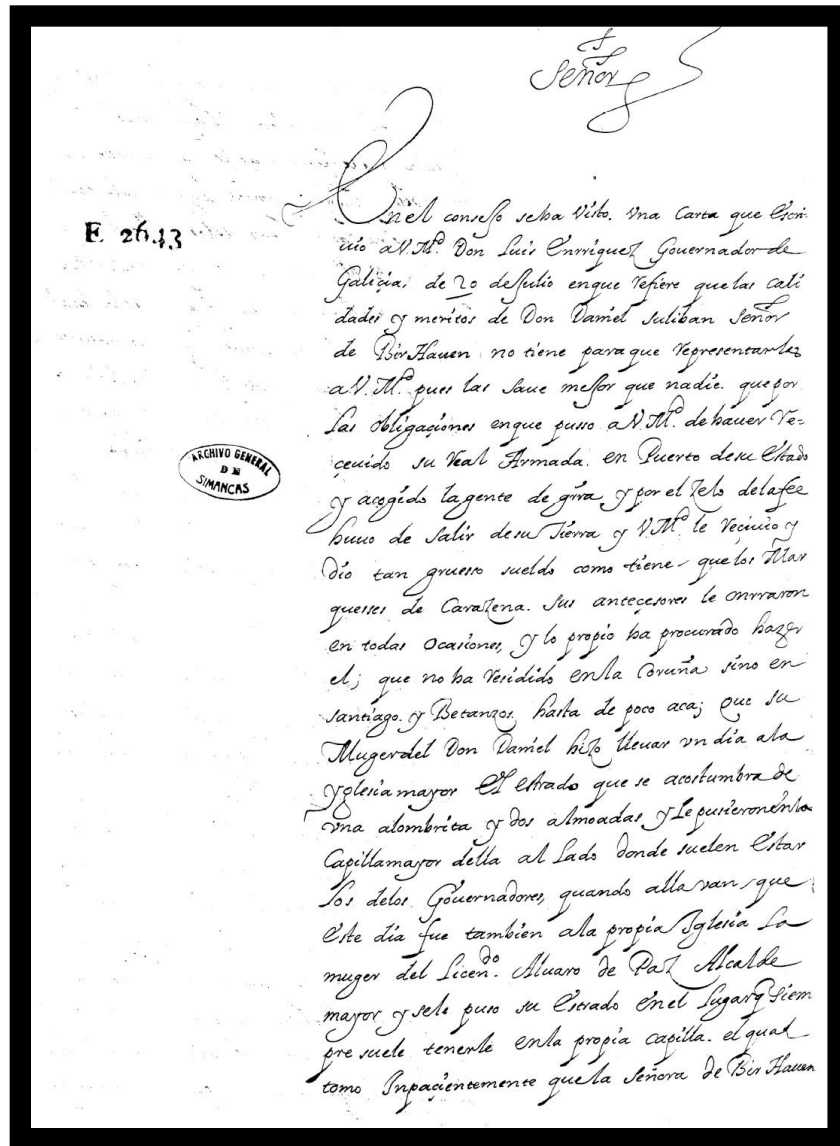


# Irish Migration Studies in Latin America

Volume 8, Number 3, July 2014

Archives of Irish Interest in Cuba, Spain and Peru



ISSN 1661-6065

Copyright © Society for Irish Latin American Studies, 2014

# **Irish Migration Studies in Latin America**

**Volume 8, Number 3, August 2014**

**Society for Irish Latin American Studies**

## **Archives of Irish Interest in Cuba, Spain and Peru**

Cliona Murphy, Editor-in-Chief, California State University, Bakersfield.

### **Editorial Team**

Margaret Brehony, Guest Editor, National University of Ireland, Galway.

Dennise Bentle, Associate Editor

Gabriela McEvoy, Spanish Language Editor

Phillip Barron, Production Editor

Cover illustration: First page of *consulta* regarding a dispute concerning seating and kneeling privileges in the principal church in Betanzos (Galicia) between Elena O'Sullivan Mór, Countess of Biraben and the wife of the *alcalde mayor*. AGS, Estado, leg. 2643, consulta, 26 September 1613. (See O' Scea article)

ISSN 1661-6065

Copyright © Society for Irish Latin American Studies, 2014

## Contents

Clíona Murphy, <a href="#">Editor's Introduction</a> .	6
<b>Archives of Irish Interest in Cuba, Spain and Peru</b>	
Margaret Brehony, <a href="#">Guest-Editor's Introduction</a>	10
Margaret Brehony, <a href="#">The Trouble with the Irish in the Cuban National Archives</a>	15
Gabriela McEvoy, <a href="#">El valor de los archivos en los invisibles irlandeses</a>	28
Igor Pérez Tostado, <a href="#">Spanish archives on Latin-American Irish: sources, perspectives and challenges for the Early Modern Period</a>	41
Ciaran O'Scea, <a href="#">Irish emigration to Spain and the archives of the Castilian conciliar system</a>	61

---

***Irish Migration Studies in Latin America***  
**Editorial Board**

Dr. Carolina Amador Moreno, Department of English, University of Extremadura, Spain.

Dr. Monica Ayuso, English Department, California State University Bakersfield, USA.

Dr. Margaret Brehony, Spanish Department, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland.

Dr. David Barnwell, Department of Spanish, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland.

Dr. Gera Burton, Romance Languages and Literatures Latin American Literature, University of Missouri, USA.

Dr. Catriona Clear, Department of History, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland.

Dr. Lourdes de Ita, *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas*, Universidad de Michoacana, Mexico.

Dr. Carol Dell'Amico, Department of English, California State University, Bakersfield, USA.

Dr. Séamus Fogarty, Independent Scholar, Mexico.

Dr. Stephen Gamboa, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, California State University Bakersfield, USA.

Profesora Maria Graciela Eliggi, MA, *Departamento de Lenguas Extranjeras, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas*, National University of La Pampa, Argentina.

Mr. Jean-Philippe Imbert, MA, Comparative Literature and Sexuality Studies, Dublin City University, Ireland.

Mr. John Kennedy, MSc Economics, London, UK.

Dr. Laura Izarra, Department of Modern Literatures, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Ms. Gráinne Kilcullen, LLM in International Human Rights Law, Nepal.

Dr. Garrett Maher, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
University of Kuwait, Kuwait.

Dr. Francine Masiello, Departments of Spanish and Portuguese &  
Comparative Literature, University of California at Berkeley, USA.

Dr. Edmundo Murray, (founding editor).

Dr. Gabriela McEvoy, Department of Languages, Lebanon Valley College,  
USA.

Dr. Karen Racine, Department of History, University of Guelph, Canada.

Mr. Andrés, Romera, MA, Dept. of Languages, Tourism and Hospitality,  
Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland.

Dr. Hilda Sabato, History Department, University of Buenos Aires,  
Argentina.

Dr. Lia Schraeder, Latin American and Mexican History, Georgia  
Gwinnett College, USA.

Dr. Fionnghuala Sweeney, Latin American Studies, Newcastle University,  
UK.

Ms. Domino Torres, MA, Ph.D. candidate in the Department of English,  
University of Southern California, USA.

Dr. Sinéad Wall, Department of Modern and Applied Languages,  
University of Westminster, UK.

Mr. Edward Walsh, MSc Architecture, Independent Scholar, London, UK.

## Editor's Introduction

**Cliona Murphy**

California State University, Bakersfield

History is made with documents. Documents are the imprints left of the thoughts and the deeds of the men of former times. For nothing can take the place of documents. No documents, no history.<sup>1</sup>

This issue considers archives in Peru, Spain and Cuba which contain documents on connections with Ireland, and on the Irish. Indeed, our contributors, out of dedication to their subjects, selflessly share what they have found thus making research easier for subsequent scholars. Such generosity of spirit is what allows the academic world to continue to move forward. It especially aids the work here of SILAS in general, and this journal IMSLA in particular. Dr. Margaret Brehony, guest co-editor of this issue, elaborates in her introduction on the specifics of each article, and the editorial team is grateful for her collaboration.

It is important to give some space to considering what archives mean to scholars, what scholars do while there, and what happens after they leave the archives. Unless one has been part of the archival experience, it is difficult to appreciate the trials, tribulations and, sometimes, triumphs involved. Those who work in the archives are true adventurers who go it alone to far-away places. Archival research involves monotony, tedious hours, days and weeks of deciphering difficult manuscripts when one is suffering from jet lag, different food, strange accommodation, and, sometimes, uncomfortable physical surroundings. All this has to be endured (and sometimes enjoyed) before an article or book is finally written, polished, submitted, and published.

While there are many archives that are modern and state of the art, there are still those that resemble Bonnie Smith's description of nineteenth-century archives where "...decay was everywhere: small animals gnawed at the documents, which were fouled with dead bugs, rodent excrement, worms, hairs, nail clippings; old papers vellum, and script were damaged by water, fumes, soot, extremes of temperature." Moreover, the seasoned researcher would agree with Smith that, along with the unsettling

---

<sup>1</sup> This quote can be found on the website of University College Dublin's archives. It was originally used in a French publication in 1897, and was cited in English by Eamon de Valera in a letter from prison in 1924. For details [http://www.ucd.ie/archives/html/main\\_fra.htm](http://www.ucd.ie/archives/html/main_fra.htm)

environment, “Illegible writing, strange languages, shorthand, and secret codes all made archives places of mystery” (Smith 2000:119).

Indeed, there are unexpected joys as well unpleasant surprises. Irish historian Dr. Caitriona Clear remembers that her trips to convent archives in the early 1980s “were invariably accompanied, or interrupted, by a lovely tea-tray with good china and biscuits and cake, in those lovely mellow old convents with dark wood and tiled floors.”<sup>2</sup> Historian of Mexico, Dr. Bradley Benton, savors the memory of his archival work in Seville, Spain, at the *Archivo de Indias*

I noticed that all of the Spaniards working in the reading room would get up and leave at about 10:30 every morning and then all come back in about an hour later. Eventually, I learned that they were all going to have breakfast, really a second breakfast, of *café con leche* and toast with either jam, *jamón serrano*, or ham *paté*. After a few weeks, I made friends with some of the local researchers and got invited to go with them to breakfast. They all went to the same spot, the Rayuela, which was just around the block on a quaint pedestrian street in the city center. Those breakfasts were such a great opportunity to meet fellow researchers from around the globe, to network, and to enjoy tasty Spanish food!<sup>3</sup>

Whether archival work is seen as a hardship or a joy, or a mix of both, researchers have to work with what made it into the archives. There are different views on how archives are shaped. Are they shaped by fate and chance or by deliberate human decision-making? Researchers suffer the consequences of the decisions of those who (often long ago) have decided what should and should not be preserved, decided how the archives are going to be organized, and for whom they are intended - thus influencing the history that is going to be written. According to historian Richard Evans, “Archives are the product of the chance survival of the documents and the corresponding chance loss or deliberate destruction of others. They are also the products of the professional activities of archivists, which therefore shape the record of the past and with it the interpretations of the historians” (Evans, 2000: 75). Edward Walsh, a frequent contributor of articles on the Irish in Latin America, adds a further dimension to the discussion when he asserts, “I firmly believe that there are documents/

---

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Caitriona Clear, History Department, National University of Ireland, Galway, email correspondence, April 11, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Bradley Benton, Department of History, Philosophy and Religious Studies, North Dakota State University, email correspondence, April 11, 2012.

letters/correspondence held in family collections, solicitors' offices, archives (both public and private) which have not seen the light of day....".<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Walsh has dedicated much time to retrieving sources of Irish Latin-American interest from obscure locations. Thus, it is a sobering thought to realize that the history we are writing is based not only on what has survived but also on what has not survived, as well as on what has not yet been found. Historians need to be very tentative in the assumptions they make about the past considering all the missing sources.

After weeks, months and sometimes longer in the archives researchers return home and face the next task – writing up the research. Based on the sources they have found, they have to make the connections, write the story, and tell the narrative. Historian of France, Natalie Davis, author of several books, including *Fiction in the Archives*, writes that in the archives the stories do not come ready made. She maintains that historians examine certain documents, and then try to weave a story, and though they are constrained by the evidence (and lack of evidence) they need to make certain creative leaps to write their narratives (Davis 1987: 1-6). Truly, not only the historical imagination but also the creative imagination must be used. For without that we will just have a mere summary of what is in the archives on a particular topic, and no context, analysis and insights. Without researchers' prior expertise, intense training, and extensive knowledge of the already existing literature and scholarship, along with creative writing skills, they would be able to do little with what they find in the archives. Without the act of writing up and publishing the research, the time spent in the archives is of little use to anyone except the researcher. Therefore, what one reads in a journal such as this is the result of an arduous and creative process.

In recent years digital archives have been appearing and seem to be making sources more accessible. Initially, they were seen as the answer to every researcher's dream, both student and advanced scholar. They do have all kinds of potential, especially for bringing large amounts of material together, encouraging ambitious projects and allowing collaboration between scholars and often with members of the general public too. However, digitizing is time consuming, expensive and involves many resources. There is also the problem of who decides what gets put up on digital archives. How does the prioritization of what to put online change the history that gets written? Are national newspapers put on line, while regional ones are left out? Are the letters of some well-known individual put up, while those of lesser known individuals are ignored? Are mistakes made when some documents are scanned, copied or transcribed? Do these decisions and efforts shape the history that will be written? Who funds digital archives? How long will the funding last? Who updates

---

<sup>4</sup> Edward Walsh, Independent Scholar, London, email correspondence, August 8, 2013.



archival websites and for how long? While these questions are being grappled with, it is undoubtedly true that the arrival of digital archives is changing the discipline of history, the view of the past and the accessibility of the past. However, caution should be maintained, and all the reservations about traditional archives should be kept in mind when approaching the digital archives.

While not all will agree fully with Dr. Caitriona Clear, it is appropriate, for this issue of IMSLA, that she shall have the last word,

doing research online while it is convenient and cheap, is boring and soul-destroying, with no trip to make, archivists to chat to, and worst of all, no faint spidery handwriting to decipher in a hushed atmosphere as you are plunged right back into the era you are looking at. Nearest thing to time travel any of us will experience.<sup>5</sup>

## **Bibliography**

Davis, Natalie, *Fiction in the Archives* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

Evans, Richard, *In Defense of History* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000).

Smith, Bonnie G., *The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2000).

---

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Caitriona Clear, cited above.

## Guest Editor's Introduction

**Margaret Brehony**  
**National University of Ireland, Galway**

This special issue of *IMSLA* considers the challenges and riches of archival sources located in Spain, Peru and Cuba by scholars from different disciplines in the field of Irish-Hispanic studies. The contributors discuss an impressive range of sources and different approaches taken to collection: walking through a cemetery in Lima, Peru to examine Irish names on tombstones; a painstaking trawl through thousands of bundles of documents in the archives of the Spanish conciliar system to reconstruct the lives of Irish families in seventeenth-century Spain; taking time to understand the “colonial sense” of how nineteenth-century documentation is organised in the pre-digitised collections at the Cuban National Archives and getting to grips with a potentially overwhelming abundance of material through state-of-the-art digital online catalogues in Spanish state archives. In dealing with the challenging complexity and voluminous nature of archival sources about Irish immigration in Spain and its American colonies the contributors point to the importance of understanding the history and rationale of particular archival systems and the need for lateral thinking in locating historical records. The locations of the sources consulted give an idea of the geographical spread of an Irish presence at different historical junctures of Spanish imperial history. In the early-modern period, Irish men and women of diverse social classes moved in a trajectory from core to periphery thus presenting a lens through which to analyse the metropolitan narrative in relationship to the colonial narrative in Irish Latin American studies. With independence from Spain, Irish emigrants to Latin American countries travelled directly from Ireland or England or through networks in the United States. Reflecting changes in the Atlantic world economy, the history of nineteenth-century Irish migration illuminates new circuits of colonial labour and “white immigration” schemes in the Iberian Atlantic at a time of transition from slavery to “free” labour.

This is a well-balanced collection, though not laid out in chronological order it begins with two nineteenth-century accounts from Latin American archives, the first from Cuba still under colonial rule and the second from Peru in the decades after independence and the abolition of slavery. The final two articles consider Spanish archives dealing with Irish migration at a time of Spanish Imperial expansion, one of which takes a gendered approach to analyse sources traditionally used in accounts of Irish military men.

Historians Igor Perez Tostado and Ciaran O'Scea outline the wealth of archival sources and rich possibilities in the Spanish state archives for research on Irish immigrants in the early-modern period. Though they went in their thousands to the early Spanish American colonies, Perez Tostado notes that apart from a number of more prominent military personalities, Irish immigration in this period has not received the same scholarly attention as that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Unlike the network of Irish colleges or Irish regiments in Europe, the Crown prohibited the formation of institutions, such as guilds, associations or religious societies from any particular geographical region in the early Spanish American colonies. In the absence of any expressly Irish military regiments there are no "clearly defined archives" or sections of archives dedicated to their presence. Taking the Spanish archives as a starting point for research on the Irish in the Iberian Atlantic, Perez Tostado sets his work in the context of recent developments in Irish-Spanish historical studies and the emergence of a community of scholars or "*irlandesistas*" who, through close contact with Irish historical trends, have produced a large body of work. This developing field attempts to understand the Irish experience "as part of the worldwide stream of migrants, exiles and refugees that reshaped the Spanish Monarchy and gave birth to the first global culture". Perez Tostado introduces the researcher to an extensive array of sources and lays out an invaluable guide to the major state archives, one which will certainly ease the initial stress induced by what are clearly an "overabundance of administrative documentation rather than the lack of it". We are also provided with helpful links to on-line catalogues for major libraries and state archives at the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, and the *Archivo General de Simancas* in Valladolid, and relevant sections of *Archivo Historico Nacional* in Madrid dedicated to the nobility.

In Perez Tostado's view, the exhibition of the *Archivo General de Simancas* on "The Irish and the Hispanic Monarchy" curated by our next contributor Ciaran O'Scea, is "the perfect starting place to get a taste of the possibilities of the Spanish archives for the study of Ireland and the Irish in LatinAmerica". O'Scea goes into fine detail about the possibilities for research on Irish immigrants' contact with civil, ecclesiastical and royal institutions through the complexities of the Spanish Castilian conciliar system dating back to the early seventeenth century. In a system structured around territorial divisions of the Spanish Monarchy, the adoption of a principle of bureaucratic literacy meant that "as long as there existed an economic justification or payment, every transaction involving an individual or part of royal property left a paper trail". Given the Irish presence wherever the Spanish Monarchy had influence over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there is "an abundant documentary trail" of sources which O'Scea assures is largely untapped. This article underlines the value of understanding archiving processes, particularly where changes occurred that reflect structural and administrative shifts in

the conciliar system. Through tenacious and painstaking research using royal, ecclesiastical, and notarial archives, O'Scea suggests different methods to "complete the jigsaw of family reconstruction, and the many varied aspects regarding the role of Irish female immigrants". State archives in Spain traditionally used to tell the story of the lives of military men in Irish *tercios* or regiments have been underutilised in terms of the lives of Irish immigrant women and families. In O'Scea's view, there may be "proportionally even more than that regarding Spanish women owing to the difficulties faced by the immigrant communities in protecting their female members". Working with individual letters of petition and the *consulta*, a document containing the summary and decision on the appeal as primary source documents, O'Scea outlines the possibilities for family reconstruction through petitions claiming "inherited services" by Irish women whose spouses, brothers or uncles provided important services to the Spanish Monarch. Written appeals often contain a level of detail about individual men and women, their kinship networks and important events in Ireland "not found in English sources". They can throw up fascinating and unusual fragments of rich social data such as "Gaelic concubinage", as in the case of one Maria McSweeney in 1618 who "was deprived of most of her pension because several years earlier she had been living in concubinage with an Irishman while still married". O'Scea estimates that there are tens of thousands of memorials by Irish petitioners in the principal state archives pointing to the potential for further research on Irish immigration under the Spanish Monarchy. Pension documentation containing details about Irish military widows provides insights "into Irish female literacy, their physiognomy, social networks, marriage patterns, and residence patterns" which, when combined with other sources permit a more complete study.

