colours	Le plongeon	
	Dermot O'Brien	Male	62		Mixed Painting, Paintings	La fin de la journée	
	Oliver Sheppard	Male	63		Mixed Sculpturing, Statues	Le Baigneur	
	Stella Steyn	Female			Drawings And Water colours	Sur la Glace	
Los Angeles 1932							
	George Collie	Male	28		Mixed Painting	Stony Broke	
	Humbert Craig	Male	55		Mixed Painting	After a fresh on the Dun river.	
	Frances J. Kelly	Female			Mixed Painting	Dr. Hayes Dockrell, Swimming and Boxing Champion	
	Charles Lamb	Male	38		Mixed Painting	The Fisherman	
	Seán O'Sullivan	Male	26		Mixed Painting	Cyclone Warren, Negro Boxer	
	Hilda Roberts	Female			Mixed Painting	Watching the Curragh races	
					Mixed Painting	The Little Hurler	
	Leo Whelan	Male	39		Mixed Painting	The Village Champion	
	Jack Yeats	Male	60		Mixed Painting	The Small Ring.	

London 1948								
	Letitia Hamilton	Female	69	Bronze	Mixed Painting	Meath Hunt Point-to-Point Races		
					Mixed Painting U	Punchestown Races		
	Ina Boyle	Female	59		Mixed Music, Vocals	Lament for Bion		
	Desmond Broe	Male			Mixed Sculpturing, Statues	Clearing the Obstacle (Plaster)		
	Christopher Campbell	Male			Mixed Painting U	Victory of David over Goliath		
	Edmondo Gigante	Male			Mixed Sculpturing, Statues	Eire Youth (Wood)		
	Jack Hanlon	Male	35		Mixed Painting U	Preparing for a Days Sailing		
					Mixed Painting U	The Jockeys		
	Charles Lamb	Male	54		Mixed Painting U	The Curragh Races, Connemara		
	Stanislaus Lynch	Male			Mixed Literature, Epic Works	Echoes of the Hunting Horn		
	Flora Vere O'Brien	Female			Mixed Painting, Graphic Art	The Hurlers (Lino cut)		
	May Power	Female			Mixed Sculpturing, Statues	The Athlete (Plaster)		

Appendix 3. World Congress of the Irish Race, Paris 1922, Program.

The following was the programme – as taken from a copy of agenda prepared by Miss

Hughes¹³

Aonac na nGaedael

At the Salle Des Fetes, Hotel Continental

Jan21-28, 1922

Program

(Subject to alteration)

Jan 21 – Saturday Registration of Delegates and Visitors at the Grand Hotel

Jan 22 – Sunday Tour of Paris in motors in afternoon –

visiting places of interest from the viewpoint of Irish history.

Jan 23 – Monday Opening of session: Meeting at 10:30 and at 2:30 pm.

(Ireland's Day) Evening: 9pm Concert of Irish Music.

Jan 24 – Tuesday Continuation of sessions: 10:30 am and at 2:30 pm.

(United States day) Evening: Concert and Public Reception.

Jan 25 – Wednesday Continuation of sessions: 10:30 am and at 2:30 pm.

(Sth. America day) Evening: Concert of Irish Music.

Jan 26 – Thursday Continuation of sessions: 10:30 am and at 2:30 pm.

(British Domn's day) Evening: Concert of Irish Music followed by

Farewell Reception for Delegates and Visitors.

Jan 27 – Friday Final session: 10:30am

(Ireland's day of Godspeed)

¹³ The agenda is compiled from these sources: UCD-FitzGerald. P80/703 and NAI DFA ES Box 11 File 77. Diarmuid Coffey, Michael Hayes, Douglas Hyde and Eoin MacNeill, *Report on the Irish Race Conference in Paris*, Feb 1922. <http://www.difp.ie/docs/1922/Irish-Race-Convention-Paris/239.htm> accessed 16/11/2016 which differs slightly from Fine Ghaedheal, *Imieac̃ta Aonaĩge na n-Gaedeal ib-Páris, eanair, 1922, Proceedings of the Irish Race Congress in Paris, January, 1922*, (Dublin: Cahill & Company, 1922), which is more accurate and agrees with Nantes 155, 170-181.

On this evening – Jan 27 – the Delegates and Visitors of the Aonac na nGaedael are invited to the presentation of “The Riders to the Sea” and “The rising of the moon” in the Salle Hoche, by the Dramatic Section of the Irish Club of Paris, followed by Grand Ball.

Exhibition of Irish Art. This exhibition to be given in the Barbazanges Gallery – will be opened during the Congress week and continue for three weeks.¹⁴

The details added to this agenda specified what was to be discussed on each particular day.

Monday: Irish language, literature and history Chairman – Prof. Eoin MacNeill.

Tuesday: Music, Arts and Physical Culture. Chairman – Rev. Dr. O'Reilly.

Wednesday: Organisation, purpose and constitution of an Irish World Association.

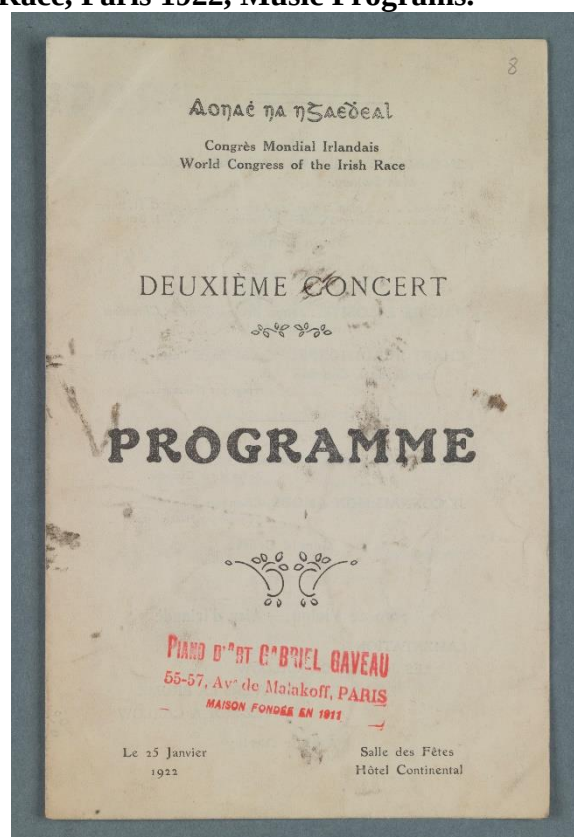
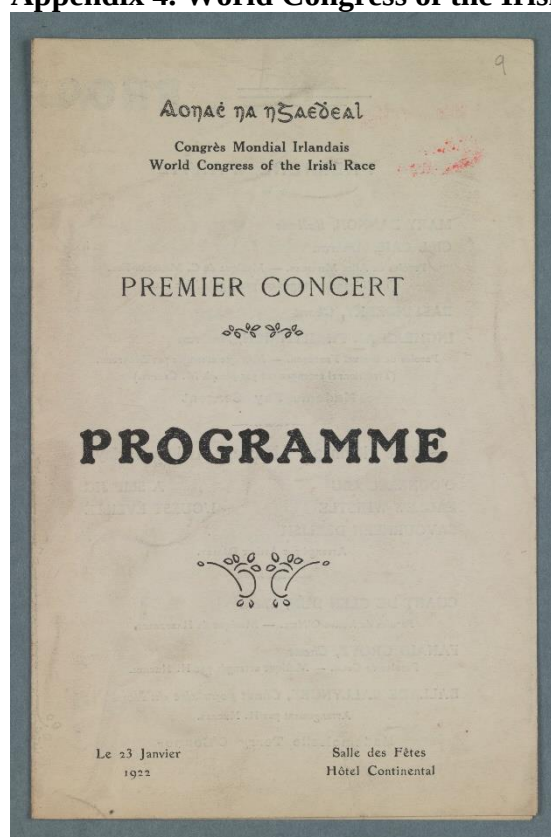
Chairman – Mr. Eamon de Valera.

Thursday: Economic Questions Chairman – Mr Art O'Brien.

Friday: Continuation of Wednesday's programme. Chairman – Mr. Eamon de Valera.

¹⁴ The art exhibition ran for four weeks.

Appendix 4. World Congress of the Irish Race, Paris 1922, Music Programs.



