Urban Celtic Subcultures 1700-1850

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Synopsis

The aim of this paper is to highlight some developments pertaining to ethnic Celtic minorities in foreign city environments before the rapid onset of industrial growth that changed the character of Europe in the period following 1750. Due in part to the constraints of source material, but also to the fact that France felt the effects of the industrial revolution about a hundred years later than Britain, the testimony relating to the Bretons in Paris is taken up to 1900. It is hoped that despite being of a later date, the complementarity of the Breton experience to that which the other Celts experienced in Britain will outweigh strictly temporal considerations. The general scantiness of the evidence relating to the experience of the dominated Celts in adapting to the novel environment of the city means that evidence from all periods is useful. However I have chosen to study in more detail from 1700 to around 1850, justifying this somewhat subjective end-date by the establishment of the rail network, universal education, and the accelerating social effects of technological advance.

Preliminary remarks

I would like to emphasise that by Celtic I will be referring to the Celts proper, and not the French-speaking inhabitants of eastern Brittany or English-speaking inhabitants of the eastern part of Ireland or the southern and eastern parts of Scotland:[1] none of the latter suffered the linguistic difficulties in adjusting to urban life which the Celts proper experienced. In following this line in this paper – which I believe to be the only option for a historian trying to perceive contemporary realities – there can be some difficulty with the sources as, throughout this period, the Celts were

[1] As today the terms 'Irish', 'Scottish', 'Breton' tended to be applied liberally to non-Celts who lived within the Celtic countries, only in Scotland do we find the common use of a term that referred specifically to the Celtic as opposed to the non-Celtic peoples of Scotland.

treated as an underclass that was seldom mentioned.[2] Official documentation angli-cised and frenchified Celtic names, so that one cannot certainly tell the language of an individual in question from a name alone. There can be no doubt that the bias of most accounts from the period, followed thereafter by many historical accounts, underestimate the 'hidden' history of a forgotten segment of north-western European society (as Leersen[3] and Pittock[4] have respectively argued for Irish Catholicism and British Jacobitism, and we are fortunate to have at least one mid 17th century com-plaint from a Scottish-Gael that contemporary sources "made no mention at all of the Gaels")[5]. I would also like to emphasise that I use the 'nation' and 'national' (its derived adjective) to refer to the Celtic-speaking peoples of the Celtic countries rather than to present-day geographically-based notions of Celtic 'nationality'.[6]

This paper ventures into a badly known subject. Apart from Charles Withers' work on the Scottish Gaels[7] hardly any methodical attention has been given to the way in which the Celts interfaced with foreign urban environments during the period 1700-1850. General accounts of the urban environments themselves during this period – with the exception of R. A. Houston's work on Edinburgh[8] – understanda-bly tend to bypass the 'foreign' component. This is particularly true in the work of French historians who, despite writing otherwise admirable books on the social structure of Paris, tend only to refer to immigrants if they originate from other states,

2 The geographical situation of the Celtic languages in the period 1700-1850 is fairly relia-bly known, save the eastern part of Ireland, most specifically Leinster, which seems to have begun a process of accelerated deculturation in the 18th century.

3 Josep Leersen, *Mere-Irish and Fior-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century*, Dublin 1996, 315.

4 Murray G. H. Pittock, *Jacobitism*, Basingstoke 1998, 67-68.

5 Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, East Linton 1996, 118.

6 The term 'ethnic' is acceptable and widely used for 'national', but its corollary, the rather unwieldy 'ethnic group' hardly finds favour anywhere. Historians from Britain and France have been rather too quick to accept the derivative meaning of the term 'nation' acquired towards the end of the 18th century, so that 'nation' from referring to any 'ethnic identity', was restricted solely to a – sometimes hypothetical – 'community of interests' intimately associated with a state (and based on a dominant 'ethnic entity').

7 Charles W. J. Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland 1698-1981: the Geographical History of a Language*, o.O. 1984; Charles W. J. Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture*, in: *Social History* 10 (1985), 171-92.

8 Robert Allan Houston, *Social Change in the Age of the Enlightenment: Edinburgh, 1660-1760*, Oxford 1994.

e. g. Roche[9] (as if being part of the French state precluded Bretons from being 'fo-reign' and from 'immigrating' to Paris). More work would really be needed on whe-re the silent majority of poor Celts settled in the new urban environment. Work on official censuses, tax returns, whilst not giving the whole picture, might indicate how segregated or not they were (and for how long), whether particular concentrati-ons were connected to particular industries, whether the employment they took on was restricted to certain trades, furthermore a study of the surnames and other do-cumentation might also reveal regional patterns and trends in the currents of immi-gration from the native homeland. It would also pay for us to compare the few known associations of Celts in the context of the developments to which associati-ons – such as clubs, salons, freemasonry, etc – experienced in urban environments in the 18th-19th centuries (especially the connections with political opinions and circles of patronage). Notwithstanding that so much research still remains to be done, I have presumed to venture an outline of urban Celtic subcultures during this period.

The political situation of the homelands

In the early Modern period the main Celtic nations – Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, Wales – were dominated by their powerful neighbours the states of England and France, a result of which the political capital lay in a 'foreign' environment. A meas-ure of decentralisation in both states meant that many of the duties of capital were performed by the secondary capitals of Dublin, Edinburgh, Rennes, and Ludlow.[10] These secondary capitals though their situation was closer and more practical, still lay outside Celtic-speaking homelands. However, a common development during this period was the dissolution of the parliaments or advisory bodies of these se-condary capitals and the centralising of political power at London and Paris; the Council of Wales at Ludlow was dissolved in 1694;[11] the parliaments of Edinburgh, Rennes, and Dublin were respectively dissolved in 1707, 1789, and 1803. Thus, towards the end of the 18th century, it seemed that both England and France had

9 Daniel Roche, *The People of Paris: an Essay in Popular Culture in the 18th Century*, Leamington Spa 1987, 23, 25.

10 Contrary top the other secondary capitals, Ludlow was a small English town which had become, with the establishment of the Council of Wales there in the late 15th century, to all intents and purposes, the secondary capital of Wales.

11 Murray G. H. Pittock, *Inventing and Resisting Britain: Cultural Identities in Britain and Ireland, 1685-1789*, Basingstoke 1997, 12, 15, 28.

finally subjugated all trace of separate political identity in the Celtic countries they dominated.

At the very same time, however, a resurgence of the national sentiment began to make itself felt. The growing interest in antiquarian and local history studies in learned and comfortable circles, indulged in as a hobby with no ulterior motive in view, created a growing interest in the nation's past. This 'aristocratic' interest was transformed and subsumed in an intellectual movement with a nationalist perspective, which began influencing civic and political leaders by offering new analyses of the condition of the dominated nationalities. The subsequent propagation of these ideas to the populations concerned had far-reaching effects and was enabled by the growing presence and power of the media of newspapers and of education, and led to a growing reassertion of political independence by the Celtic nations. The scenario given above for the Celtic nations has parallels in the political development of most other contemporary dominated nationalities in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries,[12] and was the path by which an independent state was created for many of these nations.

The Celts had – and indeed have to the present day – never succeeded in establishing a native urban tradition. In view of the undeveloped nature of institutions particular to the Celtic countries[13] it is thus understandable that in the political/intellectual reawakening of the Celtic countries the situation of distant 'foreign' capitals – London, Paris, Dublin, Edinburgh, Rennes – became even more important in offering the best modern facilities for intellectual activities to promote Celtic tongues and culture. This, however, was not to remain permanent, for as technological advances, literacy and democratic government progressively spread in each country, centres for modern intellectual activities in the Celtic tongues finally formed themselves in the actual areas in which the languages were spoken, so the relative cultural importance of the secondary capitals waned towards the end of the 19th century. In this respect the period 1700-1850 can be interpreted as a well-defined transitory phase – never before and never since have I matched – in which intellectual and cultural activities in the Celtic tongues, catching up with technological and cultural

12 Rosalind Mitchison, *The Roots of Nationalism: Studies in Northern Europe*, Edinburgh 1980, 3-4.
13 "There was little contact between the inhabitants of north and south Wales. Indeed, Iolo Morganwg went so far as to claim [...] that north and south Wales had 'no more intercourse with each other than they have with the man in the moon'." Geraint H. Jenkins, *The Foundations of Modern Wales 1642-1780*, Oxford 1987, 388.

advances in other parts of Europe, were centralised in a small number of foreign urban environments.