The term archive for this journal issue was defined broadly to include newspapers, literature, private collections, online sources, oral histories etc. Gabriela McEvoy combines the use of archival records at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM) Library and records at the British cemetery in Callao, Lima to open a new line of investigation into Irish migration processes, a somewhat invisible group in the national memory of Peru. She retrieves a relatively unknown migration episode by examining a number of dissertations on immigration schemes around the end of the nineteenth century. The discourse of attracting immigrants from Europe became part of a modernising imperative; however, McEvoy's reading of the contemporary documentation provides evidence of a racial subtext to the rhetoric of immigration. In 1900, Larrabure y Correa wrote "*solo con una inmigración de hombres blancos trabajadores y enérgicos, saldrá el Perú victoriosamente de su postración actual*". He concluded that immigration schemes from Ireland were unsuccessful, not for lack of numbers but, reminiscent of similar immigration schemes in Brazil and Argentina during the mid-late nineteenth century, because they were badly

organised. One such immigration project imported agricultural labourers from Ireland, sponsored by an Irish doctor John Gallagher and the wealthy merchant William Grace in 1851. Newly arrived immigrants were offered little or no material supports to work on frontier lands that few survived the neglect and hardship.

As a counterpoint to forgetting due to lack of material evidence, McEvoy turns to “*el ultimo sitio de la memoria*” or “*el parque de la memoria*” where she uses tombstone inscriptions and cemetery registers in Callao as physical and written vestiges of Irish immigrant lives in Peru. She finds tombstones with Celtic crosses and discovers Protestant and Catholic Irish graves in the British cemetery. The burial records contain a wealth of socio-economic data on the deceased immigrants and their families where reconstruction of their life histories can begin.

In my own research on the Irish in Cuba, the vestiges of Irish railroad workers in the archives suggest that those who died as a result of cholera outbreaks along the tracks were buried in unmarked graves. Archival sources concerning the construction of the first railroad in Latin America threw up passenger lists of labourers and their families recruited in New York to work under contract for the Railroad Commission in Cuba. While I had limited success in reconstructing individual lives of poor Irish labourers and their families, historical records of the railroad did provide much rich detail on labour relations and the conditions of life that labourers endured. There is an abundance of source documentation from which to build a colonial narrative of the representation of Irish migrants in the discourse of Cuba’s planter elite in the context of labour relations in a slave-based sugar plantation economy. This research underlines the difficulties of reconstructing subaltern lives because of their obscurity and having to rely on sparse first-hand documentation, colonial reportage and travel accounts by a different social class. There is a large quantity of records in the Cuban archives about different waves of Irish migrants such as those who came as part of a “white colonisation scheme” in the 1820s and many more individuals of diverse social classes, sugar planters, slave traders, mechanics, doctors, teachers, merchants, miners and washerwomen, seeking opportunity and wealth in the Spanish colony. Their names turn up in a wide range of records as they come into contact with the colonial authorities, for example, registers of foreign residents and petitions for permission to practice trades or professions. Notarial records and records of criminal proceedings documenting legal transactions or accounts of incidents where people fall foul of the authorities are a particularly rich source and often provide socio-economic data on individuals.

Research on Irish Latin American Migration Studies covers a vast geographical area and is a bilingual endeavour. The challenges of distance,

time and necessary resources are often difficult to overcome, yet the field of research continues to expand in exciting and dynamic ways. This current edition of the journal is a welcome development, not least for the range and quality of multidisciplinary scholarship, but also because it opens up for future researchers a rich seam of archival sources as yet untapped.

I wish to thank the contributors to this volume for creating what is a valuable resource and inspiration for other researchers. This discussion of archival, literary and “vestigial” sources has in my opinion achieved its aim of aiding scholars in diverse geographical, historical and other disciplinary categories. It makes an enormous contribution to furthering the field of Irish Latin American/Hispanic Studies and presents exciting possibilities for new research. Sincere thanks are due to the Editor-in-Chief, Professor Cliona Murphy whose supportive expertise, patience and editorial judgement sets a rigorous standard in bringing this and previous issues of the journal to fruition.

# **The Trouble with the Irish in the Cuban National Archives**

**Margaret Brehony**

*Margaret Brehony is an independent researcher and teaches Latin American Studies at NUI Galway. A Government of Ireland Scholar, she completed her PhD at the Centre for Irish Studies, NUI Galway in 2012.*

## **Abstract**

There are few notable traces of an Irish presence in the fusion of cultural influences in Havana's cityscape but manuscript sources in the National Archives of Cuba provide accounts of Irish lives, lived amongst some of the wealthiest and more often the poorest of European immigrants in Cuban colonial society. This article describes the process of researching the history of a large workforce of Irish railroad workers who arrived in Havana in 1835 to build the first stretch of railroad in Latin America and the discovery of additional archival sources concerning different waves of Irish migration to the Hispanic Caribbean. It describes the riches and challenges of locating this cohort of immigrants in archival holdings in Havana and provides a reading of colonial reportage against a backdrop of the troubled context of Cuba, a global hub of the sugar trade and slavery, migration and culture.

For just as Havana's visible identity is one of fusion and confusion, so too can one trace a history based on the continuous fusion of cultural influences and manifestations, making a clear-cut identity as difficult to detect as the cityscape (Antoni Kapcia 2005: 5).

In November 1835 close to a thousand Irish labourers in New York were laid off for the winter season from their work labouring on the New York and Harlem railroad and on the Erie Canal. They were recruited as contract labourers for the Cuban Railroad Commission to build the first stretch of railroad in Latin America. Arriving in the teeming port of Havana, Irish migrants must have been awe-struck by "the city half-hidden behind a forest of masts and sails", a heavily militarised, Caribbean Spanish colony at the height of a sugar boom. As a key port in the global sugar market and the transatlantic slave trade, Alexander Von Humboldt described the city as presenting "diverse elements of a vast landscape" (Humboldt 2011: 27). Some of the architects of this landscape

included Irish merchants and sugar planters who during the eighteenth century were firmly established at the heart of the Spanish-Cuban aristocracy, such as the celebrated, O'Reilly, O'Farril, and O'Gaban. There were others who identified with the anti-colonial struggle including abolitionist Richard Robert Madden<sup>1</sup> and Irish Fenian, James J. O'Kelly, author of *Mambiland*.<sup>2</sup> The most significant numerically were the hundreds of settler families who participated in 'white colonisation' schemes to boost the numbers of white population in the 1820s followed by upwards of a thousand railroad workers in the 1830s. With no previous research on Irish migration to Cuba to draw on<sup>3</sup>, this article outlines a study of archival sources which formed the basis of doctoral research for my dissertation entitled 'Irish Migration to Cuba 1835-1845: Empire, Ethnicity, Slavery and 'Free' Labour'. In contextualising the railroad workers within a multi-layered history of Irish immigration to the colonial world of Cuba, it became apparent that there was a diversity of class and identity amongst the Irish who went to work and live in Spanish colonies. Because of the transcolonial and transnational history of the Caribbean region, research on Irish migration to Cuba involves a search of the archives in several different places. I have concentrated on the Cuban archives, with some research in the Spanish archives. The British archives proved to be a rich source of documentation for this group of migrant colonial subjects, whereas I found no records in the Irish archives. For the same reasons, to understand the context of the Caribbean it is necessary to consider a multiplicity of documents on Irish history and migration, the Irish in the United States, Irish migration to the Caribbean and Cuban labour and immigration history. Since Irish immigrants did not come to Cuba in any significant numbers after the mid-nineteenth century, any search for traces of immigrant lives in the mix of what has endured in this *entrepôt* of colonialism must engage with a palimpsest of diaspora, hybrid identities and "ethnic fade" where "ethnicity becomes un-cobbled from its

---

<sup>1</sup> For Madden's own account as a British colonial official in the position of Superintendent of Emancipated Slaves in Cuba see: Richard Madden *The Island of Cuba: Its Resources, Prospects and Progress Considered in Relation to the Influence of its Prosperity on the Interests of the British West India Colonies* (London: C. Gilpin, 1849).

<sup>2</sup> Ortiz wrote a lengthy forward to the 1934 Cuban edition of James J. O'Kelly *La Tierra del Mambí* (Ciudad de la Habana: Colección de Libros Cubanos, 1930). He cites a host of Irish connections with the Cuban aristocracy through the Catholic courts in Europe and the Irish brigades in the Spanish army. Such was Ortiz's praise for O'Kelly's contribution through his writings to *Cuba Libre* that he suggested erecting a statue or naming a street after him.

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of Irish scholarship on Irish links with Latin America see Mary N. Harris, "Irish Historical Writing on Latin America and on Irish Links with Latin America." In *Europe and the World in European Historiography*, by Casaba Levai. Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2006. Accessed 20 February 2008. <http://cliophres.net/books/6/Harris.pdf>.



artefacts”.<sup>4</sup> The notion of ethnic fusion, or transculturation, as Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz termed it best frames the search for Irish cultural influences in the twenty-first century city.

Rafael Fernández-Moya, a local historian, from the *Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de La Habana*, has compiled the first account of traces of Irish heritage in Cuba.<sup>5</sup> He presents a catalogue of the enduring marks on Cuban place names in memory of Irish immigrants who, over the centuries, made significant contributions to the economic, cultural and political evolution of the island (Fernández-Moya 2007: 193). A well known example is O’Reilly Street in Habana Vieja, named in honour of Dublin-born Alejandro O’Reilly, a general in the Spanish army, remembered for his crucial role in fortifying the imperial defences after the British occupation of Havana in 1762. Besides those traces “engraved in bricks and mortar” (Stoler 2009: 2), there are more oblique signs of an Irish presence in the fusion of cultural influences in Havana’s cityscape. The soundscape, that “distinctive fusion of noises” of the city, described by Kapcia as one of Havana’s “signatures” (Kapcia 2005: 1), also holds strains of an Irish cultural influence, albeit a more recent one. Hence the sight and sound of a lone Afro-Cuban piper sitting on the wall of the Malecón, playing an Irish tune on a set of Galician pipes in December 2007 would strike a note of hope and a certain chord of confusion in this researcher’s quest for records of Irish migrants.<sup>6</sup> The transmission of Irish culture, through such an intriguing fusion of Irish music with Afro-Cuban roots resonated with my search in the dusty colonial documents of the *Archivo Nacional de Cuba* (ANC). My research questions became more compelling; what was the experience of Irish people in the company of other diasporas from the African continent, the Canary Islands and mainland Europe in this Caribbean Spanish colony in the early decades of the nineteenth century? What did they bring with them and what, if anything has survived of their ethnicity and culture? Two centuries later,

---

<sup>4</sup> The concept of ‘ethnic fade’ is borrowed from a Plenary Lecture given by Professor Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin ‘Rhizomes, Hybrids and Prosthesis: Irish Diasporic Space and Music Memory in Québec’ at Ómos Áite International Conference, Center for Irish Studies, NUI, Galway, ‘*Lifeworlds, Space, Place and Irish Culture*’, NUI, Galway March 2014.

<sup>5</sup>For an account of a host of place names bearing the mark of an Irish presence in different parts of Cuba since the sixteen hundreds, see Rafael Fernandez Moya ‘The Irish Presence in the History and Place Names of Cuba’ in *Journal of Irish Migration Studies in Latin America* 5 (2007), accessed 20 February 2012 <http://www.irlandeses.org/imsla0711.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> The piper in question has since recorded an album entitled *Diaspora*, see <http://www.wilbercalver.com/>. There are strong Asturian and Galician piping traditions in Cuba, a legacy of Spanish immigration. The addition of Irish piping traditions is more recent and Cuban pipers or *gaiteros* are learning from visiting musicians through an Irish musical exchange programme with CeltfestCuba and Na Píobairí Uilleann.

Cuba does not boast an identifiable Irish diaspora, yet a quick search of the Havana phone directory throws up many names suggestive of an earlier Irish-Cuban diaspora – O’ Bourke Rodriguez, O’Halloran Gonzalez, O’Neal Sanchez and others such as Brown, O’Connor, Doyle, Dowling, Barrett, Murray and Morfi. These were not the names on the passenger lists of railroad workers – were there other waves of Irish migrants?

Manuscript sources held in the ANC provide colonial accounts of Irish lives, lived amongst some of the wealthiest and more often the poorest of European immigrants in Cuba’s history. Searching the records for evidence of Irish railroad workers produced a surprisingly complex picture of a diverse Irish presence in Cuba since the early decades of the eighteenth century. In framing the experience of Irish labour migration in 1835, as the “outcome of colonial processes” of migration, labour and race, this study could not ignore the contribution of the earlier migration of Irish-Cuban planter families who were “integral to the continuing formation of such processes” (Axel 2002: 14). Irish merchants, planters and high-ranking military men were at the centre of colonial power and wealth in an escalating plantation economy dependent on forced African labour. However they were also enthusiastic supporters of free-market ideology and the formation of a separatist Creole identity. In pursuit of these ideals they promoted strategies to increase the white population with European, including Irish, settler families and the importation of ‘a colony’ of Irish catholic settler families as early as 1820. Archival sources for high-ranking military men and their families, who arrived to Cuba in the eighteenth century via Iberian-Irish connections, are described in great detail by Igor Perez-Tostado in this journal issue. Nineteenth-century Irish migration differed significantly not only in its mediation through the United States and the lower socio-economic status of this numerically much larger group, but also because of its trajectory within the emerging Atlantic networks of colonial labour.

### ***Archivo Nacional de Cuba***

The Cuban National Archive (ANC, *Archivo Nacional de Cuba*) located on Compostela Street at the corner of San Isidro in Old Havana<sup>7</sup> contains extensive records for the colonial period going back to the seventeenth century, but for the nineteenth century they are described as voluminous (Perez 1984: 144). There is, according to Perez, a considerable overlap of subjects, so that a search for materials can take the researcher across a range of *fondos* (collections). A logical place to start might be the *Fondo*

---

<sup>7</sup> For useful practical advice for foreign researchers accessing the ANC see the following blog written in 2007: <http://archivesmadeeasy.pbworks.com/w/page/24454205/Archivo%20Nacional%20de%20Cuba>

*Ferrocarriles*, the main source for the history of the railroad, but this does not cover the early period of construction carried out by the colonial authorities. This collection was more recently organised with an inventory by Oscar Garcia and Alejandro Zanetti before writing their major work on the history of the Cuban railroad, *Caminos Para el Azúcar* (1987) with a publication in English, *Sugar and Railroads: A Cuban History 1837-1959* (1987). Parts of this collection, unfortunately, have since been damaged by hurricane flooding. In general, as Zanetti and Garcia mention “the bibliography on Cuba’s railroads is lamentably scanty” (Zanetti and Garcia 1987: xxvi). Overall accounts by Cuban and Spanish historians make scant reference to Irish immigrants and only as part of the historiography of the railroad.<sup>8</sup>

For reasons to do with colonial processes of archiving the subjects of immigration, railroads and *irlandeses*, as the Irish railroad workers were referred to, the relevant records are found across a number of different *fondos* or collections. A ten-day wait for permission to access primary source documents presented an unanticipated opportunity to browse at my leisure the guides and catalogues in the archives. Not being a seasoned researcher of nineteenth-century Cuba at the time, the pace of working in a pre-digitised system, allowed useful time to discern the ‘structures of thinking’ of a colonial database.<sup>9</sup> This involved a search of card catalogues held in wooden boxes, crisscrossing the four walls of the main reading room. The guides to each collection are organised chronologically or by name and sometimes cross-referenced by subject. There is a good mixture of index cards in manuscript and not always complete or legible with others more recently catalogued in typescript. With characteristic beginner’s optimism I started my search with the keyword *irlandeses*. Drawing a blank I then moved to *inmigración* which also led nowhere. Back to E for *extranjeros* (foreigners) and F for *ferrocarril* (railroad), both yielding sparse results, however they led to records of other relevant collections. *Reales Cédulas y Ordenes* is a collection containing royal decrees, circulars and

<sup>8</sup> Other historical writings that mention Irish railroad workers include: Fernando Ortiz, ‘Las Perspectivas Económico-Sociales del Primer Ferrocarril de Cuba’ in *Revista Bimestre Cubana*, (1937), pp. 163-176; Duvon Corbitt, ‘El Primer Ferrocarril Construido en Cuba’ in *Revista Cubana*, Vol. XII, (April-June 1938), pp. 179-195; Manuel Moreno-Fraginals, *The Sugar Mill: The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba*. Translated by Cedric Belfrage (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), pp. 131-142; Violeta Serrano, *Crónicas del Primer Ferrocarril de Cuba* (1973); Alfonso Ballol, *El Camino de Hierro de La Habana a Güines: Primer Ferrocarril de Iberoamerica* (Madrid 1987); Moyano-Bazzani, Eduardo, ‘Los Recursos Humanos en La Construcción del Primer Ferrocarril Cubano’ in *Arbor-Ciencia Pensamiento y Cultura* 136 (1990), pp. 189-202.

<sup>9</sup> For an introduction to the collections in the National Archives of Cuba, see Louis A. Perez Jr., ‘Record Collections at the Cuban National Archives: A Descriptive Survey’ in *Latin American Research Review*, 19:1 (1984). Also see Louis Pérez Jr. and Rebecca J. Scott (eds), *The Cuban Archives/Archivos de Cuba* (Havana: Ediciones, 2003), also published in English by University of Pittsburgh Press in 2003.

documents relating to the *Junta de Población Blanca* and the establishment of new colonies of white foreigners. Starting a new search of *Población Blanca* proved to be more productive and threw up an array of manuscripts of government correspondence and official reports outlining strategies to promote white settlement, the rules and regulations of acquiring residency and permission from the authorities to conduct business in Cuba. It also contains documents with the lists of names of Irish settler families who came from New Orleans, Baltimore and Philadelphia to participate in white colonisation schemes in 1818-1820.

*Gobierno Superior Civil*, a ‘collection of miscellany’ dealing more with the institutional character of the colonial government and the administration of the Captain-General (Pérez 1984: 146), contained manuscripts dealing with royal decrees, stipulating the rules of entry and regulation of movement of foreigners, and surprisingly also dealt with the railroad; a search with the key-word *extranjeros* in the collection *Asuntos Politicos* threw up references to proclamations detailing strict rules regulating the circulation of foreigners dating back to 1750. In 1808 a royal decree ordered that “no consuls, agents or any class of representative of people from foreign nations would be admitted to the Spanish Indies”.<sup>10</sup> Another reference to correspondence from the Captain-General to the Governor of Santiago de Cuba in 1811 demanded “the most scrupulous vigilance of foreign passengers” landing at any port.<sup>11</sup> The references alone in this particular collection which, dealing with “such diverse matters as banditry, *cimarrones* (fugitive slaves), piracy and the colonial militia” (Pérez 1984: 145), gives some indication as to the changing colonial sensibilities in relation to *extranjeros* over the course of a century. By 1846 references to *extranjeros* had changed from a matter of imperial defence to one of regulating and controlling contact with the Afro-Cuban population. In 1846 the Captain-General was concerned “about meetings of *mulatos* in Cuba and some suspicious *extranjeros*”.<sup>12</sup> Still looking for a lead to Irish immigrants and railroad workers, I browsed the index cards for the collection *Real Consulado y Junta de Fomento* (The Royal Development Board) under *ferrocarril* and the search became instantly more productive with several references to *los operarios* (unskilled labourers). This collection is described by Pérez as the “one of the most important sources for the economic history of Cuba between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries” (147). It is made up of official reports and government correspondence on subjects such as the slave trade, population statistics, the railroad, white colonisation and all aspects of economic development. The *Real Junta de Fomento* collection also held the records of

---

<sup>10</sup> See ANC GSC, 10-25, July 1808.

<sup>11</sup> See ANC GSC, 213-165, 1811.

<sup>12</sup> See ANC GSC, 141-17.

the *Comision del Ferrocarril* (the Railway Commission). The Irish finally made their appearance, with no reference to *los irlandeses*, but in documents described in the card index as: “about the unskilled workers on the railroad”, “measures taken by the government to prevent desertions”, “contracts for the railroad” and “an enquiry into the unfortunate occurrences on the railroad and how order was reinstated”. This collection yielded the largest number of documents on the railroad workers in question with passenger lists, details of their contracts, reception and accommodation. The different reports therein by the engineers, the Railway Commission, newspaper reports, and correspondence between the *Junta de Fomento* and the Captain-General provide a rich source from which to document and analyse the harsh conditions and coercions at play, and the protests and strikes by the railroad workers. These manuscripts describing the response of the colonial authorities, the engineers and the military forces, provide an insight into the discursive strategies of the ruling elite and their contradictory ideas on property and ‘free’ labour. In the consternation over insubordinate Irish labourers, as reported in the colonial record and the perceived threat they posed to the social order, the discourse of ‘free’ labour and the earlier welcome increase to the white population quickly turned to a racialised discourse of a ‘degenerate’ class of white labourers with a ‘disinclination to work’.