PROGRAMME

2^e Quatuor à cordes, dédié à la mémoire de Terence Mac Swiney.

1^{er} Violon . . . Arthur DARLEY. Alto G. H. BRETT
2^e Violon . . . Terry O'CONNOR Violoncelle J. SCHOFIELD
Swan Hennessey

BALADE JACOBITE, : Jeune Prince Charlie, *Chanson*
Arrangé par J. M. CROFTS.

CHANT TRADITIONNEL : Jeune Sarah aux cheveux
flamboyants, *Chanson*
Arrangé par HARDEBECK.

LES TUNICS VERTES, *Chanson*
Arrangé par GLENNON.

JE CONNAIS MON AMOUR, *Chanson*
Arrangé par H. HUGHES.
Gerald Crofts

Solo de Violon. — Airs d'Irlande

LAMENTATION

LES JOYEUX DE MALLOW

LA ROSÉE A TRAVERS LA BRUME

SUIVEZ-MOI A CARLOW

Arthur Darley

LAMENTATION POUR PATRICK SARSFIELD, *Chanson*

Arrangé par STANFORD.

HYMNE DE BATAILLE, *Chanson*

Arrangé par Comtesse MARKIEWICZ.

Andy Dunne

CATASTROPHE EN MER, *Chanson*

Paroles de Moira O'NEILL. — Arrangé par Herbert HUGHES.

JE SAIS OU JE VAIS, *Chanson*

Terry O'Connor

LAMENTATION POUR OWEN ROE, *Chanson*

Arrangé par STANFORD.

L'OUEST S'EST RÉVEILLÉ, *Chanson*

Paroles de Thomas DAVIS. — Arrangé par ESPOSITO.

Micheal O Giallehobhair

Quatuor à Cordes. — Quatuor à 4 Mouvements

Arrangé sur des Airs irlandais par HENRI BAST.

Adagio : Ancienne Marche des Clans.

Scherzo Le Chant des Bois.

Allegro e Lento : La Fondrière Glissante.

Finale : Patrick Sarsfield.

1^{er} Violon . . . Arthur DARLEY Alto G. H. BRETT.
2^e Violon . . . Terry O'CONNOR Cello Joseph SCHOFIELD

Au Piano : J. AHERN

Appendix 5. List of invited guests for 1924 Aonach Tailteann.

The following includes all the distinguished visitors invited to the 1924 Aonach Tailteann and includes some members of the Dáil and Seanad and the judiciary who also attended the special events with the guests.

Hon. R. Erskine of Marr, the Marquis of Bute, Sir Thomas Lipton, Sir John and Lady Lavery, Sir W. H. Hadow, Sir William Berry, Sir Edward and Lady Lutyens, Sir Alfred Cope, Mr. H. H. Jeffcott, Hon. Cecil Baring, Mr. Compton Mackenzie, Mr. Ezra Pound, Mr Augustus John, Mr and Mrs John McCormack, Mr. John Devoy, Prince Mirza Meza Khan (a Persian patron of culture and ambassador to the League of Nations), Prince von Schlitz (German nobility), His Highness the Maharajah Jam Sahib of Nawanagar (an Indian ruling prince, League of Nations representative and an international cricketer), G. K. Chesterton, Governor General Tim Healy, Commander C. B. Fry (English politician and cricketer), Senhora and Carlos de Azeredo (Brazilian ambassador to the Holy See), Her Highness Countess von Schiltz (see above, a relative of the Kaiser), Monsignor W. H. Nolens (a Dutch author, politician – Minister in the Dutch Parliament and a Roman Catholic priest), His Highness Wilhelm Graf, Lennox Robinson, George Atkinson RHA, Dermot O'Brien, President RHA, James Stephens (1924 Tailteann medal winner), Susan Mitchell, Denis McCullough, M. J. Pahalajani (member Indian Bar), W. Denis Johnston (author), Francis Hackett, New York (author), Compton MacKensie, Mr. Justice Wylie, Sir John Lumsden, Dr. Von. Dehn (German Consul), Mr. Pdraig Colum, Sir John Irwin, Senator A Jameson, Sir Wm Thompson, Dr. D. J. Coffey (President of UCD), Sir John R. O'Donnell, Marquis and Marchioness MacSwiney, Sir Simon and Lady Maddock, D.L., Chief Justice and Mrs. Kennedy, Mr Justice Johnston, Colonel J. O'Reilly, Mr. and Mrs. James MacMahon, Mr. Frank Cunningham, New York, Senor Augereoto, Brazil, Sir. Nugent Everard, Baron Palmisterna (Swedish Minister), Lord and Lady Glenavy, Senhora and Senor Godoy, Consul-General to the Argentine, Senhora de Figueredo, Sec. of

Brazilian Embassy, Madame and Monsieur Goor, Consul-General, Belgium, Lord and Lady Ardee, Mr. P. J. Hooper, Editor Freemans Journal, Senator and Mrs. Oliver St. J. Gogarty, Sir Henry and Lady McLaughlin, Mr J.J. Keane, Edward Bohane, Major Arthur Whewell, Frank Finnegan, W. B. and Mrs Yeats, Dr. W. Lombard Murphy, Col. Walter Scott, Mr. Vincent O'Brien, Major-Gen. Felix Cronin, Doctor Keelan, Charles, John, Robert and David La Touche, D.F. and Mrs Bremner, USA, Mr J. and Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, USA, Mr. Joseph O'Mara, Commissioner Sheehy, Sir Thomas and Lady MacArdle, KBE, Mr. Chevalier, Leonard Fryer (artist), Major Lawlor, Madame Rock, Serjeant Hanna, KC, Mrs and G. W. Panter, MA MRIA, JJ Buckley, MRIA, Dr. Kennedy Cahill, Dr. W. M. Crofton, Sir W. Henry Hadow, Sir Philip Banson, Mrs Henry Hanna, Mrs. And Senator James Douglas, Rt. Hon. General Sir Bryan Mahon, Walter Starkie, K. S. Mudhavsinhji, Lady Wheeler, Hon. Cecil Baring, Talbot Clifton, Senhor de Costa, Mrs and John P. Trant, Consul at Calloo, Peru, Mrs Joseph O'Mara, Major Bryan Cooper, MBE, R. S. Digvijaysinhji, Mr. Justice Creed Meredith, Mrs and Dr. Hathaway, American Consul, C. E. Seaman, Mrs. and Justice M. Rafferty, Sir John O'Connell, Mrs. and Joseph O'Connor, KC, Count Westphalen, Mons. Weeninck, Mrs. Senator Wyse Power, Mrs. Beta Croker, Major Hackett, M.C., W. F. Butler, Fredk. W. Coit, American Bar, Mrs. M. F. O'Brien, Miss Aileen Browne, Charles Keatinge, Sir Conway Dwyer, Major Hennessy, Sir William De C. Wheeler, Sir James Aikens, Lieut-Governor Manitoba, Mrs. Francesca Dunlloo, Tierney O'Rourke, Mrs and Ald. H. Clarke (High Sheriff of Dublin), Col. J. J. Hennessy, London, Senator Martin Fitzgerald Mr. P.J. Floyd, General Eoin O'Duffy, Dr. Myles Keogh, TD, Professor J. M. O'Sullivan TD, Mr. P. O'Maille, Leas Chean Comhairle, Mr. M. Hayes, Ceann Comhairle, General and Mrs. Mulcahy, JJ Walsh, TD and Mrs Walsh, Kevin and Mrs O'Higgins, Desmond and Mrs Fitzgerald, Seamus Burke TD, Dr. Myles Keogh, TD, Senator George Nesbit.