Temporary migration

Before we turn to each capital in turn, I would like to refer to temporary, circular or seasonal migration. Seasonal migration from Celtic areas to English or French areas is widely attested, and was chiefly dictated by agricultural or commercial considerations, but also in the case of the upper strata of society by legal exigencies.

Seasonal migration of Highland agricultural labourers – sometimes gangs of young women – to the Scottish Lowlands is attested from the late 17th century onwards,[14] young men would go as crew on herring fleets.[15] In the 18th century agricultural labourers from Ireland went to the rich lands of south-eastern England[16] and Lowland Scotland.[17] Gangs of Irish agricultural workers would embark on ships at certain times of the year, and Irish harvesters are mentioned as lodging in London (probably the port of embarkation and disembarkation for many).[18] The leader of Welsh gangs of reapers who went to the English county of Hereford in the early 19th century were acquainted with English so as to strike bargains with farmers and landholders – and as a consequence were known as Sais 'Englishman'.[19] From as early as the early 18th century large numbers of Welsh labouring women known as merched y gerddi 'the garden girls' set off in groups of 6 from western Wales and trudged over 300 km to London to work the gardens and parks of London, others went to work the harvests of hay, grain, hops and fruits in Middlesex and Kent.[20] In the 19th century many of the Irish gangs moved from harvesting to more renumerative seasonal occupations such as railway setting, building work and brick-making.[21] I

14 Robert Allan Houston, *The Population History of Britain and Ireland 1500-1750*, Basingstoke 1992, 60.
15 Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture* (s. note 7), 178.
16 Massimo Livi Bacci, *La Population dans l'Histoire de l'Europe*, Paris 1999, 182.
17 Andrew Gibb, *Glasgow: the Making of a City*, Beckenham 1983, 105.
18 William E. Vaughan, *A New History of Ireland V: Ireland under the Union, I 1801-70*, Oxford 1989, 631-33, 639.
19 David Rees Davies, Susanah Zabeth, *Hanes Llanwenog: y Plwyf a'i Phobl*, Aberystwyth 1939, 109.
20 William Linnard, *Merched y Gerddi yn Llundain ac yng Nghymru*, in: *Ceredigion*, 1, 3 (1982), 260-63.
21 Vaughan, *A New History* (s. note 18), 631-33.

have not come across documentation relating to seasonal migration of Bretons, though I know that a great number of Bretons would go to the fertile Beauce region west of Paris to help with the harvest since at least the end of the 19th century.

Another seasonal movement, that hardly counts as migration, was that of the Welsh drovers who would in the mid 18th century drive 30,000 lean cattle & sheep driven over the Welsh border to London to satisfy the fast growing capital's craving for meat. This enabled many Welshmen to become familiar with London and the route leading thereto.[22] In Scotland the Highlanders also drove their cattle to places like Edinburgh, but those beasts that went on to London were sold on to Lowland drovers.[23]

Yet another seasonal movement of Celts was that of landlords, who, admittedly, were becoming more and more anglicised, and more estranged from their native communities. Not a few, if they could afford it, had town houses, or stayed with relations or acquaintances in order to fight legal battles for landownership (the ownership of land then much more complicated than in the present-day) as well as to partake in the rich social life of the metropolis. Moody & Vaughan talk of the 'parliamentary winter' in Dublin, the highlight of the social season, which lasted for 6 months every second year when the Lord Lieutenant (the King's representative) held court at Dublin Castle.[24] These nobles may well have been anglicised, but they often brought with them trusted servants, domestics, and even favourites, such as the case of Siôn Parri the Welsh harpist brought to London by Watkin Wynne in the mid 18th century where he became a darling of London society.[25]

There is no doubt that seasonal or temporary migration was the main information channel between the exiled Celts and their kin and acquaintances in the homeland. A Welsh drover could not only deliver letters, money, etc, but could also accompany young people who had decided to chance their future in London. So too with landowners who spent a considerable amount of their time in London: inevitably they brought back urban tastes and modern ideas to their country residences.

22 Jenkins, *Foundations* (s. note 13), Oxford 1987, 281; Roy Porter, *London: a Social History*, London 1994, 132.
23 Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, East Linton 1996, 142-43.
24 Theodore W. Moody, William E. Vaughan, *A New History of Ireland IV: Eighteenth Century Ireland 1691-1800*, Oxford 1986, 49.
25 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13).

Installation

The permanent installation of Celts in the foreign urban environment should form the central part of this paper. Unfortunately – as was explained in the beginning – not much work has been done on this particular subject, and furthermore we should expect the bias of the surviving historical documentation to conceal the situation of the poorer classes which constituted the largest portion of the urban Celts. Having thus qualified the nature of the surviving evidence I think it is nevertheless possible to envisage substantial numbers of Celts emigrated to the growing English- and French-speaking towns in the 18th century. Their position, as many migrants to cities before and since, was not enviable, and this is borne out by testimony from 1791:

"As the offices of drudgery, and of labour, that require not any skill, are generally performed in London by Irishmen, and Welsh people of both sexes, so all such inferior departments are filled in Edinburgh by the Highlanders."[26]

I will now proceed to treat each city – Edinburgh, Dublin, London, Rennes, Paris – on an individual basis (including facts on the situation in Glasgow, Belfast, and Nantes, which were important mercantile cities that competed with their respective secondary capitals).[27]

Edinburgh & Glasgow

We are fortunate in the recent publication of Houston's *Social Change in the Age of the Enlightenment: Edinburgh, 1660-1760* which pays attention to the Highlander

26 Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland* (s. note 7), 191.
27 I have avoided talking of the communities of political exiles during this period, mainly catholic and/or jacobite Irish and Scottish-Gaels. These communities were found mostly in Paris (Moody, Vaughan, *A New History* [s. note 24], 644) as well as some other trading towns on the west coast of France, such as Nantes and Bordeaux (ebd. 647). In Paris and a few other centres in Europe such as Leuven (Louvain), Rome, Prague, it is the priestly training colleges that formed the kernel that drew the Irish together, as well as at the 'court' of the jacobite pretender in St-Germain-en-Laye near Paris in the early part of the 18th century which formed the kernel around which Irish and Scottish jacobites were to be found (Pittock, *Jacobitism* (s. note 4), 25, 58/59). Though related, the theme of the exiled Irish soldiers who formed the famous Irish and Scottish regiments of the French army and would later serve the armies of other European powers is peripheral to my study on the adaptation of Celts to urban environments.

minority in what is a comprehensive account of 18th century social life in Edinburgh.[28]

Houston states that in the early 18th century there were no more than 500 Highlanders (1%) in Edinburgh,[29] and in 1800 it is estimated that Edinburgh and Glasgow had some 2–3,000 Highlanders each.[30] The fact that Edinburgh, lying well outside the Scottish-Gaelic homeland, was known to Highlanders by its traditional Gaelic name Dun Eideann indicates an unbroken familiarity between the Highlanders and the town.

Plaids and blue caps were typical of Highlanders' dress in the early 18th century.[31] The Highlanders were also noticeable by their dress in Glasgow in the 1780s.[32] There are notices of Highlanders with swords, daggers and pistols (1680), but the carrying of weapons was also common in Lowland Scottish society until much later than in England.[33] Highlanders were thus described by Defoe in 1706-07:

"They are all gentlemen, will take affront from no man, and insolent to the last degree ... a man with his mountain habit, with a broad sword, target (shield), pistol or perhaps two at his girdle, a dagger and a staff, walking down the street as upright and haughty as if he were a lord – and withall driving a cow."[34]

In 1787 the history of Edinburgh by Kincaid remarked that Highlanders were almost all (sedan-)chairmen, porters, watermen, soldiers of the town-guard, and household servants, besides a vast number of labourers.[35] Part of the 'chronic distancing' of the town-guard from the bulk of the populace was the fact that they were mostly Gaelic speaking Highlanders.[36] Two Highlander women beggars from Blair Atholl had to have a town-guard soldier translate for them when they were brought before the judge.[37]

28 Houston, Social Change (s. note 8).
29 Ebd, 69.
30 Withers, Urban Gaelic Subculture (s. note 7), 186-87.
31 Houston, Social Change (s. note 8), 41.
32 Simon Berry, Hamish Whyte, Glasgow Observed, Edinburgh 1987.
33 Houston, Social Change (s. note 8), 168.
34 Ebd, 41.
35 Ebd, 282.
36 Ebd, 68.
37 Ebd, 278.