The next collection I approached with a degree of trepidation, on discovering two shelves of thirty type-written ledgers of anywhere between 250 and 800 pages each were the guides to a miscellaneous collection known as the *Libros de Miscelánea* and *Miscelánea de Expedientes* dealing exclusively with the nineteenth century. This is a rich treasure trove of chaotically organised records relating to civil and criminal disputes, records of altercations in which people fall foul of the law, providing unexpected and tantalising details concerning the general population. It also contains information on the entry and departure of ships and lists of foreign residents. It is organised alphabetically, so starting with the first initial of names of foreign residents allows a small advantage. Conveniently with Irish names, a search starting with O or Mc presented an encouraging warm-up. While the collection was catalogued in 1922, the old binding and the deteriorated state of some of the volumes can make the search a very frustrating experience, rewarded every now and again by the appearance of Irish names. This led to records with lists of applications for residency by hundreds of Irish settler families and petitions to Ricardo O’Farrill of the *Junta de Población Blanca* for aid, when left destitute by prospective sponsors. When I returned to Ireland after my research trip I read the wise caution of more seasoned researchers than I, who recommend approaching this set of records with “time, patience and

mental stamina”.<sup>13</sup> It is worth the effort because while the collection does not yield much about cutting edge technologies of the day, large public works or major social or political upheavals it is filled with what Stoler describes as “rich ethnographic moments stored in the non-eventful” (2009: 157).

In the collection *Donativos y Remisiones*, containing a wide array of donated materials to do with commerce, military leaders of the independence period, correspondence by political figures and intellectuals there are references to Irish names dating from the middle to the end of the nineteenth century. Within the same time period, *Instrucción Pública*, which deals with public education in the latter part of the colonial period, contains references to many Irish names, by now double-barrelled, applying for permission to receive and give instruction in subjects as varied as mechanics, languages, medicine and music. Time did not allow a fuller search of this collection but it would be a good place to work back from, linking the now fused Irish-Cuban names to earlier settlers.

The final collection I looked at was the records of the Military Commission, *La Comision Militar*, which deals with public order, crime, slave conspiracies and rebellions. This massive collection comprises “at least 165 *legajos*, or bundles of testimony for 1844” with verbatim transcripts of the military tribunals dealing with the *Escalera* conspiracy (Finch 2007: 15). I examined several large bundles containing the records about Irish and other foreigners accused of conspiring to revolt which, interestingly, also appears in the British and Spanish archives.<sup>14</sup> At the National Archives in Kew Gardens, London, the Foreign Office collection held a surprising amount of detail in English on British subjects in Cuba, including Irish, contained in consular dispatches by British Officials petitioning on behalf of Her Majesty’s subjects who fell foul of the law or ended up in prison. My search of the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* in Madrid (AHN) and more recently the *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI) in Seville provided little new on the Irish railroad workers; however it was possible to re-read copies of documents of the *Junta de Fomento* and newspapers of the day in pristine

<sup>13</sup> For a rich description and excellent guide to the intricacies of this collection, see Jorge L. Giovanetti and Camilla Cowling, ‘Hard Work with the Mare Magnum of the Past: Nineteenth-Century Cuban History and the *Miscelánea de Expedientes* Collection’ in *Cuban Studies* 39 (January: 2008), pp. 60-84. Giovanetti and Cowling draw attention to the deteriorating condition of this collection which is a problem across many of the collections I consulted. The concern and commitment by the staff at the archives to protect and conserve the documents is impressive, but the challenges are enormous, given the sheer volume of the collections and the scarce resources available to carry out the necessary work of conservation.

<sup>14</sup> For a more detailed discussion of these documents and Irish involvement in the *Escalera* Conspiracy see Margaret Brehony, ‘Irish Free Labor and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba’, 1835-1844’, *Éire-Ireland*, Volume 47, Issue 1&2 Spring/Summer 2012, pp. 70-93.

condition compared to the more deteriorated state of some of the records in Havana. The contrast between resources, research facilities, and conservation of documents in archives in the metropolis and archives in the periphery is stark testament to ‘uneven development’ in archival preservation into the twenty-first century.

This research was carried out over two three-month visits to Havana in 2008 and 2009. Because of the time-consuming nature of searching primary sources, there was less time to spend on secondary literature and accounts by Cuban historians of the period which could only be consulted in Cuba. Inter-library loan is not possible and much of the historical research carried out in the last fifty years in Cuba is relatively difficult to obtain from outside Cuba. A survey of historical literature and newspaper reports at the *Biblioteca Nacional ‘Jose Marti’* (National Library); *Instituto de Historia*; *Museo de la Ciudad, La Habana* (City Museum); and Havana University Library, *fondos raros y valiosos* (Rare Books Collection), all provided secondary material such as nineteenth-century travel narratives, contemporary Cuban and Spanish accounts adding texture and context to the history of colonial administration, the railroad, the slave trade, and abolition.<sup>15</sup> The records of the *Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*, known as *Las Memorias de la Sociedad Económica* are held at the *Instituto de Lingüística y Literatura*.<sup>16</sup> This colonial institution was set up in 1791 by twenty-seven Havana planters to inform the work of the *Junta de Fomento* by promoting agriculture, trade, literature, education and science. The planters used it mainly as a forum to promote schemes to advance the efficiency, technology and prosperity of the sugar industry. The many volumes of the *Memorias* provide rich historical documentation on a wide variety of subjects to do with sugar production, population trends, white colonisation, immigrants and railroads, but they also throw light on the mindset of the planter class on all aspects of the colony and particularly on the subject of ownership of labour, slavery, and abolition.

It goes without saying that immigrant mobile labour is a difficult cohort to research because they were poor, transient and often illiterate, therefore leaving few records of their own experiences. They appear obliquely and infrequently in the records and more likely when they fall foul of the authorities, but they become more centrally located as in the case of the railroad workers in question, when they erupt in protest challenging the colonial order. The Irish railroad workers occupied more space in the archive than they might otherwise have had they not contested the coercions and intimidations of their contracts. After the highs and lows of

---

<sup>15</sup> *Biblioteca Nacional ‘Jose Marti’* can be accessed at <http://www.bnjm.cu/>, the *Instituto de Historia* can be accessed at <http://www.ihc.cu/>, and Havana University Library at <http://www.uh.cu/Biblioteca-Central>.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ill.cu/>

six months spent navigating a bewildering labyrinth of colonial archives I was beginning to get a sense of the “processes of archiving” and “how colonial sense and reason conjoined social kinds with the political order of colonial things” and even then how “that ‘common sense’ was subject to revision and actively changed” (Stoler 2009: 9). In the subject index of ‘colonial things’ in the archive in Havana, certain subjects mattered more for reasons of ‘colonial sense’, and the appearance, absence or location of subject matter followed a similar archival rationale. The fact that records of Irish immigration in the 1820s are filed under a subject index for ‘white population’ provides rich historical context. While looking for manuscript records of the railroad workers I encountered a huge irony in the colonial memory of place and ‘bricks and mortar’, on discovering that the National Cuban Archive building on the corner of Compostela and San Isidro, only a few blocks from the main Garcini railway station, was built on the ground where Ricardo O’Farrill first housed his slave depot, conveniently near the port and the slave market (Fernández Moya 2007: 190).

## Discourse and the Colonial Archive

The archive in this study of Irish migration to Cuba is treated not so much as a “repository of the facts” but as “complexly constituted instances of discourse that produce their objects as *real*, that is, as existing prior to and outside of discourse” (Axel 2002: 14). In applying postcolonial theory to the historiography of the Irish railroad workers and taking a new direction to Ignatiev’s line of inquiry in *How the Irish Became White* (1995) in the United States, it is possible to examine the discourse and strategies of the Cuban ruling elite in which the Irish were variously construed as Catholic ‘whitening’ agents, free labourers, and ‘troublesome’ in the formation of a subaltern Cuban identity. By examining the archive against the social, political and economic backdrop of a ‘troubled colonial context’ the Irish experience as settlers and labourers in the context of the transition from slavery and free labour comes into sharper view. The importation of cheap white European labour in the 1830s, driven by an acute shortage of labour supply and a fear of ‘africanisation’, provides a window into the way in which processes of labour, class and race formation were adapted to changing economic and political climate.<sup>17</sup> The developing discourse in the the colonial records of a transition to ‘free’ labour reveals a great deal about the mindset of the slave-holding class in controlling racial hierarchies and labour. By 1835, as the pressure to abolish slavery increased, debates on slavery became more heated, slave revolts were more common than at

---

<sup>17</sup> The idea of *africanización* (africanisation) of Cuban society drew on a racialised colonial discourse used to distinguish between a white Cuban nation of Spanish heritage desired by colonial elites and a nation of mixed African and European cultural heritage. The term was employed to invoke fear amongst planter elites of Cuba becoming a black republic, like Haiti.



any other time and colonial comparisons with the first, black independent republic in neighbouring Haiti added renewed force to the planters' fears. Elaborate schemes for white colonisation and new sources of labour were devised in a contested and contradictory discourse which reads more as a "blueprint of distress" (Stoler 2002: 157). Ideologies of racial and ethnic hierarchies and systems of colonial labour were debated in the context of perpetual fears of slave revolts and insubordinate 'wage' workers threatening the colonial order. The case of Irish railroad workers affords an interesting examination of the reformulation of labour in the discursive strategies of the planter elite while the contradictions inherent in their rationale for importing cheap white labour as a likely substitute for slavery are laid bare by the coercions they exercised over 'free' labour.<sup>18</sup>

There is no clear-cut Irish identity detectable in the fusion that is twenty-first century Cuban culture and there is no one Irish experience in the historical records which remain from the colonial era. Irish experience can only be fully understood through analysis within the broader historical and social context of transnational and trans-colonial migration from Ireland, as part of a small flow of European migrant labour in the nineteenth-century Spanish Caribbean within larger migratory flows of forced African labour, contract labour from the Canary Islands and later Chinese indentured labour. Irish labour was introduced as a test of 'free' labour that would bolster the white population at a time when the pressure to abolish slavery was growing and played a part in the continual processes of class and race formation in the multi-ethnic and trans-cultural environment of Cuba.

## Bibliography

- Axel, Brian Keith, (ed.), *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).
- Ballol, Berta-Alfonso, Mercedes Herrera-Sorzano, Eduardo Moyano, Jesús Sanz-Fernández, Martín Socarras-Matos, *El Camino do Hierro de La Habana a Güines: Primer Ferrocarril de Iberoamerica* (Madrid: Fundación de los Ferrocarriles Españoles, 1987).
- Brehony, Margaret, 'Irish Labor and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1835-1844', *Éire-Ireland*, Volume 47, 1&2 (Spring/Summer 2012), pp. 70-93.

---

<sup>18</sup> For an analysis of the railroad worker debacle, see Margaret Brehony, 'Free Labour and Whitening the Nation: Irish Migrants in Colonial Cuba', *Saothar* 38, *Journal of the Irish Labour History Society* 2013.

- Corbitt, Duvon C. 'Immigration in Cuba' in *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 22: 2 (1942), pp. 280-308.

- 'El Primer Ferrocarril Construido en Cuba' in *Revista Cubana*, XII, (April-June 1938), pp. 179-195.

- Fernandez-Moya, Rafael, 'The Irish Presence in the History and Placenames of Cuba' in *Journal of Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, (2007), 3:5, pp. 189-197.

- Finch, Aisha K., 'Insurgency at the Crossroads: Cuban Slaves and the Conspiracy of La Escalera, 1841-1844' (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2007).

- Giovanetti, Jorge, and Camilla Cowling, 'Hard Work with the Mare Magnum of the Past: Nineteenth Century Cuban History and the Miscelánea de Expedientes Collection' in *Cuban Studies* 39 (2008), pp. 60-84.

- Harris, Mary N., 'Irish Historical Writing on Latin America and on Irish Links with Latin America', in *Europe and the World in European Historiography*, by Casaba Levai (Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2006).

- Humboldt, Alexander Von, *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba: a Critical Edition*, edited by Vera M. Kutsinski and Ottmar Ette (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

- Ignatiev, Noel, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

- Kaptcia, Antoni, *Havana: The Making of Cuban Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2005).

- Madden, Richard R. *The Island of Cuba: Its Resources, Prospects and Progress Considered in Relation the Influence of its Prosperity on the Interests of the British West India Colonies* (London: C. Gilpin, 1849).

- Moreno-Fraginals, Manuel. *El Ingenio: Complejo Economico Social Cubano del Azucar*. (La Habana: Ciencias Sociales, 1978) 3 Volumes.

*The Sugarmill: The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba*. Translated by Cedric Belfrage, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976).

- Moyano-Bazzani, Eduardo, 'Los Recursos Humanos en La Construcción del Primer Ferrocarril Cubano' in *Arbor-Ciencia Pensamiento y Cultura*, 136 (1990), pp. 189-202.

- Pérez Jr., Louis A., 'Record Collections at the Cuban National Archives: A Descriptive Survey' in *Latin American Research Review* 19:1, (1984), pp. 142-156.
  
- Pérez Jr., Louis A, and Rebecca Scott, *The Archives of Cuba/Los Archivos de Cuba*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003).
  
- Ortiz, Fernando, Introduction to *La Tierra del Mambí* by James J. O'Kelly, (Ciudad de la Habana: Colección de Libros Cubanos, 1930).
  
- Serrano, Violeta, *Crónicas del Primer Ferrocarril de Cuba*, (La Habana: Departamento de Orientación Revolucionaria de Comité del Partido Comunista Cubano, 1973).
  
- Stoler, Ann, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).
  
- 'Developing Historical Negatives: Race and the (Modernist) Visions of a Colonial State', in *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures*, by Keith Axel (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 156-185.
  
- Zanetti, Oscar, and Alejandro García, *Caminos Para el Azúcar* (La Habana: Ministerio de Cultura, 1987).
  
- *Sugar and Railroads: A Cuban History 1837-1959*, translated by Franklin Knight and Mary Todd (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina, 1987).

# El valor de los archivos en los *invisibles* irlandeses

Gabriela McEvoy

*Gabriela McEvoy es profesora de lengua y literatura en Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pennsylvania. Se doctoró en Literatura Latinoamericana en la Universidad de California, San Diego con especialidad en los estudios de inmigración. Actualmente está investigando el tema de la inmigración irlandesa en el Perú durante el siglo diecinueve.*

## Abstract/Resumen

Utilizing a series of archival sources from the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM) Library and the British Cemetery in Lima, Peru, this study contributes to academic conversations regarding the construction of Peruvian national memory. It specifically posits that Irish immigration to Peru during the nineteenth century was not successful due to a lack of socio-economic politics and incentives, and, moreover, that most Irish immigrants who established in Peru did not become *prominent and historical characters* but rather common citizens positioned between Peru's lower and middle classes.

“El valor de los archivos en los *invisibles* irlandeses” ofrece una nueva línea de investigación del proceso migratorio irlandés a través del estudio de diversas fuentes históricas peruanas. La labor archivera es un tanto compleja ya que requiere explorar los distintos niveles de los depositarios de la memoria nacional. A través del estudio de algunas tesis de grado, depositadas en la biblioteca de la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos de Lima, Perú (UNMS) y de los Registros de Defunción del Cementerio Británico del Callao (Perú) y de la visita al Antiguo Cementerio Británico del Callao, este ensayo sugiere que la *invisibilidad* del inmigrante irlandés en la sociedad peruana se debe, en primer lugar, a que es una inmigración poco exitosa y, por lo tanto, poco estudiada debido a su baja representatividad y, en segundo lugar, a que muchos de los inmigrantes irlandeses no logran convertirse en *personajes históricos prominentes* y son, en todo caso, ciudadanos comunes que se posicionan tanto en las clases medias como bajas de la sociedad peruana.

Este trabajo se concentra en la visita a la Biblioteca de la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM). Allí se encuentran algunas de las fuentes históricas más relevantes para este estudio: las tesis de grado. Al leer algunos de estos trabajos, se puede observar que la captación de

inmigrantes europeos hacia el Perú ha sido un tema central de discusión tanto a mediados del siglo diecinueve como a principios del siglo veinte. Para muchos, se requería impulsar este proyecto con el propósito de llevar a cabo la modernización del país. Mientras que Luis N. Brayce y Cotes escribe, en 1899, su tesis *Resumen histórico acerca del desarrollo de la inmigración en el Perú*, Carlos Larrabure y Correa presenta su trabajo *Colonización de la costa por medio de la Inmigración: historia, legislación* en 1900. Ambas tesis plantean, como idea central, la necesidad del inmigrante europeo. No obstante, es evidente la ideología racializante subyacente de aquel momento. Larrabure y Correa escribe, por ejemplo: “solo con una inmigración de hombres blancos trabajadores y enérgicos, saldrá el Perú victoriosamente de su postración actual” (Larrabure y Correa 1900: 16).<sup>1</sup> Abraham Padilla Bendezú se incorpora en esta discusión y en 1952 presenta la tesis *Inmigración: historia, legislación*. Más adelante lo hace, Óscar Huertas del Pino G, quien escribe en 1965, *La Inmigración en el Perú*.<sup>2</sup>

Una de las bien definidas conclusiones que llegan los autores de estas tesis de grado es que la inmigración irlandesa no fue exitosa en el Perú ya que faltó un plan viable no solo que posibilitara la captación de inmigrantes irlandeses sino que proporcionara las condiciones materiales necesarias para su acomodo en el país receptor. Padilla Bendezú escribe, “en realidad, más vale hablar de intento de inmigración irlandesa pues no pasó de una posibilidad al arribo de crecida cantidad de inmigrantes de esta nacionalidad hacia el Perú primero a poco promulgada la ley de 1849, y después cuando se iniciaba el régimen político de la “Patria Nueva” en 1919” (Padilla 1952: 138). Según Padilla Bendezú, son varios los intentos de inmigración irlandesa. El primer intento lo realiza el médico irlandés John Gallagher en 1851, logrando traer algunos colonos para sus

---

<sup>1</sup> Por su parte, Hildrebrando Fuentes escribe en el texto *La inmigración en el Perú* (1892) que “solo la inmigración al Perú de la raza blanca europea, fuerte por naturaleza, ágil por educación, rica en virtudes, costumbre, valiente por instinto, progresista obedeciendo a ley fatal, será el eficaz remedio de los defectos que hemos palpado” (Fuentes 1892: 15). Esta cita se refiere a la oposición que plantea el autor con respecto al incentivo de la inmigración china que se inició (aproximadamente) en el mismo período histórico.

<sup>2</sup> En una futura visita a este recinto universitario se constatarán las fuentes bibliográficas de las tesis de grado presentadas en este estudio a fin de establecer si, por cierto, hubo continuidad de estudio de la inmigración entre los estudiantes de la Universidad de San Marcos.

haciendas.<sup>3</sup> Este proyecto se sustenta al ver en el periódico *El Comercio* la siguiente información:

Idem [21 de Julio de 1851] Fragata inglesa “Louisa” de 1033 toneladas, procedente de Londres en 99 días, su capitán W. Carpenter, con 54 hombres de mar, su carga jeneral consignada a G. Gibbs y Ca. Conduce 170 personas de ambos sexos y distintas edades para el señor Gallagher” (*El Comercio* 1851).

El proyecto de Gallagher consistía en trabajo agrícola para las haciendas de La Legua, Valverde y Villegas (Callao).<sup>4</sup> Sin embargo, ante la falta de agua para la irrigación de las tierras, este proyecto no funcionó. En su libro *Merchant adventurer: the story of W. R. Grace*, James Marquis escribe lo siguiente:

The lands that Doctor John Gallagher hoped James Grace’s colonists would convert into a sugar plantation and second Eden lay in the fertile Rimac valley, on the north side of the white, dusty cart hopes that the rainless skies of coastal Peru had helped to engender in the breasts of theses travelers were not destined to be realized, however. Before their labors were well started nearly the whole colony came down with malaria and dysentery (Marquis 1993: 20).