**Appendix 6. 1922 Aonach Tailteann Art Exhibition prize winners.
Group A. Drawing and Painting.**

Class 1. Portraiture.	
1.	Ernest Forbes.
2.	Miss Estella F. Solomons
HC	Seán Keating, Francis Cahill, Miss K. Fox.
Class 2. Landscape and Seascape.	
1.	E. M. O’R. Dickey
2.	Ernest Forbes
HC	J. H. Craig, E. M. O’R. Dickey, Miss E. Hamilton.
Class 3. Genre, including figure subjects, still life, etc.	
1.	Jack B. Yeats
2.	Seán Keating
HC.	Seán Keating, Jack B. Yeats
Class 4. Prints and drawings.	
1.	Seán Keating
2.	George Atkinson
HC.	W. Farrell, Patrick Tuohy, Miss E. F. Solomons, Miss Dorothy Fitzgerald
Class 5. Sculpture in the round.	
1.	Albert G. Power
2.	Mrs. L. M. Vanston
Class 6. Sculpture in the relief.	
1.	Albert G. Power
2.	Mrs. L. M. Vanston
Class 7. Architectural design.	
1.	R. M. Butler
2.	Messrs. O’Callaghan and Webb
HC.	Messrs. O’Callaghan and Webb, Messrs. Orpen and Dickinson, Frederick Hicks, William H. Ward.
Class 8. Architectural drawing and studies.	
	Bronze medal. George F. Beckett.
HC.	Bernard Garrett Joyce.

Group B. Arts and Crafts and Art Industries.

Class 9. Stained Glass and cartoons and coloured schemes therefor.	
1.	Harry Clarke
2.	Miss W. Geddes
HC.	Michael Healy
Class 10. Mosaic.	
Bronze Medal. Miss Ethel Rhind	
Class 11. Decorative Painting and Schemes of decoration.	
No awards. Eight entries.	
Class 12. Decorative Sculpture in all materials.	
Silver Medal. Mrs. Beatrice Campbell	
Class 13. Decorative Stone and Marble Carving and Inlaying.	
HC.	H. B. Emery
Class 14. Sgraffito.	
No entries.	
Class 15. Gesso and Stucco Work.	
No awards. Two entries both not for competition.	
Class 16. Pottery and Porcelain.	
Silver medal. Miss M. J. McKeen	
Bronze medal. Miss Eva McKee	
HC.	Miss M. J. McKeen
Class 17. Hammered Ironwork.	
No Awards. Six entries.	
Class 18. Metal Work, Brass, Copper, Pewter.	
Silver medal. Matthew O'Byrne	
Class 19. Gold and Silversmiths' work.	
Silver medal. Miss Frances Burroughs	
Bronze medal. Miss M. Lynch	
HC.	Miss H. M. Loughridge
Class 20. Jewellery.	
Silver medal. Mrs. Maeve O'Byrne-Doggett	
Bronze medal. Miss Lucy Garrett	

HC.	Miss Dorothy Matthews
Commended.	Miss Mabel McCorry
Class 21. Enamels and Enamelled Metal Work.	
Silver medal.	Miss Margaret O'Keefe
Bronze medal.	Miss Nora McGuinness
HC.	Patrick O'Donnell
Class 21 a. Not sure why class 21 was split – not obvious from the catalogue.	
Silver medal.	Mrs. D. K. Allen-Reeves
Bronze medal.	Miss Nora O'Kelly
HC.	George McDonnell
Commended.	Ralph Anderson
Class 22. Cabinet Making.	
Silver medal.	James Hicks
Bronze medal.	Daniel Costello
Class 23. Painted Furniture Making.	
Silver medal.	Thomas Kain.
Class 24. Wood-Carving.	
Silver medal.	S. W. W. Bell
Bronze medal.	Thomas King Moylan
HC.	Mrs. Julie Moylan
Class 25. Inlaying in Wood.	
Bronze medal.	Richard Joseph Phelan
Class 26. Hand-Tufted Carpets.	
Silver Medal.	Dun Emer Guild
Class 27. Hand-Made Tapestry.	
Silver Medal.	Dun Emer Guild
Class 28. Decorative Hand-Woven Fabrics	
Silver Medal.	Mrs. J. Gibson
Bronze medal.	Miss Ethel Hamilton and Miss Ellen Webb
HC.	Miss Frances Baker
Class 29. Coloured Embroidery.	
Bronze medal.	Dun Emer Guild

Class 29a. Not sure why class 29 was split – not obvious from the catalogue.
Silver medal. Miss Lily Yeats
Bronze medal. Miss Curran
Commended. Miss Crookshank, Miss Weldon, Miss G. Grew
Class 30. White Embroidery.
? Large entry unsure of winners.
Class 31. Ornamented Garments for Children.
Silver medal. Miss Bridget Kealey
HC. Miss Logue and Miss McCloskey
Commended. Miss Lily Yeats
Class 32. Lingerie.
Silver Medal. Miss B. McMenamin
Commended. Miss McMenamin
Class 33. Needlepoint Lace.
Silver medal. Sister M. O’Ryan
Bronze medal. Sister Teresa Dominic
Class 34. Bobbin Lace.
Silver Medal. Miss Isabel Orpin
Class 35. Carrickmacross Lace
Silver Medal. Sister M. Talbot
Class 36. Limerick Lace
Silver Medal. Miss O’Sullivan
Bronze Medal. Miss Kitty Dunlea
HC. Miss Halpenny
Class 37. Filet Lace.
HC. Miss H. Gilborne
Class 38. Crochet.
Silver medal. Miss Alice Higgins
Bronze medal. Miss J. Neville
HC. Miss Halpenny
Class 39. Bookbinding and Decorative Leather Work.
Bronze medal. Miss Nora Jackson

HC.	Colm Ó'Lochlainn, Miss Evelyn Willis, Miss Eva McKee
Class 40. Decorative Engraving and Lithography.	
Silver medal.	Miss Mary Crookshank
Bronze medal.	William Whelan
HC.	Miss W. Geddes
Class 41. Decorative Drawing for Reproduction.	
Silver medal.	Harry Clarke
Bronze medal.	Miss W. Geddes
HC.	Harry Clarke, George Atkinson.
Class 42. Decorative Drawing for Reproduction in Colour.	
Bronze medal.	Bouguran Wilson
HC.	Miss Nora McGuinness, Miss Olive Cunningham, Miss M. O'Keefe.
Commended.	Miss H. Roberts, Miss Kathleen Bridle, Frank Brandt
Class 43. Decorative Scribe Work.	
Bronze medal.	J. F. Maxwell
HC.	Miss E. C. Yeats
Class 44. Typography	
Silver medal.	Colm Ó'Lochlainn
Bronze medal.	Miss E. C. Yeats
Commended.	Frank Brandt
Class 45. Designs for Hand- or Machine-Made Fabrics.	
Silver medal??	Harry Clarke (hankies). Large entry, other winners unclear.
Class 46. Violins or Other Musical Instruments	
Silver medal.	Edward Keenan
Class 47. Toys: Costume Figures and Dolls.	
Silver medal.	Miss E. C. Yeats
Bronze medal.	Miss Anne McElheron
HC.	Miss E. C. Yeats, Miss Mary C. Yeats.
Class 48. Toys not included in class 47.	
Silver medal.	Miss Caroline Eaton Walker
Bronze medal.	Pierre Ponsonby Metge
HC.	Richard Phelan

**Appendix 7. 1924 Aonach Tailteann Art Exhibition prize winners.
Group A. Drawing and Painting.**

Tailteann Trophy. John S. Keating.	
Class 1. Portraiture.	
Silver Medal.	John S. Keating.
Bronze Medal.	Patrick J. Tuohy.
Class 2. Landscape and Seascape.	
Silver Medal.	Power O'Malley.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Letitia M. Hamilton
Class 3. Genre, including figure subjects, still life, etc.	
Silver Medal.	John S. Keating.
Bronze Medal.	Mrs. Margaret Clarke.
Class 4. Prints and drawings.	
Silver Medal.	John S. Keating.
Bronze Medal.	Patrick J. Tuohy.
Class 5. Sculpture in the round.	
Silver Medal.	Francis Doyle Jones.
Bronze Medal.	Francis Wiles.
Class 6. Sculpture in the relief.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Kathleen Verchoyle.
Bronze Medal.	Joseph Higgins.
Class 7. Architectural design.	
Silver Medal.	R. M. Butler.
Bronze Medal.	Beckett and Harrington.
Class 8. Architectural drawing and studies.	
Silver Medal.	R. A. Cammack.

Group B. Arts and Crafts and Art Industries.