We are also fortunate in that the Highlander Iain Mac Dòmhnaill (John Mac Donald) has left us an account of his arrival with his siblings in Edinburgh in 1747.[38] they were accosted by a woman "seeing us strangers and in Highland dress [...] she was a widow, and let lodgings; her husband before he died, was a master-chairman of the name of Mac Donald, born near the place where we were born". After being arrested for vagrancy, another Highlander who ran an inn and livery stables helped them out and promised, and gave, them work. In 1752 a 54 year-old homeless 'resident' who had a son in the poorhouse, "he cannot write neither can he read but some of the Irish language".[39] Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir (Duncan Ban Macintyre) (1724-1812) of Glenorchy, Argyle, was a member of Edinburgh's town-guard from 1767 onwards, whilst his wife Màiri opened a small bootleg liquor shop in Lawnmarket for which she was brought before the magistrates but discharged after Donnchadh argued that he had drunk more than his wife had ever sold.[41] John Forbes, a Gaelic monoglot, lived in Canongate by taking lodgers and selling ale.[42] A writer in 1766 noted of Highlanders: "even after residing amongst us for a course of years, their knowledge of our language, generally speaking, is very imperfect, and they rest satisfied with so much as is necessary for their daily business".[43]

The Irish community increased noticeably with the industrialisation of Glasgow in the 19th century, the Irish-born comprised 10% in 1819, 25% in 1845, and were mostly employed in cotton industry, the 30% destitute listed as Irish in 1841 compares equitably with the proportion of Irish in Glasgow's population.[44] The way the Irish were perceived in Glasgow, as compared to the Highlanders, is given in an interesting account of 1841:

"It may be a prejudice on the part of the Scotch but they generally prefer the Highland females in their families; ... the Highlanders have many friends in Glasgow to whom they apply."[45]

38 Ebd, 42.
39 Ebd, 68.
40 Withers, Gaelic Scotland (s. note 7), London 1988, 346.
41 Glen Angus MacIntyre, website: www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~crumey/duncan_ban_macintyre.html, 2000.
42 Houston, Social Change (s. note 28), 42.
43 Withers, Urban Gaelic Subculture (s. note 7), 179.
44 Andrew Gibb, Glasgow: the Making of a City, Beckenham 1983, 106.
45 Vaughan, A New History (s. note 18), 641/42.

Dublin & Belfast

Within the compass of the Celtic countries during this period Ireland stands apart. Savage and protracted wars of conquest during the 17th century had decapitated the native gentry class, which had been almost wholly replaced by an English-speaking ruling class. The inimities between the Irish and English were further exacerbated by a religious distinction between the catholic and the protestant: in an age where religious allegiance formed such a critical part of men's perceptions of right and wrong. The resentful Irish thus entered the 18th century with their traditional institutions overthrown and kept in line by punitive laws that discriminated against their catholic beliefs (beliefs which had become intimately linked with the notion of 'Irishness'). But it is noteworthy that whilst the Irish fondly cherished their religion, they began, sometime in the 18th century, and especially in eastern Ireland around Dublin, to abandon their native language. This is a crucial phenomenon which – whilst having modern parallels – remains in the particular case of the Irish poorly documented. The Irish language, which must have been the language of the majority throughout the 18th century, is significantly under-represented in official and printed documentation, and the historian McDowell draws attention to this lack of documentation:

"All the evidence suggests that the English-speaking world in Ireland attributed little significance to the fact that the majority of the population still spoke Irish. The evidence admittedly is negative, but it is remarkable how rarely a reference to the prevalence of the Irish language over large areas of the countryside occurs in the newspaper press or in contemporary pamphlets or correspondence. Apparently only once during the latter half of the eighteenth century was the language question raised in parliamentary debate."[46]

Despite the long-standing English-speaking community of Medieval origin and the adjacent anglicised countryside of Fingal north of the city there were many Irish speakers in Dublin in the mid 17th century.[47] Indeed there existed some religious provision for Irish speakers in the late 18th century but it is only in the early 19th century that we get some detail on Irish-speaking areas within the city, the following description comes from Seán de Fréine:

46 Robert B. McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution 1760-1801*, Oxford 1979, 149.
47 Liam Mac Mathúna, *Pobal Gaeilge Bhaile Átha Cliath: oidhrí agus ceannródaithe*, in: Ó Coigligh (1985), 29-49, 36.

"In Dublin there were two Irish-speaking areas of long-standing. One lay behind the north quays, bounded roughly on the west by Stoneybatter. A larger amount of Irish was to be found in the Liberties on the south side of the city, between Whitefriar Street and Thomas Street. Here, in, Swift's Lane, a Baptist school was opened in 1815, where English was taught through the medium of Irish because it was found that the young pupils 'learn to read the language they have been accustomed to speak with greater facility than a foreign one. Here, too, in Mitre Alley, in the shadow of St. Patrick's Cathedral, one might see the Irish signboard of Michael O'Casey, a traditional physician, who plied the art of healing with the aid of numerous medical manuscripts written in Irish."[48]

There is some evidence that the Liberties area seems to have been a 'stronghold' of sorts for Irish-speakers in 19th century Dublin, this reputed slum was a natural reception area for poor migrants from the country. However, the inhabitants of the Liberties turned to English during the late 19th century, encouraged in this by the anglicising effect of mission schools and a major rehousing scheme in 1875 so that by the end of the 19th century the only associating done through Irish in Dublin was by middle-class revivalists of the Gaelic League.[49]

As has been magisterially demonstrated by Leersen in his book *Mere-Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century*,[50] the 18th century saw a relaxation of the political and religious inimities between the native Irish and foreign English which led to the growth of a synthetic Irish nationality based on the notion of a common 'geographical' identity of all the inhabitants of Ireland irrespective of their national-ethnic origins.

"The Enlightenment ideal celebrated the concord between two ethnic traditions by optimistically ... cancelling historical debts and enmities [...] one trend had [...] been firmly fixed in the course of the eighteenth century [...] the implicit notion that Ireland was fundamentally a Gaelic country, that the true Ireland looked back to a Gaelic past, and that the presence of English-derived culture within Irish shores was a matter of cultural adulteration. Irish nationalists, though usually belonging to an urban, English-speaking middle

48 Seán De Fréine, *The dominance of the English language in the 19th century*, in: Ó Muirithe (1977), 71-87, 79.
49 Máirín Mooney, *Irish in the Liberties (1850-1900)*, in: Ó Coigligh (1985), 11-14.
50 Josep Leersen, *Mere-Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century*, Dublin 1996.

class or upper middle class, were to refer to native, Gaelic culture and to native, Gaelic antiquity in the first person, as something to identify with, while seeing England as an alien, foreign country."[51]

The same process occurred in the Spanish colony of Mexico, where a colonial elite sought independence from the country of origin of the elite, Enrique Florescano calls this process „creole patriotism" and remarks that the appropriation of the indigenous past by the colonial elite to give them historical legitimacy in their struggle with their original „motherland" was a development particular to the creoles (inhabitants of Hispanic descent) of Mexico amongst the ex-Spanish colonies. In Ireland this almost imperceptible change of definition of Irishness occurred, not only amongst the English of Ireland, with the members of the protestant ruling classes increasingly describing themselves as Irish in opposition to the English of England, but also amongst growing sections of the native Irish. This is most clearly demonstrated by the activities of Cathal Ó Conchobhair (1710-91), a native Irish scholar, and one of the few remaining catholic landed gentlemen of the 18th century, despite defending the rights of the catholic religion and cultivating the Irish language, whilst at the same time acquiescing in – or at least resigning himself to – the new order. His son would write that his aim had been: "to reconcile the conquerors and the conquered in Ireland".[52] It thus seems that many native Irish during the 18th century began reconciling themselves to the new system, and like Ó Conchobhair they held fast to their catholic religion, but unlike him, perhaps feeling the pressure of a more modern and anglicised economy, they abandoned the Irish language for English. It would seem that in the 18th century the native language had become considerably less important for the sense of identity as opposed to their geographical provenance and their religious allegiance to catholicism: as a corollary the term Irish ceased to have - an unambiguous 'ethnic' meaning.[53]

51 Ebd., 356, 376.
52 McDowell, *Ireland* (s. note 47), 185.
53 That the term Irish referred to people of very different background in 18th century London has been established by D. George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*, Harmondsworth 1976 (quoted by Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* [s. note 7], 175).