Tanto la noticia de *El Comercio* como lo mencionado por James Marquis y posteriormente por Lawrence Clayton en su libro *Grace: W. R. Grace & Co.*

---

<sup>3</sup> Dos motivos lo llevan a Gallagher a solicitar jornaleros irlandeses para la faena agrícola: las noticias recibidas, de su país de origen (Irlanda), donde la aguda miseria se había apoderado de los más pobres y del negocio que significaba traer inmigrantes hacia el Perú, ya que el gobierno pagaba 30 pesos por cada individuo inmigrado. Es importante destacar que, comparado con el africano o el chino, que viene como trabajador forzado y semi-forzado, el inmigrante irlandés ocupa una mejor posición en la sociedad peruana; no obstante, se incorpora principalmente en la clase obrera.

<sup>4</sup> Es importante mencionar que en su *Diario, 1824-1890: Un testimonio personal sobre el Perú del siglo XIX*, el inmigrante alemán Heinrich Witt escribe (en relación a Gallagher) lo siguiente: “Él era un gran partidario de Vivanco y había venido a Lima, sin duda con la intención de aumentar su fortuna bajo su protección” (Witt 1992: 56-57). Más adelante escribe: “Visité a los Gallagher, quienes se encontraban en claro proceso de hacer fortuna. El doctor tenía su propio hospital en Bellavista donde hizo dinero. Había comprado o de alguna manera obtenido, dos chacras en la parte izquierda del camino del Callao a Lima, llamadas “Villegas” y “La Legua” (Witt 1992: 118). Estas citas evidencian, por un lado, las propiedades de Gallagher que son parte de su proyecto agrícola y, por el otro, se nota la posición privilegiada de este inmigrante irlandés que se logra asociar con las élites peruanas.

*The formative years, 1850-1930*, ratifican la existencia del compromiso entre James Grace (padre de William Russell) y el doctor Gallagher. Existen evidencias en fuentes primarias (partidas de matrimonio, principalmente) donde se indica que, en efecto, hubo inmigrantes irlandeses que hicieron trabajos agrícolas en el Callao (Perú). Por ejemplo, el irlandés Santiago Bordan, testigo del matrimonio realizado entre Santiago Gahan y Ana Feeley (en 1858) se identifica como irlandés, de ocupación chacarero y residente de la chacra Villegas. Una investigación futura en los documentos concernientes a las propiedades de Gallagher permitiría tener mayor información sobre los trabajos agrícolas hechos por los irlandeses en el Perú.

Existió un proyecto de inmigración irlandesa mucho más ambicioso que el de Gallagher. En efecto, Padilla Bendezú sostiene que el inglés Eduardo Cullen propone la introducción de 25,000 colonos irlandeses. Si bien el contrato se aprueba por Decreto Supremo del 27 de agosto de 1859, no se cumple “en razón de que estaba fresco el recuerdo de la llegada de los primeros irlandeses al Perú y la suerte adversa que hallaron” (Padilla 1952: 39). El tercer y último intento por captar inmigrantes irlandeses se da, según Padilla, durante el segundo período presidencial de Augusto B. Leguía (1919-1930). Se menciona que “atraídos por [la] propaganda, un centenario de irlandeses viajaron con destino al Perú en 1919. Se hospedaron en el hotel de San Lorenzo y vivieron algún tiempo en dicho lugar, pero como no encontraron ningún apoyo oficial, concluyeron por pedir la intervención de su gobierno que, a su vez, obtuvo que las autoridades peruanas pagasen los pasajes de retorno de los inmigrantes” (Padilla 1952: 39).<sup>5</sup> En suma, la secuencia de estos trabajos de investigación realizados desde el siglo diecinueve hasta mediados del siglo veinte, nos permite identificar tanto los factores incitadores y disuasivos de los proyectos migratorios como la aparente necesidad y/o urgencia del inmigrante irlandés por salir de su país natal y escapar hacia Latinoamérica en calidad de “exiliados” (término utilizado por el historiador Kerby Miller).

Muchos de los investigadores del tema en discusión encuentran vacíos en la historia de la inmigración irlandesa hacia al Perú, hecho que dificulta encontrar las causas de los fallidos proyectos migratorios. Al recurrir a piezas literarias e intentar indagar más en el tema del inmigrante irlandés, encontré, por ejemplo, la pieza literaria titulada *Breve historia de los procedimientos de la Administración en los tres años desde su instalación hasta la fecha*.

---

<sup>5</sup> Hay evidencias de que Antolin Rodolfo también introdujo inmigrantes de diversas nacionalidades al Perú (incluyendo probablemente irlandeses) en la fragata inglesa “Looshtank” el 16 de febrero de 1852; sin embargo, las tesis de grado estudiadas en este ensayo asocian a este empresario con la introducción de inmigrantes alemanes (especialmente).

*Por el ciudadano, N.V.* (1848) donde se menciona la oposición al transporte de inmigrantes irlandeses:

El Ministro Iturregui con destreza  
 en la Corte de Londres representa  
 contra el enganche y la indebida venta  
 de irlandeses y buques de la empresa.  
 La ley del caso se observa con pureza,  
 el fallo al empresario desalienta,  
 sin remedio es perdido cuanto intenta,  
 la expedición acaba donde empieza.  
 No era duda propio y razonable  
 en un siglo tan sano y tan lúcido  
 que un acto anti-legal fuese aprobado  
 Este servicio, a tantos favorable,  
 al Jefe del Perú solo es debido,  
 pues su tino solo quiso tal enviado.

Este soneto (pieza poética compuesta por dos cuartetos y dos tercetos) es un elogio al presidente Ramón Castilla (1797-1867) tanto por su labor militar como política. También se resalta la labor de su Ministro Juan Manuel de Iturregui y Aguilarte quien, ante una gestión en las Cortes de Europa, impide el transporte de irlandeses hacia Latinoamérica. A un nivel literario, se aprecia cierta preocupación por el “enganche y la indebida venta de irlandeses”; la voz poética no calla y demuestra el “triumfo” de la labor del gobierno peruano. Esta clara demostración política también representa la resistencia ante la victimización del inmigrante irlandés (vía el enganche) por parte de las compañías navieras. Se apela a la salubridad, a la razón, a la justicia y a la legalidad para suspender el transporte masivo de irlandeses. Sin embargo, la contextualización histórica de este soneto sugiere que este impedimento se debe ante el intento de Juan José Flores<sup>6</sup> (1799-1864) por transportar una expedición de 1,200 soldados irlandeses hacia Latinoamérica. La idea era organizar una expedición que luchara por la instauración del Reino Unido de Ecuador, Perú y Bolivia. En este caso particular se observa un nuevo perfil del inmigrante irlandés: el soldado que se alista en las luchas intestinas latinoamericanas y quien recibe la promesa de obtener tierras e instrumentos de labranza para colonizar las tierras del Río Napo y de

---

<sup>6</sup> Juan José Flores fue un militar, político y primer presidente de la República del Ecuador. Para mayor información sobre las gestiones de Juan José Flores, se sugiere leer el artículo “Cuando Ecuador fue casi un Reino” de Rosa Garibaldi. <http://clioperu.blogspot.com/2009/06/el-general-juan-jose-flores-y-el.html>.



Esmeralda (Ecuador).<sup>7</sup> Por tal motivo, la participación de Iturregui ante las Cortes de Europa demostraba su oposición ante la conformación de una expedición integrada por irlandeses (y otras nacionalidades) para evitar que Ecuador y Perú perdieran la soberanía nacional.

De lo expuesto anteriormente, se puede sugerir que las tesis de grado, seleccionadas para este trabajo, demuestran que aunque fue poco significativa la inmigración irlandesa hacia el Perú, hubo individuos quienes vivieron y murieron en el país sudamericano. Cabría entonces preguntarse: ¿Dónde encontrar vestigios de estos individuos? ¿Cuáles fueron sus actividades socio-económicas en el Perú? y ¿Cómo fue su proceso de adaptación y/o acomodo en la sociedad receptora?

Hilvanar el proceso migratorio irlandés de una manera cronológica y fidedigna podría ser una labor quijotesca para el historiador ya que existen silencios que imposibilitan escuchar la voz de un puñado de hombres, mujeres y niños que hicieron la travesía hasta el Perú. Sin embargo, es importante destacar que una visita al Cementerio Británico del Callao (Perú) me permitió encontrar los registros de defunción de inmigrantes irlandeses donde se provee importante información sobre la ocupación, religión, edad y causa de muerte. La recopilación de estos datos permite conocer, por ejemplo, el tipo de trabajo que realizó el inmigrante irlandés y la religión que profesó. Las evidencias encontradas de la presencia irlandesa en el Perú nos puede guiar a otras fuentes de investigación adicional (por ejemplo, periódicos y arzobispados). A continuación cito algunos registros<sup>8</sup>:

Año de Fallec.	Nombre	Religión	Ocupación	Causa de la muerte
1860	John Hobson	Protestant	Gas Fitter	Typhus fever (at age 45)
1861	Patrick Donegan	Protestant	Family Servant	Old age (at age 76)
1862	Catharine McGlown	Roman Catholic	Washwoman	Consumption (at age 33)
1862	Michael Gahan	Roman Catholic	No profession	Found drowned in Bellavista at the factory
1863	Ellen Lucas	Roman Catholic	Washwoman	Dysentery (at age 25)
1864	Emily Shaw	Protestant	Bar Keeper	Apoplexy (at age 30)

<sup>7</sup> Para mayor información véase el artículo de Efrén Avilés “El Gral. Juan José Flores” en *Enciclopedia del Ecuador*. <http://www.encyclopediadelecuador.com/temasOpt.php?Ind=879&Let=>.

<sup>8</sup> Registros de Defunción (Volumen I y II). Callao: Cementerio Británico del Callao.

Año de Fallec.	Nombre	Religión	Ocupación	Causa de la muerte
1865	J. Scott	Protestant	Clerk	Run over by train (at age 45)
1868	Martin Cavanagh	Roman Catholic	Engineer	Yellow fever (age about 21)
1868	James Lawler	Roman Catholic	Clerk	Yellow fever (at age 24)
1868	John Kelly	Protestant	Mariner	Yellow fever (at age 48)
1868	James McKinney	Catholic	Keeper of a Boarding House	Yellow fever (at age 38)
1868	Martin Cavanagh	Roman Catholic	Engineer	Yellow fever (age unknown)
1868	William Gahan	Catholic	Bookkeeper	Bullet wound (found dead near River Rimac)
1869	Marian Byrne	Catholic	House Manor to M. Shaw	(unknown)
1870	Ann Foster	Protestant	Servant to Mrs. Keith	Hemorrhage (at age 50)
1880	Michael Gould	Catholic	AB HMS Shannon	Suffocated (at age 21)
1883	James Rowe	Catholic	Railroad Employee	Liver sickness (at age 45)
1881	Michael Nugent	Catholic	Photograph	Reumatism (at age 59)
1885	Elena Shadd	Catholic	Tavern Keeper	Fever (at age 60)
1885	Daniel Hayes	Catholic	Road Master-Oroya Line	Railroad accident (at age 40)
1892	Thomas Lawlor	Catholic	Cook	Influenza (age unknown)
1896	Catherine Skillman	Catholic	Laundress	Enteritis (at age 60)
1900	David Genno	Protestant	Merchant	Gangrena (at age 70)
1946	Susan McComerkey			Neumonía (at age 69)

De esta lista, se puede deducir, en primer lugar, que contrario a la idea de que el inmigrante irlandés salía de su tierra natal huyendo de la persecución religiosa con el simple propósito de profesar la religión católica ante la intolerancia del protestantismo inglés, se ve que si bien la gran mayoría de los inmigrantes residentes en el Perú son católicos romanos también hay un pequeño número de protestante, lo cual indica que posiblemente hubo, a través de los años, migraciones personales y espontáneas.

En términos de situación socio-económica, el inmigrante ocupa tanto posiciones de mando medio (contador, ingeniero, marino, fotógrafo, etc.) como en la clase trabajadora (cocineros, sirvientes domésticos, lavanderas). Mientras algunos se inician en el nivel más bajo de la estructura ocupacional otros se posicionan en niveles de mayor prestigio. Por otro lado, en el caso de las mujeres, realizan labores intrínsecamente relacionadas a las labores domésticas.<sup>9</sup> La participación del inmigrante irlandés en la fuerza laboral demuestra tanto la versatilidad laboral como su capacidad de adaptación a los diversos sectores económicos de la sociedad peruana. La mayoría son jornaleros, lo que demuestra que no continúan en el proyecto agrícola inicialmente planteado por el gobierno peruano o por empresarios independientes. Su trabajo se realiza (principalmente) en el sector industrial, comercial y de servicios.

El siguiente paso fue visitar el cementerio y llegar a este último *sitio de la memoria*. Utilizando las palabras de Marwick, si bien el cementerio “is not deliberately designed for the benefit of the historian” (Marwick 1070: 136) tiene un gran valor histórico (como fuente primaria) por ser un espacio donde quedan anotados datos específicos del inmigrante. De allí que exista una clara articulación entre el cuerpo enterrado del inmigrante irlandés y su historia. En la búsqueda de nuevas fuentes de investigación llegué al “museo al aire libre” o “parque del recuerdo” (como ha sido denominado el cementerio). Tenía grandes expectativas por emparejar el registro de defunción (el vestigio escrito) y la tumba (el vestigio físico). A pesar de que las tumbas se encuentran alineadas en una secuencia ordenada de filas, la labor fue bastante difícil principalmente por la falta de lápidas. Es decir, al recorrer el Cementerio Británico del Callao constaté, que este espacio se concibe, principalmente, en función de la contraposición entre el recuerdo o prueba física y el olvido por falta de un signo material. En esas tumbas desaparecieron historias trágicas y nostálgicas del país que se dejó y también de las experiencias (probablemente) traumáticas del proceso de adaptación y transformación del inmigrante irlandés en su nueva sociedad.

El cementerio es un espacio donde permanecen las voces dispersas y silenciadas por la muerte, el tiempo y la falta de la preservación de la memoria oral o escrita que hubiera permitido la transmisión del conocimiento. Aunque el cementerio pudiera verse como un espacio nivelador social, los signos físicos del recuerdo (las tumbas) oscilan entre lo

---

<sup>9</sup> Los diversos oficios de irlandeses (tanto hombres como mujeres) podría responder a la promoción que se hace en Europa en la captación de inmigrantes. Por ejemplo, el 13 de febrero de 1852 se anuncia en el *El Comercio* la llegada de los inmigrantes de la siguiente manera: “la colección más escogida y variada que ha venido hasta ahora, de inmigrantes de todas las profesiones y oficios, mayordomos y costureras, cocheros, niñas, cocineros de escuela francesa e italiana, jardineros-huerteros, distinguidos como fruteros y floristas, artesanos”. En tal sentido, la tendencia laboral irlandesa se enmarca en un contexto en el cual se empezaba a conformar la clase trabajadora de la sociedad peruana.

grandilocuente y lo anónimo. Por otra parte, al leer las inscripciones de las tumbas también se percibe la oposición entre el desplazamiento (lugar de nacimiento) y el acomodo (lugar de muerte). El cementerio podría leerse como un espacio simbólico donde no solo se sedimentan las raíces irlandesas sino donde se reafirman las diferencias de *status* entre los inmigrantes irlandeses y la familia que le sobrevive. Mientras que en algunos casos existe un recuerdo visible como prueba de haber sido parte de la sociedad peruana, en otros no existe signo alguno.

Durante mi recorrido por el cementerio pude observar también uno de los íconos religiosos más importantes de la cultura irlandesa: la cruz celta.<sup>10</sup> Este símbolo representa tanto la esencia identitaria como el nacionalismo irlandés que se graba en la memoria del camposanto peruano. En otras palabras, el carácter nacional irlandés representado, a través de la cruz celta, posibilita el trascender de la muerte en suelo peruano. Por ello, existe una juxtaposición entre ausencia física y presencia espiritual religiosa.

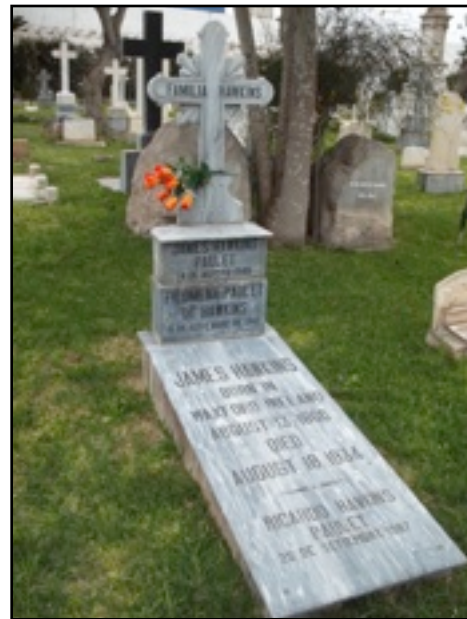
La observación de las tumbas de irlandeses, con más detalle, demuestra la costumbre de enterrar a los miembros de una familia en el mismo suelo. Esto permite conocer al patriarca de una familia irlandesa. Por ejemplo, el inmigrante irlandés Michael Nugent fallece en 1881 y posteriormente sus descendientes son enterrados en la misma tumba. Este espacio ejemplifica tanto el legado irlandés como el proceso de mestizaje cultural que se produce tras la llegada y permanencia del irlandés en la sociedad peruana. Otro ejemplo es el caso de David Genno (fallecido en 1900). En su tumba su unen dos generaciones: una de raíces irlandesas y otra peruana, de herencia irlandesa. Incluso, se observa que mientras las inscripciones del inmigrante irlandés están en inglés, la información de las siguientes generaciones se escribe en español. En tal sentido, se destacan las diferencias culturales inter-generacionales a través del lenguaje. Por otra parte, la tumba de James Hawkins demuestra la llegada del inmigrante en la etapa post-hambruna, hecho que cuestiona la idea de un solo conjunto de inmigrados irlandeses. En síntesis, estos espacios simbolizan la unión del patriarca y sus descendientes en el territorio peruano.

Ha pasado más de un siglo y medio del período de la gran hambruna irlandesa donde miles de individuos dejaron sus tierras en la búsqueda de la sobrevivencia. Recientes estudios han reconsiderado el tema de la diáspora irlandesa y han establecido que el desplazamiento humano (especialmente más contemporáneo) contribuye con la construcción del

---

<sup>10</sup> Aunque hay diversas teorías sobre el origen de la cruz celta, es interesante mencionar la leyenda popular que dice que es San Patricio quien introduce este símbolo durante la evangelización de los paganos y que incluso él también une el símbolo cristiano a una representación del sol o de la luna (representación de lo pagano) para transmitir su mensaje cristiano.

“individuo global”. En el caso del Perú, con el paso del tiempo, las generaciones peruanas (de ascendencia irlandesa) iniciaron el proceso de movilidad social y tuvieron mayor participación en los distintos sectores de la sociedad peruana. Aunque resulta imposible borrar la historia de victimización creada por la narrativa dominante de la gran hambruna



irlandesa se puede sugerir – con una visión contemporánea – que aquellos individuos aportaron su granito de arena para construir el mestizaje peruano y también *construir la historia* del país.

Cementerio Británico del Callao (Perú)  
(Fotos: Gabriela McEvoy, Junio 2013)

En conclusión, este trabajo me ha permitido hacer un breve recorrido por los distintos lugares de la memoria nacional y explorar los vestigios que han quedado de la inmigración irlandesa en el Perú. Mientras que las tesis de grado demuestran que hubo intentos por captar inmigrantes irlandeses, los registros de defunción y el cementerio evidencian la existencia de un grupo de irlandeses (principalmente en el Callao, Perú) que llegaron al Perú no tanto como respuesta al proyecto de captación de inmigrantes sino huyendo del hambre y de la pobreza. Las tesis de grado tienen un gran valor histórico ya que estas fuentes documentarias son aportaciones académicas que reflejan el contexto socio-histórico del momento en que se escriben y ratifican la presencia irlandesa en el Perú. Por otro lado, los registros de defunción permiten reconstruir la vida de los inmigrantes irlandeses, la evolución demográfica de una ciudad y las actividades económicas realizadas por ellos. Estas fuentes históricas dan la oportunidad de seguir trabajando en temas relacionados a la vida cotidiana del inmigrante irlandés. El cementerio, como fuente primaria de investigación, puede verse como un espacio social “leible” que muestra que fue una generación irlandesa quien sentó las bases para el desarrollo de las futuras generaciones hiberno-peruanas.