Class 9. Stained Glass and cartoons and coloured schemes therefor.	
Gold Medal.	Harry Clarke.
Silver Medal.	Harry Clarke.
Class 10. Mosaic.	
No award. Only a single entry.	
Class 11. Decorative Painting and Schemes of decoration.	
Silver Medal.	Harry Clarke.
Bronze Medal.	Thomas J. Byrne.
Class 12. Decorative Sculpture.	
No entries.	
Class 13. Decorative Stone and Marble Carving and Inlaying.	
Silver Medal.	John Sloan.
Class 14. Sgraffito.	
No entries.	
Class 15. Gesso and Stucco Work.	
No award. Only a single entry.	
Class 16. Pottery and Porcelain.	
Bronze Medal.	Miss Gertrude M. Grew.
Class 17. Hammered Ironwork.	
No entries.	
Class 18. Metal Work, Brass, Copper, Pewter.	
Silver Medal.	Matthew O'Byrne.
Bronze Medal.	Thomas J. Byrne.
Class 19. Gold and Silversmiths' work.	
Silver Medal.	P. Oswald Reeves.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Francis Burroughs.
Class 20. Jewellery.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Nan Holland.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Gertrude M. Grew.
Class 21. Enamels and Enamelled Metal Work.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Kathleen Bridle.

Bronze Medal.	Miss Nora O’Kelly.
Class 22. Cabinet Making.	
Silver Medal.	James Hicks.
Bronze Medal.	Joseph Taylor.
Class 23. Painted Furniture Making.	
Silver Medal.	Thomas Kain.
Bronze Medal.	Robert Maguire and Michael Slevins.
Class 24. Wood-Carving.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Irene Kelly.
Bronze Medal.	John Cronin.
Class 25. Inlaying in Wood.	
Silver Medal.	R. J. Whelan.
Bronze Medal.	R. J. Long.
Class 26. Hand-Tufted Carpets.	
Bronze Medal (two awarded). Miss Ellie Carton. Miss Evelyn Gleeson.	
Class 27. Hand-Made Tapestry.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Evelyn Gleeson.
Class 28. Decorative Hand-Woven Fabrics	
Silver Medal.	Miss J. Gibson.
Bronze Medal.	Mrs. Kennedy Cahill.
Class 29. Coloured Embroidery.	
Bronze Medal.	Miss Evelyn Gleeson.
Class 30. White Embroidery.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Mary Harris.
Bronze Medal.	Miss N. M. Buckley.
Class 31. Ornamented Garments for Children.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Brigid McCloskey.
Bronze Medal.	Miss A. Hannigan.
Class 32. Lingerie.	
No awards.	
Class 33. Needlepoint Lace.	
Silver Medal.	Sister M. Magdalen.

Bronze Medal.	Miss Minnie Murphy.
Class 34. Bobbin Lace.	
No entries.	
Class 35. Carrickmacross Lace	
Silver Medal.	Miss M. Anne Kilcullen.
Class 36. Limerick Lace	
Silver Medal.	Miss Julia Flynn.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Monica O'Mahoney.
Class 37. Filet Lace.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Sarah A. Reynolds.
Bronze Medal.	Mrs. M. G. O'Hara Mease.
Class 38. Crochet.	
Silver Medal.	Sister M. Dympna.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Nellie O'Brien.
Class 39. Hand-Knitting in Wool, Silk or Cotton.	
Bronze Medal.	Mrs. E. C. S. Bayly.
Class 40. Bookbinding.	
Bronze Medal.	Colm Ó'Lochlainn.
Class 41. Decorative Leather Work.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Evelyn M. Wills.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Florence Clugston.
Class 42. Decorative Engraving and Lithography.	
Silver Medal.	Harry Clarke [not listed in catalogue, ex-catalogue]
Class 43. Decorative Drawing for Reproduction in Black and White.	
No awards despite large entry.	
Class 44. Decorative Drawing for Reproduction in Colour.	
No awards despite large entry. [Were classes 42, 43, 44 combined in some way?]	
Class 45. Decorative Scribe Work.	
Silver Medal.	James Hodgen.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Jane E. Simms.
Class 46. Typography.	
No awards. Eight entries.	

Class 47. Designs for Hand- or Machine-Made Fabrics.	
Silver Medal.	Miss N. M. Buckley.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Marjorie Drury.
Class 48. Violins or Other Musical Instruments	
Silver Medal.	Edward Keenan.
Class 49. Toys: Costume Figures and Dolls.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Alice K. Wynne.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Sara Hyland.
Class 50. Toys not included in class 47. Silver Medal.	
Silver Medal.	John and Christopher Darley.
Bronze Medal.	R. J. Phelan.

**Appendix 8. 1928 Aonach Tailteann Art Exhibition prize winners.
Group A. Drawing, Painting and Sculpture.**

Two Gold medals awarded. Mrs Margaret Clarke. Mr Albert G. Power.	
Class 1. Portraiture.	
Silver Medal.	Leo Whelan.
Bronze Medal.	John Keating.
Class 2. Landscape and Seascape.	
Silver Medal.	Maurice McGonigal.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Letitia M. Hamilton.
Class 3. Genre, including figure subjects, still life, etc.	
Silver Medal.	Mrs Margaret Clarke.
Bronze Medal.	John Keating.
Class 4. Prints and drawings.	
Silver Medal.	George Atkinson.
Bronze Medal.	Maurice McGonigal.
Class 5. Sculpture in the round.	
Silver Medal.	Albert G. Power.
Bronze Medal.	Kathleen Verschoyle.
Class 6. Sculpture in the relief.	
No awards. Only a single entry.	
Class 7. Architectural design.	
No awards. Only a single entry.	
Class 8. Architectural drawing and studies.	
No awards. Only a single entry.	

Group B. Arts and Crafts and Art Industries.

Gold Medal.	James Hicks.
Class 9. Stained Glass and cartoons and coloured schemes therefor.	
Silver Medal.	H. J. McGoldrick.
Bronze Medal.	William McBride.
Class 10. Mosaic and Opus Sectile.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Ethel Rhind.
Class 11. Decorative Painting and Schemes of decoration.	
Silver Medal.	H. J. McGoldrick.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Hilda Roberts.
Class 12. Decorative Stone and Marble Carving and Inlaying.	
Unknown. Possibly no awards. Only a single entry.	
Class 13. Pottery and Porcelain.	
No entries.	
Class 14. Wrought Ironwork.	
No entries.	
Class 15. Metal Work, Brass, Copper, Pewter.	
Unknown.	
Class 16. Gold and Silversmiths' work.	
Silver Medal.	J. L. Powell. DMSA.
Bronze Medal.	Nora Jackson. DMSA.
Class 17. Jewellery.	
Silver Medal.	Nora Jackson.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Nan Holland.
Class 18. Enamels and Enamelled Metal Work.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Margaret O'Keeffe, The Cluna Studio
Bronze Medal.	J. L. Powell, DMSA.
Class 19. Cabinet Making, Painted Furniture and Inlaying.	
Silver Medal.	James Hicks.
Bronze Medal.	Daniel J. Kelly.
Class 20. Wood-Carving.	
No entries.	

Class 21. Hand-Tufted Carpets and rugs.	
Silver Medal.	The Dun Emer Guild Ltd.
Bronze Medal.	Mrs. Elinor Sibel Jolley.
Class 22. Hand-Made Tapestry and Decorative Hand-Woven Fabrics.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Jane E. Simms.
Class 23. Coloured Embroidery.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Sara Hyland, Cuala Industries.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Alice Morrin, DMSA.
Class 24. White Embroidery.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Olive B. McNair, DMSA.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Gertrude Twiss, DMSA.
Class 25. Garments for Children.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Lena O'Reilly, Cuala Industries.
Bronze Medal.	Miss May Courtney, Cuala Industries.
Class 26. Needlepoint Lace.	
Silver Medal.	Presentation Convent, Youghal.
Bronze Medal.	Presentation Convent, Youghal.
Class 27. Carrickmacross Lace	
No entries.	
Class 28. Limerick Lace	
Silver Medal.	Institution for Deaf and Dumb, Cabra.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Norah Sophia Jackson, DMSA.
Class 29. Filet Lace.	
Unknown.	
Class 30. Crochet.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Nellie O'Brien.
Bronze Medal.	Miss A. Lally.
Class 31. Hand-Knitting.	
Unknown.	
Class 32. Bookbinding.	
Silver Medal.	Colm Ó'Lochlainn.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Sarah A. Reynolds.