London

Already evident in London in the 1640s, during the 18th century the Irish became the largest foreign group in the city.[54] They were the most unpopular Celts in this period, having taken this dubious honour from the Scots, who themselves had previously taken it from the Welsh.[55] There was an Irish colony nicknamed 'Little Dublin' in St-Giles-in-the-Fields (also known as „the Rookery of St Giles"[56]), and another in the East End.[57] From 1775, well into the 19th century, the hub of Irish Catholic London was the Freemasons Arms.[58] Their adherence to catholicism made them at times unpopular with the London mob which could be fiercely xenophobic and anti-catholic, e.g. the Rag Fair Riots of 1736,[59] the Gordon Riots of 1780.[60]

Despite the reputation for poverty and being chiefly employed in labouring and menial tasks, this was certainly not the fate of every Irish immigrant. In the 1760s a Mrs Farrell of St Giles left more than £1,000 accumulated from 2-penny lodgers "chiefly her own countrymen, harvesters or labourers from Ireland".[61] Regional patterns of emigration can also be discerned, at least as early as 1834 when it was noted that more Irish was spoken in London than in Liverpool, as Connacht immigrants habitually passed on to London. Western Ireland provided more emigrants than Leinster.[62]

As we have seen many Welsh gentlemen, merchants and scholars prospered in London.[63] Thomas Jones, a tailor from near Corwen, Meirionydd, became a successful bookseller and almanacker in the 1680s, he was friend with such famous men as Tom Brown, Francis Moore (another Almanacker), Tom D'Urfey. Welsh poets could at times praise London as the fairest city on earth: "its streets", sang Ellis ab Ellis, "ran with gold", and James Howell, for one, confessed he was "habitually in love

54 Lynn Hollen Lees, *Exiles of Erin: Irish Migrants in Victorian London*, Manchester 1979, 48.
55 This hierarchy in the arrival and status of the different nationalities is also suggested by the fact that the quarter called 'Welshtown' in Liverpool was later known as 'Irishtown'. Vaughan, *A New History* (s. note 18), 634.
56 Ebd., 634.
57 Porter, *London* (s. note 22), 132.
58 Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture* (s. note 7), 173.
59 Porter, *London* (s. note 22), 157.
60 Lees, *Exiles* (s. note 56), 48.
61 Vaughan, *A new History* (s. note 18), 639.
62 Ebd., 627-628.
63 Jenkins, *Foundations* (s. note 13), Oxford 1987, 111.

with her".64 However, this was not the only perception of London by the Welsh. Ellis Wynn, a puritanical clergyman, scorned the enchantments of London, and Lewis Morris described London as "a bush of thorns", a devilish world of scribblers, cheats, drunkards, prostitutes and pickpockets, whilst Iolo Morganwg described as "Folly's hateful sphere" as opposed to "the Garden of Wales".65 Neither were all immigrants successful, Robert Lewis of Anglesey who had set himself up as a coach-builder in London died deaf, deranged, and penniless in a workhouse.

The Scottish Gaels seem to have been less prominent in London, and those Scots mentioned as prominent in hairdressing and tailoring in the late 17th century London were in all likelyhood English-speaking Lowlanders.

Rennes, Nantes and Paris

Whilst I have traced references to Breton-speakers in Nantes, the great commercial metropolis of southern Brittany, I have not come across particular references concerning Rennes, the administrative capital of Brittany. However, indirect evidence indicates that both these towns were locations for a migration, the fact that they were both commonly known in the Breton homeland by their traditional historic names Roazon and Naoned bespeaks a continuous familiarity. In the late 19th century there was a Breton 'colony' at Chantenay at Nantes downstream from the centre.

References to the situation of the Bretons in Paris is hampered in part by the usual perspective of historical documentation biased against recognising dominated minorities like the Bretons, but also by the failure of French historians to treat the Breton-speaking Bretons as any different from Frenchmen from other areas of France. Notwithstanding this observation, there is scattered evidence that confirms that Bretons were different from other Frenchmen.66 An example is McPhee's noting that Bretons were notoriously vulnerable to homesickness (mal-du-pays) in Napoleon's armies in the early 1800s, which I take as indicative of an ethnic difference.67

Bretons were particularly susceptible to group together in a foreign environment. Certainly, the testimony of evidence from the late 19th century and early 20th century indicates that Breton immigration to French cities was thought worthy of note by many contemporaries. Berlanstein notes that in the years around 1900:

64 Ebd.
65 Ebd., 389.
66 Jean Guiffan, Didier Guyvarc'h, *Nantes et la Bretagn: Quinze Siècles d'Histoire*, Morlaix 1996, 102/103.
67 Peter McPhee, *A Social History of France 1780-1880*, London 1992, 87.

"The Bretons provided contemporaries with the clearest example of workers who resisted assimilation into Parisian ways, at least for a generation. They constituted one of the few bulwarks against working-class anti-clericalism."68

Their catholicism seemed to be strengthened in the urban environment,69 and Breton women with distinctive coiffes were common in the Parisian suburb of Ivry in 1920s.70 Morvan Lebesque tells us that in Nantes in the 1920s the term "Breton" was pejorative, and was applied by the French-speaking natives to the Breton-speaking emigrant communities from further west, and certainly not to themselves (in the early 17th century the archives of Nantes mention the death of an occasional "femme brette" or "Breton", quite distinct from the local inhabitants). Lebesque elaborates in a passage that is worth quoting (if only to prove the way in which Breton-speakers were seen as different by French-speakers):

"Les Bretons, je les connaissais. C'était des êtres crasseux, superstitieux, comiques, bref étrangers, logés à l'extrémité de la ville, dans le faubourg de Sainte-Anne, un quartier où on allait peu, juste après celui des putains. Il surplombait le port du haut d'une falaise de granit à laquelle on voyait toujours accrochés des gosses dépenaillés, culs-nus; et, disait mon père, quand l'un d'eux tombe ou se fait écraser, ça ne compte pas, ces gens-là font des tas d'enfants. [...] Parfois, il [le père] me rapportait de ses tournées des histoires de médina sur ces plouqs qui travaillaient aux docks, aux savonneries, aux engrais chimiques Kuhlmann, dans la puanteur des suifs et du noir animal. Ils se chauffaient encore à la tourbe. Ils avaient leur église, leur prêche en patois et même leur cinéma; simplement, le patron était obligé de leur traduire les sous-titres des films, en se mettant à leur portée [...] Un jour par an, ils se donnaient une fête et les gens de la ville venaient les voir danser avec leur binious. Tous alcooliques, hélas! De pères en fils. Le gros-plant, le noah et leur fameux chouchen, cette espèce d'hydromel qui fait tomber à la renverse (ce pourquoi beaucoup d'entre eux, expliquait-on, gardaient leurs cheveux longs dans le cou: pour amortir la choc quand ils roulaient ivres morts). N'importe, conclut mon père, ils sont tout de même plus civilisés que dans leur foutu bled où ils n'ont ni plats ni assiettes et mangent dans un trou creusé dans la table. Et puis les jeunes vont au régiment, ça les dessale. C'est le bon côté de la caserne: on se moque d'eux et ils ont honte."71

68 Lenard R. Berlanstein, *The Working People of Paris 1871-1914*, Baltimore 1984, 166.
69 Maurice Agulhon, *Histoire de la France Urbaine vol.4*, Paris 1983, 449.
70 Berlanstein, *Working People* (s. note 68), 235.
71 Morvan Lebesque, *Comment peut-on être Breton?*, Paris 1970, 22/23.