Este proyecto ha intentado buscar fuentes relacionadas con la diáspora irlandesa del siglo diecinueve y a su vez desarrollar una línea de estudios poco investigada. “El valor de los archivos en los *invisibles* irlandeses” es el resultado de un proceso de selección y de ordenamiento de la información encontrada en ambos espacios depositarios de la memoria histórica. Esta información clarifica y aporta una carga socio-histórica bastante importante ya que, por un lado, posiciona al inmigrante irlandés como un nuevo sujeto histórico y, por otro, contribuye con la divulgación del conocimiento del proceso migratorio irlandés.

## Bibliografía

- Avilés Pino, Efrén. *Enciclopedia del Ecuador*, available at <http://www.encyclopediadelecuador.com/temasOpt.php?Ind=879&Let>.
- Brayce y Cotes, Luis N. *Resumen histórico acerca del desarrollo de la inmigración en el Perú*. Tesis para optar el grado de bachiller en la Facultad de Letras (Lima: Librería Escolar e Imprenta de E. Moreno, 1899).
- *Breve historia de los procedimientos de la administracion Castilla en los tres años desde su instalación hasta la fecha. Por el ciudadano, N.V* (Trujillo: Cipriano Sociago, 1848), available at <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/yale.39002085763416>.
- Bullock, Marcus and Peter Y. Paik. Edit. *Aftermaths Exile, Migration, and Diaspora Reconsidered*. (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2009).
- Clayton, Lawrence, *Grace: W.R. Grace & Co., The formative years, 1850-1930* (Ottawa: Jameson Books, 1985).
- Fuentes, Hildebrando. *La inmigración en el Perú: proyectos de ley y colecciones de artículos publicados en "El Comercio" de Lima* (Lima: Imprenta del Estado, 1892).
- Garibaldi, Rosa. "Cuando Ecuador fue casi un Reino", available at <http://clioperu.blogspot.com/2009/06/el-general-juan-jose-flores-y-el.html>.
- Huertas del Pino G. Óscar. *La inmigración en el Perú*. Tesis de grado de la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Comerciales (Lima: Univesidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1965).
- *Inmigración Alemana. Fragata Ohio*. (Lima: *El Comercio*, 18 de febrero, 1852).
- Larrabure y Correa, Carlos, *Colonización de la costa peruana por medio de la inmigración europea*. Tesis para optar el grado de doctor en la facultad de ciencias políticas y administrativas (Lima: Librería Escolar e Imprenta de E. Moreno, 1900).
- Marquis, James, *Merchant adventurer: the story of W.R. Grace* (Wilmington: SR Books, 1993).
- Marwick, Arthur. *The Nature of History* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1970).

- Padilla Bendezú, Abraham. *Inmigración: historia, legislación*. Tesis de grado de la Facultad de Derecho (Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1952).
- *Puerto del Callao. Entradas* (movimiento de vapores) (Lima: *El Comercio*, 21 de julio, 1851).
- *Registros de defunción* (Volume I and II) (Callao: Cementerio Británico del Callao).
- Witt, Heinrich. *Diario, 1824-1890: un testimonio personal sobre el Perú del siglo XIX* (Lima: Banco Mercantil, 1992).



# **Spanish archives on Latin-American Irish: sources, perspectives and challenges for the Early Modern Period**

**Igor Pérez Tostado**

*Igor Pérez Tostado is permanent lecturer of Early Modern History at the Pablo de Olavide University in Seville. His research deals with Irish migration to the Spanish Monarchy in Europe and America, focusing on the social and political involvement of the Irish with these societies. He is working on a book analysing the Irish history in the Spanish Caribbean from the early Seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century. He also deals with the history of religious and political violence, diplomacy and foreign relations.*

## **Abstract**

This article deals with the most active research trends and richest archives available in Spain which deal with the history of Irish migration in Latin America. Their greatest strength lies in the Early Modern Period, where all Latin speaking territories of America were politically linked to the Iberian Peninsula. Spanish archives are rich in administrative material (appointments, trials, contracts, last wills, etc.), well preserved and many of them now available on-line. However, they are weak in private documentation (memoirs, personal letters, etc.). These characteristics have led researchers to focus mostly on the careers and networks of the Irish who achieved top political, military and administrative positions in the Early Modern Latin America. The article concludes prospecting trends for future research.

What three things do Duarte Valois, a seventeenth century surgeon, Juan Bautista, a church robber, Francisca de Paula de Birkdale, a lady of La Habana, and Juan Beard, her servant have in common? The first two, of course, are that all of them share an Irish ancestry and sought their fortune in Latin America. The third element is that, for the study of their lives, sources stored in Spanish archives play a key role. That is also the case for thousands of Irish, known and unknown, in early modern Latin America.

From the time of the arrival in 1492 of Columbus to what he believed to be somewhere near Japan, much of the American continent became incorporated into the Spanish crown as part of its constellation of kingdoms and territories. This dominion evolved over time, until the surrender of the defenders of Baler in the Philippine Islands in June 1899, who continued fighting for a year after the Spanish government had already officially handed over its last American and Asian possessions to

the United States. For more than three centuries, the Spanish monarchy ruled all these immense territories almost as it did its European possessions, through a combination of local self-rule and the sending of key administrative, military and religious staff. The circulation of these people was indispensable in keeping together such distant and disparate territories and creating a shared global culture; as essential as the flow of migrants that every year left the Iberian Peninsula for the New World.

The Irish exiles and migrants in the Spanish monarchy adapted to this environment. The increase of their numbers in the 1580s coincided with the union of the Castilian and Portuguese crowns, which greatly expanded the global dimension of the Habsburg monarchy. Irish newcomers not only circulated around the European territories of the Catholic kings, especially in the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and the Southern Netherlands, they also availed of the global dimension of the Iberian empire (García Hernán, Pérez Tostado 2010).

In spite of the significance of the Irish presence in Early Modern Latin-America, their experience has received relatively little scholarly attention. The shortage becomes more manifest in comparison with the more ample research on Irish migrations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This imbalance might be the result of three interconnected factors. First, there is hardly any present day group who claims to be descendant of those early modern Irish Latin-Americans. Thus, their study lacks the drive and enthusiasm usually at work in the preservation of a living heritage. Second, in America the Spanish crown did not allow the foundation of “national” institutions, such as guilds, confraternities, schools or religious houses reserved exclusively for people of a certain geographical origin. This American particularity was in sharp contrast with the practice in all the European territories of the Spanish Monarchy, where national corporate bodies and institutions were not only allowed, but protected and fostered by the crown itself. The difference has caused the lack of “Irish” institutions in Spanish America, similar to the college network in Europe or the Irish tercios and regiments present in the Flemish, Italian or Iberian armies. There were no expressly Irish military units in America prior to the dispatch of regiments from Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century (Marchena Fernández 2007, 317-350). As a result, the presence of individuals of Irish origin at the top of the American administration, such as Alexander O’Reilly or Ambrosio O’Higgins, have been traditionally seen as isolated cases; in fact they were the visible peak of a wide network of patronage relationships which included many Irish and non-Irish individuals (Chauca García 2003, 481-500). The third and last factor is that, as a consequence of the two others, the Irish in the Spanish America have no clearly defined archives, or archive sections, devoted to them which could serve as starting points to reconstruct their invisible story.

However, there is no lack of source materials for the study of the Irish. Overabundance of administrative documentation rather than the lack of it is more likely to distress new researchers. To avoid such an event, the following pages will consider the characteristics and scope of the sources available in Spain for the study of the Irish in Latin America. This article will then look at the main focus of the researchers working with that documentation. Attention will also be paid to the growing number of repositories and catalogues available on-line. Finally, the limits and challenges of the sources will be considered in order to conclude with an exploration of some promising lines future of research.

## Major Repositories and Research Trends

Between the 1490s and the 1820s, much of the land mass between California and *Tierra del Fuego* was incorporated into the Crown of Castile. Information relating to military, administrative, fiscal and religious affairs was regularly shipped to Spain and appointments, orders and regulations decided by the king and his advisory councils and secretariats were sent back. Issues ranged from the very broad to the very specific. Among the former, major military decisions, founding of new administrative units and settlements, fiscal changes and financial allocations or court cases and laws and regulations issued by the king are found. Among the very specific, individual travel permissions, appointments for civil ecclesiastical or military offices, pensions, auditing of public servants (*visitas*), solving of local conflicts, and similar issues abound. In many cases, the files sent from the court to the Americas have been later lost or destroyed. Fortunately for historians, the central administration kept incoming files and copies of the orders and appointments sent to its subordinate administrators, together with the minutes. Once the documentation in the government offices became unnecessary for daily business, it was taken from Madrid, where the royal court was usually seated, to be stored near Valladolid, in a medieval castle revamped in the sixteenth century as the first purpose-built archive of Europe: Simancas (*Portada del Archivo General de Simancas*, available online (<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AGS/>))

The central administration was organised in a system of advisory boards or *consejos*, which helped the king to decide on specific issues. Some of the councils were organised following geographical areas, each including a political unit, such as the crown of Aragon, or a composition of political units linked by geography, like the Italian peninsula, where the crown possessed a string of different territories. For the Americas, the main territorial advisory board was the *consejo de Indias*, the council of the Indies. Other boards were “thematic”, deciding globally on matters such as war, diplomacy, finance, inquisition, military orders, etc. When matters overlapped, files would pass from one board to another. Sometimes in

order to speed up process or specific complex issues, ad-hoc mixed committees or *juntas* were created. In the eighteenth century councils lost part of their relevance, while the administration was progressively reorganised in a shape similar to present day ministries. When an issue was finally archived, the file ended up usually in the deposit of the last council or committee which dealt with it. Sometimes documents relating to one issue were brought back from Simancas to the council of the Indies in order to deal with a similar or related problem. When returned to the archive, they were not always restored to their original position but filed inside the new dossier.

The regular pattern of decision making, communication and data storage was similar for all the territories ruled by the Spanish crown. Thus, the historian wishing to know more on the Irish in Puebla should, as a rule, follow the same methodology as the one inquiring on the Irish in Palermo. However, there is one major issue affecting research in Latin American History. In 1785, King Charles III created a new institution in Seville, the General Archive of the Indies (AGI), with the aim of putting together the major historical sources relating to his American and Asian dominions. (*Portada del Archivo General de Indias*. available online (<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AGI/>), accessed 15 September 2013) Most, although not all archive material from the central administration was sent from Simancas and Madrid to Seville. The new institution was enriched with archives of another nature, mainly of the mercantile institutions which regulated the inter-oceanic exchange, administrative material brought from American territories after independence, especially from Cuba, and private archives connected to America. In contrast, material relating to the twentieth century is much scarcer and has thus attracted less scholarly attention. The following pages will be dedicated to the Early Modern period, the age for which sources for the Irish in Latin America are richest and Spanish scholarship is the liveliest.

Spanish-based research on Ireland and the Irish in Latin America began to grow in the in the last decade or so out of two different intellectual traditions. One is grounded in early modern historical research, connected to the unflagging effort of Enrique García Hernán from the CSIC (Spanish Research Council). This endeavour was part of a wider historiographical development which brought the study of foreign communities and migrations from the margins to the core of early modern studies (Schüller 1999; Villar García 2000; Villar García and Pi Corrales 2003). A group of *irlandesistas* developed which, in close contact with Irish historical trends (see specially: O'Connor 2001; Morgan 2004; O'Connor, Lyons 2003, 2006, 2010; Downey, Crespo McLennan, 2008; Hazard, 2010; Gillespie, Ó hUiginn, 2013), has produced individual publications (Lario Oñate 2002, Pérez Tostado 2008; Tellez Alarcia 2008; García Hernán 2009; Recio Morales 2010), series of international conferences

and collective publications (García Hernán, Bunes Ibarra, Recio Morales 2002; García Hernán, Recio Morales 2007; García Hernán, Pérez Tostado 2010; Recio Morales, 2011, 2012) and source publications (Recio Morales 2007; García Hernán, 2013) whose themes have been in constant evolution. The chronological focus has progressively moved from the late sixteenth century towards the early nineteenth century. Methodology has unfolded, from being based on prosopography and the study of institutions, towards a wider focus on social networks, culture and *mentalités*. The most studied individuals and groups are those who left abundant traces in the Spanish administrative records; clergymen, aristocrats and soldiers. Only later have family lives, intellectual endeavours or destitute migrants been brought to light (Guillespie, Ó hUiginn, 2013). The geographical framework has expanded progressively from the study of mainly bi-directional relations between Ireland and the Spanish Monarchy, towards a wider European understanding of those connections (see specially O'Connor, Lyons 2003, 2006, 2010; García Hernán, Pérez Tostado 2010; Recio Morales, 2011, 2012). Its logical consequence was the incorporation of the American dimension of the Irish-Spanish links. At present, the main common goal is to understand the Irish experience as part of the worldwide stream of migrants, exiles and refugees that reshaped the Spanish Monarchy and gave birth to the first global culture. (Pérez Tostado, Ruiz Ibáñez, forthcoming)

The other intellectual tradition of Spanish studies on the Irish in Latin America is grounded in the study of literature and arts. Its evolution has followed an independent, but equally exciting, path. The divergence is probably a result of Spanish academic tradition where history and literature are taught at separate faculties and thus less cross-fertilisation occurs. Literary and cultural studies on the subject are gathered around the Spanish Association of Irish Studies (*Asociación Española de Estudios Irlandeses*, <http://www.aedei.es>). The collective was founded in 2001 thanks to the effort of Professor Ines Braga of the University of Burgos. In addition to Early Modern History, the interests of the association cover modern history, culture, literature and art. Among their major activities, the AEDEI organises an annual conference and publishes *Estudios Irlandeses*, an electronic journal devoted to literature, history, arts and media in connection to Ireland (Estudios Irlandeses. available online <http://estudiosirlandeses.org>).

In combination, the historical and literary approaches offer a rich research panorama made possible by abundant sources. To the newcomer, the exhibition organised this year by the *Archivo General de Simancas* on The Irish and the Hispanic Monarchy curated by Ciaran O'Scea is the perfect starting place to get a taste of the possibilities of the Spanish archives for the study of Ireland and the Irish in Latin-America. (*Archivo General de Simancas*, 2012).

Although Simancas and Seville are the biggest and richest, they are not the sole major archives with relevant material. The *Archivo Histórico Nacional* (AHN) in Madrid must also be taken into account (Portada del Archivo General de Simancas, available online (<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AHN/>)). It was created in the mid-nineteenth century to expand the services provided by Simancas as the main receptacle of state documentation of historical value. It also served to accommodate the archives of the religious institutions seized by the state and the deposits of administrative units closed down with the end of the *Ancien Régime*. Among those, it is important to note that the AHN preserves the records of the Supreme Council of the Inquisition, the final court of appeal for all territorial tribunals, including the American ones. This allows for the reconstruction of processes in regions, such as Cartagena de Indias, whose inquisitorial archives have been badly damaged.

The AHN has a separate section in Toledo dedicated to aristocratic archives. It preserves the documentation donated to, or bought by, the Spanish state and deposits from noble houses still in existence. The contents are very eclectic, mainly to do with property rights, financial documentation, accounts, wills and private correspondence (*Portada de la Sección Nobleza del Archivo Histórico Nacional*. Available on-line (<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/NHN/>)). The documentation relates in many cases to the different territories of the Spanish Monarchy, including America, due to the circulation of Spanish aristocrats in high official positions (Yun Casalilla 2009). Irish-related material might be very difficult to spot at a first glance, but if the researcher has previously identified Americans of Irish descent who were granted nobility titles, it is worth following the trail in order to see if the documentation has been preserved (Andujar Castillo 2007; Felices de la Fuente 2013).

Some major aristocratic archives, much connected with America, are still owned by the historic houses. That is specially the case of the archive of Medina Sidonia, one of the biggest and richest in private hands. Up to the 1640s, the dukes were lords of the estuary of the Guadalquivir River which connected Spain to its American dominions. This location was strategic for American trade, since the river's sand spit made the passage up of big vessels very dangerous, and thus forcing big ships to unload and reload, creating big opportunities for dubious businesses. The dukes of Medina Sidonia had fiscal rights and privileges on the river trade, and the archive reflects their deep involvement with trans-oceanic trade (Fundación casa Medina Sidonia, Archivo, Available on-line (<http://www.fcmedinasidonia.com/archivo.html>)). The archive, located in San Lucar de Barrameda, has not been explored in relation to material of Irish interest. However, it is open to researchers and is also developing digitalisation programs. Recent outstanding research based on its sources

serves as an example of the possibilities of the documentation it hosts (Salas Almela 2008).

The Spanish military archives offer a rich documentation for the study of the thousands of Irish who served in the royal army on both sides of the Atlantic. An excellent resource is the “personnel” series at the General Military Archive, located in Segovia (Cultura de Defensa, Archivo General Militar de Segovia). Available on-line ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLeon/archivo\\_150.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLeon/archivo_150.html)), accessed 15 September 2013). Those interested in the American independence process and in the Spanish Caribbean during the nineteenth century, should not miss either the *Archivo General Militar in Madrid*, which hosts all the documentation issued by the ministry of war (Cultura de Defensa, *Archivo General Militar de Madrid*. Available on-line ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo\\_3.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo_3.html)). The General archive of the Navy “Alvaro de Bazán”, located in a spectacular palace in el Viso del Marqués, preserves the documentation of the military maritime activity from the late eighteenth century onwards (Cultura de Defensa, *Archivo General de la Marina*, “Alvaro de Bazán”, available online ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLaMancha/archivo\\_1095.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLaMancha/archivo_1095.html)), accessed 15 September 2013).

The scientific activity of the Irish in the Spanish America has not been thoroughly researched. Military archives host information on the experimental and technological pursuits carried out by the army and navy. The Archive of the Naval Museum in Madrid preserves interesting material relating to the scientific activity of the Navy, some of which are connected to the Irish (Cultura de Defensa, *Archivo del Museo Naval*. Available on-line ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo\\_153.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo_153.html)). Eclectic in nature, its documentation covers all the early modern period and the nineteenth century. The archive also has an excellent cartographic and image collection.

During the eighteenth century, the crown promoted several scientific expeditions to its American territories with the aim of setting firm and clear boundaries with other empires, gathering geographical and anthropological knowledge about its dominions, and designing projects of economic development, such as new cash crops. The Archive of the Royal Botanic Garden, located in Madrid next to the Prado Museum, conserves the principal documentation generated by these enlightened expeditions (*Real Jardín Botánico de Madrid*. Available on-line (<http://www.rjb.csic.es/jardinbotanico/jardin/index.php?Cab=111&SubCab=214&len=es>). In spite of the number of Irish serving in the navy and its technical positions, so far as this writer is aware, they have not been explored in connection with these scientific endeavours.

There are other Spanish archives with material relevant to the Irish beyond the Atlantic outside the administrative units connected to the government of the American territories. The most relevant ones are the local notary records of the monopoly ports trading with America: Seville in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and Cadiz afterwards (*Portal de Archivos de Andalucía, Archivos Históricos Provinciales, Archivos Históricos Provinciales*, AHP Sevilla. Available on-line (<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/culturaydeporte/archivos/ahpsevilla>); *Portal de Archivos de Andalucía, Archivos Históricos Provinciales, Archivos Históricos Provinciales*, AHP Cádiz. Available on-line (<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/culturaydeporte/archivos/ahpcadiz>), Fernández Chaves, Gamero Rojas 2010, 2012). In the eighteenth century, new chartered companies were created which connected directly a port in Spain with an American region, in order to foster the trade and communications of little-attended to territories. Such was the case of the *Real Compañía Guipuzcoana de Caracas* created in 1728, which connected the Northern part of Spain with present day Venezuela, holding exclusive rights to the cocoa trade. Although the American commerce was legally opened to any Spanish port in 1778, Cadiz, host to a lively Irish community, remained the principal hub for trans-Atlantic connection up to the American independence (Lario Oñate, 2002).