Class 33. Publishers Casings.	
No entries.	
Class 34. Decorative Leather Work.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Norah S. Jackson, DMSA.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Evelyn M. Willis.
Class 35. Engraving, Lithography, Woodcuts, and Lino Cuts.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Phyllis M. Godfrey.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Kathleen Quigley.
Class 36. Drawing for Reproduction.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Stella Steyn.
Bronze Medal.	Miss Dorothy Blackham.
Class 37. Decorative Scribe Work and Illumination.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Kathleen Quigley. [Simms also mentioned as a silver medallist?]
Bronze Medal.	Miss Gertrude M. Grew, Cluna Studio.
Class 38. Typography.	
Silver Medal.	Cuala Press.
Bronze Medal.	Colm Ó'Lochlainn.
Class 39. Designs for Fabrics.	
Silver Medal.	Miss Ursula Hilser, Cork School of Art.
Bronze Medal [Two awarded]. Miss Hylda Boyd. Miss Lucy E. Charles, DMSA.	
Class 40. Musical Instruments.	
Silver Medal.	Edward Keenan.
Class 41. Toys: Costume Figures and Dolls.	
Silver Medal [Two awarded]. Miss Annie McElheron. Arthur E. Burns.	
Bronze Medal.	Richard J. Phelan.
Class 42. Toys not included in class 41.	
Unknown.	

**Appendix 9. 1932 Aonach Tailteann Art Exhibition prize winners.
Group A. Drawing and Painting.**

Class 1. Portraiture.	
Silver gilt.	Mrs. Margaret Clarke
Hon Mention.	Miss Nano Reid and Miss Hilda Roberts
Class 2. Landscape and Seascape	
Silver gilt.	Jack B. Yeats
Silver medal.	M. McGonigal
Hon Mention.	H. C. O'Donnell and Miss Nano Reid.
Class 3. Genre.	
RHA Trophy.	Mrs. Margaret Clarke
Silver gilt.	Lady Glenavy.
Silver medal.	Jack B. Yeats
Hon Mention.	M. McGonigal
Class 4. Prints and Drawings.	
Hon Mention.	Miss Hilda Roberts and C. B. Simmonds.
Class 5. Sculpture in the Round.	
Silver gilt.	Lady Glenavy
Silver medals.	Oliver Sheppard and Morris Harding.
Class 6. Sculpture in Relief.	
Silver medal.	Miss Kathleen Cox.
Class 7. Architectural Design.	
Silver gilt.	F. S. Hicks.
Silver medal.	Vincent Kelly.
Class 8. Omitted.	

Group B. Arts and Crafts and Art Industries.

Class 9. Stained Glass and cartoons and coloured schemes therefor.	
Silver gilt.	C. B. Simmonds.
Silver medal.	Wilhelmina Geddes.
Hon mention.	R. J. King.
Class 10. Mosaic and Opus Sectile.	
Silver medal.	Hubert McGoldrick.
Class 11. Decorative Painting and Scheme of Decoration	
Silver gilt.	Miss Mainie Jellett.
Silver medal.	Miss Evie Hone.
Hon Mention.	H. A. Kernoff.
Class 12. Decorative Stone and Marble Carving and Inlaying and Modelled Plaster Work.	
No award. Only two entries for competition.	
Class 13. Pottery and Porcelain.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Kitty Evershed.
Silver medal.	Miss Kathleen Cox.
Hon Mention.	Miss Anne Acheson.
Class 14. Omitted.	
Class 15. Metal Work, Brass, Copper, Pewter.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Norah Jackson.
Silver medal.	Miss Shelia Kennedy.
Class 16. Omitted.	
Class 17. Jewellery.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Norah Jackson.
Hon Mention.	Miss Roise Nic Sheamuis.
Class 18. Enamels and Enamelled Metal Work.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Shelia Kennedy.
Hon Mention.	Miss Nan Holland.
Class 19. Cabinet-making, Painted Furniture and Inlaying.	
Trophy.	James Hicks.
Silver medal.	Lady Glenavy.

Silver Medal.	Henry Hicks.
Class 20. Wood Carving.	
No award. Only a single entry.	
Class 21. Hand-tufted Carpets and Rugs.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Evelyn Gleeson.
Class 22. Handmade Tapestry and Decorative Handwoven Fabrics.	
Silver gilt.	Mrs. F. C. Farrell.
Silver medal.	Miss Wynne.
Hon Mentions	Miss Estelle Scally and Miss Helen Ross.
Class 23. Coloured Embroidery.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Lily Yeats.
Silver medal.	Miss Gertrude M. Grew.
Class 23 (domestic). Coloured Embroidery.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Agnes Callier.
Silver medal.	Miss Florence Gick.
Class 24. White Embroidery.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Hannah Carberry.
Class 25. Garments for Children.	
Silver gilt.	Mrs. B. Dennehy.
Hon Mentions.	Miss Hannah Carberry and Mrs. Vere O'Brien.
Class 26. Omitted.	
Class 27. Carrickmacross Lace.	
Hon Mention.	Rev. Mother, Presentation Convent, Caherciveen.
Class 28. Limerick Lace.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Norah Jackson.
Class 29. Omitted.	
Class 30. Crochet.	
Silver gilt.	Miss A. E. Willis.
Class 31. Bookbinding.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Phyllis Bates.
Class 32. Publishers' Casings.	
Hon Mention.	Colm Ó'Lochlainn.

Class 33. Decorative Leather Work.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Gertrude Howe.
Silver medal.	Miss Florence Huggard.
Hon Mention.	Miss Claire Heydon.
Class 34. Engraving, Lithography, Woodcuts and Lino Cuts.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Kathleen Quigley [not in catalogue].
Hon Mentions.	Miss Isa MacNie and C. B. Simmonds.
Class 34. Engraving, Lithography, Woodcuts and Lino Cuts. [Second set of awards.]	
Silver gilts.	Miss Kathleen Quigley, Miss Margaret O’Keefe and C. B. Simmonds.
Silver medal.	Miss Dorothy Blackham.
Hon Mentions.	Henry Walsh, Miss Elizabeth Yeats and Miss Isa MacNie.
Class 35. Drawings for reproduction.	
Silver gilt.	Lady Glenavy.
Silver medals.	Olive Cunningham Henning, Miss Sheelah Parker and Mrs Doris Valentine.
Hon Mentions.	Miss Dorothy Blackham, Miss Hilda Roberts, and Miss May Tisdall.
Class 36. Decorative Scribe Work and Illumination.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Elizabeth Austin.
Hon Mentions.	Miss Jennie Fitzharris and Michael O’Brien.
Class 37. Typography.	
Silver gilt.	Miss Elizabeth Yeats.
Silver medal.	Colm Ó’Lochlainn.
Hon Mention.	Pierce Bergin.
Class 38. Designs for Hand or Machine-Made Fabrics.	
Silver gilts.	Miss Lucie Charles and Miss Joy Smith.
Silver medals.	Miss Dorothy Blackham and Miss Gladys Cooke.
Hon Mentions.	Miss Florence Gick, Miss Joy Smith and Miss Elizabeth Warren.
Class 39. Harps, Pipes, Violins, or Other Musical Instruments.	
Silver gilt.	Edward Keenan.
Silver medal.	Daniel F. O’Connell.
Hon Mention.	F. Kinsella [not in catalogue]
Class 40. Toys: Costume Figures and Dolls.	

No awards.	Five entries.
Class 41. Toys not included in Class 40.	
Silver gilts.	F. Claude Butterworth and Miss A. C. Wynne.
Silver medal.	Arthur E. Burns.
Hon Mentions.	F. C. Shackleton and Miss A. C. Wynne.

Appendix 10. Imperial Art Gallery exhibitions.

Exhibited art works by Irish Free State artists in the ‘Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Engravings and [small] sculpture by artists resident in Great Britain and the Dominions’, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931.

1927.		
Watercolours, Drawings, Engravings, etc.		
7. Patrick Tuohy,	Pencil,	Seán O’Casey.
8. Margaret Clarke,	Chalk,	Juliana.
79. Harry Clarke,	pen and ink drawing,	Death lurks without.
Oils.		
91. Margaret Clarke,		Anne.
97. Grace Henry,		The Girl in White.
103. Leo Whelan,		The Kitchen Window.
113. Patrick Tuohy,		Mayo Peasant Boy.
123. Paul Henry,		Potato Diggers.
124. John Keating,		Brethren of the Coast.
139. George Russell,		Manifold Hills.
Sculpture.		
167. Oliver Sheppard,	bronze,	La Vie En Fleur.
174. Albert Power,	bronze,	Icarus.