Lebesque further notes that some of these Bretons did live amongst the French, and elaborates on a coiffe-wearing widow who lived in the same apartment block as the author:

"On l'appelait la Bretonne. Point d'autre nom, jamais. Tiens, disions-nous, voilà la Bretonne qui rentre, la Bretonne qui va faire sa soupe ou (quand après un coup de tafia, elle interpellait ses voisins d'une grosse voix rauque, avec ses mots de nulle part) [...] Alors, les gosses se rassemblaient dans la cour et braillaient: Les pommes de terres pour les cochons, / les épluchures pour les Bretons, / à la nigousse[72], à la nigousse, / à la nigousse, merdouse! 'Ne parle pas à la Bretonne', m'enjoignaient mes parents: la Bretonne est sale, la Bretonne boit; jusqu'au jour où elle réussit à coincer ma mère dans la cour et à lui raconter sa vie, devenant dès lors la Bretonne qui a eu des malheurs, puis la Bretonne qui au fond est une femme comme tout le monde. Finalement, la Bretonne mourut. Mais des longues années plus tard, je me souviens d'elle et du nom qui la désignait, aussi fabuleux pour moi que la Cafre ou la Bantoue".

In 1882 the 3 Breton-speaking departements supplied one-seventh of the domestic servants of France[73] (which is comparable to the many Irish domestic women in 19th century Britain).[74]

In the 18th century there seems to have been a well-known route from Brittany to Paris with Versailles forming a kind of staging post before reaching the capital. I have heard oral evidence dating to the late 19th century – from the central Breton-speaking homeland – that many, being poor, walked the whole distance from western Brittany to towns like Rennes, Nantes, Angers.

Associative institutions of exiled Celts

It seems that the Celts were slower in establishing particular institutions for themselves than were some other immigrant groups. It is noticeable that in 17th century London, it was the French protestants and the Jews who were the most organised ethnic groups. Of course these were, in the main, religious refugees who already

72 "Nigousse" is a pejorative term for a Breton woman derived from a colloquial Breton pronunciation of "an hini goz" 'the old one' (a familiar term for 'my wife').
73 Jean-Jacques Monnier, Jean-Christophe Cassard, *Toute l'Histoire de la Bretagne: des Origines à la fin du XXᵉ siècle*, Morlaix 1996, 455.
74 Vaughan, *A new History* (s. note 18), 641.

came from urban and trade backgrounds, whilst the Celts, on the other hand, were, with hardly an exception, from rural backgrounds. The following fact cannot be overemphasised the Celts have never succeeded to establish towns, let alone cities, every town in the Celtic countries being the result of an implantation by French or English-speakers.

However, not all the Celts were at the bottom of the social scale or had migrated due to deprivation, some, due to a more comfortable background, or sometimes due to luck and abilities, were able to secure positions of prestige in the new economic environment where they could offer less fortunate co-nationals assistance.[75] The industrialist George Macintosh, originally from Ross-shire, who established works in 1777 at Dunchatten, Glasgow, ensured that all his employees were Highlanders, and the roll call would be given in Gaelic every morning.[76]

The most widespread institution for a national subcultures in a foreign urban environment was the religious place of worship. Pettegree points out that for 16th century French Protestants in London: "churches were from the beginning much more than purely religious institutions" and quickly became an institutional centre for the foreign community.[77] All the Celtic peoples came to have special religious provision in the urban environments, whether based on denominational or purely linguistic arrangements.

However, it is the more comfortable circles of exiled Celts who, in the 18th century, lie behind the emergence of the first known voluntary associative institutions. Many of these societies were self-help 'improving' associations with economic and spiritual as well as any cultural or national aims. Again I will separately treat such associative institutions according to location – viz. Edinburgh & Glasgow, Dublin & Belfast, London, Rennes, Nantes & Paris.

Edinburgh & Glasgow

In 1708 the Presbytery of Edinburgh in their visiting and catechising "found some persons lately come out of the Highlands who do not understand our language". This led to the appointment of Neil MacVicar to preach and baptise in Gaelic to these people in the West Kirk, though with the interesting qualification that the sermons should be in private "seeing a public intimation of that nature might occasion a great

75 Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture* (s. note 7), 179.
76 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 194.
77 Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London*, Oxford 1986, 2.

many curious people their profaning the Lord's Day".[78] In 1723 John McLaurin was appointed as Gaelic preacher in Glasgow "to such Highlanders in Glasgow as do not have the English language".[79] In the late 18th century, from 1769 onwards, specifically Gaelic chapels were founded in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and later in other major towns of the Lowlands, over the course of time these would tend to anglicise, but not without a struggle on the part of those who wanted to maintain the Gaelic.[80]

Other institutions which fostered a Scottish-Gaelic identity were the associative societies:

- the Glasgow Highland Society (fd.1727) met in the Black Bull Inn in Argyle Street (by Trongate), which lay on the western boundary of the city. The inn had specifically been built by the Highland Society in 1760, and served as a gathering point and a labour exchange for Highlanders. In Edinburgh, the White Hart Inn in the Grassmarket area, run by one of the managers of the Edinburgh Gaelic Chapel served a similar function in the late 18th century.[81]

- the Glasgow Gaelic Club of Gentlemen (fd.1780) also met in the Black Bull Inn, was described as a socially elitist offshoot of the Highland Society for landowners, industrialists and merchants, and performed charitable works including the 'charitable' apprenticing of young Highland boys.[82] It also met in the Black Bull Inn.[83]

- the Highland Society of Scotland in Edinburgh (fd.1784).[84] The Highland Society of Scotland was a sort of Gaelic academy, a typical product of the Enlightenment, one of its objects was to "Pay proper attention to the preservation of the

78 Houston, *Social Change* (s. note 8), 8.
79 Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture* (s. note 7), 177.
80 Ebd., 181.
81 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 195, 203.
82 It is of course, beyond record whether the apprenticing system was charitable or exploitative – it is easy to envisage it was a bit of both – and considering the different outlook of people of this era from that of those brought up with the 20th century welfare state systems it might prove rather foolish to rush and pass judgement. It is interesting to note that a Welsh day-school which opened in Liverpool in 1804 also had as function the apprenticing of poor children of Welsh parents born in the town (Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture* [s. note 7], 173).
83 Withers, *Urban Gaelic Subculture* (s. note 7), 190-91; Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, East Linton 1996, 226.
84 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 203.

language, poetry and music of the Highlands", which they did by appointing a bard, a piper and a 'professor' of Gaelic and Gaelic MSS published.[85]

Dublin & Belfast

There is evidence during the early years of the 18th century, during the regime most bleak and oppressive to the native Irish that Irish learning was flourishing in Dublin, and was particularly associated with what may be called the 'Ó Neachtain circle'. A 1728 poem of Tadhg Ó Neachtain reveals that there were no fewer than 26 Irish-language scholars assembled at that time in the capital near the cathedral, proof positive that a body of traditional Irish scholars continued in an anglicised urban environment to preserve and promote the Irish-language cultural heritage, these were mostly native Irish, but some seem to have been of English origin,[86] e.g. Richard Tipper (of Fingall), Maurice Newby, Stephen Rice, and William Lynch (a Dublin man who had indeed learnt Irish).[87] The circle seems to have had jacobite political sympathies (and the catholic priests in their midst were in constant danger of being imprisoned).[88]

A number of these scholars would later publish books on Irish history and antiquities for the benefit of an English-speaking public and would be aided or encouraged by the proliferation of learned societies such as the Dublin Philosophical Society (fd.1707), the Royal Dublin Society (fd.1731), the short-lived Physico-Historical Society (fd.1744), the Royal Irish Academy (fd.1772), and the Royal Society of Irish Antiquaries (fd.1786).[89] Through a heightened interest in the history and antiquities of Ireland, an interest developed in a necessary prerequisite – the Irish language. The controversy surrounding the authenticity of the influential Ossianic poems of Macpherson was particularly important in bringing English Protestants and Irish Catholics together in the Royal Irish Academy to defend the reputation of their common country, and one finds an English colonel, Charles Vallancey, a prime mov-

85 Ebd. 335.
86 It must not be forgotten that there was a distinct population of 'Old English', who considered themselves distinct from both the native Irish and the more recent English immigrants since the 17th century. By and large they had preserved the catholic faith as well as their distinct dialect of English.
87 Brian Ó Cuív, *Irish language and literature*, in: Moody, Vaughan, *A new History* (s. note 18), 374-423, 393-96.
88 Ebd., 395.
89 Josep Leersen, *Mere-Irish and Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century*, Dublin 1996.

er of the English institution that was the Royal Irish Academy providing succour to Cathal Ó Conchobhair, and in the latter's wake, to younger Irish scholars such as Sylvester O'Halloran and Theophilus O'Flanagan. [90]