Madrid, seat of the royal court, was the place to which many Irish travelled in search of pensions, appointments and promotion. Among these, the Irish who settled in Spanish America are also found. The *Archivo Histórico de Protocolos de Madrid*, the city notary's archive, is very well preserved, even if the level of description of the inventories is very limited, although improving (*Información Práctica, El Archivo de Protocolos de Madrid*. Available online ([http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?c=CM\\_InfPractica\\_FA&cid=1142661150374&idTema=1142598542569&language=es&pagename=ComunidadMadrid%2FEstructura&perfil=1273044216036&pid=1273078188154](http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?c=CM_InfPractica_FA&cid=1142661150374&idTema=1142598542569&language=es&pagename=ComunidadMadrid%2FEstructura&perfil=1273044216036&pid=1273078188154)). The staff are very helpful and the researcher with names of Irish in Latin America who may have stayed in Madrid to settle business, however briefly, should take some time to check the archive. Travelling in the Early Modern period was so dangerous that many people wrote their last will each time they started a major journey. Even if many of them were not executed, they offer a great wealth of information. Spanish last wills are a great source for social relations analysis, economic and material history and the study of cultural and religious practices. If the researcher is interested in servants in the king's household, the archive at the Royal Palace has preserved the personnel files of its workers (*Patrimonio Nacional, Archivo General de Palacio*. Available online (<http://www.patrimonionacional.es/Home/Colecciones-Reales/Archivo-General-de-Palacio.aspx>).



Finally, a special reference has to be made on the Canary Islands. During the early modern period, the archipelago served as the main provisioning station for the fleets on their way to and from America. The commercial privileges of the islands gave birth to a thriving and international mercantile community. Of course, the Irish were found among the traders and local Canarian archives abound with material relating to them (*Archivo Histórico Provincial de Las Palmas*. Available on-line (<http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/cultura/archivos/ahplp/>); *Archivo Histórico Provincial de Santa Cruz de Tenerife*. Available on-line (<http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/cultura/archivos/ahptf/>); Guimerá Ravina 1985).

### Access to Material

Access to all these Spanish sources is relatively easy. Public archives are freely available to all citizens provided with identification (national ID card or passport). Ecclesiastical and private archives are normally open to accredited researchers. For independent scholars, a letter of recommendation will generally suffice to get access. Reproduction and shipping of archive material is relatively inexpensive in Spain, especially when compared with other European countries. However, researchers are not allowed to take photographs on their own, with the rare exception of the Provincial Historical Archives.

Many Spanish sources, inventories and databases are available on-line. The best starting resource for researchers on the Irish in Latin America is the page of the project coordinated by Enrique García Hernán (*Proyección política y social de la comunidad irlandesa en la Monarquía Hispánica y en la América colonial de la Edad Moderna (siglos XVI-XVIII)*). Available on-line, (<http://www.irishinspain.es/>). Its latest addition is a database on the Irish Mission, the publication of the sources on the support given by the Spanish crown to missionaries travelling to Ireland (*Base de Datos Misión de Irlanda*. Available on-line (<http://www.irishinspain.es/bdmisionirlanda.php>)). The work by Oscar Recio Morales on the Irish military service in the Spanish Monarchy, which covers the American territories, is available on CD (Recio Morales, 2007). The database published by Juan Marchena Fernández on the American army in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is also very useful (Marchena Fernández, 2005). Those researchers interested in Irish connections with the Early Modern world-wide Spanish administration, should also be aware of the Fichoz database project (Dedieu, Fichoz: a database for social history, available on-line (<http://fichoz.hypotheses.org/a-propos/ap-spanish>)).

Major collections on-line deal with Spanish America and contain materials relating to the Irish. The Spanish government began a major digitisation program of its American sources in the 1980s, in preparation for the 1992

celebration of the fifth centenary of Columbus' voyage. A pioneering program at the time, it continued to grow with the addition of the indexes, catalogues and digitised documentation of many other archives, not only in relation to America. Today PARES, the Portal of Spanish Archives (integrated in Europeana) is freely available on-line and constitutes one of the world's biggest online deposits of digital archive sources (*Portal de Archivos Españoles*. Available on-line (<http://pares.mcu.es/>); Europeana, Available on-line (<http://www.europeana.eu/>).

Beyond administrative records, other on-line deposits are concentrated on the arts and literature. The *Biblioteca Hispanica Digital* hosts the digitised documentation of the Spanish National Library and is part of the project of the European Digital Library (Biblioteca Digital Hispánica. Available on-line (<http://www.bne.es/es/Catalogos/BibliotecaDigitalHispanica/Inicio/>). The *Biblioteca virtual Miguel de Cervantes* focuses more on Spanish and Latin American history and literature (*Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes*. Available on-line (<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/>), accessed 15 September 2013). The history of political thought is more profoundly dealt with at the Saavedra Fajardo Library (*Biblioteca Saavedra Fajardo de Pensamiento Político Hispánico*. Available on-line (<http://saavedrafajardo.um.es/Biblioteca/IndicesW.nsf/Inicio?Open>). Last but not least, some Spanish universities, as the University of Seville, are carrying on digitisation programs on their own historic libraries, making available on-line an important part of their heritage (Fondos digitalizados, Universidad de Sevilla. Available on-line (<http://fondosdigitales.us.es/>).

Unfortunately, not all early modern literature is available on-line. Much of the rare material is scattered through smaller and sometimes unexpected local archives and libraries. In order to help in the search, the Spanish Ministry of education developed a database, the Catálogo Colectivo del Patrimonio Bibliográfico Español (CCPBE). It works in a similar way to the Early English Books On-line (EEBO) catalogue. It is very exhaustive for the sixteenth and most of the seventeenth centuries. The difference with EEBO is that, instead of offering an online version of the work in question, the CCPBE tells you which among the Spanish libraries or archives hold a printed copy (*Catálogo Colectivo del Patrimonio Bibliográfico Español*. Available on-line (<http://www.mcu.es/bibliotecas/MC/CCPB/index.html>).

## Challenges

The sheer amount of documentation available in Spanish archives can feel overwhelming. No other European country hosts so many kilometres of records relating to America. Thus, finding one's way can become a thorny problem, especially when there are not archives or archive sections specifically allocated to the Irish in Latin America as such. The researcher

has to dig in general sections (government, justice, appointments, economic files, etc.) looking for bits and pieces of information. In this search, different people with the same name, and an individual using several names simultaneously, becomes a tricky issue (Salinero, Testón Núñez, 2010).

Another challenge to the research is the uneven detail of catalogues and inventories. Some sections have been thoroughly and minutely described, allowing the researcher to move faster but also reducing the chance of finding unstudied material. On the other hand, almost complete mammoth sections such as *Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas* (general accounts) in Simancas and *Indiferente* (that is, not differentiated) in the *Archivo General de Indias* hold treasures of untapped material. The digging up, in return, requires a greater investment in time and patience. The key issue here is to ask the archivists, who in Spain are very well trained civil servants. In many cases, even if the available inventories are poor, there might be new cataloguing projects partially available on demand, or even complete sections digitised and catalogued anew in order to be uploaded into PARES. Even if such extreme cases are not frequent, it is always probable the archivists are aware of some Irish-related content in inventoried sections. So, as in general, it is always wise to ask the archivists.

It is possible at this point to infer the strengths and weaknesses of Spanish sources for Irish in Latin-America studies. The main advantage is the sheer quantity of records preserved and that most of them are stored in a few key locations and with a considerable part of them available online. The main two disadvantages are that working with this material can feel like looking for a needle in a haystack, and that Spanish sources are mainly composed of administrative records.

In short, most of the Irish in Early Modern Latin America did not leave any record in Spanish archives. Most among the few, who did so, just appear as passing reference in more general documentation. This makes it more difficult, although not impossible, to approach the life of non-elite people. For the very few on which considerable files have been preserved, mainly officials, clergymen and merchants, only a few dimensions of their experience can be studied: especially, their dealings with the public administration. Spanish archives are generally poor on private sources if we exclude those of the aristocracy. Personal or intimate material such as memories and diaries are very rare, only becoming available at the end of the early modern period. The examples of Monica Bolufer's study of Inés Joyes, or Luis Antonio Sierra's on Maria Edgeworth, demonstrate not only the existence of these kind of sources, but also of their research possibilities (Bolufer Peruga 2008; Sierra Gómez 2012). Also, the complex and prolific writer José María Blanco-White, who dedicated much of his intellectual energy to the political revolutions of Spanish America, offers a

window on the Irish-émigré understanding of the period (Moreno Alonso 2002; Méndez Bejarano 2009; Murphy, 2011).

## **Future Prospects**

In spite of their shortcomings, the Spanish sources hold great possibilities to explore new research on the Irish in Latin America. Some of them have been already hinted at. No research has addressed Irish feminine migration to the Spanish America. Although less visible in the documentation, female migration was both voluminous and of great importance. When the Spanish crown enrolled Irish migrants in order to repopulate and reinforce its most exposed American frontiers in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it aimed at enlisting complete Irish families, not just males. The success or failure of the policy is key to understanding the formation of new societies and their impact on the old ones, as the recent Spanish historiography demonstrates (Sánchez Rubio, Testón Núñez 1997, 91-120; Almorza Hidalgo 2011; Corbacho González 2013, 887-902). The private letters of the migrants allow access to the hopes, wonders, fears and anxieties of newcomers to the New World, especially taking into account the scarcity of other private and intimate material (Otte 1988; Sánchez Rubio, Testón Núñez 1999).

No thorough study has been carried out on the Irish brought in front of the Spanish Inquisition, both in Spanish and Spanish America. The spectacular case of William Lamport, judged by the Inquisition of Mexico, is the exception which hopefully will attract new research to these extremely rich and detailed sources (Troncarelli 1999; Crewe 2010). Isabel Drumond Braga's study on the Irish in the Portuguese Inquisition has served to uncover a previously unknown perspective on the connections and everyday practices of Irish sailors and migrants (Drumond Braga 2001, 165-191).

Comparisons between different areas in Latin America and the connection between hispanophone and lusophone America are some of the issues still to be studied. Before, during and after the union of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns (1580-1640), people of Irish origin criss-crossed the porous divisions among the two big American dominions. However, if the studies on the Irish in Spanish-speaking America during the early modern period are not very abundant, these are even rarer in the case of Brazil. Joyce Lorimer's book on English and Irish settlements in the river Amazon is one of the rare studies for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Lorimer 1989). However, the recent MA thesis of Ariadne Ketini Costa on the eighteenth century Belford family in Maranhao, directed by Maria Fernanda Bicalho, marks a new interest on the subject (Costa 2013).

Military personnel and administrators form, as a group, the main subjects of the Spanish documentation. However, only few of the analytical possibilities have been so far explored. Attention has focused mainly on those of Irish descent who reached the top military and political positions. Less attention has been paid to the whole network of people, Irish or not, connected to them. In addition to war and government, the administration and army played a crucial role in scientific advancements and teaching on medicine, botany, cartography, engineering, shipbuilding, etc. and the Irish connection to those activities have not yet been thoroughly studied. Oscar Recio Morales' work on Alexander O'Reilly's involvement in the renewal of Spanish military teaching in the eighteenth century serves as a guide in this direction (Recio Morales, 2012b).

Beyond Europe and America, the Pacific dimension of the Irish in the Spanish Monarchy remains untapped. The small islands and the Philippines functioned up to the nineteenth century as an extension of the vice-royalty of New Spain. Spanish sources allude to the Irish in the Pacific, such as Diego Daniel, a trumpeter in the fleet sent to Manila as early as in 1618 (AGI, Filipinas, legajo 5, f. 172). Documentation grows more abundant in the eighteenth century but has not yet received any scholarly attention.

This text has shown that the sources in Spanish archives are of enormous importance to the study of the Irish in Latin-America. The richest documentation is chronologically linked to the period between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, when Spanish-American links were strongest. In contrast with Europe, the foreign communities in Spanish America had not the right to organise their own corporate bodies and institutions. Thus specific documentary deposits on them do not exist, and their early heritage is difficult to grasp. They became more visible in the eighteenth century due to their participation, at all levels, in the reforms of the enlightenment period. As a consequence, it is the period leading to American independence and the revolutions themselves where their impact is most visible and where most researchers have focused (Brown 2006; Rodríguez 2006). On the other hand, the richest depositories in Spain are dedicated to state documentation, which deals mainly with military, religious and administrative affairs. As a result, efforts in the study of the Irish in the Spanish America have centred on those issues. This level of analysis was as a necessary first step. Thanks to its fruitful results, and together with the development of relational databases and massive digitisation programs, a different research environment emerges, where new fascinating subjects and approaches, a few of which, pointed out here, await, like Juan Bautista, Francisca de Paula de Birkdale, and Juan Beard, for their daring researcher.

## Bibliography

- Almorza Hidalgo, Amelia, *Género, emigración y movilidad social en la expansión Atlántica: mujeres españolas en el Perú colonial (1550-1650)* (Florence: European University Institute PhD thesis, 2011).
- Andujar Castillo, Francisco, “Familias irlandesas en el ejército y la corte borbónica”, *Los oficiales militares irlandeses en el ejército de América, 1750-1815* in: *Extranjeros en el Ejército: militares irlandeses en la sociedad española (1580-1818)*, ed. Enrique García Hernán and Oscar Recio Morales (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2007), pp. 271-295.
- Archivo General de Simancas, *Los irlandeses y la Monarquía hispánica (1529-1800) : vínculos en espacio y tiempo = The Irish and the Hispanic Monarchy (1529-1800) : connections in time and space* (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, Subdirección General de Documentación y Publicaciones, 2012).
- Archivo Histórico Provincial de Las Palmas*. Available on-line (<http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/cultura/archivos/ahplp/>), accessed 15 September 2013.
- Archivo Histórico Provincial de Santa Cruz de Tenerife*. Available on-line (<http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/cultura/archivos/ahptf/>), accessed 15 September 2013.
- Asociación Española de Estudios Irlandeses*. available online (<http://www.aedei.es>), accessed 15 September 2013.
- Biblioteca Digital Hispánica*. Available on-line (<http://www.bne.es/es/Catalogos/BibliotecaDigitalHispanica/Inicio/>), accessed 15 September 2013.
- Brown, Mattew, *Adventuring through Spanish Colonies: Simón Bolívar, Foreign mercenaries and the birth of new nations* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006). *Catálogo Colectivo del Patrimonio Bibliográfico Español*. Available on-line (<http://www.mcu.es/bibliotecas/MC/CCPB/index.html>), accessed 16 September 2013.
- Chauca García, Jorge, “Ambrosio O'Higgins: paradigma militar y gobernante en la América Meridional del setecientos” in *Jornadas Nacionales de Historia Militar, Milicia y sociedad ilustrada en España y América (1750-1800)* (Madrid: Deimos, 2003), pp. 481-500.
- Corbacho González, Victoria Eugenia, “Un género olvidado para un tiempo silenciado: las mujeres de la emigración a América durante el siglo XVII” in Eliseo

Serrano, *De la tierra al cielo. Líneas recientes de investigación en historia moderna* (Zaragoza: CSIC, Institución “Fernando el Católico”, 2013), pp. 887-902.

-Costa, Ariadne Ketini, *Uma “casa” irlandesa no Maranhao: Estudo da trajetória da família Belfort, 1736-1808* (Niterói: MA Thesis, 2013), available on-line ([http://www.historia.uff.br/stricto/teses/Dissert-2013\\_Ariadne\\_Costa](http://www.historia.uff.br/stricto/teses/Dissert-2013_Ariadne_Costa)), accessed 16 September 2013.

-Crewe, Ryan Dominic, ‘Brave New Spain: an Irishman’s independence plot in seventeenth-century Mexico’ in *Past & Present* (Oxford) 207:1 (2010), pp. 53-87.

-*Cultura de Defensa, Archivo del Museo Naval*, available on-line ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo\\_153.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo_153.html)), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Cultura de Defensa, Archivo General de la Marina, “Álvaro de Bazán”*, available online ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLaMancha/archivo\\_1095.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLaMancha/archivo_1095.html)), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Cultura de Defensa, Archivo General Militar de Madrid*. Available on-line ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo\\_3.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/madrid/archivo_3.html)), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Cultura de Defensa, Archivo General Militar de Segovia*. Available on-line ([http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLeon/archivo\\_150.html](http://www.portalcultura.mde.es/cultural/archivos/castillaLeon/archivo_150.html)), accessed 15 September 2013.

-Dedieu, Jean-Pierre, *Fichoz: a database for social history*, available on-line (<http://fichoz.hypotheses.org/a-propos/ap-spanish>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-Downey, Declan M., Crespo McLennan, Julio (eds.), *Spanish-Irish relations through the ages* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2008).

-Drumond Braga, Isabel ‘Os Irlandeses e a Inquisição Portuguesa (séculos XVI-XVIII)’ in *Revista de la Inquisición* (Madrid) 10 (2001), pp. 165-191.

-*Estudios Irlandeses*. available online <http://estudiosirlandeses.org>, accessed 15 September 2013.

-Felices de la Fuente, María del Mar, *La nueva nobleza titulada de España y América en el siglo XVIII (1701-1746) : entre el mérito y la venalidad* (Almería: Universidad de Almería, 2013).

-Fondos digitalizados, Universidad de Sevilla. Available on-line (<http://fondosdigitales.us.es/>), Accessed 15 September 2013.

-Gamero Rojas, Mercedes, Fernández Chaves, Manuel Francisco, “Hacer del Dinero Riqueza: Estrategias de Ascenso Económico y Asentamiento de los Comerciantes Irlandeses en la Sevilla del Siglo XVIII” in García Hernán, Enrique, Pérez Tostado, Igor (eds.), *Irlanda y el Atlántico Ibérico* (Valencia: Albatros, 2010), pp. 15-36.

-Gamero Rojas, Mercedes, Fernández Chaves, Manuel Francisco, “El reino de Sevilla como escenario del ascenso del poder social y económico de los extranjeros en el siglo XVIII: el caso irlandés”, Recio Morales, Oscar (ed.) *Redes de nación y espacios de poder. La comunidad irlandesa en España y la América Española, 1600-1825* (Valencia: Albatros, 2012), pp. 131-152.

-García Hernán, Enrique (ed.), *The battle of Kinsale: study and documents from the Spanish archives* (Valencia-Madrid: Albatros, Ministerio de defensa, 2013).

-García Hernán, Enrique, *Base de datos misión de Irlanda*, available online (<http://www.irishinspain.es/bdmisionirlanda.php>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-García Hernán, Enrique, Bunes Ibarra, Miguel Ángel de, Recio Morales, Oscar, *Irlanda y la monarquía hispánica: Kinsale 1601-2001, Guerra, política, exilio y religión* (Madrid: CSIC, 2002).

-García Hernán, Enrique, *Ireland and Spain in the reign of Philip II* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2009).

-García Hernán, Enrique, Pérez Tostado, Igor (eds.), *Irlanda y el Atlántico Ibérico* (Valencia: Albatros, 2010).

-García Hernán, Enrique, Recio Morales, Oscar, *Extranjeros en el Ejército: militares irlandeses en la sociedad española (1580-1818)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2007).

-Guillespie, Raymond, Ó hUiginn, Ruairí (eds.), *Irish Europe, 1600-1650: writing and learning* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2013).

-Guimerá Ravina, Agustín, *Burguesía extranjera y comercio atlántico: la empresa comercial irlandesa en Canarias (1703-1771)* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife: Consejería de Cultura y deportes, Gobierno de Canarias, CSIC, 1985).

-Hazard, Benjamin, *Faith and patronage: the political career of Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire, c. 1560-1629* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2010).



- Información Práctica, El Archivo de Protocolos de Madrid*. Available online ([http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?c=CM\\_InfPractica\\_FA&cid=1142661150374&idTema=1142598542569&language=es&pagename=ComunidadMadrid%2FEstructura&perfil=1273044216036&pid=1273078188154](http://www.madrid.org/cs/Satellite?c=CM_InfPractica_FA&cid=1142661150374&idTema=1142598542569&language=es&pagename=ComunidadMadrid%2FEstructura&perfil=1273044216036&pid=1273078188154)), accessed 15 September 2013.
- Lario Oñate, María del Carmen, *La colonia mercantil británica e irlandesa en Cádiz a finales del siglo XVIII* (Cádiz, Universidad de Cádiz, 2002).
- Lorimer, Joyce, *English and Irish settlements on the river Amazon, 1550-1646* (Londres: Hakluyt society, 1989).
- Marchena Fernández, Juan, *El ejército de América antes de la Independencia. Ejército regular y milicias americana. 1750-1815. Hojas de servicio, uniformes y estudio* (CD-Rom) (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2005).
- Marchena Fernández, Juan “Los oficiales militares irlandeses en el ejército de América, 1750-1815” in: García Hernán, Enrique, Recio Morales, Oscar, *Extranjeros en el Ejército: militares irlandeses en la sociedad española (1580-1818)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2007), pp. 317-350.
- Méndez Bejarano, José María, *Vida y obra de D. José María Blanco-White* (Sevilla: Centro de Estudios Andaluces, Renacimiento, 2009).
- Moreno Alonso, Manuel, *Divina libertad: la aventura liberal de José María Blanco-White* (Sevilla: Alfar, 2002).
- Morgan, Hiram (ed.), *The Battle of Kinsale* (Bray, Co. Wicklow: Wordwell, 2004).
- Murphy, Martin, *El ensueño de la razón: la vida de Blanco-White* (Sevilla: Centros de Estudios Andaluces, Renacimiento, 2011).
- O’Connor, Thomas (ed.), *The Irish in Europe, 1580-1815* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2001).
- O’Connor, Thomas, Lyons, Mary Ann (eds.), *The Irish in Europe after Kinsale, 1602-1820* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2003).
- O’Connor, Thomas, Lyons, Mary Ann (eds.), *Irish communities in Early Modern Europe* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2006).
- O’Connor, Thomas, Lyons, Mary Ann (eds.), *The Ulster Earls and Baroque Europe* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010).