1928.	
Watercolours, Drawings, Engravings, etc.	
None but see catalogue number 36 by Robert Gibbings.	
Oils.	
104. W. J. Leech,	The Actress.
105. J. C. Walker,	White Cinerarias.
106. John Keating,	Don Quixote.
107. W. C. Gore,	Interior, Closed Shutters.
108. James Sleator,	The Bill-Poster.
109. Grace Henry,	Gossips in Connemara.
111. Letitia Hamilton,	The Old Oak.
112. E. L. Lawrenson,	The Bridge.
113. M. McGonigal,	The Mob.
114. Paul Henry,	In Connemara.
115. Margaret Clarke,	Strindbergian.
Sculpture.	
None.	

1929.		
Engravings.		
12. George Atkinson,	etching,	Shannon Scheme, Excavations.
13. R. M. C. Leeper,	etching,	Old Net Huts, Hastings.
21. Edmund J. Sullivan,	etching,	La Grosse Horloge, Rouen.
37. Seán O’Sullivan,	lithograph,	The Topper.
Watercolours, Drawings, Etc.		
92. John Keating,	watercolour drawing,	Deux Magots.
Oils.		
114. Paul Henry,		The Village by the Lake.
134. William Crampton Gore,		Interior, the Open Window.
136. James S. Sleator,		Still Life.
140. J. Crampton Walker,		Phlox.
160. Margaret Clarke,		The Nuns’ Hour.
168. Seán O’Sullivan,		Snow and Sunlight, Dublin.
170. J. Humbert Craig,		Winter in the Donegal Highlands.
179. Edward L. Lawrenson,		Lewes Town.
180. John Keating,		The Interval.
Sculpture.		

195. Oliver Sheppard,	bronze,	Pastoral.
1930.		
Engravings.		
15. Charles Leeper,	etching,	Brooklands, Romney Marsh.
21. E. L. Lawrenson,	aquatint,	Stopham Bridge.
41. Stella Steyn,	drypoint and etching,	In a Galway Pub.
Watercolours, Drawings, etc.		
55. Charlotte Lawrenson,	pencil,	The Window Cleaner.
60. Hilda Roberts,	pencil,	The Dressmaker.
63. F. C. Mulock,	watercolour,	West Appledore.
93. Seán O’Sullivan,	black chalk,	Peadar O’Donnell.
Oils.		
102. J. Crampton Walker,		Phlox.
103. Leo Whelan,		Interior of a Kerry Farm House.
152. John Keating,		Don Quixote.
153. William John Leech,		Yarrows
178. Margaret Clarke,		Ann Catherine.
Sculpture.		
202. Oliver Sheppard,	bronze,	The Bathers.

1931.		
Engravings.		
50. Séan O’Sullivan,	lithograph,	Head of a woman.
Watercolours, etc.		
63. E. L. Lawrenson,	watercolour,	Gypsies on the South Downs.
64. Maurice McGonigal,	watercolour,	Western Peasants.
68. W. Crampton Gore,	watercolour,	In a French farmyard.
114. W. J. Leech,	watercolour,	Farm in Provence.
Oils.		
120. Letitia M. Hamilton,		La Charité sur Loire.
130. Margaret Clarke,		Child with cat.
133. J. S. Sleator,		Cyclamen.
141. J. Crampton Walker,		Wallflowers.
144. Leo Whelan,		Midday meal.
146. J. Humbert Craig,		The Donegal Highlands.
150. John Keating,		I Gave Him a Smoke.
168. G. F. Kelly,		Colonel George Harvey, A study.
194. Paul Henry,		Evening in Connemara.
196. Frank McKelvey,		On the River Bann.
232. W. J. Leech,		Smiling Girl [page 16, Staircase].
Sculpture.		
203. Albert G. Power,	bronze,	The Rag Picker.
204. Albert G. Power,	bronze,	Mascot.
206. Oliver Sheppard,	bronze,	Brothers.

Appendix 11. 1927 DCW Handbook artists.

1. Matthew Barry	between pages
1) TCD	4/5,
2) St. Patrick's Cathedral	44/45
3) Mangan Monument	52/53.
2. Brendan Clinch	
1) Casino at Marino	7/9,
3. Harry Kernoff	
1) O'Connell Street	7/9,
2) The Custom House	12/13,
3) Christchurch	20/21
4) College Green	24/25,
4. William McBride	
1) Johnston Court	24/25,
2) Rosemary Alley	40/41
5. Flora Mitchell	
1) Stephens Green	
2) Government Buildings	32/33,
6. Seán O' Sullivan	
1) Riddall's Estate (old Dublin market)	
2) St. Audeon's Gate	48/49
7. Hilda Roberts	
1) Grafton Street	
2) Mountjoy Square	16/17,
3) Leinster House	40/41
4) Four Courts	56/57
8. Estella F. Solomons	
1) Marsh's Library	28/29,
2) The Leinster Market	36/37

9. Stella Steyn
1) Front cover of a Dublin flower seller.
10. H. Walsh. In text illustrations.
11. Paul Henry was Art Director. Beatrice Glenavy illustrated the fancy dress program.
12. Katherine MacCormack designed the 1927 Civic Week poster.

Appendix 12. 1929 DCW Handbook artists.

(Borders depicting old and new Dublin. Decorative borders relevant to the content.)

1. Maurice MacGonigal
1) Cover - Dublin Merchantman of the XVIIth Century (ship). 2) Title Page (statues of Burke, O'Connell, Grattan and Nelson), 3) Pages 17-22 (Medieval Dublin) 4) Pages 38-41 (Dublin Merchantmen XVIIth century manufacturing) 5) Pages 57-63 (Old ballad singers)
2. Kathleen Quigley
1) Page 5 (Rotunda) 2) Pages 6-7 (Custom House)
3. Harry Kernoff
1) Pages 8-9 (Georgian houses) 2) Pages 23-28 (well-known landmarks)
4. Hilda Roberts
1) Pages 10-16 (Kildare Street Club)
5. William McBride
1) Pages 29-37 (Sir William Hamilton, Dunsink Observatory and TCD) 2) Pages 48-56 (Libraries TCD, NLI, and Marsh's Library) 3) Pages 68-69 (St. Patrick's Cathedral)
6. Art O'Murnaghan
1) Pages 42-47 (Dublin bay and the sea)
7. Liam Megahey
1) Pages 64-67 (coats of arms of various bodies connected with Dublin)
8. Posters by Paul Henry, Maurice MacGonigal and Micheál MacLiammoir (as Michael Willmore).

Appendix 13. A Book of Dublin artists

1. Flora H. Mitchell.
1) Dun Laoghaire Harbour. 2) Residence of the Governor-General.
2. Lillian Davidson.
1) Christ Church Cathedral. 2) Leinster House.
3. Maurice McGonigal.
1) St. Audeon's Church. 2) St. Doulough's Church. 3) The Office of Arms, Dublin Castle. 4) Merchants' Arch. 5) Grafton Street. 6) Shipbuilding in Dublin.
4. Hilda Roberts.
1) O'Connell Street. 2) The Library, Trinity College 3) The Organ, St. Michan's Church. COI, organ reputed to have been used by GF Handle to practice before first performance of the <i>Messiah</i> .
5. Paul Henry, R.H.A.
1) The Castle Steps. 2) The Grand Canal Dock.

6. Harry Kernoff.
1) Guinness's Brewery. 2) Jacob's Biscuit Factory. 3) The Grain Silo.
7. Estella F. Solomons, A.R.H.A.
1) Rosemary Lane. 2) Marsh's Library. 3) Rotunda Hospital.
8. Harry Walsh.
1) St. Patrick's Cathedral. 2) Woodcut – Dolphin's Barn.
Liam Megahey , capital letters. McGonigal and Walsh tail pieces.