Indeed, the growing acceptance of Irish identity during the 18th century led to the formation of associations in Dublin which specifically strove to maintain and promote Irish: the apparently short-lived Irish Club or Cóimhthionól Gaedhilge (fd. 1752). The Gaelic Society of Dublin (fd. 1807), was established by Theophilus O'Flanagan who was employed as an Irish language expert at Trinity College and the Royal Irish Academy (this was to be a direct forerunner of many similar societies throughout the 19th century, culminating in the Gaelic League [fd. 1893]). [91]

London

The enormous metropolis of London was, of course, a magnet for all the nationalities within the British state. Here existed societies representing the three Celtic nations of Britain:
- *the Scottish Gaels:*
the Highland Society of London (fd. 1778). [92]
the Comunn Fíor Gael als the Club of True Highlanders (fd. 1815). [93]
the Gaelic Society of London (fd. 1830). [94]
- *the Irish:*
the London Hibernian Society (fd. 1806) which supported Irish-speaking proselytising. [95]

Because there seems to be better documentation we shall dally a little longer with the Welsh societies. The civil war of the 1640s had brought a small coterie of Welsh puritans to London that would preoccupy themselves with bringing the reformed religion to their 'backward' homeland, [96] such sentiments seem to have continued in Welsh circles, for in the late 17th century we find Welsh London merchants (or those of Welsh origin) financing the publishing of Bibles and devotional literature in

90 Ebd, 347.
91 Ebd, 366.
92 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 203.
93 Ebd., 206.
94 Ebd., 206.
95 Ó Cuiv, *Irish language* (s. note 87), 376.
96 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13), 46.

Welsh. [97] In a similar vein, but with wider horizons, Moses Williams, a Welsh scholar, dreamt of raising Wales from its provincial torpor, and appealed – unsuccessfully – to prosperous Welsh London merchants of the Society of Antient Britons in 1717 to raise money to build universities, charity schools, workshops, almshouses and hospitals in the homeland. [98] The Society of Ancient Britons [99] does not seem to have achieved much and one must wait for the mid 18th century before a more productive Welsh cultural association asserted itself in London. [100]

The Welsh Cymmrodorion 'aborigines' (fd.1751) in London, under patronage of Prince of Wales, met on the 1st Wednesday of each month in the Half Moon tavern in Cheapside, members mostly gentlemen, lawyers, doctors, merchants, goldsmiths, glovers, brewers, apothecaries, printers, grocers, craftsmen, gathered to eat and drink and be merry. Membership was open to Welshmen by birth or extraction. Richard Morris (1703-79), who had arrived aged 14 in 1722 in London and had become clerk in the Navy Office (and fell in love with the place), bore the brunt of organising. He had a strikingly ambitious plans: to help Welsh poets and authors, to collect valuable manuscripts, to promote study of Welsh history and scientific research, to encourage economic developments, to publish learned material (redolent of Moses Williams's dream of 1718). The total membership varied: 168 in 1759; 228 in 1778; 70 in 1787 (the year the society became defunct). The society's members were disappointment to Morris brothers, apart from William Vaughan of Cors-y-gedol, a colourful patron and bon viveur "few members either understood or cared about Welsh scholarship".

The Gwyneddigion „the Gwynedd people" (fd. 1779) was established mainly for the northern Welsh by Owen Jones & Robert Hughes, a solicitor, resolved to turn it into the show-piece of Welsh culture by providing a popular forum for stimulating and wide-ranging discussions. Membership was open to "all London-based Welshmen, provided they were fluent Welsh-speakers and fond of singing". It attracted people of more modest background, than the Cymmrodorion, including teachers, printers, solicitors, merchants, craftsmen and taverners. Met in taverns such as Goose & Gridiron in St Pauls churchyard, George & Vulture (Lombard St), members were more democratic and less pretentious than the Cymmrodorion. Passionate

97 Ebd, 43.
98 Ebd., 202, 248/49.
99 This is the oldest Welsh society that I know of, but I do not know the date of its foundation.
100 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13), 390.

political debate surfaced after French Revolution, and it was to become a power-house of early Welsh radicalism. However, this was not the whole picture: "The notion that members of the Gwyneddigion Society were more radical and egalitarian than their counterparts within the Cymmrodorion is a myth. Not until after the French Revolution of 1789 did the Gwyneddigion Society become a standard-bearer of liberty and sansculottism. Love of metre, music, and mead drew its members together and there is little indication that the libertarian notions publicized by Richard Price and David Williams appealed to them."[101] During the American War of Independence a song was composed and sung lustily containing fulsome expressions of loyalty to the House of Hanover and the British constitution. During celebratory dinners, glasses were raised to „King and Church" and „Prince and Principality', Owen Jones (Owain Myfyr), the society's founding father and its first chairman was like some mafia „godfather" expecting his fellow members to pander to his whims.

"As this rotund, dictatorial 'Civic Chief' made his entrance into meetings, members used to stand to attention or rush to supply three chairs, one for him to sit upon and the other two to prop him up."[102]

Society meetings were convivial affairs, liquor ran freely, clouds of tobacco smoke hung in the air, and harpers and fiddlers played merrily – interest focused in Welsh culture and scholarship rather than the cause of liberty.

The first Gorsedd of druids – which was to develop into a very particularly Welsh institution – was held in 1792 at Primrose Hill, London and had been instigated by the eccentric but brilliant scholar Iolo Morganwg, who had been a member of the Gwyneddigion since 1789.

Welsh churches – nonconformist chapels – were only founded in London following the split in 1811 of the Calvinist Methodist faction of the Established Church, these would develop in the 19th century into the traditional focus of attraction for Welsh immigrants to English cities, so much so that in 1922 it could be reported as a Welsh national characteristic: "Dywedir mai arfer y Sais cyffredin mewn tref ddie-

101 Ebd., 321.
102 A great component of most societies during this period seems to have been jolliment. This is illustrated back in the Welsh homeland by "Y Gymdeithas Locrig" 'the lunar society' (fd.1760s) which was a literary society that met once a month at Drws-y-nant near Dolgellau: "members were called upon to exchange doggerel, praise Bacchus, gulp like fish, howl like wolves, and toast Hymen and Sir John Barleycorn" (ebd, 389).

ithr ydyw holi am yr hotel; ond arfer y Cymro crefyddol hyd yn hyn ydyw holi am y capeli."[103]

Rennes, Nantes and Paris

I hesitate to speak on events in Rennes, Nantes and Paris. The Académie Celtique (fd.1805) – which included a number of Breton scholars – and was to metamorphose in 1814 into the Société des Antiquaires de France was partially responsible for spreading a more positive view of the Breton language.[104] But the earliest attestation I have of Breton cultural activities is a mention that Breton students in Paris met once a year at a banquet and were active in the 1830 revolution.[105] The salons[106] of Courcy and Gourcuff in Paris were a meeting ground of young Bretons in the 1830s.[107] The gentleman-scholar Hersart de la Villemarqué one of the founding fathers of Breton cultural nationalism was involved in such an association of 'patriotic' Bretons during the 1830s, and it may be worthy of note to mention his visit to Wales in 1838 (since hailed as the first inter-celtic meeting). Much Breton political/cultural activity in this period – as the Association Bretonne (fd.1843) – was dominated by conservative landowners.

103 "it is said that the custom of the common Englishman in a strange town is to ask for the hotel; but the custom of the religious Welshman, up till now, is to ask for the chapels." (I believe that the author did not mean "religious Welshman" in order to emphasise a certain type of Welshman, but to characterise the Welshman as being religious in comparison with the non-religious Englishman).
104 Yves Le Gallo, Jean Balcou, *Histoire Littéraire et Culturelle de la Bretagne*, vols.1-3, Paris 1987, 2, 336.
105 Edgar Leon Newman, *Historical Dictionary of France from the 1815 Restoration to the Second Empire*, vols.1-2, Westport 1987, 128.
106 In the 1830s clubs or cercles in France were the liberal bourgeois's counterpart to the aristocratic salon, and emphasised "le modernisme et légalitarisme contre la tradition et la hiérarchie" (however, women were not allowed membership). A French writer complained: "La fondation de clubs (encore une importation des Anglais) a detruit notre vieille galanterie française, de même qu'elle a porté un coup mortel à la vie de famille", Georges Duby, *Histoire de la France Urbaine* vol.3: *la Ville Classique de la Renaissance aux Révolutions*, Paris 1981, 598.
107 Monnier, Cassard, *Toute l'Histoire* (s. note 73), 468.