-Otte, Enrique, *Cartas privadas de emigrantes a Indias* (Cáceres: Junta de Andalucía, Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1988).

-*Patrimonio Nacional, Archivo General de Palacio*. Available online (<http://www.patrimonionacional.es/Home/Colecciones-Reales/Archivo-General-de-Palacio.aspx>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-Pérez Tostado, Igor, *Irish influence at the court of Spain in the seventeenth century* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2008).

-Pérez Tostado, Igor, Ruiz Ibáñez, José Javier (eds.), *Los exiliados del rey de España* (Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica, forthcoming).

-*Portada del Archivo General de Indias*. available online (<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AGI/>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Portada del Archivo General de Simancas*, available online (<http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AGS/>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Portal de Archivos de Andalucía, Archivos Históricos Provinciales, Archivos Históricos Provinciales, AHP Sevilla*, Available on-line (<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/culturaydeporte/archivos/ahpsevilla>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Portal de Archivos de Andalucía, Archivos Históricos Provinciales, Archivos Históricos Provinciales, AHP Cádiz*, Available on-line (<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/culturaydeporte/archivos/ahpcadiz>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Portal de Archivos Españoles*, Available on-line (<http://pares.mcu.es/>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Europeana*, Available on-line (<http://www.europeana.eu/>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-*Real Jardín Botánico de Madrid*. Available on-line (<http://www.rjb.csic.es/jardinbotanico/jardin/index.php?Cab=111&SubCab=214&len=es>), accessed 15 September 2013.

-Recio Morales, Oscar (ed.), 'Los extranjeros y la nación en España y la América española' in *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna, Anejos* (Madrid), n° 10, 2011.

-Recio Morales, Oscar (ed.), *Redes de nación y espacios de poder: la comunidad irlandesa en España y la América Española, 1600-1825* (Valencia-Madrid: Albatros, Ministerio de Defensa, 2012).

- Recio Morales, Oscar, 'Un intento de modernización del ejército borbónico del XVIII: la Real Escuela Militar de Ávila' in *Investigaciones Históricas:Época Moderna y Contemporánea* (Valladolid) 32 (2012b), pp. 145-172.
- Recio Morales, Oscar, *Ireland and the Spanish Empire, 1600-1815* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010).
- Recio Morales, Oscar, *La presencia militar irlandesa en los ejércitos de la Monarquía Hispánica, 1580-1818. Database on CD-Rom* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa-Trinity College Dublin, 2007).
- Rodríguez, Moises Enrique, *Freedom's mercenaries: British volunteers in the Wars of Independence of Latin America* (Lanham: Hamilton books, 2006, 2 vols.).
- Salas Almela, Luis, *Medina Sidonia: el poder de la aristocracia, 1580-1670* (Madrid-Sevilla: Marcial Pons Historia-Centro de Estudios Andaluces, 2008).
- Salinero, Gregoire, Testón Núñez, Isabel (Eds.), *Un juego de engaños: movilidad, nombres y apellidos en los siglos XV a XVIII* (Madrid: Casa Velázquez, 2010).
- Sánchez Rubio, Rocío and Testón Núñez, Isabel, "Mujeres abandonadas, mujeres olvidadas" in *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna* (Madrid) Vol. 19 (1997), pp. 91-120.
- Sánchez Rubio, Rocío and Testón Núñez, Isabel, *El hilo que une: las relaciones epistolares entre el Viejo y el Nuevo Mundo (siglos XVI-XVIII)* (Cáceres: Universidad de Extremadura, 1999).
- Schüller, Karin, *Die Beziehungen Zwischen Spanien Und Irland Im 16. Und 17. Jahrhundert* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1999).
- Sierra Gómez, Luis Antonio, "La literatura como vehículo de representación de España en la obra de María Edgeworth", in *Redes de nación y espacios de poder. La comunidad irlandesa en España y la América Española, 1600-1825* ed. Oscar Recio Morales (Valencia: Albatros, 2012), pp. 255-273.
- Tellez Alarcia, Diego, D. *Ricardo Wall: aut Caesar aut nullus* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2007).
- Troncarelli, Fabio, *La Spada e La Croce. Guillén Lombardo El L'Inquisizione in Messico* (Roma: Salerno, 1999).

-Villar García, María Begoña, *La emigración irlandesa en el siglo XVIII* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2000).

-Villar García, María Begoña and Pezzi Cristobal, Pilar (eds.), *Los extranjeros en la España moderna: actas del I coloquio internacional celebrado en Málaga del 28 al 30 de noviembre de 2002* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2003) 2 vols.

-Yun Casalilla, Bartolomé (ed.), *Las redes del imperio: élites sociales en la articulación de la Monarquía Hispánica, 1492-1714* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, 2009).

# **Irish emigration to Spain and the archives of the Castilian conciliar system**

**Ciaran O'Scea**

*Ciaran O'Scea holds a doctorate from the European University Institute in Florence, and curated the recent exhibition 'The Irish and the Hispanic Monarchy (1529-1800). Connections in time and space' at the Archivo General de Simancas (2013).*

The archives of the Spanish council system have been little used by English language historians up until recently. Owing to the importance of Irish emigration to Spanish dominions in the early-modern period, these archives contain considerable material relating to Irish immigration to the Hispanic Monarchy. In the light of the voluminous nature and complexity of the Castilian conciliar system, the utilisation of these archives represent a challenge for future historians. Nevertheless, the wealth of the material that they contain more than outweighs the necessary time and effort.

On 22 June 1619 Juana O'Driscoll, then aged twelve together with her two brothers, Denis and Florence, aged eight and six respectively and her two sisters, Catalina and Leonor, aged ten and two and a half respectively trooped into the paymaster's office of the Finance Council in Madrid to collect their fifteen escudos due as heirs of the services from the Lord of Castlehaven's second marriage. Some fifty years later on 13 September 1669 an Irish speaker, Leonor Miagh, aged forty, pale faced, blond haired, blue eyed, and corpulent arrived at the same office to collect her two reals due as the widow of her first husband who had died serving in Catalonia.<sup>1</sup>

Accustomed as most historians of early-modern Ireland are to the scarcity of available sources or their lack of detail, the extensive detail and most of all the voluminous nature of continental archives comes as a welcome surprise. For historians of Irish emigration to Europe there exists a wealth of data covering a wide variety of fields detailing the points of contact between Irish immigrants and royal, civil, and ecclesiastical institutions of the continental European powers. Even at the beginning of the seventeenth century when Irish emigration to Europe first took off, the Spanish Monarchy already constituted Western Christendom's foremost bureaucratic secular power. By the late-sixteenth century, the complete

---

<sup>1</sup> AGS, CS, leg. 325 (1), 22 June 1619; AGS, CS, legs. 329, 2 July 1677; 330, 13 September 1669

adoption by the Castilian noble and urban elites of bureaucratic literacy, and the reduction in the price of paper permitted the adoption of the Roman legal maxim, “what is not in the acts does not exist” (*quod non est in actis, non est in mundo*), as the defining principle of royal bureaucratic practices. (Lorenzo Cardarso 2001: 82-83). As a consequence this meant that as long as there existed an economic justification or payment, every transaction involving an individual or part of royal property left an extensive paper trail covering many diverse aspects of social, cultural, and political history. These might range from the list of medicines brought by the Spanish forces to Ireland in 1601 to an account of the capture of the Irish-manned galleon the *Rosary* in the Straits of Gibraltar by Moorish pirates in 1622. (García Hernán 2013: 614-615; Archivo General de Simancas 2012:137)

One of the fields in which Spanish archives can help to fill the gaps in Irish historiography is in regards to the history of the family, and the role of Irish female immigration. More than any other area of research, our knowledge of the history of the Irish family prior to 1800 is almost non-existent due primarily to the absence of birth and marriage registers that have been the traditional barometers of early-modern family reconstructions. Similarly, aside from pioneering studies by Michelline Kerney Walsh (Walsh 1961, 1981), based directly on continental archives, our limited knowledge of early-modern Irish female immigration has been filtered primarily through English language sources especially the state papers of the English crown (Henry 1992, 1995). Nevertheless, royal, ecclesiastical, notarial and noble archives in Spain can greatly help complete the jigsaw of family reconstruction, and the many varied aspects regarding the role of Irish female immigrants. Although considerable volumes of surviving wills, donations, and parish registers of births, marriages and deaths, dating back to before the early sixteenth century, can be found in the extensive network of Spanish archives, for reasons of space comments will be restricted to the principal archives of the Castilian conciliar system. The first part will deal with the practical problems of working with these archives, and the second part with some of the Irish material relevant to the history of Irish families and of Irish female immigration.

## **The Archives of the Conciliar System Introduction**

The Spanish conciliar system was organised primarily on a territorial basis with a number of councils such as the Council of State, the Council of Military Orders, the Finance Council, the Council of the Crusade, and

that of the Inquisition having extra-territorial remit.<sup>2</sup> All councils except the Council of State possessed judicial functions which gave rise to frequent disputes regarding competing jurisdictions. Furthermore, during the reigns of Philip III (1598-1621) and Philip IV (1621-65), *ad hoc juntas* or committees effectively removed much of the decision-making from a number of royal councils (Baltar Rodríguez 1998: 153). As a consequence, considerable documentation, which should have been deposited in the principal archives of the Hispanic Monarchy, ended up dispersed among the private archives of one-time councillors or secretaries.

Within the framework of studies on Irish emigration in the early-modern period, it is almost a truism to say that wherever the Spanish Monarchy had influence Irish immigrants are to be found among the documentation of the Spanish (Castilian) conciliar system.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, for the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, owing to the difficulties that Irish immigrants had in adaptation to royal patronage networks, the most important of these bodies were the Councils of State, War, Finance, Flanders, Italy, Portugal, Castile, the *Cámara de Castilla*, and the Council of Military Orders. In the eighteenth century owing to the changes brought in at the beginning of the reign of Philip V (1700-46), a re-configuration of the Spanish conciliar system took place. Although all the councils continued to exist, all petitions were now channelled through five secretariats (*Secretarías de Despacho*) (*Estado, Guerra, Gracia y Justicia, Hacienda, and Marina e Indias*) (Archivo General de Simancas 2010: 21).

The bulk of the documentation produced by the Castilian conciliar system is located in the *Archivo General de Simancas* (AGS)(Valladolid), the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* (AHN) (Madrid), and the *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI).<sup>4</sup> An unknown amount of documentation, which never found its way into these archives, was intentionally or unintentionally destroyed, found its way into private archives of the nobility, or found its way into foreign

<sup>2</sup> On the Spanish administration, see Patrick Williams, "Philip III and the restoration of monarchical government, 1598-1603" in *English Historical Review*, 88 (1973), pp 751-69; for monographs on the various councils see, Santiago Fernández Conti, *Los Consejos de Estado de y guerra de la monarquía hispana en tiempos de Felipe II, 1548-98* (Valladolid: Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1998); Salustiano de Dios, *El consejo real de Castilla (1385-1522)* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1982); idem, *Gracia, merced y patronazgo real: La Cámara de Castilla entre 1474-1530* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1993); Carlos Javier de Carlos Morales, *El consejo de hacienda de Castilla, 1523-1602: Patronazgo y clientelismo en el gobierno de las finanzas reales durante el siglo XVI* (Valladolid: Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Prior to 1707 each Spanish kingdom had a separate royal administration. The use of the term 'Spanish conciliar system' in the context of this article refers to the bureaucratic organs of the Castilian crown.

<sup>4</sup> Considerable material of a military nature covering the early-modern period found its way into military archives. These are not included in this review.

archives as part of the illegal trade in state papers during the course of the early-modern period (Riol 1787:83-84).<sup>5</sup> Broadly speaking, AGS is the most homogenous of the three archives, though principally containing material relevant to the sixteenth century, the seventeenth century, and to a lesser extent to the eighteenth century. Owing to its proximity to the principal organs of political power in Madrid, AHN continues to be a living archive that absorbs material of historical value as the latter loses its administrative value. Partly for this reason it took in the archive of the Council of the Inquisition which was originally located in the AGS in the nineteenth century, and recently that of the Archivo de Asuntos Exteriores. Most of the documentation in AHN covers the eighteenth century and to a lesser degree the nineteenth century, although there is also a considerable body of material relevant to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Furthermore, the documentation of some councils such as that of the Council of State and the *Cámara de Castilla* is divided between this archive and AGS, or in the case of the Council of Aragón between the *Archivo de la Corona de Aragón* and AHN. AGI contains the majority of the material relating to the Spanish Indies during the early-modern period though both of the other two archives also contain important material covering the same area especially for the eighteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

In the light of the sheer volume of documents produced by the Spanish council system, its complexities, the frequent changes in internal organisation, and the loss and dispersion of documentation, any prior experience by the researcher in Irish or British archives will be of little practical use when faced with the labyrinths of Simancas or AHN. Considerable research effort is dissipated owing to the failure to understand the functioning of the Spanish conciliar system and the early-

---

<sup>5</sup> Many of the private archives of the nobility are currently located in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, *sección de la nobleza* (Toledo). See for example that of the Marqués de Caracena who was governor of Galicia in the late-sixteenth and early seventeenth century at the time of the fallout from the Battle of Kinsale before becoming *virrey* of Valencia in 1606 where he was responsible for the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609-10. His private archive, which has important documentation relating to these two governorships, is located in the archival fond of Frías A fond is the complete body of documents produced by a person, family or institution that has been created and accumulated by them. On international archival terminology see the database of multilingual archival terminology at <http://www.ciscra.org>, 18 March 2014.

<sup>6</sup> For introductions to these archives see Luis Sánchez Belda, *Guía del Archivo Histórico Nacional* (Valencia: Tipografía Moderna, 1958); Mariano Alcocer y Martínez, *Archivo General de Simancas: guía del investigador* (Valladolid, 1923); Pedro González García et al, *El Archivo General de Indias* (Madrid: Dirección General del Libro, Archivos y Bibliotecas, 1995); see also the relevant bibliographies listed on their respective websites: <http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AHN/FondosDocumentales/Bibliografia.html>, 12 February 2014; <http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AGS/FondosDocumentales/Bibliografia.html>, 12 February 2014; <http://www.mcu.es/archivos/MC/AGI/FondosDocumentales/Bibliografia.html>, 14 February 2014.



modern bureaucratic process.<sup>7</sup> Equally essential is the need to come to terms with early-modern bureaucratic and financial terminology that even present-day archivists do not always understand. This becomes of fundamental importance when faced with *legajos* or bundles whose contents are inventoried only by date and document type such as is the case regarding the fond of *Guerra y Marina* in AGS. Clearly, it is a waste of time looking for petitions by Irish immigrants in *negocios de oficio* (inter-institutional correspondence) instead of in bundles listed as containing *memoriales y consultas de partes* (petitions of private individuals).

Many of the difficulties involving research in these archives are related to our limited understanding of the nature, functions and jurisdictions of the various councils and their respective personnel. Moreover, both during the lifetime of these institutions as well as after their final demise some of these archives continued to be organised and re-organised according to the criteria of the institutions themselves as well as by those organs that inherited their supervision as was the case in regards to the all-important Council of Castile (Bernal Alonso 2012: 190-197). The end result is that an understanding of both the nature of the respective councils and of the organisation of contemporary archives is fundamental to the completion of any research objectives. Added to this is the very uneven quality of research aids.<sup>8</sup> Broadly speaking, research aids are of four kinds – those that were drawn up by the sixteenth to eighteenth century archivists for internal use or those which accompanied the various transfers of documentation to AGS; those compiled in the nineteenth centuries when the latter archive was first opened to historical investigation and after the setting up of the AGI (1785) and AHN (1866); those (both online and paper formats) produced by modern-day archivists according to international standards since the twentieth century; and the description and digitalisation of images that are subsequently placed in PARES.<sup>9</sup> Owing to the lack of funding dedicated to the drawing up of inventories, the researcher is forced in many cases to rely on very elementary inventories that reflect maybe only 5-10 per cent of any bundle's contents such as those of the *Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas 1º* and *2º épocas* in AGS. Even in more utilised fonds such as *Estado* (AGS) some of the principal inventories list probably on average only about 10 per cent of any 500-600 document bundle. Much the same can be said of the nineteenth century

---

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of the bureaucratic process see Ciaran O'Scea, "The role of Castilian royal bureaucracy in the formation of early modern Irish literacy" in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds.), *Irish communities in early modern Europe* (Dublin: Four Courts Press 2006), pp 200-239.

<sup>8</sup> Based on the available research aids in paper and electronic formats of some thirty fonds.

<sup>9</sup> <http://pares.mcu.es/>

English historian Martin Hume, who in his pioneering work on English material in Simancas limited his researches to the series *negociación de Inglaterra* and *negociación de Francia* of the fond *Estado*, notwithstanding the existence of considerable material relevant to English, Irish and Scottish history in other series of the same fond, or in other fondos of the same archive. Yet, the work of this English historian continues to define modern British perceptions of the limited usefulness of early-modern Spanish historical source material for the study of the history of the British Isles as can be seen from the recent re-edition of his seminal volumes by Cambridge University Press (Hume 1892-1899; Hume 2013).

On the other hand, the more modern research aids are more complete and give greater and more in-depth descriptions of the contents of the legajos or libros. Nevertheless, owing to the sheer volume of documentation involved, many of these inventories are restricted by necessity to series within fondos such as those dealing with the Monarchy's Italian dominions in *Estado* in Simancas, or to less voluminous or more manageable fondos such as the *Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas 3º Época* in the same archive. Much the same is applicable to AHN in Madrid which has parts of some fondos well inventoried but other extensive series only minimally catalogued. In the case of the fond *Ordenes Militares* some of the series such as the *pruebas* or files of evidence for entry into the military orders are well inventoried owing to their popularity for genealogical research. However, substantial series of *legajos* of the same fond contain no information in regards to date or contents, or at best give only documental type or to which military Order the documentation belongs.<sup>10</sup> At times the utilisation of some inventories is of questionable benefit and is more akin to "the blind leading the blind". Part of the problem in regards to AHN is that some of its fondos such as *Clero* or *Consejos Suprimidos* are in fact all-encompassing fondos that have received documentation from a wide variety and number of institutions. In contrast, the fondos of AGS bear a closer resemblance to their former institutional origin, and as a result are more homogenous. The end result of the deficiencies in research aids is that the researcher is obliged to trawl through entire series or sub-series in order to obtain the requisite documentation. This slow method however also produces the richest material as more often than not especially in the field of Irish, English or Scottish studies the material is totally unknown.

Finally, the best starting point for research on original source material in Spanish archives is the website PARES, hosted by the Spanish Ministry of Culture, which contains considerable digitalised material from those archives under its supervision. At this point in time, given the difficulties in estimating relative percentages, the documentation on this website

---

<sup>10</sup> AHN, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Índice de instrumentos de descripción de la Sección de Órdenes Militares (Madrid, 2000); AHN, Ordenes Militares, Registro de Legajos.

probably only constitutes a small fraction of the total contents of these archives. The principal criteria for inclusion on this site have been the commemoration of centenaries such as the “Discovery of America” in 1492 or the “Spanish War of Independence (1808-1814)”; the most frequently consulted series; their historical value; costs of digitalisation; and those fonds or those series that have already been fully catalogued.