Appendix 14. *Saorstát Éireann Handbook Artists.*

1. Art O’Murnaghan	Covers.
2. Paul Henry.	
1) Errigal, Co. Donegal.	Rural. Thatched cottage. Mountain.
2) Sugarloaf Mountain, Co. Wicklow.	Rural. Mountain.
3) Slieve Mór, Achill Island	Rural. Thatched cottage. Mountain.
4) Achill Head, Co. Mayo.	Rural. Mountains.
5) Glendalough	Rural. Mountains.
6) Glenmalure	Rural, Mountains.
3. John Keating.	
1) The Office of Arms	Urban. Historic. Dublin.
2) The King’s Inn	Urban. Historic. Dublin.
3) The Currency Commission.	Urban. Dublin.
4) Shannon Hydro-Electric Works.	Modern. Industrial. Shannon.
4. Seán O’Sullivan.	
1) King John’s Castle, Limerick.	Urban. Historic. Limerick.
2) Scellig Michael	Rural. Historic.
3) The Rock of Cashel.	Rural. Historic. Thatched.
4) St. Finbarr’s Cathedral, Cork.	Urban. Religious.
5) Killarney.	Rural. Mountains.
6) Lismore Castle.	Rural. Historic.
7) Dunbrody Abbey	Rural. Historic/religious.
8) The Cliffs of Moher.	Rural.
9) The Lake at Waterville.	Rural. Mountain.

5. Estella F. Solomons.	
1) Dowras Bay.	Rural. Mountains.
6. Maurice MacGonigal.	
1) The Clare Coast from Aran	Rural.
2) St. Laurence's Gate, Drogheda.	Urban. Historic.
3) An Aran Village.	Rural. Thatched cottage. Mountain.
4) Gathering seaweed for kelp.	Rural. Genre scene.
5) Loch Corrib, Co. Galway.	Rural.
6) Dun Aonghusa, Aran Islands.	Rural. Mountain.
7) Church of Kilmacduach, Aran Islands.	Rural. Historic. Religious.
8) Mountains near Maam, Connemara.	Rural. Thatched cottages. Mountains.
9) Killiney, Co. Dublin.	Rural/Urban. Mountains.
7. Mary Duncan.	
1) The Custom House Dublin.	Urban. Historic.
2) The Bank of Ireland.	Urban. Historic.
8. Hilda Roberts.	
1) Leixlip Castle.	Rural. Historic.
2) The Royal Hospital, Kilmainham.	Urban. Historic.
9. Harry Kernoff.	
1) The Mountains near Dublin.	Rural. Modern.
2) The Liffey at Dublin.	Urban. Modern.

Ten images of ancient/museum items including one depicting a capital letter from the *Book of Kells*,

Thirty five full page commissioned illustrations, 15 rural west (4/5 with thatched cottages), 8 rural east, 7 city and five town scenes (the Shannon scheme is included here).

In addition there were 68 photo engraved in-text headpieces, two for the introduction and each of the 33 chapter, including a Gaelic font capital letter in an illustrated frame printed on yellow background starting each chapter. In the main these were provided by the full page illustrators supplemented by Dorothy Blackham and Harry Walsh.

Appendix 15. Artists who overlap across the four handbooks.

1. Matthew Barry	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> .
2. Brendan Clinch	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> .
3. Harry Kernoff	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , 1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .
4. William McBride	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , 1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> .
5. Flora Mitchell	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> .
6. Seán O' Sullivan	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .
7. Hilda Roberts	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , 1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .
8. Estella F. Solomons	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .
9. Stella Steyn	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> .
10. H. Walsh.	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> .
11. Paul Henry	1927 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i>
12. Maurice MacGonigal	1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i>
13. Kathleen Quigley	1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> .
14. Art O'Murnaghan	1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .
15. Liam Megahey	1929 <i>DCW Handbook</i> , <i>A Book of Dublin</i> .
16. Lillian Davidson.	<i>A Book of Dublin</i> .
17. John Keating.	<i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .
18. Mary Duncan.	<i>Saorstát Éireann</i> .

Appendix 16. *Saorstát Éireann Handbook*. Chapters.

	Bulmer Hobson, Editor.	Introduction
i.	Eleanor Butler	The country and its people
ii.	Robert Lloyd	The fauna and flora of Ireland
iii.	T. Hallissy	Geology, structural and economic
iv.	Eoin MacNeill	History
v.	Rev. Michael Longford	Religion
vi.	E. M. Stephens	The constitution
vii.	E. M. Stephens	The judiciary
viii.	Colonel J.J. O'Connell	National defence
ix.	T.J. Kiernan	Public finance
x.	J.P. Colbert	The banking and currency system
xi.	A. F. Blair	The ownership of land
xii.	Joseph Hanly	Agriculture
xiii.	A O'Brolchain	Fisheries
xiv.	A O'Brolchain	The economic problem of the Gaeltacht
xv.	George O'Brien	Industries
xvi.	George O'Brien	Trade and commerce
xvii.	T.A. MacLaughlin	Power supply in the Irish Free State
xviii.	J. Ingram	Transport and communications
xix.	John P. Fitzgibbon	Social services and public health
xx.	W. J. Williams	Education
xxi.	W. J. Williams	Cultural agencies
xxii.	Roisin Walsh	Libraries
xxiii.	A. Mahr	Archaeology
xxiv.	C. P. Curran	Early Christian art in Ireland
xxv.	Thomas Bodkin	Modern Irish art
xxvi.	R. M. Butler	Irish architecture
xxvii.	Joseph O'Neill	The Irish language and the linguistic struggle
xxviii.	J. H. Delargy	Folklore
xxix.	Gerald Murphy	Irish literature
xxx.	Robert Lynd	Anglo-Irish literature

xxx <i>i</i> . D. J. O'Sullivan	Irish Folk music
xxx <i>ii</i> . Michael Tierney	Learning in Ireland
xxx <i>iii</i> . Stephen Gwynn	Ireland for the visitor
List of Irish Diplomatic and Consular Representatives aboard	
List of Diplomatic and Consular Representatives in the Irish Free State	
Index.	

Appendix 17. Chicago 1933 COP A&C catalogue.

Catalogue of Arts and Crafts exhibition compiled from shipping lists Box 3 Folders 13-59.

Catalogue numbers and prices are as listed in the records.

1	Dun Emer Guild	Set of Vestments (Poplin)	35 0 0
2	Gertrude M. Grew	Banner Applique (Poplin) St Patrick	47 0 0
3	Gertrude M. Grew	Banner Applique (Poplin) Madonna	27 0 0
4	Stella Brennan	Crochet Supper Cloth	10 0 0
5	Stella Brennan	Crochet Tea Cloth	3 3 0
6	Stella Brennan	Crochet Tea Napkins	12 6
7	Mount Carmel Lace School	Lace Rochet	80 0 0
8	Mount Carmel Lace School	Surplice	15 0 0
9	Mount Carmel Lace School	Cloth	15 0 0
10	Mount Carmel Lace School	Altar Fall	15 0 0
11	Mount Carmel Lace School	Lace Fall	2 0 0
12	Mount Carmel Lace School	Ace Point Fan	10 0 0
13	Mount Carmel Lace School	Flat Point Fan	6 0 0
14	Mount Carmel Lace School	Piece Rose Point	3 10 0
15	Mount Carmel Lace School	Piece Flat Point	2 0 0
16	Mount Carmel Lace School	Point Set	4 0 0
17	Mount Carmel Lace School	Length of Lace	12 0 0
18	Mount Carmel Lace School	Point Collar	3 0 0
19	Mount Carmel Lace School	Point Collar	3 10 0
20	Mount Carmel Lace School	Point Handkerchief	2 10 0