Common tendencies among the Celtic associations

The scholarly associations which were interested in the ancient history of the countries should be differentiated from the associations of Celts intended either to act as a focus for Celtic life or to promote the Celtic language. However, both types of associations tended to publish works which brought the Celtic language literature to a wider public. In the following paragraphs I will concentrate my attention solely on the associations of exiled Celts, as their composition can be taken to reflect, even if only dimly, the evolution of the Celtic immigrants in their new urban surroundings. Despite the fact that much of the following evidence comes from the late 19th century, it may point some light on the nature of these exiled associations at an even earlier date.

J. F. Campbell, the renowned collector of folktales, had been offered the directorship of the Highland Society of London, but after having attended one of the society's dinner in 1871 refused:

"This is a remnant of the ancient dining clubs with a good deal to drink [...] those who frequent the dinners chiefly are not the genuine article but Londoners making believe to be Highlanders [...] the whole thing struck me as make believe so I will have nothing to do with directing it."[108]

Many of these associations were supportive of the native language, and included rules that demanded that the Celtic language itself be spoken (in itself suggestive that a certain amount of coercion was needed to stop many from conversing in English). The Dublin Irish Club of 1752's rules specified:

"That no language be spoken in the club room, but the Irish language, on a pain of one penny for every such offence [...] save only Doctor Taafe, or such other members, who may not be able to convey their sentiments in the Irish, without the help of the English, until better acquainted therewith; but subject nevertheless to receive instructions on such occasions."[109]

The Glasgow Gaelic Club of Gentlemen of 1780 had as a principle to converse "as friends in the bold and expressive language of heroes in ages past" but the qualification that members were "to converse in Galic, according to their abilities, from 7 to 9 o'clock" suggests that after two hours of effort the language of conversation was English. The Gaelic Society of London of 1777, founded with the aim of fostering

108 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 206.
109 Leersen, *Mere-Irish* (s. note 89), 330.

the Gaelic language, had the ability to speak Gaelic as a condition of membership to be too restrictive, and was renamed the Highland Society of London the following year, with 'Highland descent' replacing Gaelic fluency as a qualification.[110]

With the Welsh association of the Cymmrodorion in London things do not seem to have gone much better:

"They might style themselves 'ancient Britons' and develop a liking for ritual and pomp, but a wealth of good intentions, nostalgia, and empty patriotic gestures was simply not enough. Lewis Morris was appalled by the lethargy and ignorance of members. When Hugh Hughes's Cywydd yr Ardd [...] was read aloud during a meeting in 1757 the members unanimously called for an immediate English translation and exegesis."[111]

Though established much later (about 1879, and lasting into the early 1900s), the Diners Celtiques established at Paris, by Ernest Renan and Paul Sébillot for exiled Bretons, again shows the same kind of phenomena typical of an exiled Celtic association. The Diners Celtiques consisted of a monthly lunch whereby Breton could be spoken, songs sung, pancakes eaten, and cider drunk.[112] Casimir Le Roux in 1901 judged:

"Je n'appelle pas ainsi ces associations d'admiration mutuelle où l'on se réunit une fois l'an pour vider des coupes de champagne ensemble et où l'on se contente de célébrer les gloires de la Bretagne."[113]

François Cadic, a priest, organiser of Breton exiled life in Paris around 1900, noted in 1899:

"On y mangeait bien, on y vidait les coupes de champagne, on y récitait des beaux vers, on y chantait de belles chansons et pendant ce temps les Bretons mouraient de faim dans les rues."[114]

110 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 206. This is in marked contrast to the use of Gaelic as a working medium in some branches of the later Highland Land Law Reform Association (founded in London in 1883), which was primarily political and directed protest against the power of the landlords.
111 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13), 391.
112 Gallo, Balcou, *Histoire Littéraire* (s. note 104), 2, 55-56.
113 Fañch Postic, *Les Oeuvres de François Cadic: Contes et Légendes de Bretagne*, Rennes 1997, 32/33.
114 Ebd.

Cadic had founded La Paroisse Bretonne (fd.1897) to look after the interests of the many poor Bretons who had immigrated to Paris. His appraisal of the activities of the Diners Celtiques is probably, for the most part, correct (though one must not forget Renan was considered a noted atheist by the catholic circles of which Cadic was a member).

It seems to be a general feature of these associations of exiles that they never managed to impose the Celtic language as the working language of the associations. Nevertheless they were certainly pro-Celtic, examples being the publication of a Welsh prayer book in 1770 by the Cymmrodorion. The Cymmrodorion members also helped in a campaign in 1766 to oust Thomas Bowles, an English-speaking rector of two Welsh-speaking parishes where only 5 from 500 understood English. Bowles' attorney had argued:

"Wales is a conquered country; it is proper to introduce the English language, and it is the duty of the bishops to promote the English, in order to introduce the language."[115]

R. T. Jenkins emphasises that early in the 19th century the Gwyneddigion would support nonconformist publications despite the fact that the majority of its members were supporters of the established Church – precisely because these publications were in Welsh. The same support to the native language is seen by the Scottish-Gaelic societies through the production of the Gaelic-English dictionary of 1828 by the Highland Societies of London and of Scotland, and the donation by the latter of £300 toward a Chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University.[116] However, such support was hostage to the vagaries of fashion, the Edinburgh Highland Society's 'professorship' of Gaelic was discontinued in 1799, evidence that other cultural commitments were viewed more and more with distaste, by 1844 the piping competition had been abolished, but the society was still influential in setting up a Celtic Chair in 1883.[117]

Whilst defining themselves primarily as having a cultural or national agenda, many of these associations were also very preoccupied with their social status within the host society. The cost for joining was not insubstantial, and it is to be noted, for example, that a substantial number of members of the Glasgow Highland Society had managerial and merchant backgrounds, including bookbinders, goldsmiths,

115 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13), 390-393.
116 Withers, *Gaelic Scotland* (s. note 7), 206/07.
117 Withers, *Scotland* (s. note 41), 335.

collectors of excise, etc.[118] The fact that Highlanders were not segregated into any markedly recognisable 'ghetto', reflects the fact that residence for them tended to be rather along lines of social class.[119] Lewis Morris urged his brother Richard to attract more aristocrats, disguise the obscure origins of the lowliest members: "Let their titles be disguised as much as possible that every English fool may not have room to laugh in his sleeve and say 'such a society, indeed'."[120]

Contribution of urban 'exiles' to the reemerging national consciousness

The Medieval and early Modern views of the different Celtic nations by the English and the French were that they were barbarians. Hardly any different was the Enlightenment attitude, with its belief in progress of civilisation and the improvement of mankind, prevalent in Britain in mid 18th century was that the Celts were 'primitive', "Pinkerton's Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of the Scythians or Goths", for example, stated that the Celts "are savages, have been savages since the world began, and will be forever savages while a separate people: that is, while themselves and of unmixed blood".[121]

It must be understood that the 17th century had seen in the Celtic countries the almost complete disappearance of the traditional native learned culture which had been maintained by professional bards.[122] This is particularly evident in Ireland, where poetic schools existed right till the end of the 17th century.[123] Leersen notes that after the turmoil of the 17th century the cultivation of Irish-language literature was marginalised with the loss of native patrons with wealth.[124] The heritage of the

118 Ebd, 192.
119 Ebd, 197/98.
120 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13), 390.
121 Leersen, *Mere-Irish* (s. note 89), 339.
122 Brittany is not known to have had a bardic tradition comparable to that of Wales, Ireland and Scotland, nevertheless it would seem that the ancient metrical assonance so typical of medieval Breton verse – and presenting similarities to the traditional Welsh *cyng-hanedd* – went out of fashion in the 17th century, at the same time as the Jesuit missions were involved in modernising the orthography of Breton as part of their campaign to secure the compliance of the Bretons to a Tridentian catholic doctrine.
123 Ó Cuiv, *Irish language* (s. note 87), 387.
124 Leersen, *Mere-Irish* (s. note 89), 315.