## Family and Gender

From the 1580s until the end of the eighteenth century tens of thousands of Irish immigrants became dependent to varying degrees on the Spanish monarchy for economic survival. As a consequence, Irish immigrants left an, at times, abundant documentary trail in Spanish state archives. Certainly, the surviving documentation indicates that the term *irlandés* was better known in early-modern Spain than it is today (AGS 2012: 5). It is the wealth of this surviving documentation in the archives of the Spanish conciliar system, which together with ecclesiastical and notary archives that permits the reconstruction of many Irish communities in exile especially those that were dependant on the Spanish crown for economic survival.<sup>11</sup>

At the basis of all petitions to the Spanish crown were the services carried out by the individual, her/ his immediate family, grandfather and uncles to various Spanish monarchs. In recompense the Hispanic Monarchy rewarded these services with pensions, promotions, privileges or other awards of varying kinds. Moreover, these services were inheritable as far back as one’s grandfather or collaterally as far as uncles by direct living descendants. In this way the monarchy extended its patronage base by bringing in more and more members of the noble, rural and urban elites into its service.

The memorial or petition letter, and the *consulta* formed the documentary backbone of the Castilian bureaucratic process throughout the early-modern period with the former representing the initial start to the individual’s petition and the latter the decision making phase. For the most part the *consulta*, if drawn up as a separate document, contained a summary of what was in the memorial as well as the eventual decision of the relevant council or of the king. However, very high proportions of *consultas* were not drawn up as separate documents but were written in the margins of memorials, a practice very evident in the *negocios de partes* of the Council of State, the Council of War and in the *Cámara de Castilla* at least.

---

<sup>11</sup> For an example of the reconstruction of the Irish community in La Coruña in Galicia in the north-west of Spain see the author’s *Surviving Kinsale: Irish Emigration and identity formation in early modern Spain, 1601-1640* (forthcoming).

Clearly, in the face of the volume of petitions passing through a secretary's hands, it represented a more efficient manner of dealing with any bureaucratic backlog than drawing up separate *consultas* for every petitioner (O'Scea 2006: 206).

+

Señor

(19)

Doña Elena Corti hija de Don Vermicio Corti entret. en la Corona dice q como  
 el dho su padre ha perdido sus tierras y castillo en defensa de la fe y fern de  
 v. Mag<sup>o</sup> no tubo otra cosa con q dotar a ella mas q lo q alcanco ala real haz  
 señalo y hizo donacion en dote ala sup<sup>ta</sup> de 1200. v. la qual suma en nombre y  
 titulo de dote v. Mag<sup>o</sup> por orden suya mando pagar. la sup<sup>ta</sup> con tal provision  
 se sometio al yugo del matrimonio con vn entret.<sup>to</sup> y entrambos del dho matri-  
 monio causado dela dha orden quedan cargados de muchos niños muy tiernos  
 En la Corona la dha suma se le yba pagando a q. de 4. 75 al dia q se le señalas  
 ron por sustento a q. se acabasse la suma total de 1200. v. En esta reform<sup>on</sup>  
 qual en Galicia se caso al dho marido su entret.<sup>to</sup> y ala sup<sup>ta</sup> el beneficio  
 dela dha orden y la resta por cobrar de su orden y dote 1049. v. Atentos  
 el pagam<sup>to</sup> dela dha suma seria sumptuoso ab. Mag<sup>o</sup> y ala sup<sup>ta</sup> por ventura  
 tarde se alimentara a sus niños desamparados q sin sustento en deuido tpo no  
 pueden vivir como no pudian los otros dos dho q en el camino de la Corona  
 se perdieron de sola necess<sup>o</sup> sup<sup>ta</sup> ab. Mag<sup>o</sup> por via del conf<sup>o</sup> de esta dha  
 se servido para remediar con prasteza atanta necess<sup>o</sup> de hacerle cha  
 ridad y merced en recompensa dela dha suma se provea titulo de  
 Marques en Italia con lic<sup>o</sup> de venderlo luego y en el punto q hallara  
 quien lo comprara derogando a q. ra orden q impidiera o dierata-  
 danca ala rendicion del y v. Mag<sup>o</sup> le remittio al conf<sup>o</sup> de Italia  
 Atento q la sup<sup>ta</sup> no tiene amparo q si ny p<sup>a</sup> sus hijos may niños cuyo su-  
 stento se perdio por v. Mag<sup>o</sup> y defensa de la fe, y q en esta reform<sup>on</sup> se les  
 quite el entret.<sup>to</sup> y el beneficio dela orden muy hñmilm<sup>te</sup> sup<sup>ta</sup> sea servido  
 como rey Cath<sup>o</sup> y amparador comiserativo q se le de el dho titulo en re-  
 compensa dela dha suma de 1049. v. con lic<sup>o</sup> de venderlo como  
 ya esta dho: y en ello hara v. Mag<sup>o</sup> Cath<sup>o</sup> a muy gran fern. a Dios

**Fig. 1** Memorial of Elena McCarthy, 11 January 1635. AGS, Secretarias Provinciales, leg. 115, f. 19.

For private individuals the memorial or petition letter was the primary document type for initiating a petition to the Spanish crown in the early-modern period. The memorial represented an early-modern *curriculum vitae* in which the petitioner laid out the motives of his appeal to the Crown. The most important of these were political, military and religious. In Irish appeals up to 1615 these inevitably contained details of service to the Spanish king or in the Catholic cause carried out in Ireland both before and after the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 (O'Scea 2006: 212). For this reason many of these memorials give details of events in Ireland not found in English sources. In 1616 Florence O'Clery, foster brother to one of the sisters of Red Hugh O'Donnell returned to Ireland from the Spanish Netherlands in order to help her escape from prison and bring her and her son back to Flanders.<sup>12</sup> Nor is this kind of detail confined to the Nine Years War and its aftermath. Even long after this war had become part of Ireland's recent history, details concerning petitioner's lives or those of their relations continued to appear in Irish memorials. The principal difference then being that the focus of the lives of Irish immigrants had moved from Ireland to service in Spanish dominions. In 1616 Gerald Trant sought to have his pension transferred from the Irish regiment in the Spanish Netherlands to La Coruña in Spain owing to the enmity that he would have to face from within the Irish regiment, and also because he had a wife and children in the latter city.<sup>13</sup>

A further fundamental justification for royal awards in the memorials was civil status as having a wife and children to support potentially increased the size of awards. As a consequence memorials frequently contain data on spouses, numbers of living children who are sometimes named as well as the names of uncles or brothers who had carried out important services for the Crown. It is the important role played by inherited services in the Spanish monarchical system that explains the presence of this kind data that is such a great aid to family reconstructions. This is also evident in regards to the more financial funds. Thus, from an analysis of the files of some 250 Irish women in receipt of financial aid on the basis of these inherited services between 1640 and 1680, some 67 per cent of these awards were based off their husband's services to the Spanish crown, 22 per cent off their father's services, 8 per cent off their brother's and 3 per cent off their uncle's services.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the need to justify these services to the different Spanish councils meant that many petitioners provided additional documentation such as wills or service records that included

---

<sup>12</sup> AGS, E., leg. 1654, memorial of Florence O'Clery, 10 June 1617; *ibid*, leg. 2780, memorial of same, 5 May 1618.

<sup>13</sup> AGS, E., leg. 1773, memorial of Gerald Trant, 16 January 1616.

<sup>14</sup> Based on the material relating to 'dead pay pensions' in AGS, Contaduría del Sueldo (CSU), legs 319-30.

genealogical data on family background. This is evident from a perusal of the series *servicios militares* in the fond *Guerra Antigua* (AGS) or in the equivalent series in *Estado* (AHN). At the same time the financial records can also lead indirectly to the names of notaries who drew up wills for the petitioners, thus providing a shortcut to what would otherwise be an impossible task.

Traditionally, owing to the important role played by men in wars in early-modern Europe, archives such as AGS or AHN have been viewed as being primarily relevant to the history of men rather than to that of women. Yet, notwithstanding the advances made in women's studies in recent decades, these archives have been very much underutilised, notwithstanding the considerable data on the lives of women that they contain. In the case of Irish female immigrants there is considerable data, maybe proportionally even more than that regarding Spanish women owing to the difficulties faced by the immigrant communities in protecting their female members. Prior to 1607, only four out of 227 memorials seen by the Council of State were sent by Irish women. However after this date the proportion changed to one for every ten Irish male memorials through to 1620. Although data is unavailable beyond this date, there is no reason why this trend should have been reverted, if anything it may have increased.<sup>15</sup> The relatively high percentage of memorials by Irish women was due to a variety of factors, the most important of which were the inability of the Irish immigrant communities to protect their female members in altered socio-economic circumstances, higher male mortalities rates, or the absence of fathers, husbands or brothers that forced many women to deal with royal bureaucracy. One Juana O'Falvey had been forced to learn Spanish and engage with royal bureaucracy by 1618 owing to the absence of her husband who had been sentenced to the galleys seven years earlier (O'Scea 2006: 220).

Memorials, *consultas* and *libros de cédulas* (registers of letters patent) contain very varied kinds of political, economic, and social data that range from services rendered by family members in Ireland, Flanders and elsewhere to the religiosity and material culture of Irish immigrants. High percentages of memorials mention the names of spouses, living children or other family members who have carried out services for the Spanish crown. Global analyses of memorials permits the detection of evolving familial self-definitions among Irish immigrants. Both memorials and *cédulas* highlight the strategies undertaken by Irish families to look after other family members especially unmarried daughters, or the way in which they ensured the descent of the most senior family lines according to Gaelic criteria long after these strategies held any relevance in the altered socio-

---

<sup>15</sup> Based on a database of memorials carried out under the auspices of the Irish in Europe Project, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

economic circumstances of the immigrant communities. (Walsh 1988) Sometimes other fascinating kinds of social data can be found in these kinds of sources such as cases of Gaelic concubinage. In 1618 one Maria McSweeney was deprived of most of her pension because several years earlier she had been living in concubinage with an Irishman while still married.<sup>16</sup> Although memorials can be quite formulaic especially in regard to services rendered to the Spanish crown, they can also contain very wide-ranging political, military, socio-economic or human drama data. In December 1606 the serving priest of the parish of San Luis in Madrid sought charitable aid from the *Cámara de Castilla* on behalf of some 104 starving Irish men and women including some nobles who were then living in five to six roofless, windowless, and doorless houses in his jurisdiction.<sup>17</sup>

Nor are sources on Irish women confined to memorials or any eventual *cédulas*. Many of the more financial fonds contain attached documentation that help give insights, however partial into Irish female literacy, their physiognomy, social networks, marriage patterns, and residence patterns that can be combined with other sources to attain more complete studies. From the dead pay pensions it is clear that even after Irish women became military widows, substantial numbers of them continued to reside in the military garrisons, at the court or in other parts of Spain. Others, on the other hand chose to return to Ireland, and receive their pension there. Up to 1692 at least, Ana de Burg, the widow of an Irish sergeant major continued to receive her pension while residing in Ballinrobe in Ireland, which was collected by her cousin Catalina de Burg on her behalf. As proof that she was still alive she sent testimonies of Irish notaries in Irish or in English to the Spanish royal administration in order to continue receiving her pension.<sup>18</sup>

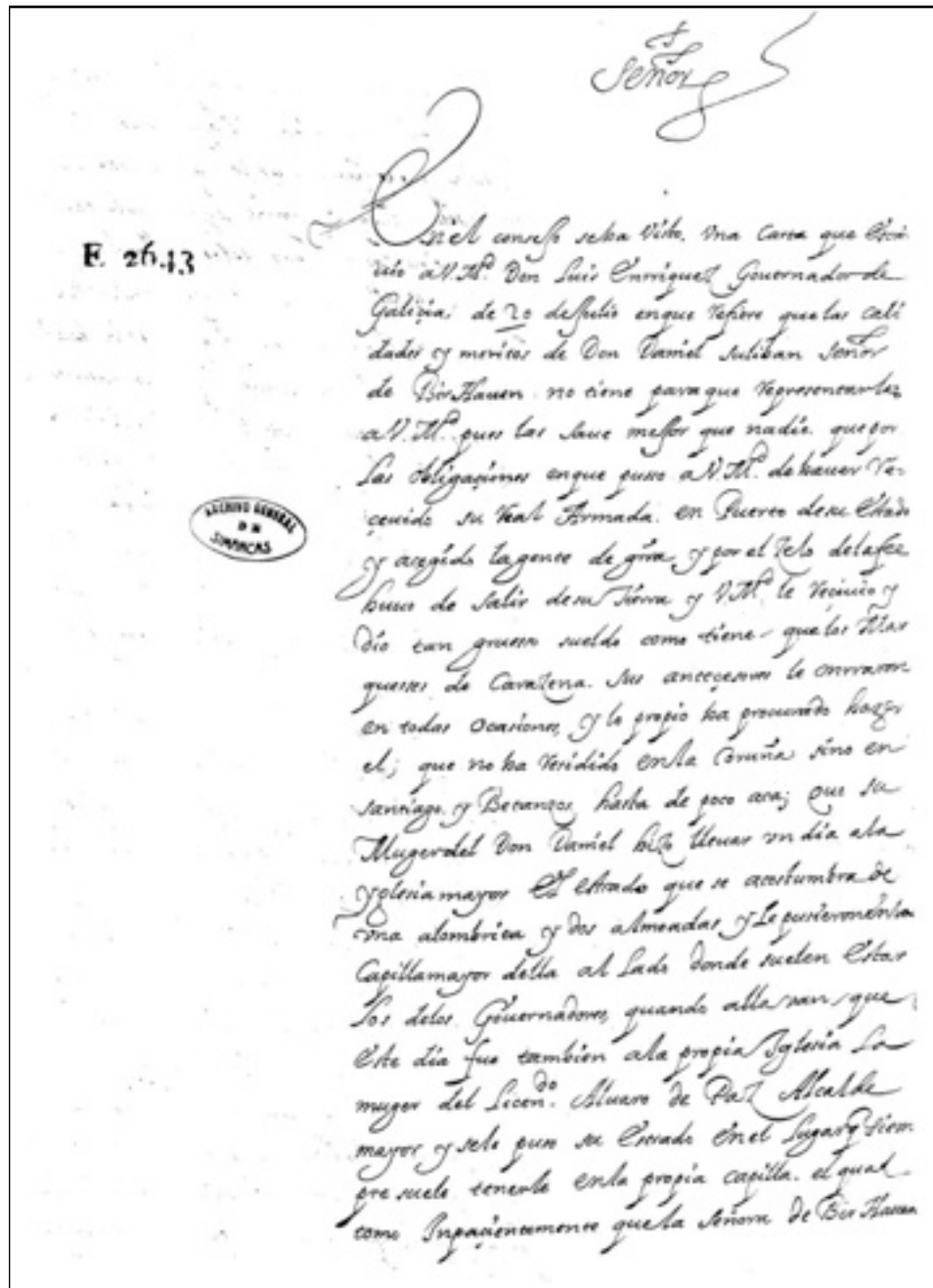
In theory the data on the family and on women in archives such as Simancas or in AHN deal primarily with military migrants and their related families. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the administration of early-modern warfare penetrated large areas of non-military society, and that the economic occupations of any soldier or official were not confined exclusively to military matters. For these reasons the archives of the Castilian crown contain considerable data of relevance to Irish immigration beyond the purely military domain. Moreover, despite the tailing off of Irish military emigration to the Iberian Peninsula from the 1660s, an Irish presence was still apparent up to the 1680s as a review of the *libros de decretos* of the Council of War (AGS) clearly shows.

---

<sup>16</sup> AGS, GA, leg. 829, consulta, 28 February 1618.

<sup>17</sup> AGS, Cámara de Castilla, leg. 909, memorial of las cinco cassas yrlandesas, 6 December 1606

<sup>18</sup> AGS, CSU, leg. 330, file of Ana de Burg, 9 August 1659.



**Fig. 2** First page of *consulta* regarding a dispute concerning seating and kneeling privileges in the principal church in Betanzos (Galicia) between Elena O’Sullivan Mór, Countess of Birabuen and the wife of the *alcalde mayor*. AGS, Estado, leg. 2643, consulta, 26 September 1613.



In the light of the all important role of the memorial as a curriculum vitae of service to the Spanish crown, and of the continuing military, ecclesiastical, commercial, and poor Irish migration to Spanish dominions throughout the seventeenth century and beyond it is possible to estimate that the principal archives of the Spanish conciliar system contain tens of thousands of memorials of Irish petitioners if not more. A study of three-fifths of the series *negocios de partes* of *Estado* (AGS) alone turned up nearly one thousand memorials by Irish petitioners between 1598 and 1620.<sup>19</sup> Figures like these, which one can expect were repeated in other councils, give an indication of the potential for future research on Irish immigration in the archives of the Castilian council system.

---

<sup>19</sup> Carried out under the auspices of the Irish in Europe Project, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

## Bibliography

- Alcocer y Martínez , Mariano. *Archivo General de Simancas: guía del investigador* (Valladolid, 1923).
- Álvarez-Coca González, M. J. "La Fe Pública en España. Registros y Notarías. Sus fondos. Organización y descripción" in *Boletín de la ANABAD*, 37 (1987), pp 7-67.
- Archivo General de Simancas, *The General Archive of Simancas* (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 2010).
- Archivo General de Simancas, *Los irlandeses y la Monarquía Hispánica (1529-1800) : vínculos en espacio y tiempo* (exposición) (Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2012).
- Baltar Rodríguez, J. F. *Las juntas del gobierno en la monarquía hispánica (siglos XVI-XVII)* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 1998).
- Bernal Alonso, Eva. "Los fondos del consejo de castilla en el archivo histórico nacional: monederos falsos y saca de moneda" in M. T. Muñoz Serrulla (ed.), *La moneda: Investigación numismática y fuentes archivísticas* (Madrid: Asociación de Amigos del Archivo Histórico Nacional y Departamento de Ciencias y Técnicas Historiográficas de la UCM, 2012), pp. 185-215.
- Carlos Morales, Carlos Javier de. *El consejo de hacienda de Castilla, 1523-1602: Patronazgo y clientelismo en el gobierno de las finanzas reales durante el siglo XVI* (Valladolid: Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1996).
- Dios, Salustiano de. *El consejo real de Castilla (1385-1522)* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1982).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Gracia, merced y patronazgo real: La Cámara de Castilla entre 1474-1530* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales, 1993).
- Fernández Conti, Santiago. *Los Consejos de Estado de y guerra de la monarquía hispana en tiempos de Felipe II, 1548-98* (Valladolid: Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1998).
- García Hernán, Enrique (ed.), *The Battle of Kinsale* (Valencia: Albatros Ediciones, 2013).
- González García, Pedro et al, *El Archivo General de Indias* (Madrid: Dirección General del Libro, Archivos y Bibliotecas, 1995).

- Hume, M. A. S. *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1892-1899), 4 Vols.
- Hume, M. A. S. *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 4 Vols.
- Lorenzo Cadarso, P. S. *El documento real en la época de los Austrias (1516-1700)* (Cáceres: Universidad de Extremadura, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2001).
- Martí Bonet, J. M. (ed.), *Guía de los Archivos de la Iglesia en España* (Barcelona: Asociación de Archiveros de la Iglesia en España, 2001).
- O'Scea, Ciaran. "The role of Castilian royal bureaucracy in the formation of early- modern Irish literacy" in Thomas O'Connor and M. A. Lyons (eds.), *Irish communities in early modern Europe* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), pp 200-239.
- Riol, S. A. "Informe que hizo a Su Magestad sobre la creacion, ereccion, é institucion de los Consejos, y Tribunales" in *Semanario Erudito*, Vol. 3 (Madrid, 1787), ed. Antonio Valladares de Sotomayor, pp 75-234.
- Sánchez Belda, Luis. *Guía del Archivo Histórico Nacional* (Valencia: Tipografía Moderna, 1958).
- Walsh, M. K. "Some notes towards a history of the womenfolk of the Wild Geese" in *Irish Sword*, 5 (1961), pp 98-106, 133-45.
- Walsh, M. K. "Irishwomen in exile 1600-1800" in *OMahony Journal*, 11 (1981), pp 35-48.
- Walsh, M. K. "The last Earls of Tyrone in Spain and Captain Bernardo O' Neill, illegitimate son of Eoghan Rua" in *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, 13 (1988), pp. 33-58.
- Williams, Patrick. "Philip III and the restoration of monarchical government, 1598-1603" in *English Historical Review*, 88 (1973), pp 751-69.