21	Mount Carmel Lace School	Point Handkerchief	1 10 0
22	Norah Jackson	Limerick Berthe	8 8 0
23	Norah Jackson	Duchess Set (4 mats)	10 10 0
24	Norah Jackson	Collar and Jabot	3 3 0
25	Norah Jackson	Collar, Wild rose	2 10 0
26	Norah Jackson	Embroidered Tray Cloth	4 4 0
27	Crock of Gold	Pr. of Curtains, handwoven	7 17 6
28	Crock of Gold	Silk Dress Length	4 14 6
29	Crock of Gold	Silk Evening Wrap	2 15 0
30	Crock of Gold	Silk Evening Wrap	2 12 6
31	Crock of Gold	Tweed Suit Length	2 15 0
32	Crock of Gold	Tweed Suit Length	2 18 9
33	Crock of Gold	Wool Patterned Length	2 15 0
34	Crock of Gold	Motor Rug	3 3 0
35	Crock of Gold	Wool Scarf	12 6
36	Crock of Gold	Silk Scarf	16 9
37	Blank		
38	Crock of Gold	Silk Tie	5 6
39	Crock of Gold	Silk Tie	5 6
40	Crock of Gold	Silk Tie	5 6
41	Tirconail Embroidery Indus.	Embroidered Celtic Table cloth	5 0 0
42	Tirconail Embroidery Indus.	Lace and Embroidered supper cloth	9 0 0
43	Mary O’Kiersey	Lace trimmed supper cloth	4 10 6
44	Mary O’Kiersey	Harp & Shamrock supper cloth	2 15 6
45	Mary O’Kiersey	Celtic Supper Cloth	1 15 0
46	Mary O’Kiersey	Banquet Cloth	10 0 0
47	Mary O’Kiersey	1 doz napkins	1 16 0
48	Mary O’Kiersey	Michlieu Cloth	5 5 0
49	Mary O’Kiersey	Celtic Luncheon Set	1 9 6
50	Mary O’Kiersey	1 doz handkerchiefs	1 10 0

51	Eamon O'Moore	Leather Blotter	3 10 0
52	Eamon O'Moore	Leather Pocket Case	15 6
53	Eamon O'Moore	Leather Bag	3 3 0
54	Sallie Byrne	Leather Celtic Writing case	2 10 0
55	Sallie Byrne	Leather Bag Celtic	2 2 0
56	Sallie Byrne	Leather Bag	1 17 6
57	Sallie Byrne	Leather Pocket Case	1 1 0
90	M. O'Keefe	Hand Painted Wooden Bowl with enamels	4 4 0
91	M. O'Keefe	Hand Painted Shade and Stand	2 2 0
92	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand painted toilet set	4 4 0
94	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Painted Mirror	2 10 0
95	Norah Jackson	Leather Fire Screen	8 8 0
96	Gertrude Twiss	Applique Fire Screen	5 0 0
97	Dun Emer Guild	Rug Circular 68 diameter	14 10 0
98	Dun Emer Guild	Rug 7'4 x 3	11 10 0
100	Dun Emer Guild	Rug Fine Quality 6'3"x3'1"	9 15 0
101	Lady Beatrice Glenavy	Hand painted chest	30 0 0
103	Arthur Burns	Horse and Jaunting Car	3 0 0
104	Dorothy Blackham	Linocut, Camden Row, Dublin	1 1 0
105	Dorothy Blackham	Linocut, Slieve Foy	1 1 0
106	Dorothy Blackham	Linocut, Snow in the Scalp Wood	1 1 0
107	Dorothy Blackham	Linocut, Barnecullia, Co. Dublin	15 6
108	Kathleen Quigley	Design for Organ Music Cover	3 3 0
110	Kathleen Quigley	Linocut in colour, Four Courts, Dublin	3 3 0
111	Kathleen Quigley	Linocut, Wicklow	12 6
112	Kathleen Quigley	Linocut Madonna & Child	1 1 0
118	May Tisdall	Set of Altar Charts	12 12 -
119	G.S. Walsh	Stained Glass Panel, Sleeping Beauty	10 0 0
120	G. S. Walsh	Cartoon, St Paul	5 0 0
121	G. S. Walsh	Sketch St Paul	5 0 0
122	William Dowling	Cartoon, St Colmcille	20 0 0

123	William Dowling	Cartoon, St Bridget	10 0 0
124	William Dowling	Cartoon, St John	20 0 0
124a	William Dowling	Colour Sketch for same	
125	Marie English	Embroidered picture	5 0 0
126	Richard King	Cartoon St Brendan	12 12 0
127	Richard King	Glass Panel	15 15 0
128	C. Campbell	Design for stained glass	5 5 0
132	C. Campbell	Design for stained glass	10 10 0
133	C. Campbell	Design for stained glass, Madonna & Child	10 10 0
134	C. Campbell	Design for stained glass, St Columba	10 10 0
135	C. Campbell	Design for stained glass, Good Shepherd	10 10 0
136	C. Campbell	Calvary Group, Design for stained glass	7 7 0
137	C. Campbell	Design for stained glass, Wise Kings	10 10 0
138	J. Fitzharris	Linocut, The Four Courts, Dublin	1 10 0
139	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand Coloured print, The Fiddler	14 6
140	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand Coloured print, Poem by AE	12 6
141	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand Coloured print, Tir na Nogue	10 6
142	M. O. O'Keefe	Hand coloured print, Book lovers prayer	7 6
144	M. O. O'Keefe	Hand coloured print, Trees & Flowers	7 6
145	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand coloured print, Old woman of the roads	10 6
146	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand coloured print, Fiddler of Dooney	10 6
147	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, Innisfree	10 6
148	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, Fairy Hill	10 6
149	E. Yeats	Hand Coloured print, Within a little field	8 6
150	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, The Traveller	10 6
151	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand coloured print, Cashel	10 6
152	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, Glendalough	6 6
153	Elizabeth Yeats	Sheet of Christmas Cards	

154	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, The Tinker	10 6
155	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand coloured print, The Poohawn	8 6
156	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, The Shanachie	8 6
157	Elizabeth Yeats	Hand Coloured print, Glencree	10 6
158	M. O'Keefe	Sheet of Calendar and Greeting Cards	2 5 0
159	M. O'Keefe	Sheet of Greeting Cards and prints	2 10 0
160	M. O'Keefe	Sheet of greeting Cards and prints	2 5 0
161	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand Coloured print, The Ass	14 6
162	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand Coloured print, St Brigid	14 6
163	Margaret O'Keefe	Hand Coloured print, Stephens Green	17 6
164	Phyllis Godfrey	Specimen of Linocuts	
165	Phyllis Godfrey	Linocut, Galway Laycock	1 0 0
166	Phyllis Godfrey	Linocut, Curraun	15 0
167a	P. Godfrey	Linocut in two colours	15 0
167	Lily Yeats	Embroidered picture, St Francis of the Birds	10 10 0
167 (dup no)	Lily Yeats	Embroidered picture, The Abbey Theatre	6 6 0
168	Lily Yeats	Embroidered picture, The Custom House	6 6 0
170	Lily Yeats	Embroidered picture, The Cork Garden	3 13 0
171	Lily Yeats	Embroidered picture, Sea Chanty	7 7 0
172	Lily Yeats	Wall Hanging, Olive and Rose	10 10 0
173	Dun Emer Guild	Tapestry, Viking Ship	10 10 0
174	Dun Emer Guild	Tapestry, The Lake	8 8 0
175	Harry Clarke Ltd.	Stained glass panel	60 0 0
176	Harry Clarke Ltd.	Stained Glass Window design	30 0 0
177	Harry Clarke Ltd.	Stained Glass Window design	
178	Harry Clarke Ltd.	Stained Glass Window design	42 0 0
179	Harry Clarke Ltd.	Stained Glass Window design	
	(part of group 177 and 178)		
180	Harry Clarke Ltd.	Stained Glass Window design	

	(part of group 177 and 178)		
181	C. B. Simmonds	Wood engraving	2 2 0
182	C. S. Simmonds	Wood engraving	2 2 0
183	Sheila Kennedy	Copper Bowl	6 6 0
184	Sheila Kennedy	Copper and enamel ink pot	20 0 0
185	Hubert McGoldrick	Opus Sectile design	2 0 0
186	Hubert McGoldrick	Stained glass colour sketch	10 0 0
187	Olive Henning	Illustration, Low back car	7 10 0
188 (dup no)	Olive Henning	Illustration, The Spinning Wheel	3 3 0
188	Hubert McGoldrick	Mosaic Design	10 0 0
189	Hubert McGoldrick	Two Stained glass cartoons	20 0 0
190	James Hicks	Satinwood wall cabinet	25 0 0

Relevant here also from Box 6 Folder 13-205 is

Miss Mia Cranwill, Dublin

1 Large Oak Frame

1 Small Oak Frame (glasses removed)

Containing photographs of executed work in gold and silversmith art.

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