Irish-language cultural tradition became increasingly transmitted through non-traditional or even non-Irish channels, in the main middle-class protestant English (whether as commissions by scholarly societies or the interests of wealthy individuals). In Wales Gruffudd Ffylip of Ardudwy (†1666) was described as last of the old perambulating bards (clerwr), and Siôn Dafydd Las of Nannau (†1694) was the last Welsh family bard. In 1655 Edward Dafydd, last of the old Glamorgan bards, wrote: "The world is not with the bards", and lamented the loss of patronage, with bards only occasionally commissioned. Eventually even this practice died too as was the experience of Owain Gruffudd of Llanstumdwy (1642-1730).[125] In Scotland, the old ways generally lingered a little later into the 18th century, but suffered a fatal blow with the suppression of the 1745 rising. This can be illustrated by the cases of John Mac Codrum (1693-1779), appointed in 1763 as the last house-bard to Sir James Mac Donald of Sleat.[126]

The native learned tradition, secure in the Celtic homelands, seem to have been fading little by little before the increasing anglicising influences of the period. In many respects the 18th century therefore stands as a bleak interlude between the certainties of the old learned culture and the resurfacing of a new cultural tradition in the Celtic homelands following the advent of literacy in the late 19th century (the interlude was the least traumatic in the case of the Welsh, as the independent dissenting protestant religion began to dominate the Welsh homeland in the late 18th century, and brought Bible-based literacy to a high level). It can thus be understood that in the 18th century the relatively rich associations of exiled Celts were in a hitherto never attained position to influence their fellow countrymen, whether by publishing books on Celtic languages, litterature, and history, or supporting them through donations or subscriptions.

The spread of literacy during the 19th century led to the spread of similar cultural associations in the Celtic homelands, as documented for Scotland[127] and for Wales. A corollary effect was that the relative importance of the associations of the urban Celtic associations in the cultural field were no longer as predominant as they had been during the 18th century.

125 Jenkins, *The Foundations* (s. note 13), 226-27. It must be emphasised that the cultivation of strict ancient metres persisted after these dates among farmers, craftsmen, clergymen and publishers, alongside the employment of freer metres.
126 Withers, *Scotland* (s. note 41), 346.
127 Ebd. 203/04.

Patterns and discordances in urban Celtic experience during the period 1700-1850

The common experience of the Celtic urban experience in the period 1700-1850 was that they, unlike Jews and Huguenots in London for example, enjoyed no privileged – nor, for that matter, restricted – legal status, so that there never existed any Celtic ghetto outside hyperbolean assertions. The accession to the throne of England by a 'Welsh' dynasty in 1487, and then a Scottish dynasty in 1603, made adapting to the English environment fairly unproblematic for those Welsh and Scottish-Gaels who wished to do so (and this was also largely the case with the Bretons who posed no political threat to the French state). In sharp contrast stood the Irish, who because they had been involved in a bloody and protracted war with the English throughout the 17th century, and, despite losing, adhered to catholicism as their badge of identity. It is debatable whether the Irish were particulary unamenable to participation in the life of the host society or whether they suffered the English notions of the most reviled of all Celts, Vaughan, in an informative chapter on 19th century Irish immigration to Britain during the period, points out:

"The immigrant's sense of Irishness was to some extent a defensive posture, adopted in response to the hostility and prejudice of British neighbours and fellow proletarians."[128]

While there existed natural tendencies for concentrations of Celts, these seem to have tended to dissipate as the second and third generation Celts became absorbed into mainstream English and French society. The – albeit paltry – evidence adduced from the experience of a few associative institutions reflect that many urban Celts, despite adhering in name to their ethnic background were already anglicised or frenchified. This seems to indicate a well-known observation on the absorption of ethnic minorities in host societies in the 20th century (at least where there is no great physical difference in appearance): the 3 generation transformational process whereby a monoglot in the immigrant language has bilingual children, who in turn produce monoglot children who only have the language of the new society.[129] One suspects that the insidious class distinctions of the urban environments (different from

128 Vaughan, *A New History* (s. note 18), 650.
129 Suzanne Romaine, *Language in Society: an Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, Oxford 2000, 49-55.

that which existed in the Celtic homelands) soon superseded any nationalistic sentiments most Celtic immigrants may have held.

What appears to be a discordance is the time lag between developments in France and in Britain, for though I have generally found similar patterns of immigration to urban areas amongst the Bretons in France as with the other Celts in Britain – the evidence comes from a later date – about a century later to be precise. Because the state of research on Breton immigration to places like Rennes, Nantes and Paris, at present, is hardly satisfactory, it is far too early to assert that this difference reflects a qualitative difference in development between the French and British economies during this period. Nevertheless, it needs emphasising that the effects of the industrial revolution began making itself felt in Britain in the late 18th century, whilst in France the same effects were not felt until the late 19th century. Furthermore – the effect of the industrial revolution in Britain was more intense than in France – the ratio of population of Britain to France, just over a quarter in 1700, rose to three-quarters by 1850, and – continuing to rise – had largely become equal by 1900. The discrepancy of almost a century between Britain and France seems mirrored in the the lag by which Breton literature got its lettre de noblesse in 1839 with the publication of "Barzaz Breiz" (whereas comparable books had already appeared in Scotland and Wales in the 1760s, and in Ireland in the 1780s).[130]

This paper should be treated as an incomplete exploratory foray into a subject that merits and deserves further study. I would, however, strongly recommend future researchers that work carried out on the implantation and adaptation of the Celts in the English and French urban environments would be better understood by studying the period 1700 to 1914 inclusively.

130 Namely, Fragments of Ancient Poetry (1760) & Fingal (1762) for Scotland; Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Antient Welsh Bards (1764) for Wales; Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards (1786) & Reliques of Ancient Irish Poetry (1789) for Ireland.

Bürgertum und Stadteliten im 18. Jahrhundert. Das Beispiel der Mark Brandenburg

Brigitte Meier

Allein die Begriffe – Bürgertum und Stadtelite – stellen ein weites Feld dar. Die regionale Vielfalt der Kulturlandschaften und die binnenstrukturellen Differenzierungen beeinflussten sowohl die Entwicklung des Bürgertums als auch die der Stadteliten sehr nachhaltig. So unterscheidet sich die brandenburgische Stadtelite in vieler Hinsicht von der rheinländischen, hessischen oder der norddeutschen. Die politischen, sozialen und ökonomischen Rahmenbedingungen und die jeweiligen lokalen Traditionen prägten den spezifischen Charakter des Bürgertums und der Stadtelite einer historischen Region. Aber auch innerhalb einer Städtelandschaft gab es eine beachtliche Binnendifferenzierung hinsichtlich der wirtschaftlichen und politischen Bedeutung der einzelnen Städte.

Die brandenburgischen Städte, die sich bis 1809 in Immediat- und Mediatstädte unterteilen, gehörten bis auf wenige Ausnahmen (Berlin, Potsdam, Frankfurt an der Oder, Brandenburg an der Havel oder Prenzlau) nicht zu den blühenden kulturellen – im weitesten Sinne des Wortes – Zentren des 18. Jahrhunderts. Für 1773 registrierte Friedrich Wilhelm August Bratring 43 Immediat- und 40 Mediatstädte.[1] Die Städte der Mittelmark, der Altmark, der Prignitz und der Uckermark zählten 1801 zusammen 344.116 zivile Einwohner. Davon wiederum lebten allein 43 % in Berlin, 5,2 % in Potsdam, 3 % in Frankfurt an der Oder, 2,98 % in Brandenburg an der Havel und 2 % in Prenzlau. Über die Hälfte der zivilen Stadtbewohner (56,18 %) konzentrierte sich demnach in nur fünf Städten. Lediglich weitere acht Städte weisen zu jener Zeit eine zivile Bevölkerung von über 3000 Personen auf.[2] Unter den oben genannten 83 brandenburgischen Städten dominierten mit 84,4 % die Kleinstädte.[3]

1 Friedrich Wilhelm August Bratring, *Statistisch-topographische Beschreibung der gesamten Mark Brandenburg*. Kritisch durchgesehene und verbesserte Neuausgabe von Otto Büsch und Gerd Heinrich. Mit einer biographisch-bibliographischen Einführung und einer Übersichtskarte von Gerd Heinrich, Berlin 1968, 74.
2 Ebd, 248-1020.
3 Ebd.